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The international weekly heralding the coming of Mashiach  
**BEIS MOSHIACH**

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### U.S.A

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

### ERETZ HA'KODESH

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

### EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:

M.M. Hendel

### ENGLISH EDITOR:

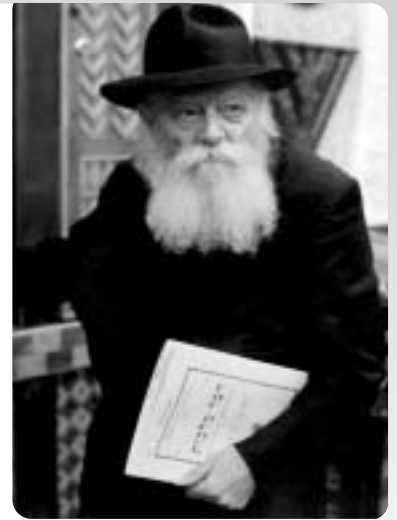
Boruch Merkur  
editor@beismoshiach.org

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# HOW MANY YOSEFS WOULD THERE BE IN THE MARKET?

SICHOS IN ENGLISH



## 2<sup>ND</sup> DAY OF SHAVUOS, 5749

1. In regard to the significance of the giving of the Torah, the Talmud relates:

On the day of Atzeres (Shavuos), Rav Yosef said: "Were it not for that day which caused [an elevation], how many Yosefs would there be in the market place?"

Rashi explains that Rav Yosef was saying: "Were it not for that day," i.e., the day associated with my studying Torah and thus being elevated, what difference would there be between me and all the other people in the market place who are called Yosef?"

Nevertheless, the precise expressions used by the Talmud raise questions: a) Why did Rav Yosef say, "How many Yosefs would there be in the market place?" What significance is the name Yosef? b) Why did Rav Yosef mention "the market place?" Why is he comparing himself to people located there? c) [The tractate Sota relates that Rav Yosef was an extremely humble person.] Why then does he describe the contribution of the giving of the Torah in terms of himself? Why doesn't he speak of Torah objectively, as it is for itself? Though the Talmudic passage

continues and states, "At the outset, a person does (studies) with himself in mind," Rav Yosef had surely proceeded beyond these preliminary stages of service.

The resolution of these questions is associated with the significance of the name Yosef which means "increase." Rav Yosef is saying that the giving of the Torah granted him a potential to increase, to make a contribution to the world that transcends the contribution made by others. Their contribution is made "in the market place," while the contribution Rav Yosef makes is on a much higher level.

The "market place" refers to the world that was created in a manner in which G-dliness is not revealed and hence, the world is characterized by separation. Though the world was created in this manner, G-d did not intend for the world to remain in that state. Rather, He desired that the Jews contribute to the world and through their service of performing "all their deeds for the sake of Heaven," and through the fulfillment of mitzvos, reveal G-dly light within the world and transform the world into a dwelling place for G-d.[120]

Rav Yosef implied that despite the

high level of this service, the contribution ("increase") made through the study of Torah is more significant. Furthermore, as will be explained, the study of Torah allows one to bring about a higher level of refinement of the world.

The difference is as follows: When a person "Performs all your deeds for the sake of Heaven," and "Knows G-d in all Your ways," he adds a dimension of G-dliness to the world which did not exist previously. Nevertheless, the fundamental nature of the material environment in which he lives remains worldly, without any fundamental change. Though he is a Yosef, he is contributing to the world, he remains "in the market place," within the realm of worldly experience and not inside a holy place, e.g., a house of study.

Even the fulfillment of mitzvos which refine and elevate the material articles with which they are performed have only a limited effect. The physical article becomes a vessel for the revelation of G-d's will. However, the extent of the connection to G-dliness is not complete. Mitzvos are called "the limbs of the king." This implies that just as a person's limbs are totally

given over to his soul to the extent that they have no independent existence, similarly, the mitzvos are extensions of G-d's will. However, just as our limbs are not our souls, the connection between mitzvos and G-d's will is not complete.

Similarly, though the very word mitzvah is related to the word tzavsa meaning "connection," that connection is limited. The Tanya states that a person who performs a mitzvah becomes "a chariot" for G-d's will. However, just as a chariot remains separate from the person driving it, there is a difference between the person performing the mitzvah and G-d who commanded its performance.

In contrast, the unity with G-d established through Torah study is complete. "The Torah and the Holy One, Blessed be He, are one." They are united, not as two separate objects that are joined together, but rather as a single entity. Therefore, the study of Torah also allows for the establishment of a complete bond between a Jew and the Torah and a Jew and G-d.

When a Jew studies and understands a Torah concept (which is "G-d's will and G-d's wisdom," "comprehending it, grasping it, and encompassing it in his mind"), he (within the context of his own individual existence) becomes one with the Torah "in a wondrous unity" to which there is no comparison in physical terms, becoming "totally unified and at one from all sides and corners." Through this unity with the Torah, the person who studies becomes one with G-d, for "He and His wisdom are one. He is the Knower and He is the Knowledge."

The potential for such unity was granted with the giving of the Torah. Indeed, from the time the Torah was given onwards, the clarification of Torah law is dependent on the decisions of a Jew in this physical

world. "Heavenly voices are of no significance" in rendering a decision. On the contrary, G-d and the heavenly court come and hear the decision rendered by a court of men in this world.

The person thus becomes a master of the Torah he has studied as evidenced by the law: Should a sage desire, he can forego the honor due him.[121] Also, his decisions in Torah study become dependent on his own powers of understanding. Thus, the complete unity that a person can establish with the Torah can and must permeate his own intellectual abilities and thus, the

***The "market place" refers to the world that was created in a manner in which G-dliness is not revealed and hence, the world is characterized by separation.***

totality of his personality.

The paradigm for this process is our teacher, Moshe. We find that the entire Torah is considered his as the prophet declared, "Remember the Torah of Moshe, My servant." [122] Afterwards, this potential was given over to the Sages as it is said, "Who are our kings? Our rabbis." Since "the Torah and G-d are one" and a sage unites completely with the Torah he studies, when he renders a decision he is like a king who commands a statute.

Based on the above, we can appreciate the advantage of the

service of Yosef in Torah (i.e., the Jews' potential to increase and contribute) over that of Yosef "in the marketplace" (the contribution made through the refinement of the world at large). Through the study of Torah, a Jew establishes unity with G-d on a level that cannot be paralleled in physical terms (nor in the service of refining the physical). Thus, Torah study surpasses the service of refinement for in the latter service, on a revealed level, unity is not established with G-d.

Within the study of Torah itself, there are also two levels: The study of Torah as a Z'vulun, i.e., Torah study is only one dimension of one's service throughout the day. He has another occupation and fixes a specific period in the morning and a specific period in the evening for Torah study. During the time he studies, he becomes one with the Torah (and thus, with G-d) in complete unity, he, nevertheless, spends the majority of his day "in the market place," involved with material affairs.

The most complete evidence of the effect of the giving of the Torah can be seen in those for whom "Torah is their occupation;" i.e., their unity with Torah continues the entire day, permeating their entire existence. There remains no aspect of their lives which is not connected with Torah.

Based on the above, we can also understand why in the passage quoted above, Rav Yosef mentions the effect the giving of the Torah had on him personally and why the Talmud states that, "At the outset, a person does (study) with himself in mind." On the surface, this is contrary to the desired intent of a Jew's service. Seemingly, it would be proper for a Jew to nullify himself entirely, appreciating that he has only one purpose for existence, "I was created only to serve my Creator." Nevertheless, the Torah teaches him to begin his service "with himself in

mind.”

However, since the intent of creation is “to make a dwelling place for Him in the lower worlds,” the existence of “the lower worlds” should not be negated. Rather, the very existence of our world within its own context should become “a dwelling place for Him.” Therefore, an approach of self-negation alone is not sufficient. One must be complete as a person with his own existence and that individual existence should become one with G-d. This is established through the perfect unity established through Torah study.

Therefore, the above passage emphasizes the need to study “with one’s self in mind,” since in this fashion, a person establishes unity between his own individual personality and Torah. To point this out, the first of the Ten Commandments states, “I am the L-rd, your G-d,” using the singular form of the word “your.”

Elokim—“G-d”—also has the meaning “strength and life-energy.” The Ten Commandments emphasize how a person’s strength and life-energy emanates from “I am the L-rd,” to teach each person that he must establish unity with the Torah according to his own character and thinking processes and in this way, establish “a dwelling place for G-d in the lower worlds.”

First, the “dwelling” is established within the mind of the person studying Torah and, afterwards, it is extended to his surrounding environment. Thus, the existence of the world is not negated, but is transformed. The “market place” does not remain as it was, it becomes G-d’s dwelling.[123] Each and every element of creation perceives how “all the entities in the heaven and the earth... came into being only from the truth of His being.” Within the existence of the world, it becomes apparent that “there is nothing aside

from Him.”[124]

It is for this reason that Rav Yosef compares himself to those in the “market place.” Rav Yosef also has an effect on the world at large, contributing the unique dimension of oneness and unity made possible by the giving of the Torah to the world.

The potential to establish unity between the spiritual and physical realms, which the Torah endows to those who study it, stems from the fact that the Torah is essentially above the limits of both the physical and the spiritual realms and, therefore, can establish unity between them. Therefore, the mitzvos were given together with Torah to show that the “dwelling for G-d” established through mitzvos is an outgrowth of the inner connection between man and G-d established by the Torah.

“These days are remembered and celebrated.” Each year, all the spiritual influences associated with “the day that caused [an elevation],” the giving of the Torah are revealed anew, thus granting us the potential to bring unity into the “market place.”[125] Thus, it can be understood that on Shavuos, each Jew is given new power to increase his Torah study, beginning a new epoch, transforming the coming year into a year of Torah. Although one already has “fixed times for Torah study,” the new potential granted by the holiday of Shavuos should motivate one to increase his study. The decision to make such an increase will itself bring about abundant blessings from G-d in regard to children, health, and prosperity.

2. The increase in Torah study[126] mentioned above must involve the totality of the Jewish people, men women, and children. Every Jew must invest renewed energy in his sessions of Torah study, with all the enthusiasm associated with having received the Torah anew.

In particular, the holiday of Shavuos is associated with three leaders of the Jewish people: Moshe, who received the Torah on Mount Sinai, King David and the Baal Shem Tov, whose yahrzaitz are on Shavuos. Accordingly, the increase in Torah study mentioned above should also include an increase in the study of Chitas[127] which includes texts connected with each of these leaders. The study of Chumash is associated with Moshe, Psalms, with King David who authored it, and Tanya with the Baal Shem Tov.

[The latter point is evident from the approbations printed in the text which state that “Now Israel [i.e., the Baal Shem Tov] will rejoice.” Similarly, today’s portion of Tanya, the first chapter of Shaar HaYichud V’HaEmuna, attributes the interpretation of the verse “Forever, L-rd, Your word stands in the heavens” to the Baal Shem Tov although the same interpretation is also found in the Midrash, in order to emphasize the contribution of the Baal Shem in explaining and spreading this teaching.]

Also, this increase should involve a strengthening of the study of the Rambam’s Mishneh Torah (if possible, according to the schedule of three chapters a day, and at the very minimum, one chapter a day or Seifer HaMitzvos.)[128] An effort should be made to arrange study sessions in public. In particular, after the holiday of Shavuos, Kinusei Torah (gatherings dedicated to Torah study) should be organized in every community.

There is another point relevant to this concept. According to Torah law, every moment of one’s day should be devoted to Torah study. However, because one also has an obligation to support one’s wife and family and, therefore, must devote a large portion of one’s day to mundane activities, one is allowed to fulfill one’s obligation of Torah study by setting

aside a portion of time for Torah study each morning and evening. Thus, should G-d grant a person additional wealth and prosperity, he must devote more time to Torah study.

The holiday of Shavuot shares a particular connection to material blessings as implied by our Sages' statement: "Everyone agrees that on Shavuot, 'lachem' (material satisfaction) is required." When a person is granted these material blessings, he will be able to devote more time and energy to Torah study.

If a person will argue, "I am not involved in business for myself. The reason I am so deeply involved is so that I will be able to give more to charity." The way to determine if this is so or not is to see how he conducts his business. Does the person do only what is necessary in order to make a vessel for G-d's blessings and use his free time for Torah study or does he follow a worldly perspective, accepting whatever leniencies in Torah he can find?[129]

May the above motivate an increase of Torah study in the coming days and in the entire year that follows and may this increase in Torah study hasten the time when the unity between G-d, Israel, and Torah will be revealed in the world at large with the coming of the Moshiach. May it be now, immediately.

#### NOTES:

120. This is implied by the narrative of creation which concludes describing "all His work which G-d created to do." Our Sages explained that "to do" means "to correct," that G-d left the task of "correcting" and completing to the creation to man.

121. Translator's Note: The honor with which he should be treated is due the Torah and not due him individually. Hence, one might think that he has no power to forego it. Nevertheless, since the Torah he studies is considered "his," he is given the choice whether to forego this honor or not.

122. The unity Moshe established with the Torah is dependent on the fact that he was "My servant," i.e. completely given over to G-d with no independent existence of His own. This is evident from his very name which means "he was drawn out from the water." The creations of the water are united with their source to the extent that, according to one Talmudic opinion, they are not considered to have any independent identity at all. Similarly in regard to Moshe, "the Divine Presence spoke from his throat," [he would say "I" even though with that pronoun he referred to G-d and not to himself.]

