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Readers Writing

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TO BUILD THE HOLY TEMPLE: AN ETERNAL OBLIGATION

LIKKUTEI SICHOS VOL. 18, PG. 411
TRANSLATED BY BORUCH MERKUR



Massei is a weekly Torah portion wherein it is recognized, in a revealed and pronounced way, the connection of the portion with the time of the year it is read in the Torah. It is always read in proximity to Rosh Chodesh Menachem Av (on Rosh Chodesh itself, the day following it, or on the Shabbos that blesses the month of Menachem Av). In this portion it relates and introduces the fact that the death of Aharon was **“in the fifth month on the first day of the month.”** The death of Aharon is elaborated on at length earlier, in the portion Chukas. However, the time of his death (and the story of the years of his life) is specifically in this week’s portion.

In fact, this connection is not only with regard to the proximity in **time** of the death of Aharon [being on or around Rosh Chodesh Menachem Av], as mentioned above, but also with regard to their **significance**: In the month of Menachem Av the Holy Temple was destroyed, the burning of the House of our L-rd. Indeed, our Sages say that “the death of the righteous is equivalent to the burning of the Holy Temple,” and “the passing of the righteous is difficult for the Holy One Blessed Be He, more so...than the destruction of the Holy Temple.”

We find that with regard to the manner in which the passing of the righteous is observed there are two opposite approaches: On the one hand, there must then be the conduct of “weeping and mourning” on account of his passing. On the other hand, it is the time to learn from “his deeds and his Torah and his service throughout the course of the days of his life” in order to continue going in his ways which he instructed us in. It is then [i.e., upon his passing] that the saying of our Sages applies – that if “his progeny is alive,” “so too is he alive,” and in the terminology of the Mishna in the topic at hand: “Be of the

disciples of Aharon.”

Accordingly, the same concept applies with respect to the time of the destruction of the Holy Temple: On the one hand, at this time there is the obligation mandated by the Torah of “mourning for Yerushalayim.” On the other hand, it is specifically the time of Bein HaMeitzarim that demands an especial strengthening for not falling into despair from Exile, G-d forbid, knowing – as in the completion and seal of the Haftora of the portion of Massei that we now read – that “from this time call to me, my father; you are the guide of my youth.” Indeed, it would be good to encourage oneself – as well as other Jews in general, in the doubled and redoubled darkness of the Era of the Heels of Moshiach, which is further increased Bein HaMeitzarim – by strengthening in, “I will await his coming every day,” and learning and delving into “the form of the Temple, its shape, its exit ways and its entrances, and its entire form, as well as its statutes. The result of this will be, as the Sages say, “The Holy One Blessed Be He said (to Yechezkel), ‘Great is the reading of Torah as its construction. Go and tell them to delve into reading in the Torah about the form of the Temple. And as a reward for the reading that they will delve into reading about it, I consider it in their regard as if they are occupied in building the Temple.’”

Just as this is so with regard to the Holy Temple, it is likewise so with regard to the death of the righteous: By means of going in his ways, etc., “so too is he alive,” as mentioned above. Thus, the true life of a righteous person – of whom it is said that “the life of a righteous person is not physical life, but rather, spiritual life, which entails faith, fear, and love [of G-d]” – continues, “living and being sustained” in “his progeny,” i.e., his disciples and the students of his disciples.

Thus, an especial emphasis is added in the connection between the destruction of the Holy Temple (in the month of Av) and the death of Aharon (on Rosh Chodesh Menachem Av): The reason for the destruction of the (Second) Temple was the sin of baseless hatred. The correction for this sin is the concept of “Be of the disciples (which are called children, his progeny) of Aharon, a lover of peace and one who pursues peace, a lover of the creations, and one who brings them close to Torah” – unwarranted love.

2. At first glance, we could ask the question: With regard to the passing of the righteous the phrase reads, “just as his progeny is alive, **so too is he alive**” (and not “as if” he is alive) – that through “his progeny” going “in his ways,” etc., it brings about that “he is alive.” Since the life of a righteous person “**is not** physical life, **but rather, spiritual life**, therefore “**he is alive**” (his true life, “spiritual life,” also continues thereafter, in a literal sense.).

Whereas with regard to delving into the form of the Temple, it concerns the **physical** Holy Temple (to offer physical sacrifices there – unlike from the time of the destruction of the Holy Temple, when “prayers were established in place of **sacrifices**), as well as the **speech** and the learning mentioned above, regarding which “I **consider** it in their regard **as if** they are occupied in building the Temple.” This [study] is, at first glance, only like the speech of prayers.

The fact is, however, that this is not so. For when the Torah of **Truth** equates two things (as in our case – that through learning about the form of the Temple, etc., “I consider it as if they are occupied in building the Temple”) it is because they are in truth **one** thing.

However, since the physical result of delving [into the form of the Temple] is manifest below only later on, therefore the term used is “as if.” But even before it is manifest in actuality (as in our circumstances, before we can build the Holy Temple below, in physicality), it is not the case that the learning is merely a **remembrance** (or the like) of the building of Holy Temple, nor is it (additionally) that G-d gives the same reward that He gives for the building of the Holy Temple. Rather, through delving into **learning** we are occupied in **building** the Temple.

3. The explanation of this is understood in light of what the Sages say concerning sacrifices: “Whoever delves into the Torah of the sin offering, it is as if he is offering a sin

offering