{Interestingly, this name was given to him

***Does the person do only what is necessary in order to make a vessel for G-d's blessings and use his free time for Torah study or does he follow a worldly perspective, accepting whatever leniencies in Torah he can find?***

by gentiles. Even gentiles were able to recognize how he was totally at one with G-d.)

123. A person reveals himself most in his private dwelling. Also, a pleasant dwelling encourages such revelation. The same applies in regard to our world, G-d's "dwelling." It is here in our world where He is revealed to a greater degree and through our service in making the "dwelling" pleasant, we can enhance this revelation.

124. This expression implies that "with Him" there can be existence, each element of the world can reflect His essential oneness. See Likkutei Sichos, Vol. 25, p.

202.

125. The renewed influence of the holiday of Shavuot is enhanced by making full use of the days of preparation for the holiday, the counting of the Omer, Rosh Chodesh Sivan which is associated with the unity of Jews (See the Sichos of Rosh Chodesh Sivan) and the complete bittul associated with the declaration of Naaseh V'Nishma on the fifth of Sivan. There is also the contribution of the seventh of Sivan, the first full day following the unity between the spiritual and the physical brought about by the giving of the Torah (See the Sichos of the sixth of Sivan).

This three stage sequence: a) complete bittul in preparation to receive the Torah (the fifth of Sivan), b) the giving of the Torah and the receiving of the Torah (the sixth of Sivan), c) the unity between the spiritual and the physical (the seventh of Sivan), is reflected in our everyday lives.

As soon as we awake in the morning, we declare "Modeh Ani," expressing our bittul to G-d. The recitation of the Shma establishes a connection to G-d which parallels that of the giving of the Torah, and the Shmoneh Esrei prayers when a Jew stands before G-d as a slave before his master reflects the unity with G-d associated with the seventh of Sivan. This unity is continued in one's service in the world at large that follows prayer in which one extends this unity—and as explained above, the deeper unity brought about by Torah study—to one's surrounding environment.

126. The concept of increasing Torah study can also be related to the weekly portion, Parshas Naso, which begins "Lift up the heads," implying that even the heads, the most elevated parts of our being must be lifted to an even higher level.

127. This implies a reinforcement of the daily study sessions and also studying with increased depth.

128. At least one halacha in the daily study session should be studied in depth.

129. An example of such an error are those who remove their beards, explaining that this is necessary for their businesses. They do not realize that the thirteen points of the beard reflect G-d's Thirteen Attributes of Mercy and are thirteen paths for Divine blessing.



# LETTERS TO A SCIENTIST\*

## PART 6

B.H. 21<sup>st</sup> of Shevat, 5729<sup>324</sup>  
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Dr. Zeev Greene  
School of Public Health  
University of Minnesota  
Minneapolis, Minn.

Sholom uBrocho:

Thank you very much for your correspondence and enclosures. I am particularly appreciative of your thoughtfulness in sending me the enclosures, for, obviously, they are a source of true gratification to me.

I need hardly add that I was also very pleased to read the copy of your article in the Commentary. (If Rabbi \_\_\_\_\_ had taken a liberty in showing it to me, we will keep it confidential.) Knowing you, and not underestimating your influence, I will apply to your article a paraphrase of the saying of our Sages, "more than is written there still remains to be said."

May I also add a further point, and I believe an essential one, to the explanations mentioned in your article as to how you and Mrs. Green and your children have found the true path in life. It is that the Supreme Providence has chosen you to be special messengers to bring the word of G-d to those circles where others could not have had access to, or at any rate, could not have had the same effectiveness and success. I am referring to the academic and scientific circles which wield considerable influence on Jewish youth, particularly in this day and age. More specifically - on young men and women going into scientific careers, who are yet to establish families

\*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 their own. In other words, they represent not individuals but family units, and the beneficiaries will become the benefactors, in the way of a chain reaction. This, indeed, is also what you have in mind, as I see from your letters! To use a much used phrase, our living in the "Jet Age," I hope and pray that your influence be swift and far-reaching, and that you bring it about in joy and gladness of heart.

Wishing you particular Hatzlocho on your overseas trip, especially in London,

With blessing, /signature

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# WHY DIDN'T DOVID HA'MELECH AUTHOR A SCHOLARLY WORK?

BY M. MELAMED

*A compilation of stories and aphorisms about the importance of saying T'hillim, presented for Shavuos, the yahrtzait of Dovid HaMelech, "the Sweet Singer of Israel."*

## THE TZEMACH TZEDEK WAS ENVIOUS

The Tzemach Tzedek once sat all night and studied, and when dawn broke he got up to daven. He davened with the kavanos (meditations) of the Arizal. He spent a number of hours on his davening and then sat down and learned while still wearing tallis and t'fillin. It was a day in the month of Sivan and the Tzemach Tzedek was fasting.

It was market day and two men, residents of a neighboring village, traveled together by wagon to Lubavitch. Binyamin Beinish and Yitzchok Shaul, were exceedingly simple men but they were G-d-fearing. Binyamin Beinish had already sold his merchandise, and since much of the day was left he entered the shul and waited there for Yitzchok Shaul. They would daven Mincha there and return

home together.

Since Binyamin Beinish was a simple man who didn't know how to learn, he took a T'hillim out of his pocket and began to recite chapters of T'hillim in a heartfelt manner.

The Tzemach Tzedek was engrossed in his learning, but after a while he heard the voice of Binyamin Beinish. He went to see who was reciting T'hillim so sweetly. When the Tzemach Tzedek saw the villager Binyamin Beinish, he turned to a corner and wept. He envied Binyamin Beinish's wholeheartedness and sincerity.

One of the famous Chassidim entered the shul and the Tzemach Tzedek said to him, "If only I could say one verse of T'hillim with such earnestness, as Binyamin Beinish says it. 'G-d is close to all who call Him, to all who call Him in truth.'"

## TO INTERNALIZE THE LIGHT

Our Rebbeim bequeathed powers to the future Chassidim, till the coming of the Redeemer. Every Chassid must say a chapter of T'hillim each day in particular so that the merit of the Rebbeim will be drawn to him and the revelation of light will be internalized.

*(Seifer HaSichos 5706-5710 p. 335)*

## TO BE ABSOLVED OF PURGATORY OF THE GRAVE

To be absolved of *chibut ha'kever* (purgatory of the grave), say words of Torah or T'hillim, etc., for one sixth of the day (i.e., 4 hours).

To merit purity of the soul that absolves you of *kaf ha'kela* (the "slingshot," a form of punishment to cleanse the soul of the impurity of idle chatter), spend as much of the day as possible reciting Mishnayos, Tanya, and T'hillim by heart.

*(HaYom Yom 7 Teives)*

## DOVID HA'MELECH'S DANCE

Rabbi Yitzchok Isaac of Vitebsk



said that the first dance (when Moshiach comes) will be danced by Moshe Rabbeinu with the simple people, because the holy Torah stands on them, and not on the geniuses who innovate brilliant Torah thoughts. And the real dance will be danced by Dovid HaMelech with these simple people who recite T'hillim.

(from a Letter of the Rebbe Rayatz, vol. 6, p. 298)

### TANYA – LIKE TEHILLIM

Rashbatz (Reb Shmuel Betzalel Sheftel, who served as a Chassidic mentor for the Rebbe Rayatz in his youth) said that the initials T" T stands for T'hillim and Tanya. You should learn Tanya like you say T'hillim, without *p'shetlach*, and say T'hillim like you learn Tanya.

### TO PLOTZ AND TO CONTINUE SAYING

Rabbi Dovid of Tolna asked his brother, Rabbi Yitzchok of Skver: I heard that you complete the book of T'hillim every day. How is that possible? I say only a little bit and must stop lest I plotz from fear!

R' Yitzchok answered: Indeed, that's how T'hillim is said – by plotzing and then continuing to say it.

(Chassidim Mesaprim vol. 3, p. 221)

### TO SAY TEHILLIM JOYOUSLY

The Rebbe Rayatz said: Once, in the year 5648 (1884) there was a farbrengen with Rebbetzin Rivka. The Rebbe, my father [the Rebbe Rashab] spoke about ahavas Yisroel and said, "Ai, a Jew!"

There was a Chassid there by the name of Hendel, and he said, "Ai, Master of the Universe! You certainly know what a Jew is and what he does in Your world. Give Jews ample parnasa so they can recite T'hillim joyously."

(Seifer HaSichos 5707 p. 169)

### A HEARTFELT SIGH

We must value davening and the recitation of T'hillim of the simple person. When he davens, he does not know what he is saying and he does not know the meaning of the verse of T'hillim. But the *krechtz* (groan) – "Ai, Ribbono Shel Olam" – is heartfelt (even though it's possible that at this point a sigh is not appropriate, and one should even be happy).

(Seifer HaSichos 5706-5710 p. 237)

### BREAKING HAMAN

How did they nullify and break Haman? Not with "Mordechai HaTzaddik" but with "Ish Yehudi,"

*"I heard that you complete the book of T'hillim every day. How is that possible? I say only a little bit and must stop lest I plotz from fear!"*

a warm, simple, baal mesirus nefesh Jew, who says a chapter of T'hillim. That's why we instituted the recitation of T'hillim, in order to break the "Haman" in every generation. We have many Hamans, and we don't break them with a sword or spear, but spiritually, with the heartfelt chapter of T'hillim of a simple Jew.

(Seifer HaSichos 5706-5710 p. 307)

### DOVID HA'MELECH WAS A GREAT SCHOLAR

Dovid HaMelech was a great scholar yet he did not author a scholarly work; he wrote T'hillim to arouse the heart.

### TEHILLIM WITH TEARS

A melamed from the town of Nevel had a yechidus with the Rebbe Maharash and complained that when he eats he cannot do *iskafia*, meaning that when he was served food, he ate it all, down to the last drop.

The Rebbe Maharash asked him: What do you eat?

The melamed answered: I eat *krupnik* (bean soup).

The Rebbe Maharash said: Continue to eat as you have eaten until now, but each day, aside from Shabbos, say three chapters of T'hillim with tears before davening.

(Reshimos D'varim vol. 2, p. 80)

### PRECIOUS STONES

The king's crown is made of precious stones. A precious stone is an inanimate object, the lowest level of Creation, but by refining and polishing it, it is cleansed of its impurities, and it sparkles. It thus becomes a fitting ornament for the king's crown.

So too, the words of t'filla, as well as T'hillim, when they are said with the proper inspiration, are transformed into precious stones in the Supernal Crown.

(Seifer HaMaamarim kuntreisim I p. 45)

### INFLUENCE FROM DOVID HA'MELECH

Dovid HaMelech said, "My heart is void within me," indicating that he had no Evil Inclination. And Chazal say: "Dovid Melech Yisroel chai v'kayam." A king brings the nation out and in, taking care of all their needs. So the essence of the king is expressed in the nation's matters.

The *hashpaa*, which Dovid HaMelech is mashpia to all the

Jewish people, is the ability to fulfill Torah and mitzvos without ulterior motives from the Evil Inclination, the ability to be as though "my heart is void within me" at least occasionally. It means fulfilling Torah and mitzvos for the sake of Heaven, without mixing anything else into it.

In order to receive this hashpaa there needs to be a hiskashrus with Dovid HaMelech, and this hiskashrus is through the recitation of T'hillim, songs of Dovid Melech Yisroel. Through this we become a vessel to receive his hashpaa and a likeness to Dovid's avoda.

*(Sicha of Shavuot 5717, Likkutei Sichos vol. 4, p. 1309)*

### PREPARATION FOR DAVENING

The Yid HaKadosh of Pshischa was a genius, sharp and diligent, yet he was accustomed to saying T'hillim before davening. His student, Rabbi Yeshaya of Pshedborzh, asked him: Wouldn't it be preferable to study some pages of Gemara before davening? It's true that Dovid HaMelech asked that the recitation of T'hillim should be considered like the study of Negaim and Ohalos, the hardest mesechtos in Taharos, but this proves that the study of Mishnayos is preferred over the saying of T'hillim!

*The words of t'filla, as well as T'hillim, when they are said with the proper inspiration, are transformed into precious stones in the Supernal Crown.*

The Yid HaKadosh answered: Within Dovid HaMelech's request lies a deeper intention. "Negaim" means that by reciting T'hillim, a person should see his own "negaim," his own blemishes. "Ohalos" means that by saying T'hillim a person will be able to dwell within Hashem's tent. And there is nothing more vital than these two things as a preparation for davening!

*(Niflaos HaYehudi vol. 2, p. 1)*

### 70 YEARS OF EFFORT

Rabbi Yechiel Meir of Gostinin would tell people who came to him to say a certain number of chapters of T'hillim for their salvation. Sometimes, he would tell them to say the entire T'hillim a few times

in a row. He said: "I effected in Heaven that whoever says chapters of T'hillim according to my instructions will be saved!"

\* \* \*

The Sfas Emes of Ger was once sick and he asked that his name be mentioned to the Admur in Gostinin. Rabbi Yechiel Meir said: I cannot tell the Gerer Rebbe to say the entire T'hillim, but he can say ten verses.

When they relayed this message to the Gerer Rebbe, the Rebbe wondered: Doesn't he know that when I say one chapter my head aches so that I cannot go on?

\* \* \*

When the Admur of Gostinin was in Warsaw, many people went to see him, including Rabbi Shlomo, the brother of the Sfas Emes. It was crowded and the Admur did not notice him in particular, but held out his hand and told him to say the entire T'hillim without a break.

When R' Shlomo returned to Ger and told his brother, the Admur, the Admur wondered: Dovid HaMelech spent 70 years (his lifetime) composing the book of T'hillim and you will say the entire book at once, within a short time?

*(Siach Sarfei Kodesh)*

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# A MODEL FOR CREATION

BY DR. TSVI SAKS

*“Through learning about and publicizing the topic of continuous re-creation...we hasten the Geula and bring it closer.” (Ma’amar of Shavuos, 5749) \* The Rabbi Yisroel Aryeh Leib Research Institute on Moshiach and the Sciences continues to present Dr. Saks’ fundamental paper on “The Concept of Infinity in Mathematics and Chassidus.” \* In Part 1, Dr. Saks explained the basic mathematics of infinity, introducing  $\aleph_0$ , the mathematical symbol for an infinite quantity. Here, in Part 2, he develops the mathematics of infinity further and shows how it can be used as a model for the creation of the universe.*

*(Continued from issue #507)*

Creation, as discussed in Chassidus, is not that G-d just said “Poof” and the universe came into being. Rather, He created an infinite panorama of spiritual worlds. There is a concept of an infinite descent of worlds. In each world there is a concealment of G-dliness, giving rise to the next lowest world, in which there is more concealment and in which the world and its inhabitants have more sense of self and more individuality. The culmination of this process of

infinite descent of spiritual worlds is the existence of the physical world.

This description of the creation of the world by G-d is very abstract and complex, with many references to infinity. I feel that the mathematics of infinity can help us to understand and visualize some of the processes through which G-d created the world. This should not be surprising. One of the basic tenets of this conference is that not only can there be no conceivable contradiction between true science and Torah, but that science can be helpful

in understanding Torah.

True science is an investigation into the world, which is the creation of G-d. Torah is the blueprint that G-d used for Creation, meaning that He looked into the Torah (which preceded the world) and created the world according to the Torah. With that view, we see that science can help us reveal the process of creation, and thus help us understand Torah. Since G-d used infinite processes when He created the world, as will be discussed at length, it is logical that the science of infinite processes, namely the mathematics of infinity, would be useful to help us understand those portions of the Torah which deal with Creation.

A mathematician develops an intimate relationship with his mathematical work and with the mathematical objects with which he works. Thus, although the concepts discussed are quite abstract, to me they are very real. The personal context for this paper is that I am a *baal t’shuva*, a Jew who was not raised in a Torah-observant home but made a personal decision as an adult to observe Torah and *mitzvos*. At that time I was already a mature professional mathematician. My field of expertise is topology, and the best way that I have of describing my work is to say that I did research into abstract infinite space. In fact, I used to say that my doctoral thesis and the research that followed it had no known relationship with the physical

world. Many people used to ask me to speculate on what possible application there might be for this work, and I had no meaningful answer. Thus it came as a great surprise to me when I began to study Torah, and in particular Chassidic philosophy, and specifically the description of the creation of the world by G-d, that I felt that this was indeed the actual application of the mathematical work which I had done.

Mathematics is perhaps the purest and most rigorous science. The propositions that one is assuming must be clearly specified. In addition, the acceptable methods for constructing new objects and proving new propositions are clearly defined. Thus mathematics is as objective as any science can be. Nonetheless, the truth of any mathematical system depends on the truth of its assumptions, and hence can be said to be true only relative to its assumptions. When I began to study Torah, the great difference between the relative truth of mathematics and the absolute truth of Torah, which puts us in contact with G-d, Who is the Ultimate Truth, became very clear to me. My view of the relationship between mathematics and Torah is that mathematics allows us to construct abstract models which can be useful in helping us to understand and visualize some of the processes through which G-d Almighty created the world.

### WHERE DO I COME FROM?

The term used to characterize creation in Jewish Philosophy is *yesh m'ayin*, creation of something from nothing (*ex nihilo*). What does something from nothing mean? And how is this creative process described? When G-d Almighty created the world He did so by putting a spiritual life-force in every created being, which is the source of the existence of that being and the power that sustains its existence after its creation. In other words, He continuously recreates it. Thus everything that exists as a

creation has G-dliness in it, which is the source of its existence. So the question is asked in Chassidus: why is it called "something from nothing"? The physical universe, which has only a dependent (limited) existence, should be called "nothing." G-dliness, which is the source, is a true existence and should be called "something." So Creation should be called "nothing from something." Why is it called "something from nothing"? Chassidus explains that it is called "something from nothing" because the created being thinks itself to be a something and is unaware of the fact that it has a source. It is unaware of the G-dliness within it which creates it and keeps it in existence. So the concept of *yesh m'ayin*, of something from nothing, is that the something cannot trace its

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## Creation should be called "nothing from something." Why is it called "something from nothing"?

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existence back to its source.

This is the critical condition for creation *yesh m'ayin* that I am focusing on here – that the created being cannot trace itself back to its source, that it is unaware of its dependence on the source for its existence, and perhaps even unaware that it has a source which is outside of itself. Note that this is strongly contrasted with the concept of creation of "something from something," like a work of art or a building. A building is made from an architect's plans with physical materials. No matter how complex the building may be, we can trace the construction back to the raw materials that were used and the plans that were followed.

My claim here is that the

mathematical model that we described in Part 1 is a model for this because the number  $\aleph_0$  is similar to *yesh m'ayin*. It cannot trace itself back to its source. Its source is the entire infinite process which is coming into it. To explain this, let's introduce the concepts of predecessor and successor. The sequence of positive integers 1,2,3,... is generated by starting with the number 1, and repeatedly adding 1 to get the succeeding numbers. Thus each number  $n$  has an immediate successor which is  $n + 1$ , the number following it. For example, the successor of 2 is 3; the successor of 3 is 4, etc. Also, each number  $n$ , except for 1, has an immediate predecessor which is  $n - 1$ , the number preceding it. In this process, each number comes from a definite source, its immediate predecessor: 3 comes from 2, 4 comes from 3, and  $n$  comes from  $n - 1$ . But  $\aleph_0$  has no immediate predecessor. (Any number  $n$ , no matter how big, will be the predecessor of  $n + 1$ , not of  $\aleph_0$ .) It does not come from any specific source. It requires the entire infinite sequence to generate  $\aleph_0$ . Thus the whole infinite sequence is its source.

From the perspective of  $\aleph_0$ , if it looks back and tries to see where it came from, it is going to have a very hard time realizing that there is an infinite sequence which comes into it and generates it. It is completely unaware of this infinite process and thus cannot trace itself back to its source. Since it doesn't have a source that it can observe, it says, "I am independent."

Similarly, we see in the physical world that people who don't believe in G-d and are not aware of the concept of Creation see themselves as being independent because they don't have any way to relate to the infinite process which is coming into them at every moment and continuously recreating them. Even though we are talking about conscious human life, where intellectual abstraction is most

pronounced, and daily life revolves around abstract realities, a person may still not recognize the complex spiritual structure through which his life is created and guided.

So we have a basic model for Creation which models the infinite descent of spiritual worlds culminating in a physical world, the *yesh*, which is not aware of its origin and which is therefore called *ayin*, nothing.  $\aleph_0$  represents this physical world.

## INFINITE GAPS

This is a very simple model for Creation and in fact its too simple for a number

of reasons. For example, we know that there are four major spiritual worlds preceding the physical world. There's *Atzilus*, the world of emanation; *Bria*, the world of creation; *Yetzira*, the world of formation; and *Asiya*, the world of action. There are infinite gaps between each of these worlds. *Atzilus* is infinitely higher than *Bria*; *Bria* is infinitely higher than *Yetzira*; and *Yetzira* is infinitely higher than *Asiya*. But we don't have that here in our model because in the progression of the numbers of the sequence, each time we attain a new object – a successor – there is a uniform gap of 1. There are no infinite gaps along the way.

Thus we need to expand our model into a more complex one which will include in it the notion of an infinite gap. The simplest way to expand our model is to look at  $\aleph_0$  not only as the limit point of the sequence of positive integers, but also as the beginning of a new sequence. In order to do that, I need to talk about the concept of *ordinal number*.

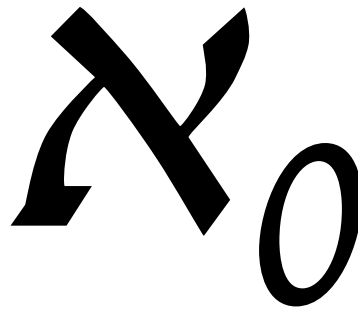
Ordinal numbers are numbers which are based on an ordering as opposed to *cardinal numbers* which indicate only quantity. For finite numbers, they are basically the same. But for infinite numbers there is a remarkable distinction. The ordinal

numbers are much more subtle than the cardinal numbers in the following sense: If we add 1 quantitatively to  $\aleph_0$ , the first infinite number, then it is still  $\aleph_0$ :

$$\aleph_0 + 1 = \aleph_0$$

In fact the Tzemach Tzedek makes exactly this point in *Derech Mitzvosecha* (“*Haamanas Elokus*,” Ch. 11, based on Tanya Ch. 48, from the *Chitas* of the coming days). The Tzemach Tzedek says that an infinite quantity will not increase by adding a finite quantity to it. The above equation is a mathematical representation of that concept.

Ordinal numbers, however, are different. With ordinals we can add 1



to  $\aleph_0$  and get something new because we are considering the way that the number in question relates to what came before.  $\aleph_0$  is the end point of the whole infinite sequence of numbers 1, 2, 3,...and, as we explained above, it has no immediate predecessor. But  $\aleph_0 + 1$  has an immediate predecessor, namely  $\aleph_0$ . So from the point of view of ordinality, these two are very different despite the fact that quantitatively they are identical.

*(To express this qualitative difference between  $\aleph_0$  and  $\aleph_0 + 1$  in more technical terms:  $\aleph_0$  is identified with the sequence 1, 2, 3,...which leads up to it. This is a sequence without a limit point. But  $\aleph_0 + 1$  is identified with the sequence 1, 2, 3, ...,*

$\aleph_0$  which leads up to it, and this sequence has a limit point, namely  $\aleph_0$ .)

Let's continue this process and add 1 repeatedly to  $\aleph_0$ . We will get the following new sequence:

$$\aleph_0, \aleph_0 + 1, \aleph_0 + 2, \dots, \aleph_0 + n, \dots, \aleph_0 + \aleph_0 = 2\aleph_0$$

We can repeat this process and add 1 infinitely many times to  $2\aleph_0$  until we get  $2\aleph_0 + \aleph_0 = 3\aleph_0$

Similarly, we can get  $4\aleph_0, 5\aleph_0$ , etc., by constructing a new sequence each time. This gives rise to a sequence of multiples of  $\aleph_0$  whose endpoint is  $\aleph_0 \cdot \aleph_0$ :

$$\aleph_0, 2\aleph_0, 3\aleph_0, \dots, \aleph_0 \cdot \aleph_0$$

While each of these numbers is different from the others as ordinal numbers (since each has a different predecessor), they all represent the same infinite quantity so they are equal as cardinal numbers. But eventually we will get to something which is quantitatively bigger than all of the others. This is called  $\aleph_1$ .

Now, let's put all this together into one long sequence:

$$1, 2, 3, \dots, \aleph_0, \aleph_0 + 1, \aleph_0 + 2, \dots, 2\aleph_0, 2\aleph_0 + 1, \dots, 3\aleph_0, 3\aleph_0 + 1, \dots, \aleph_0 \cdot \aleph_0, \dots, \aleph_1$$

This is an infinite sequence that also has infinite gaps in it before  $\aleph_0$  (which has no predecessor), before  $2\aleph_0$  (which also has no predecessor) and similarly before all the multiples of  $\aleph_0$ . Recall that this is precisely what was missing in our first model. We needed the infinite gaps to represent the infinite transition (contraction) between *Atzilus* and *Bria*, between *Bria* and *Yetzira*, and between *Yetzira* and *Asiya*. The final endpoint  $\aleph_1$  represents the physical universe. So this is a much better model for Creation as it is explained in Chassidus.

We still don't have the exact mathematics to model *yesh m'ayin* completely, but at last years conference a statement was made that Rabbi

Yisroel Aryeh Leib could discuss the whole *seider hishtalshlus*, the whole order of Creation, from *Bria* down to the physical world in everyday language so that anybody could understand it. So, G-d willing, he should be together with us immediately with *T'chiyas HaMeisim* so he can do that. I honestly believe that if he would do that, then we could get some mathematicians together and really give very precise mathematics to completely describe this process as a model.

## A CHAKIRA IN THE TZEMACH TZEDEK

Until now we have been working from the bottom up, i.e. starting with Mathematics, then using it to help us understand something about G-d. Now I want to go the other way, starting off with the Chassidus and using it to answer an important question in mathematics and philosophy.

Earlier in this paper, we quoted from the Tzemach Tzedek's discussion of infinity in Chapter 11 of the section on "*Haamanas Elokus*" (Belief in G-d) in his book *Derech Mitzvosecha*. Over the years, I've been asked a question by many Lubavitchers based on a statement that the Tzemach Tzedek makes there. He says that it is impossible that many finite, limited individuals should join together to form an actual infinity. Infinity cannot be composed of finite elements. So the question is: how can there be mathematical infinity? Is this not precisely what we have done to define mathematical infinity? We said that you can take these finite elements – the positive integers – one at a time, and join them together to form the infinite set {1, 2, 3, ...}. But the Tzemach Tzedek says that this cannot be. This seems to say that mathematical infinity does not exist.

Actually, however, the nature of mathematical infinity has been a matter of debate among the mathematicians themselves, with some,

such as Gauss, one of the greatest mathematicians of all time, saying that there cannot be actual infinity, and that mathematical infinity is just a potential infinity, i.e., the sequence 1, 2, 3,... continues indefinitely but is never actually infinite. Other mathematicians, including Cantor, on the other hand, held that the infinite sets were infinite in actuality. Does it follow from what the Tzemach Tzedek says that Cantor was wrong?

One of those who had asked me this question was Rabbi Simon Jacobson, and he was the one who helped me work out the answer. He showed me certain letters of the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach and learned them with me, and the answer is based on

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*Thus we need to expand our model into a more complex one which will include in it the notion of an infinite gap.*

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those letters. It turns out that a similar question had been asked of the Rebbe MH"M based on sources in Torah. There are numerous references in Chassidus which refer to G-d having created infinitely many worlds. It is also stated in the Talmud (*Chagiga* 13b) that G-d created infinitely many "regiments" of "troops" (i.e., angels) to serve Him, where each regiment is finite. These sources would seem to contradict the statement of the Tzemach Tzedek, because each world or troop is finite, yet there are an infinitude of them. How could this infinity possibly be attained?

To resolve this seeming contradiction, the Rebbe MH"M writes that according to human logic, it is

impossible that an actual infinity composed of finite individuals should exist. The Tzemach Tzedek's statement is made based on the fundamental principle that G-d prefers to create the world so as to conform to human logic. (In fact, Chassidus explains that the reason G-d created the universe through a succession of worlds, as we explained above, rather than by just saying "Poof!" is so that Creation could be understood by the human mind.) The Tzemach Tzedek rejects the notion of an actual infinity composed of finite entities because it contradicts human logic. However, G-d is above all limitations and contradictions, and when He so chooses, He can and does create the world with qualities that contradict human logic. In the case of the infinitely many worlds and regiments, which Chassidus and the Talmud have revealed to us, G-d used His unlimited, supra-rational power to create an infinitude of them. So for these particular cases, the limitations of logic can no longer veto the existence of an actual infinity of limited entities. The point is that the Torah would have to tell us explicitly that G-d is creating in this exceptional manner. Otherwise we would assume that He is creating in the usual way, i.e., in a manner understandable by human logic.

I believe that this explanation of the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach can be used to explain how great geniuses could disagree about whether or not the world is infinite. Cantor, who had a strong belief in G-d, understood that G-d could create an infinite world. Other geniuses, such as Aristotle and Gauss, who did not have a strong belief in G-d, came to the conclusion that the world must be finite. Since they were limited to their human understanding, the conclusion that the world is finite was the only conclusion that they could reach.

This is the best example I have of Torah and Moshiach illuminating mathematics and philosophy.

# ON THE FRONTLINES OF THE BATTLE FOR 'MIHU YEHUDI'

*A shliach of the Rebbe who knocked at Shaki's door in the middle of the night. \* The Rebbe spoke about him in his presence at a farbrengen. \* A three-hour yechidus! \* A promise and an astonishing prophecy. \* Excerpts from an interview that Prof. Avner Chai Shaki gave Beis Moshiach.*

Professor Avner Chai Shaki, former minister and Knesset member, passed away last Friday night. He was a true friend to the Chabad movement and to the Rebbe. When word of his passing got out on Motzaei Shabbos, Lubavitcher Chassidim were saddened over the loss of this dear friend who was moser nefesh for the Rebbe and the Rebbe's inyanim.

Professor Shaki, who was a law professor, was born in Tzfas in 5686 (1926). He served as Knesset member representing Mafdal in the 7th Knesset and in the 11-14th Knesset. He served as Deputy Minister of Education and Culture in the 7th Knesset and as Minister of Religious Affairs in the 12th Knesset.

Minister Shaki was one of the big fighters on behalf of halachic conversion and the amendment of the Law of Return and MiHU Yehudi. He sanctified G-d's name when he resigned from the government because the law of MiHU Yehudi was not amended. As a result of his resignation, he merited special displays of affection from the Rebbe and had a total of six hours of private audiences with the Rebbe.

Prof. Shaki, who lived in Ramat Aviv, was a loyal friend of Chabad of Ramat Aviv, and joined all their events. When the yeshiva heard of his passing, the students took turns staying with him until the funeral Sunday afternoon, and reciting T'hillim.

A few years ago, Prof. Shaki was interviewed by *Beis Moshiach*. He told of his fight to amend the Law of MiHU Yehudi as well as his special relationship with the Rebbe.

"My connection to the Rebbe began in 5732 (1972), when I voted in the Knesset to add the word "k'halacha" (according to halacha) to the law of MiHU Yehudi. Following that dramatic vote, I resigned from the Knesset. Until that point, I had no direct connection with the Rebbe. Obviously, I had heard of the Rebbe, knew of his holiness and righteousness, but that was all. My direct connection to the Rebbe began with that vote.

"It was the first Knesset in which I was a member representing Mafdal, and I served as Deputy Minister of Education. When the topic arose for discussion, I feared that this entailed an unprecedented and important matter of conscience. Even before that, I let my opinion be known on this issue in no uncertain terms. The Mafdal leadership was not exactly enamored of my clear position. One of the senior Mafdal men told me then, 'When it comes to a vote on the law, abstain or be absent.'

"He said at the time, 'We'll make



sure that you will be called outside a few minutes before the vote. You will be absent and five minutes later you'll happily return to the plenum.' That's how they tried to persuade me not to vote in favor of amending the law.

"When the pressure mounted and I wasn't convinced, that senior fellow said, 'Why do you need problems? You have a luxury apartment and a respected position and you'll lose it all in a second if you vote for the amendment of the law of Mihu Yehudi.'

"Even Prime Minister Golda Meir tried to dissuade me from voting my conscience. She sent people to me who told me that if I voted in favor of amending the law, I would

be removing myself from the government, and I would automatically lose my place in the government.

"I replied that this was a matter of principle of the highest order for me, and if I became a Deputy Minister in order to fight for my opinion, I would fight. If they suggested that I vote against my

*"My first meeting with the Rebbe was the most moving experience of my life."*

conscience, I could not be absent from the vote or vote with the government.

"After the vote, I decided to beat them to it, and I sent in my letter of resignation and concluded my job as Deputy Minister of Education. I received orders to leave the luxury condominium and the government car. I told them that I wasn't born with a car and a luxury pad.

"A few nights later, at 2 a.m. we suddenly heard a knock at the door. We were afraid to open the door at that hour. I looked through the peephole and saw a Jew I knew, a lawyer named Yechiel Gartner, who studied law with me. When I opened the door, he apologized about coming at that hour and he said that he had a message for me from the Lubavitcher Rebbe, whom he had seen a few days earlier. He said that the Rebbe asked him to visit me as soon as he arrived in Eretz Yisroel and to give me a "yasher ko'ach" for voting in favor of amending the law, and he added many brachos.

"Mr. Gartner told me that the Rebbe asked him not to delay in relaying this message and that as soon as he landed in Eretz Yisroel, he should personally convey it. The Rebbe added, said Gartner, that he would be very happy to meet me when I came to New York.

"I was dumbfounded and moved to tears. I suddenly felt what true leadership is; the Rebbe sits in Brooklyn and what interests him is encouraging a Knesset member who voted in favor of Mihu Yehudi.

"A month later, I went to the U.S. with my wife. At the airport, I was met by R' Yekusiel Rapp who was sent by the Rebbe. We were received with great honor in 770. I remember that it was Simchas Torah and the Rebbe had me sit next to him at the farbrengen and thanked me for my fight. At a number of



farbrengens, the Rebbe mentioned the kiddush Hashem I had made. The Rebbe referred to it as 'vote shel kiddush sheim Shamayim,' and that in the end, there would be victory.

"I had a yechidus at one in the morning and it lasted three hours. The Rebbe enquired about my family and my life. I told the Rebbe about my family who, for four generations in a row, were heads of the beis din in Tzfas. Then I told about how I began to fight for MiHu Yehudi. I was very moved when the Rebbe said that he had already seen the booklet I had published.

"At that yechidus, the Rebbe gave me direction on how to continue the battle. The Rebbe said it was worth expanding what I had written about MiHu Yehudi, and the Rebbe gave me the push to do it. He also helped me with the expenses involved in the research I had done on the topic of MiHu Yehudi. The Rebbe added that he would help in any way.

"The Rebbe also took an interest in the entire process that led to my resignation. He asked how they had reacted in the party, why I hadn't succeeded in convincing them, and how I explained the position of Mafdal. Throughout the yechidus, the Rebbe repeated the phrase 'yashar ko'ach' about twenty times, every time my resignation came up in the conversation. I saw how openly pleased the Rebbe was with what I did.

"The Rebbe also took an interest in the topics I taught in law and in religious and political matters. He asked how my audience reacted and what their attitude was towards religion and faith. My first meeting with the Rebbe was the most moving experience of my life.

"The highlight of this yechidus was the Rebbe's prophetic words which are engraved, till this day, in

my heart. The Rebbe said, 'A true athlete takes a few steps back before he leaps forward. Now, you are in the stage of a few steps backward.'

"Then the Rebbe added, 'Although you had to resign from your position, you will yet return with great honor and be a minister!'

"To be honest, I told my wife and friends afterward that I wondered how the Rebbe could promise that I would get the position of a minister. How could I return to Mafdal? They threw me out! I felt there was nobody to talk to in that party and the Rebbe's words were quite astonishing to me.

"The prophecy came true. Many years later, the heads of Mafdal came to my house and offered me an honored position, and I was elected as chairman of Mafdal and Minister of Religious Affairs. I saw how the Rebbe's prophecy of 5732 had come true.

"I must say that when I was

elected as chairman of Mafdal, I was at the Rebbe for a farbrengen in 5748. The Rebbe saw fit to speak about me during the farbrengen and said there is someone here who rose to greatness, and the Rebbe praised me for what I had done. I felt that the circle had been closed, that the Rebbe had promised me years before that I would become a minister, and I had."

\* \* \*

The Rebbe's promise to Prof. Shaki in 5732 that he would be a minister was an utter surprise. Before the 11th Knesset, when Mafdal was in bad shape and the polls showed that Mafdal was in the dumps, the heads of Mafdal visited Shaki and asked him to return to the party. Following that, he was elected, as an utter surprise, to chairman of Mafdal.

Shaki saw this as the realization of the Rebbe's prophecy and immediately after his election, he flew to see the Rebbe. He was

## A SPECIAL BRACHA FROM THE REBBE TWO DAYS BEFORE 27 ADAR

The Shaki family cannot forget the blessing they received from the Rebbe two days before Chaf-Zayin Adar II 5752. Mrs. Shaki:

One day I was at home at a time when I needed to be out. I don't know why I stayed home but an inner voice told me to do so.

The phone rang and the Rebbe's secretary, Rabbi Groner, was on the line. He told me that he didn't know why but the Rebbe inquired about Prof. Shaki and the family and asked that he convey the Rebbe's blessing and hatzlacha "and that's why I'm calling now, to convey the Rebbe's bracha."

Over the years, we received countless answers, encouragement, and brachos from the Rebbe. There was no family event in which we didn't speak about the unique personality of the Rebbe, who had given us so much blessing and success.

At every family simcha of the children and grandchildren, we received the Rebbe's bracha. The Rebbe sent a letter of bracha for our family simchos. The interesting thing is that with all the events, the letter never arrived late. We always received the letter on the day of the event or family simcha. We saw in this yet another interesting point in the special relationship the Rebbe had with our family.

warmly received and was present at the farbrengen of Parshas Eikev 5748. It was surprising to hear the Rebbe devote a portion of the farbrengen to Shaki's election. This is what the Rebbe said:

**Any event that occurs to someone – and all the more so an unusual event that seems to be divorced from reality, and that comes as an utter surprise – must be used in such a way that matters of Judaism, Torah, and mitzvos are increased.**

For example, a man who rose to greatness by being elected by the public, and this appointment was ratified, etc., must know that the goal and purpose for which he was chosen and rose to greatness is to use his position to increase the strengthening and spreading of Torah and Judaism...even when he sees opposition and obstacles. The more he will strengthen the spreading of Torah and Judaism, not only will it not cause a weakening, G-d forbid, but on the contrary, the obstacles will arouse hidden powers to overcome and increase with greater strength the spreading of Judaism.

This is the real reason for the opposition – since, from Above, they want his avoda to be in a way of extra strength, and therefore he should not be fazed by the obstacles. On the contrary, he should overcome them, knowing in full faith that “the word of our G-d will endure forever.”

\* \* \*

“When I passed by the Rebbe for dollars in 5748, the Rebbe smiled and asked whether I remembered what he had told me in connection with the analogy of the athlete who takes a few steps back in order to leap forward.

“Throughout the years, I had other opportunities to meet with

the Rebbe. My second yechidus took place in the summer of 5735 when I was able to bring the Rebbe the fruit of my labor, 1200 pages of research that I had done on MiHu Yehudi.

“I handed the Rebbe the papers and the Rebbe riffled through them and displayed a phenomenal memory, the likes of which I had never encountered before in my life. I remember that my wife and I stood and watched. The Rebbe held

***“When the pressure mounted and I wasn't convinced, that senior fellow said, ‘Why do you need problems? You have a luxury apartment and a respected position and you'll lose it all in a second if you vote for the amendment of the law of MiHu Yehudi.’”***

the research papers I had brought. He turned and turned the pages, and I naively thought that the Rebbe was being polite or curious.

“After half an hour, the Rebbe finished leafing through the 1200 pages I had shown him and began to ask me questions and to comment on the contents of what I had written. These were things the Rebbe had absorbed in moments!

“The research contained piskei

din on the topic of MiHu Yehudi from England, Australia, New Zealand, an international petition, and the opinions of fifty scholars who had written to Ben Gurion on this topic. The Rebbe remembered every detail I had written and began to discuss with me things that even I, who had done the research, didn't remember! Until this day, I am still amazed by how the Rebbe was an expert on the research after glancing through it all in half an hour.

“It's difficult to describe the incredible proficiency the Rebbe displayed after spending so little time reading every detail I had written. The Rebbe discussed various topics with me such as, ‘the court said such-and-such – how do you explain this in light of something else that was written elsewhere in this book!’

“I stood there flabbergasted. How did the Rebbe notice what so-and-so said among the hundreds of quotes of piskei din and complicated legal statements on the topic of MiHu Yehudi?

“I saw what the memory of a genius is like. The Rambam wrote in one of his letters, ‘Hashem has given me the gift of being able to remember whatever I see.’ When I saw the Rebbe's incredible memory and grasp in this yechidus, I said to myself that the Rebbe is like the Rambam.

“In my book, I had analyzed the Law of Return and the Law of Return as applied to the Rabbinical courts dealing with marriages and divorces. I had analyzed the word ‘Yehudi’ as it appears in the law aimed at punishing Nazi war criminals. Throughout, I proved that a Jew is only determined by halacha.

“After the Rebbe finished discussing my research at length, he said to me the most important and

moving thing I heard in my life: After 120, when there will be the Resurrection of the Dead, not only people will be resurrected, but also religious and halachic s'farim. Your book will be among those that will be resurrected.

"The Rebbe continued to encourage me and asked me not to give up the fight over MiHu Yehudi. For as long as the law wasn't passed and the Knesset did not insist on a 'halachic conversion,' gentiles would enter Eretz Yisroel, and this would endanger our existence here.

"In hindsight, when you see what happened as a result of not amending the law, especially in the past decade, I see how the Rebbe spoke prophetically. He clearly stated what would happen in Eretz Yisroel if, G-d forbid, the law was not amended. He said that Eretz Yisroel would be flooded by hundreds of thousands of gentiles, as a result of this law. That's just what happened.

"The Rebbe led the way, and when nobody else saw what was happening, the Rebbe, with his prophetic vision, saw what we see today. I am proud that I did what the Rebbe wanted on the topic of MiHu Yehudi.

"The Rebbe once said to me that not only would the Law of Return enable the gentile grandchildren of Jews to make aliya, but even those who did not convert halachically would be able to enter the country as Jews. I said to the Rebbe that there are those who tell me that even the word 'k'halacha' won't help because the Reform have their 'halacha' too. The Rebbe negated this and said that halacha by definition is 'halacha l'Moshe mi'Sinai.' Halacha is not a trick or something that you can play around with.

"During the yechidus, the Rebbe spoke a lot about shleimus ha'Aretz.

He saw the two topics as intertwined. The Rebbe made it clear that there needs to be shleimus in all three areas since they are interdependent. I remember an interesting line from the Rebbe: Whoever is ready to compromise on shleimus ha'Am will also ultimately be ready to compromise on shleimus ha'Aretz and its security.

"To my great sorrow and to our shame, these words of the Rebbe have been fulfilled with us, when

***"To be honest, I told my wife and friends afterward that I wondered how the Rebbe could promise that I would get the position of a minister. How could I return to Mafdal? They threw me out! The Rebbe's words were quite astonishing to me."***

all those groups who compromised on MiHu Yehudi abandoned shleimus ha'Aretz. Until this day, the Rebbe's words echo in my ears, in which he said that all three aspects of 'shleimus' are connected.

"When the Rebbe spoke about MiHu Yehudi I saw how pained he was. It's hard to describe. The Rebbe sorrowfully asked: How is it that the Law of Return enables gentiles to come to Eretz Yisroel? 'When Hashem returns the exiles of Tziyon,' refers to Jews and not

Reform converts.

"The Rebbe repeated the line that this is a crime, which has no atonement, and he demanded that we fight it and influence the public as much as possible.

"I can say that the Rebbe looked exceedingly pained when he spoke about MiHu Yehudi. He spoke about it with unusual fervor and unceasingly. I remember that the Rebbe banged on the table, raised his voice and said: It attacks the shleimus of the Torah, Hashem, and Yisroel – which is one.

"Parenthetically, I remember that I told the Rebbe in a yechidus that I was happy to see in Kfar Chabad that they taught children of all backgrounds, and if only it was done that way everywhere. The Rebbe said, 'Yisroel are the children of kings!' He repeated this twice. We must look at all Jews as princes with no differences among us. With the Rebbe, we saw what ahavas Yisroel for every Jew means.

"Until I met the Rebbe, I never saw such a strong position with such strong faith as the Rebbe had for the things he believed in. What fervor I saw in the Rebbe when he spoke about issues that had to do with the existence of the Jewish people! When he spoke about shleimus ha'Am and ha'Aretz, you felt that it affected the Rebbe's health and him personally. The Rebbe said that in this there were no compromises and everything had to be done according to halacha.

"Over the years, the Rebbe continued to encourage and guide me in publishing the research I did on MiHu Yehudi. Every so often, when I made discoveries and got new piskei din, I would send them to the Rebbe.

"After my yechidus, the Rebbe put out a letter which said that people should help me publish the

book. The letter said; I was pleased to be informed that you are about to finish a comprehensive research study in connection with the Law of Return (Mihu Yehudi) in continuation of the blessed and ongoing battle regarding the famous problem of Mihu Yehudi... I strongly hope that those who have the ability to help you fund the research and prepare it for print and publication, will willingly help to give you the ability to publish the aforementioned as soon as possible and in the proper manner ...

The Jewish people are known to give generously to all such matters as the aforementioned, especially in connection with the aforementioned problem, Mihu Yehudi, which endangers the shleimus of our nation, the Jewish people, which is connected with the shleimus of our land, Eretz Yisroel.

“At the end of the letter, the Rebbe added a line that alluded to the battle within the party:

Fortunate is the lot of each person who takes a share in the victory of halacha without being ashamed before those who mock, even when they are friends from within.

*The Rebbe remembered every detail I had written and began to discuss with me things that even I, who had done the research, didn't remember!*

“The Rebbe constantly inquired about my research. At my third yechidus, the Rebbe demanded that I put out volume three of my book, to round out the entire issue of Mihu Yehudi. For that reason, until this day, I continue to be involved, as much as possible, in the topic of Mihu Yehudi, from all angles and perspectives.

“In Kislev 5747, the Rebbe told me what to add to my research. He wrote; regarding the publication of your book, the development of the issue demonstrates that there ought to be additional explanation of the following topics: 1) There is no shliach to do a sin (and it makes no

difference who the sender is), and 2) the Jewish people had **actual** mesirus nefesh not even to **write** on the horn of the ox – without any additional act **at all** – that they have no share in [the G-d of Israel].

“The Rebbe guided me throughout my research. He encouraged me and urged me to delve into the topic of Mihu Yehudi and not to give in or give up for even a moment.

“When I passed by the Rebbe for dollars in 5748 together with my family, the Rebbe took out an envelope with a large amount of money and gave it to me towards the expenses of the research.”

\* \* \*

At the end of the interview, Prof. Shaki said, “One can definitely say that the Rebbe showed us the way to ensure the Jewish future in Eretz Yisroel. This is possible if the religious representatives finally understand that they must amend the law as the Rebbe demanded. It will always be remembered that the Rebbe's war for Mihu Yehudi was the most fundamental and vital, and that he led the war to save the Jewish nation in Eretz Yisroel!”

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# R' BEREL JUNIK A'H

PREPARED FOR PUBLICATION BY MENACHEM ZIEGELBOIM

*We recently lost Rabbi Berel Junik, a Chassid who was a mekurav of "Beis Rebbi"- the Rebbe, Rebbetzin Chana, and Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka. \* Over the decades, he merited countless kiruvim from the Rebbe and Rebbetzin. \* His memoirs of the years he spent in Beis Rebbi could fill books, but R' Berel didn't talk much about his experiences; he was batul like a servant before his master.*

Rabbi Berel Junik passed away a few weeks ago, on Wednesday, 9 Iyar, after a protracted illness.

\* \* \*

R' Berel was born on 6 Av, 5687 (1927), in the town of Parloky in the Ukraine. His parents were Naftali and Golda Ita Junik a'h, descendants of Rabbi Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev, Rabbi Pinchas of Koretz, and Rabbi Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl. Under the influence of the town rav, Rabbi Hillel Solotzovsky, who was a Chabad Chassid from the family of R' Hillel of Paritch, R' Naftali became acquainted with Chassidus Chabad.

R' Naftali, who was a G-d fearing man, did not send his sons to public school. He educated his sons with mesirus nefesh and had them learn Torah secretly. He was forced to send his older daughter to public school, but each week she managed to have a broken finger or the like so she wouldn't have to desecrate the

Shabbos.

With the outbreak of World War II, the family fled to Tashkent, where many Lubavitcher Chassidim went. For two years, R' Berel learned in Tashkent, and in 5704 (1944), when he was 17 years old, he went to Samarkand to yeshivas Tomchei Tmimim.

After the war, many Jews left Russia, including Chabad Chassidim, with forged Polish passports. The Junik family took this rare opportunity and left the country too.

On the train that left Russia was Rebbetzin Chana Schneerson, wife of Rabbi Levi Yitzchok and mother of the Rebbe. Rebbetzin Chana's forged passport was for a woman and her son. R' Berel played the part of the Rebbetzin's son.

Later on, Rebbetzin Chana once asked the Rebbe how his younger brother was doing, referring to R'

Berel, since he was listed in her papers as her son.

Together with the Junik family on the train sat Mrs. Yurkowitz, R' Berel's older sister. She later related that she sat next to the Rebbetzin and helped her during the trip, though she didn't know her true identity.

"During the trip, Rebbetzin Chana did not speak even one word with me," R' Berel later related. "There was such fear that nobody dared utter the word 'Schneerson.' Somehow I found out that she was Rebbetzin Chana, the mechutenes (relative by marriage, her son having married his daughter) of the Rebbe Rayatz."

Throughout the trip, R' Berel helped Rebbetzin Chana carry her suitcase. When they crossed the border, they had to get off the train and walk. Rebbetzin Chana told R' Berel to be careful because in her suitcase was the gartel belonging to the Tzemach Tzedek that belonged to R' Levik. When other Chassidim got wind of this, they asked permission to carry the suitcase but the Rebbetzin said, "The one who carried the suitcase until now will continue to do so."

After crossing the border, they arrived in Poland where they stayed for one Shabbos, and from there they continued on to Poking, Germany where there was a refugee camp with thousands of refugees.

For various reasons, Rebbetzin Chana remained in Poking with all the refugees. In her refined way, she

did not stand out and announce her lineage, but Anash, who knew who she was, tried to help her to the best of their ability. For example, each family was assigned one room (no matter how many children they had), but Rebbetzin Chana received her own room.

“Shortly thereafter she went to France where she stayed for a few months together with her son, the Rebbe, and I didn’t see her again until I arrived in America,” said R’ Berel Junik.

When the Junik family arrived in Poking, R’ Berel learned in the Chabad yeshiva there, and when the yeshiva moved to Brunoy, France, he went there too. While in yeshiva, R’

Berel received an instruction from the Rebbe Rayatz to study shechita. R’ Berel started learning shechita under the supervision of Rabbi Zalman Shimon Dvorkin. R’ Berel excelled particularly in the sharpening of knives. He traveled with a group of Anash to Dublin where they shechted and sent the meat to Eretz Yisroel.

After finishing shechita in Ireland, they all returned to France, and a group of bachurim, including R’ Berel, prepared for the trip to the Rebbe Rayatz.

On Rosh Chodesh Shvat, 5710 (1950), R’ Berel arrived in New York, where he was able to see the Rebbe Rayatz in his final days. A few days later, he had a yechidus with four

other bachurim who had come with him to America.

“When we entered, Rabbi Rothstein introduced us to the Rebbe. The Rebbe looked at each one. I entered last and Rabbi Rothstein introduced me as ‘Berel Junik,’ but the Rebbe continued to stare at me. Rabbi Rothstein said, ‘Naftali’s,’ and then the Rebbe nodded to indicate that he knew who I was.”

At that yechidus, the Rebbe asked them about the structure of their day, and their answers pleased the Rebbe. This was the first and last time they had a yechidus with the Rebbe Rayatz, who passed away less than a week later.

“I was one of the bachurim from



**Chol HaMoed Succos 5737 in the Succa of 770.  
R’ Berel Junik bringing the Rebbe a cup for washing netilas yodayim  
during the farbrengen with the children of Released Time.**

Russia who was sent, by the Rebbe's orders, on Sunday morning, to dig the grave."

R' Berel's *hiskashrus* to the Rebbe MH" M was incredible. During the *shiva* for the Rebbe Rayatz, he heard the Rebbe say, "By me, there was nobody higher than my father-in-law." These words entered his heart and he immediately became *mekushar* to the RaMaSH (as the Rebbe was known at that time).

R' Berel was one of the first to have a *yechidus* with the Rebbe. It was 7 Iyar, 5710, long before the Rebbe formally accepted the *nesius*, when R' Berel knocked on the Rebbe's door. When he was given permission to enter, he went in and said he wanted a *yechidus*. The Rebbe put on his *gartel*, closed the curtain, sat down in the place for *yechidus* and began to cry. R' Berel put his *p'n* down on the table and the Rebbe told him that a *p'n* must be handed over.

R' Berel asked a number of questions and the Rebbe answered him. A few days later, R' Berel expressed his desire to have a written account of the *yechidus*. The Rebbe told him to write it himself and then give it in to him and he would check it. And that's what happened. It was an extraordinary *kiruv*, which only very special people merited.

After accepting the Chabad leadership, when the Rebbe stopped wearing a short jacket and began wearing a *sirtuk*, Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka gave R' Berel the Rebbe's suit as a gift!

Rebbetzin Chana arrived in the U.S. in 5707. When she heard that R' Berel had finally arrived in America she invited him to visit her.

"Obviously, I fulfilled her request. After the first visit, Rebbetzin Chana asked me to visit her often. When the Rebbe left the *shul Yom Tov* night, I would stand among the *Chassidim*, and the Rebbe always said

to me that I should go to his mother and visit her. I would regularly visit her on Friday night.

"Rebbetzin Chana introduced me to Rebbetzin Nechama Dina, the wife of the Rebbe Rayatz. Since the Rebbetzin [which Rebbetzin?] also descended from the Rebbe of Chernobyl, she would call me her relative. For a while I visited both of them often, and I was a *ben-bayis* there."

On one of his visits, Rebbetzin Chana gave R' Berel the picture of the Rebbe and the Rebbe Rayatz playing chess. The Rebbetzin told him that they played chess when the doctors told the Rebbe Rayatz not to exert himself in thinking.

R' Berel was a *ben-bayis* by Rebbetzin Chana and the Rebbe.

***"There was such fear  
that nobody dared  
utter the word  
'Schneerson.'"***

Even before the Rebbe accepted the *nesius*, R' Berel was trusted by the Rebbe. The Rebbe said, "I know you are one of my men," and R' Berel was privileged to have the Rebbe select him to serve him.

R' Berel was also trusted by Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka, and, as she said many years later, when R' Berel's sons served in the Rebbe's house, she trusted them because of her trust in R' Berel.

At the very beginning of the *nesius*, the Rebbetzin asked R' Berel to be in charge of the table for the Rebbe's *farbrengen*. From then on, for decades to come, R' Berel prepared the table for the *farbrengen*. Before every *farbrengen*, he went to the Rebbe's room and the Rebbe gave him the cup that he used for *kiddush*

and to say *l'chaim* during a *farbrengen*.

"Before every *farbrengen*, I would enter the Rebbe's room and take the cup (and in addition, a small bottle with the remains of the previous *kos shel bracha*), for the *farbrengen*. At one of the *farbrengens*, which took place on a weekday, the Rebbe asked me at the beginning of the *farbrengen* to go to his room and bring a bundle of hundreds of single dollar bills.

"The Rebbe told me precisely where it was, and I went to get it. In the meantime, the Rebbe was going to wash his hands and somebody else wanted to give the Rebbe the washing cup, but the Rebbe looked off to the side, to the entrance, and waited until I returned."

At the beginning of the Rebbe's *nesius*, R' Berel was the Rebbe's "Sar HaMashkim" (Minister of the Drinks). After a while, he gave over the job to R' Mordechai Mentlik, and in 5748, after R' Mentlik passed away, Rav Chadakov said (apparently as an order from the Rebbe) that R' Berel should resume the job as Sar HaMashkim.

"Back in 5710, I was the Rebbe's personal server. The Rebbe would *farbreng* on *Shabbos Mevorchim* and we, the *bachurim*, decided to take care of the *gashmius* end of things. I would prepare the table for the *farbrengen*.

"The way it worked was that the *gabbai*, R' Yochanan Gordon would announce at the end of the *farbrengen*, in the Rebbe's presence, that so-and-so donated the expenses of the *kiddush*. One *Shabbos*, I decided to donate towards the *kiddush* and I told the *gabbai*. Before *Shabbos*, I told Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka about this.

"When she heard that I was donating, she said that she too wished to participate and donate towards the *kiddush*. Before the





R' Berel (right) during his chuppa



A picture of the Rebbe at R' Berel's wedding, which was put in the Rebbe's library at home

farbrengen, the gabbai came over to me to make sure all was in order and that he could announce my name.

"I told him that Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka was also participating. In the end, the gabbai did not announce that she contributed and did not announce anything. From that point on, he stopped announcing who donated towards the kiddush."

Over the years, R' Berel was privileged to unusual displays of closeness from the Rebbe. The Rebbe once told him: "My father-in-law took you on his shoulders and all the bachurim can be jealous of you."

When the tmimim started the Vaad L'Hafotzas HaSichos in the summer of 5710, R' Berel was one of the members of the Vaad. At the farbrengen on Shabbos Mevorchim Iyar 5712, the Rebbe took hold of R' Berel's beard and held on to it while he said a sicha.

In 5712, R' Berel's parents arrived

in Montreal and the Rebbe called him and asked him whether he had met with his parents yet. R' Berel said that he hadn't since he did not have the proper documents. The Rebbe helped him arrange the paperwork

The Rebbe asked R' Berel if he had prepared gifts for his parents and sisters. When R' Berel said that he hadn't, the Rebbe told him, "I didn't count on such *batlanus*," and gave him \$25 to buy presents.

Before Shavuot 5713, the Rebbe

***The Rebbetzin once told R' Berel that the Rebbe had told her: "If Berel Junik says something, you can rely on him."***

gave R' Berel money so he could buy a suit for Yom Tov. After he bought the suit, he showed it to the Rebbe. The Rebbe asked him to turn around and then said, "I think the suit is short on you."

"Before Pesach 5711, the Rebbe asked me to be present at the sederim in the Rebbe Rayatz's home so I could serve him. This went on until I got married in 5714. Rebbetzin Nechama Dina also invited me to the meal. When I was asked to serve the food, I served the Rebbe first. A member of the household wasn't pleased with this, but I made it clear that if they wanted me to continue my job, I wouldn't do otherwise. They wanted me to stay, and boruch Hashem, I remained at my post and continued doing my job as I saw fit."

In 5714, the Rebbetzin went to Switzerland for a few weeks. The Rebbetzin asked R' Berel to serve the Rebbe and be responsible for the food that she cooked especially for Mrs. Dubinsky. The Rebbetzin also instructed him to take two portions, one for the Rebbe and one for himself.

When the Rebbetzin went to the airport, she traveled by taxi and the Rebbe accompanied her. R' Berel joined them in the taxi and helped out as needed. When they arrived at the airport, the Rebbe asked R' Berel to stand on line until it was the

Rebbetzin's turn, and the Rebbe stood off to the side with the Rebbetzin.

When the Rebbetzin went to the plane, the Rebbe went upstairs to see the plane take off. R' Berel went up with the Rebbe and saw the Rebbe murmuring the entire time. When the plane was up in the air, R' Berel saw tears in the Rebbe's eyes.

R' Berel served the Rebbe. One time, after the food was served, the Rebbe gave him back the plate with the food and said: Eat it. It's not *shirayim* (food that a Rebbe leaves over for the Chassidim) since I didn't eat from it.

In 5714, R' Berel married his wife Fruma. When they needed to set a date for the wedding, the kalla and her mother went to the Rebbe and presented the options and what they thought was the best date. The Rebbe said the wedding should take place on Thursday, on the eve of 10 Sivan. The Rebbe said that this week, the week after Shavuos, is a happy one, and a good time for a wedding. The Rebbe was the *mesader kiddushin*.

At one of the *yechiduyos* before the wedding, the Rebbe gave R' Berel a closed box as a gift and said he was giving it to him by way of preparation for the wedding. When R' Berel opened the box, he saw eight handkerchiefs. As the years went by, R' Berel had eight children, and each one received a handkerchief before they married, "as a preparation for the wedding."

"Rebbetzin Chana was present at our *tenaim* and sat next to the kalla, but this wasn't photographed. When Rebbetzin Chana came to our wedding, she asked the photographer to take a picture of her with the kalla and alone. This is the famous picture of Rebbetzin Chana.

"Some time after the wedding, I visited Rebbetzin Chana and left our wedding album with her. She asked

for a copy of the pictures that had either her or the Rebbe in them. When the Rebbe visited her, she showed him the pictures.

"After a few years, I put one of the wedding pictures in a frame and gave it as a gift to Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka. The picture is of the Rebbe standing under the *chuppa* as Rabbi Chadakov reads the *kesuba*. The Rebbetzin put the picture in the library in their home. In addition to this picture, the Rebbe's house had only two pictures of the Rebbe *Rayatz* that were out in the open in her bedroom."

After he married, R' Berel worked as a *shochet* for a year. Then he was offered a job as a *shochet* in another

## *When R' Berel opened the box, he saw eight handkerchiefs. As the years went by, R' Berel had eight children.*

state, but he didn't want to leave the Rebbe. He changed jobs and became a diamond polisher.

For a period of time he had *parnasa* problems. He had three children and didn't know what to do. "I asked the Rebbe if I should look for a new job, and the Rebbe told me to speak to R' Dovid Deitsch.

"The Rebbe asked me how much time had elapsed since I had last worked and I said it was three weeks. The Rebbe asked how much I usually earned and then took out that amount of money from his pocket and gave it to me. The Rebbe said: If you need more money, go immediately to Rabbi Chadakov so

you won't have to wait for this."

When R' Dovid heard that this request came from the Rebbe, he gave R' Berel unlimited merchandise, and within a short time, R' Berel's financial situation had stabilized and he was able to return the money to the Rebbe.

In 5716, R' Berel began teaching knife sharpening to a group of *tmimim-shochtim*, as per the Rebbe's instructions, and continued in this role for about forty years.

On 13 Iyar, 5712, R' Yisroel Aryeh Leib, the Rebbe's brother, passed away. Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka heard the news in the morning, after the Rebbe came home and returned to 770. That morning, the Rebbetzin called R' Berel and asked him to come to the house, where she told him, "If it isn't difficult for you, have Rabbi Shmuel Levitin come here." He came, and the Rebbetzin spoke to him for half an hour while R' Berel sat in the kitchen and ate what had been prepared for him.

Afterwards, it became apparent that their conversation dealt with how to inform the Rebbe about his brother passing on, but when he went to tell the Rebbe, the Rebbe already knew about it.

Rabbi Leibel Groner relates that when R' Shmuel went to the Rebbe to inform him about his brother's passing, the Rebbe asked him whether anybody else knew about it and the Rebbe asked that his mother not be informed.

Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka later told R' Berel that that morning, she had gone to the store on the corner of Nostrand and President, and from there she had called the Rebbe's brother's home to find out how he was and she was told the news. While she was out of the house (and calling from outside so the Rebbe wouldn't know) the Rebbe went to 770.

R' Berel was involved in all the stratagems that were done so that Rebbetzin Chana would not find out about her son's passing. For example, the Rebbe said that only a small minyan of men should come daven with him during the shiva. The minyan took place in the Rebbe's room, and each time, different people made up the minyan. This was in order to prevent the spreading of the news that the Rebbe was sitting shiva.

During the shiva, the Rebbe visited his mother each day, as he always did. Beforehand, the Rebbe told R' Berel that he was afraid that his mother would notice that he wasn't wearing regular shoes. The Rebbe was already wearing non-leather shoes and R' Berel used a brush to paint the white soles black so that they looked like ordinary shoes.

As far as the actual visit with his mother, the Rebbe asked R' Berel on the first day of the shiva, that when a minute or two had gone by, he should call up to speak to the Rebbetzin, which would enable the Rebbe to leave and return to 770.

At the predetermined time, R' Berel made the phone call. The Rebbe answered the phone and told his mother: "Someone wants to speak with you. I don't want to disturb your conversation. Good night." And then the Rebbe left. The next day, another trick was devised to divert the Rebbetzin's attention. This was done throughout the shiva.

"The Rebbe made sure that nobody in England would send his mother a letter that mentioned the passing of her son. The Rebbe told me that he arranged this and had informed one of the men in England to be vigilant about this. The Rebbe asked me to bring him all the mail that arrived for his mother so he could examine it before she did. In order to do this, I had to get a key

for the mailbox. I myself fashioned a copy of the key.

"For the next three months, I would take all the mail that came for the Rebbetzin and bring it to the Rebbe. The Rebbe looked through it. I then put the mail back in the mailbox, and, boruch Hashem, when the Rebbetzin opened her mail she didn't notice that someone had opened the letters before she did and she did not suspect anything.

"One day, the Rebbetzin said sadly: I don't know what happened with my son Leibel. He hasn't written to me in a long time and I'm upset about this (because R' Leib would write often). I told Rebbetzin

## *At the farbrengen on Shabbos Mevorchim Iyar 5712, the Rebbe took hold of R' Berel's beard and held on to it while he said a sicha.*

Chaya Mushka about this and a few days later, the Rebbe gave me a letter to put in his mother's mailbox.

"When I visited the Rebbetzin, she told me happily: After a long break, I received a letter from Leibel, and my daughter-in-law and granddaughter also wrote.

"The truth is that the Rebbe made sure that the daughter-in-law and granddaughter would write and this letter was sent from England to some address in New York and was then given to the Rebbe who added a few lines of his own in his brother's handwriting. The envelope was changed and they put an English

stamp on it. When the Rebbe visited his mother, she happily showed him this letter."

On Shabbos, 6 Tishrei, 5725, the Rebbe told R' Berel to go and see how his mother was doing, since the Rebbetzin did not feel well. In the afternoon, the Rebbetzin had just had a stroke, and when R' Berel came, she thought he was the Rebbe and she said: Help me! Those were her last words. R' Berel realized that the situation was critical and he ran to 770 to tell the Rebbe. A few hours later, the Rebbetzin passed away.

On Motzoei Shabbos, the Rebbe asked that one of the Chassidim take charge of the belongings in the house and R' Berel did so. After the shiva, the Rebbe distributed some of the Rebbetzin's belongings, and he gave R' Berel the Rebbetzin's air conditioner. The Rebbe said that the one who had served her in her lifetime, deserved to enjoy her air conditioner.

R' Berel's connection with Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka began when she saw him once at Rebbetzin Chana's house, and from then on, he visited Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka too. Over the years, he visited the Rebbetzin hundreds of times. His family and children were also close with the Rebbetzin.

One year, when R' Berel was still a bachur, he ate for a few weeks during the summer at the home of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka. It was when the bachurim went on Merkos Shlichus and barely a minyan of bachurim remained in the yeshiva. The Rebbetzin suggested that he come to her house and eat, and he went nearly every day and she served him a cooked meal.

One day, the Rebbe was in the house when R' Berel came to eat. R' Berel heard the Rebbe say to the Rebbetzin, "I'll go to my room and you give him to eat. If he knows that I'm here, he won't want to eat."

After R' Berel married, he went to the Rebbetzin mostly on Shabbos. During the week, he called often. The Rebbetzin always took an interest in how he was doing in *parnasa* and displayed a keen understanding of business and economics.

R' Berel's children visited many times and spoke with the Rebbetzin on the phone too. Shortly before she passed away, when she did not feel well, she only had special visitors like a new *chasan* and *kalla* in the family.

In R' Berel and his family's conversations with the Rebbetzin, it was clear that on every issue, the Rebbetzin thought as the Rebbe did. She didn't have her own opinion. The Rebbetzin took a great interest in whatever was important to the Rebbe. She took great pleasure in speaking about the *shluchim*.

R' Berel's final visit to the Rebbetzin was on the last Friday night of her life, and he came with his daughter. R' Berel related that it was very cold, and before he left, the Rebbetzin said that when she thought of his having to go outside, she began to feel cold.

The Rebbetzin passed away on Tuesday night, 22 Shvat, 5748.

"Rabbi Groner called me at home at one in the morning and told me that the Rebbetzin had just passed away. He said, 'The news hasn't gotten out yet. I will come to you in a car and we will go to the Rebbe's house, because the Rebbe is alone and still wasn't told the news.'

"We waited outside and Dr. Feldman came and said he would call the Rebbe. He told the Rebbe that they had received news that wasn't good and they had to make new arrangements.

"Later on, the Rebbe asked whether there were items that belonged to the Rebbetzin that she especially liked. I knew that the Rebbetzin had a ring that she had

received as a gift from her younger sister, and it was very dear to her. She always took it with her wherever she went or traveled. (One time it was lost and my sons searched for the ring until finally my son Shimshon found it in the garbage where it had been put by mistake).

"The Rebbe said that the ring should be placed in the Rebbetzin's grave. There was another thing, which I don't remember, and the Rebbe said that it too should be placed in the grave."

During the burial, R' Berel, being so close to the royal house, stood to

the right of the Rebbe. You can see what a special relationship the Rebbe and Rebbetzin had with R' Berel from the fact that the Rebbetzin once told R' Berel that the Rebbe had told her: "If Berel Junik says something, you can rely on him."

Although R' Berel was close to the royal family for decades, his *Chassidishkeit* remained intact. R' Berel was outstanding in his *bittul* and never took advantage of his position. He made sure never to stand out from among the other *Chassidim* and *T'mimim*.

## MOSHIACH WILL COME BY THEN

R' Berel once told a story that took place over a span of 50 years:

"In 5710, I had a *yechidus* with the Rebbe at the beginning of Iyar. Ten years later, in 5720, I had a *yechidus* with the Rebbe with my wife and children. I told the Rebbe that it was ten years since my first *yechidus*. The Rebbe gave us all a *bracha*, and at the end of the *yechidus* he smiled and said, 'After you leave, make an appointment with Rabbi Chadakov for *yechidus* ten years from today.'

"I went to Rabbi Chadakov and asked for an appointment in ten years. He didn't understand what I wanted from him. In any case, in 5730 we had a *yechidus*, and then too, the Rebbe gave a *bracha* and again said at the end of the *yechidus* that we should make an appointment for ten years hence."

Among other things, the Rebbe said: 'About your writing regarding your birthday, you will surely conduct yourself according to the customs of a birthday.' R' Berel hadn't written anything on his *p'n* about a birthday (which didn't fall out any time near the *yechidus*!) and he immediately realized that the Rebbe was referring to the custom of *Chassidim*, who consider the day they came to Lubavitch, and their first *yechidus*, as their birthday.

"In 5740, I had a *yechidus* again, with the whole family, and the Rebbe gave me a *bracha* for my birthday and then said: 'Regarding your question about coming for a *yechidus* in ten years from now, may Hashem fulfill the requests of your heart and mine, and by then we will surely be in our holy land together with Moshiach.'

"In 5750, I wrote a note to the Rebbe that I wanted a *yechidus* as it was ten years since the previous *yechidus*. The Rebbe said that *yechidus* now took place when he gave out dollars.

"We passed the Rebbe for dollars and the Rebbe gave us a *bracha*. Another ten years went by, and it was 5760, fifty years since the first *yechidus*, and I still pray and hope that I will have another *yechidus*."

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# BRINGING HONOR TO THE REBBE THROUGH PROTESTING OR KEEPING QUIET?

BY SHAI GEFEN

## PROFESSOR AVNER CHAI SHAKI A"H

Professor Avner Chai Shaki passed away after a long illness. Prof. Shaki led the way in the battle to amend the law of Mihu Yehudi and for shleimus ha'Aretz. Although he was an unusually pleasant person and was beloved, he refused to compromise on these two principles. He stood up for what he believed in, which is rare among politicians.

Prof. Shaki proved time and again that for his principles and the war for shleimus ha'Am and ha'Aretz, he was ready to forego honor and money. He was pressured to be more flexible in his views and was promised the world, but he stood strong and didn't sell his soul.

I knew this special man and interviewed him a number of times for this publication. When Prof. Shaki spoke about the Rebbe, his tone of voice changed. He spoke with enthusiasm and wonder, and you could see how he lived with each story that he told about the Rebbe. He saw himself as the Rebbe's soldier.

On one occasion, Prof. Shaki related that during the attempted takeover of the government by the Left, his neighbor, Shimon Peres, came to visit in order to convince

Shaki to support him. Shaki told him that what interested him was Eretz Yisroel. Peres smiled and said: who is interested in ideology nowadays...

In his activities on behalf of shleimus ha'Am and ha'Aretz, Shaki demonstrated that he walked the talk. It wasn't for naught that he was so greatly appreciated by the Rebbe MH"M.

As we experience a blurring of the lines, and sadly, many among us are facing difficult tests and not always passing them, let us remember someone who was a model of mesirus nefesh for years. We must know that principles aren't sold at any price, and even if you must suffer for standing up for what you believe in, in the end, you don't lose out.

## SOLDIERS ON THE FRONT

Rabbi Wolpe wrote a wonderful article last week about a Chassid's obligation to be a part of the fight to save our land. After all, the Rebbe told Tzach to be involved in this and the rabbanim instructed everybody to go out and protest.

This is what Lubavitcher Chassidim did in the past, including when Mihu Yehudi was the issue of the day. What people thought of Chabad was a non-issue at that time.

When a Chassid knows that this is something dear to the Rebbe's heart, he takes action! This is what Lubavitcher Chassidim did when Sharon was recently in New York. With the instruction and presence of the rabbanim of Crown Heights, they took to the streets and demonstrated against the Disengagement Plan. That showed that Chabad hasn't sold out and doesn't remain quiet when millions of Jews are needlessly put in danger.

Today we all know that the Disengagement Plan is not a disengagement from Gush Katif, but a process in which we disengage from all of Eretz Yisroel. Yet it is still a time of confusion, and Chabad must bring the Rebbe's message and stand on the front lines of the battle for shleimus ha'Aretz. **A Chabad Chassid is a soldier of the Rebbe on the front lines, and he cannot choose what he prefers and what is most comfortable for him.**

In this column we have quoted what the Rebbe said – that when pikuach nefesh is the issue, that supersedes everything, including spreading the wellsprings. Whoever stands off to the side and remains quiet betrays the Rebbe's shlichus. Who knows what unfortunate repercussions could G-d forbid result.



The inexplicable silence on the part of various Chabad organizations in Eretz Yisroel is shocking. Furthermore, many people, friends of Chabad, who know that the Rebbe opposes giving any land away, are wondering what's wrong with Chabad these days. They can't understand the silence.

The Rebbe maintained his position even when everybody else supported the peace agreements. The Rebbe said that even though salaries of teachers (in Chabad schools) were being withheld because of his outspokenness for shleimus ha'Aretz, he would continue to protest.

It just can't be that Tzach, who led many fights on behalf of Eretz Yisroel in the past, like the campaign, "Eretz Yisroel B'Sakana," and the huge demonstrations against Rabin, will continue its conspiracy of silence. When certain people speak about "chillul Hashem" and "chillul sheim ha'Rebbe," we must say that it's the incomprehensible silence that is causing an enormous chillul Hashem. Eyebrows are being raised as people wonder, "What happened to Chabad?"

We wait eagerly and impatiently for all Chabad organizations to wake up and voice their non-stop protest. Speak up! Proclaim what the Torah says about endangering millions of Jews! We must feel that we are soldiers on the frontlines, carrying out the Rebbe's wishes.

### WHERE ARE THEY HEADING?

Today all admit that our flight from Lebanon brought the Hezbollah to rule in Gaza and Yehuda and Shomron. Our running away brought Lebanon to us. And the Intifada of the past five years was also caused by our flight from Lebanon, as Arafat, chief butcher, said himself. He said that the 400 Hezbollah fighters who

expelled Israel gave him the mandate to rip apart the spider's web of shattered Israeli society.

Today, all those in Security maintain that destroying settlements will intensify terrorism. This is the position of the Chief of Staff, the head of the Shin-Bet, and many others in Security. Whoever is able is quick to warn of the catastrophic results of a Disengagement, yet Sharon plows on.

Not only does Sharon persist in his suicidal plan, but in order to appease the enemy, the government continues to release prisoners, with hundreds more released this week.

The question is: where are our leaders leading us? The hundreds of released prisoners will be making way for the thousands of Jews who will defend our land. Why are we allowing this to happen?

In the Ukraine and in Lebanon, thousands took to the streets over matters of lesser import. The revolution must come from the people. Let us wake up and cry out over this rotten government, and it makes no difference which government it is, because they're all the same. Let us scream for the government of Melech HaMoshiach. Ad masai?

### THE POWER OF MESIRUS NEFESH

The Disengagement Plan has brought out the power of mesirus nefesh within many Jews. You can see this especially with "simple" people, who oppose anything that could harm a fellow Jew. They are willing to lose their jobs and careers over this. We constantly hear about yet another soldier or civilian who is refusing to take part in this tragedy.

Idan Danziger is a young soldier who became involved with Judaism

*The inexplicable silence on the part of various Chabad organizations in Eretz Yisroel is shocking. Furthermore, many people, friends of Chabad, who know that the Rebbe opposes giving any land away, are wondering what's wrong with Chabad these days. They can't understand the silence.*

and is a mekurav of the Rebbe. When he realized that he was being used and lied to, he refused to continue training soldiers in hand to hand combat, because he knew the training would be used against his

fellow Jews.

Another cadet was rejected from an officers course after he informed his commanders that he would not participate in throwing his fellow Jews out of their homes. The cadet said that if the army wasn't interested in him, he would not make a great effort to remain in the course, although his commanding officers are pressuring him to take the course the next time it is offered. As of now, dozens of officers and soldiers have been rejected.

In Chassidus, it's explained that the power of mesirus nefesh is revealed specifically within the simple people, who will withstand trials at the very end of Galus, so as not to be "disengaged" from Hashem for even a moment. It's sad to see weakness in those who you would think should know better. Those who, in the past, led the warriors, are suddenly displaying a hesitancy and a predilection to sit on the fence.

*With the instruction and presence of the rabbanim of Crown Heights, they took to the streets and demonstrated against the Disengagement Plan. That showed that Chabad hasn't sold out and doesn't remain quiet when millions of Jews are needlessly put in danger.*

Our chinuch as Chassidim is to have bittul and hiskashrus to the Nasi HaDor. This is what gives us the ability to withstand the tests, even when these tests are bitter indeed. We Chabad Chassidim, who were raised with mesirus nefesh, starting with the Alter Rebbe, continuing later under the Soviet regime, must know that now too, that which sustains our hiskashrus is the power of mesirus nefesh.

History has shown that those who were not moser nefesh but went with the flow, were washed away and forgotten. It was those who chose to swim against the current and revealed the special powers that lie within every Jew, who prevailed and brought blessing to themselves and their surroundings. The mesirus nefesh required today is not as great, but we should be doing at least the minimum that is expected of a Chassid.

We, shluchim of the Rebbe, need to develop this quality of mesirus nefesh in the public at large and encourage the public to take part in this fight. Anybody who examines the situation knows that this isn't a fight over Gush Katif but about the very existence of the Jews in Eretz Yisroel. It's a fight between the powers of impurity and l'havdil, the powers of holiness.

With this power of mesirus nefesh and emuna we will with Hashem's help, be ready to greet the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach with joy.

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# 'I AM OVERWHELMED BY THE KIDDUSH HASHEM DISPLAYED BY JEWS IN THE STRUGGLE FOR ERETZ YISROEL'

INTERVIEW BY SHAI GEFEN  
TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY

*In the last several weeks, the non-profit organization Chaneinu has provided assistance to hundreds of detainees during the struggle for shleimus ha'Aretz. Chaneinu was founded primarily to help soldiers and other citizens facing legal problems in connection with the battle for Eretz Yisroel, and it is now involved in its highest level of activities to date. Shmuel (Zangy) Meidad, the organization's director, works around the clock, day and night, but with great satisfaction. He is completely dedicated to the struggle for Eretz Yisroel, and does everything possible to give legal help to every Jew who risks his own personal freedom for Eretz Yisroel.*

**When was this organization established?**

Chaneinu was founded four and a half years ago, long before we even

dreamed about Disengagement. We have seen the need to help Jewish prisoners. Regrettably, all the human rights' organizations are concerned

only with Arab prisoners, while Jews have no one to help them against the scheming and conspiring, especially when they are arrested for their activities on behalf of Eretz Yisroel. Therefore, we give the highest importance to helping Jews, no matter who they are.

**You've had a lot of work over the past few weeks...**

Indeed, the last several weeks have seen more work for us than we usually get in six months. During the recent civil disobedience activities, 582 Jews were arrested, and we received literally hundreds of applications for help in just one day. We had to get control over all these requests for legal assistance, retain attorneys, and run to the courts. All this work fell on us in one shot, and proved to be most difficult and arduous.

**What do you expect to happen now?**

In my estimation, as things get more serious, we will eventually come to thousands of arrests – maybe even more. The recent civil disobedience campaign was for us as well, and we have come to the conclusion that we must improve our method of operations. This is no easy job since

we work primarily on a volunteer basis. Such activities usually cost a lot of money, and we know that a major deciding factor in the battle for Eretz Yisroel will be on the legal front. Therefore, it is most important that we invest much effort in this area.

**How would you classify the conduct of the police?**

In some places, they acted quite gently, while in other locations, their conduct was utterly disgraceful. There were even incidents where prisoners were not allowed to go to the bathroom. People were also not brought to court in a timely fashion. Minors, i.e., twelve-year old girls, have remained incarcerated to this day, even though it is illegal to hold them in jail, simply because they refuse to identify themselves. The court in Petach Tikva was unwilling to release them without certain limitations.

**Is Israel a country based on the rule of law?**

It's hard for me to say if the law is protected here. There are no human rights, and I am concerned that the situation will get worse as the battle heats up. Girls are hit by female police officers behind prison walls because they didn't want to identify themselves. These large demonstrations were a source of some annoyance to the authorities, and when they lost control of the situation, they were prepared to violate any law or ruling they desired. This clearly expresses what our objective is: to protect and assist Jewish prisoners to the best of our ability.

**How many attorneys do you retain?**

During the last wave of arrests, we retained twenty attorneys, but we fully expect to increase this number in the coming weeks. In addition, there is a growing staff of legal experts who help us with advice and consultation. I can safely say that, barring a few technical difficulties, we were able to deal with every request for assistance that came our way. We did everything we could to help our detainees.

I wish to take this opportunity to turn to all those who can help us in the struggle for Eretz Yisroel to provide their assistance as much as possible in body, in spirit, and with their contributions. In the final analysis, it is our activities that give backing and support to those prepared to risk their personal freedom and will eventually succeed in tipping the battle in our favor.

**How do you perceive the struggle?**

This is a struggle of the Jewish People for their land. Anyone who wants to uproot such a large community of families and give their homes to the murderers of women and children, anyone who is prepared to

*It is our activities that give backing and support to those prepared to risk their personal freedom and will eventually succeed in tipping the battle in our favor.*

extract the limbs of a flotilla fighter that were brought piece by piece from Lebanon (following the flotilla tragedy) and scatter them throughout Israeli cemeteries will have a difficult time protecting human rights. If someone abuses human rights, there is no reason why he shouldn't do so on prisoners' rights, and we are prepared for any possible scenario.

**Can right-wing demonstrators be calm?**

No one can be calm these days. This is a most serious and intense battle. We are constantly improving our operations and we are trying to the best of our ability. With G-d's help, we will succeed.

**I understand that there were some very interesting stories from the recent wave of arrests. Can you share one with us?**

At a demonstration in Beersheva for the administrative detainee Neria Ofen, there was someone who was arrested simply because a policeman claimed that he cursed him. He was brought before the court, and the district attorney requested that he should remain behind bars until the conclusion of the legal procedure, explaining that he belongs to dangerous groups who listen to rabbanim more than civil law. The man got up and denied the main charges, however, he admitted to believing that the laws of the Torah take precedence to the laws of the state. He stated that Eretz Yisroel is no different than any other country throughout Jewish history: when the laws of state clash with the laws of the Torah, Jews follow the latter.

Here I saw what a Jew's kiddush Hashem really is. He stands before a judge, knows that he is endangering himself, yet he is not embarrassed to declare truthfully that the Jewish People cleave to the Torah, and will not yield at any price. This reveals a strong Am Yisroel, faithful to G-d and His Torah.

**Are you losing hope in the face of the worsening situation?**

Since the recent wave of arrests, I have been strengthened even more. I see that there are tens of thousands of Jews who understand the great importance of this hour and are prepared to pay a heavy personal price. They know quite well where they're heading. They understand that this is a battle for the existence of the Jewish People in their land, and they are ready to fight.

There is no question that this is a most encouraging phenomenon that instills us with tremendous strength. With G-d's help, Am Yisroel will emerge victorious!

# TO LOVE EVEN A COMPLETE RASHA

BY MENDY BRAND

TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY

*We can learn many things from this story, but the lesson most relevant to our times is that true ahavas Yisroel pertains even to those Jews whose actions cause harm to other Jews and we might feel that we may act differently towards them.*

Nowadays, when the concept of ahavas Yisroel has, regrettably, turned more into a slogan and less into an area of true avoda, I recall the following story I heard from the chassid, Reb Michel Wishetsky:

When I was privileged to live in Crown Heights, the neighborhood of the King, I would customarily participate in a farbrengen each year on the first night of Sukkos, at the home of R. Berel Dubrawsky. Other regular participants in these farbrengens included Reb Asher Sasonkin and the renowned mashpia, R. Mendel Futerfas. Each year, R. Asher would retell the following story:

The holy tzaddik, Reb Yisroel of Ruzhin, had a very enthusiastic chassid named R. Shabsi who lived in the city of Berditchev.

Reb Shabsi's devotion to his Rebbe was so great that he would visit the Rebbe's court very

frequently. Every-so-often, he would feel an immense yearning to his Rebbe's holy countenance. When this happened, R. Shabsi would drop everything he was doing — whether it was a regular weekday, Erev Shabbos, or Erev Yom Tov, and immediately travel to the Ruzhiner to calm his thirsting soul.

When he arrived at his Rebbe's beis midrash, Reb Shabsi would wait with immense anticipation for the Rebbe to leave his room so he could behold the radiant image of the Rebbe's holy face. Only after he would catch a glimpse of the Rebbe would he calm down and start on his way home.

One Erev Yom Kippur afternoon, R. Shabsi felt an unusually intense desire to see his Rebbe. His heart longed for this so deeply that despite the fact that he was in the midst of all his preparations for the holy Day of Atonement, he set out on his way....

Upon his arrival at the beis midrash, chassidim told him that the Rebbe had not left his room for several hours. Nevertheless, R. Shabsi proceeded to stand near the holy Ruzhiner's room and waited for him to appear, all the while reciting T'hillim with great fervor.

Suddenly, the door opened and the holy tzaddik appeared in the doorway. (Informed chassidim later noted that this was the first time the Rebbe came out of his room on Erev Yom Kippur before Kol Nidrei.) He turned to his devoted chassid, R. Shabsi, and said, "*Sertche, sertche* [Russian for "my heart, my heart"]; The was known to use this term of endearment], do you love me? Just know that as much as you love me, it cannot be compared to my love for... (here the tzaddik named a certain Jew known as a terrible rasha and moiser, who turned Jews in to the authorities to be put to death *r"l*). This will help you understand how much I love simple Jews who are not wicked. It will then be even easier for you to understand my great love for Jews who observe Torah and mitzvos, especially tzaddikim.

"But one thing you must realize," the tzaddik added, "as much as I love complete tzaddikim, it has no comparison to G-d's love for Jews who are totally evil. This will help you understand how much

G-d loves simple Jews, and all the more so, those who observe Torah and mitzvos, especially tzaddikim.”

When the tzaddik finished speaking, he entered his room, and R. Shabsi went home to complete his preparations for the holy day of Yom Kippur.

\* \* \*

We can learn many things from this story, but the lesson most relevant to our times is that true ahavas Yisroel pertains even to those Jews whose actions cause harm to other Jews and we might feel justified in acting differently towards them.

This idea is also expressed in a story with the Mezritcher Maggid

*“But one thing you must realize,” the tzaddik added, “as much as I love complete tzaddikim, it has no comparison to G-d’s love for Jews who are totally evil.”*

(as mentioned by the Rebbe MH”M on numerous occasions, e.g.,

Shavuos 5713):

“It is also known that the tzaddik, Reb Zushe of Anipoli told the Alter Rebbe that he heard from his brother, the tzaddik, Reb Elimelech of Lizhinsk, that the Maggid’s Chassidim took turns serving him.

“Once, during my turn, R. Elimelech recalled, ‘the Maggid called me over and said, ‘You hear, Meilech (a term of endearment for Rabbi Elimelech of Lizhinsk)? The Heavenly Court says that **ahavas Yisroel means to love a complete rasha the same way one loves a complete tzaddik!**’”

The time has come to live with this kind of love for one’s fellow Jew!

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# THE BOY SUDDENLY STOPPED WALKING

BY NOSSON AVROHOM

S.D. is a shochet who works at the Rubashkin slaughterhouse in Postville, Iowa. He established a shiur, which takes place every Tuesday morning right after Shacharis. Many people attend this shiur, including shochtim and melamdim. S. does whatever he can to make the shiur a success. On Monday nights he makes reminder calls to the participants.

\* \* \*

This story took place last year on Tuesday, the 16th of Adar. "Because I was so busy preparing for Purim, the shiur slipped my mind and I forgot to call the participants and remind them about it. By the time I remembered, it was late at night. I assuaged myself by telling myself that people would be tired after Purim and participation would be less than usual, but I went to sleep feeling bad that our ongoing class would be interrupted the next morning, for the first time.

Around four in the morning, I woke up to the sound of one of my children crying. I tried to calm him down but to no avail. I finally took him out of bed to bring him to my room. When I took him out he was wide-awake, but to my surprise, he fell down. I couldn't understand why he had fallen, but I assumed his leg had fallen asleep or he was confused because it was

the middle of the night. I calmed him down and put him back in his bed, where he fell into a deep sleep.

The next morning he stayed in bed, which was unusual for him. After a while, we realized that something peculiar was going on. We asked him to get up, but he continued to lie there. We thought that perhaps something had happened and he didn't want to get up. We tried persuading him to get

*"My wife and I were distraught. It was my wife who finally said, 'We haven't written to the Rebbe yet.'"*

up, but nothing worked.

It was only after we picked him up that we realized, to our dismay, that he couldn't stand up on his own! At first, we thought it was a passing thing, but as time went on, and each time he tried to stand up he was in pain, we realized that something was seriously wrong with his legs.

We were terribly frightened and took him to the nearest hospital. The doctor who checked him

confirmed our fears. He said he couldn't diagnose the problem with the available equipment, but it was a serious problem with his nervous system. The doctor made an appointment for us at the Gunderson Clinic, a big local hospital, located an hour and a half from where we live.

That was the worst day of my life. My wife and I were distraught. It was my wife who finally said, "We haven't written to the Rebbe yet."

We immediately made a good hachlata and sat down to write a detailed letter. I took out a volume of *Igros Kodesh*, and after putting the letter between the pages at random, I opened the book, which turned out to be volume 14, and read the answer, located on page 499. I read as follows:

B"H

16 Adar II, 5717  
Brooklyn

To the Avreich Naftali  
Sh'yichyeh

Shalom U'v'racha!

"It has been a while since I received any news from you. I hope that you are continuing to participate in the shiurei Torah being taught, as well as those on Chassidus. Since Hashem has granted you the power to influence

others through writing, and your work has been published, you reach a broad spectrum of our fellow Jews. Certainly this channel

will also be utilized for this purpose, as per the well-known saying, "The spreading of the wellsprings of Chassidus to the

farthest reaches."

I was stunned by the answer. First of all, the letter was dated 16 Adar. Second of all, as soon as I read the Rebbe's answer, I felt certain that I knew what the Rebbe was referring to, for just that day I had skipped the Chassidus shiur I was in charge of.

I called all the regular attendants of the shiur and told them the whole story. I arranged for the shiur to be held later that morning. I believed with all my heart that this was what the Rebbe was referring to, and that things would work out just fine.

More people than usual came to the shiur. One of my friends, a regular at the shiur, said I had nothing to worry about and that he had a strong feeling that the problem would just disappear.

I went home feeling tense because we had that appointment at the hospital soon, and who knew what they would diagnose. But as soon as I walked in the door, my son ran to me joyfully. I stood there frozen in place, pinching myself again and again to make sure I was really seeing him run.

We went to the hospital later on, and after X-rays and various tests the doctors shrugged and said they didn't find a problem. They couldn't make heads or tails out of what the first doctor had written on the form.



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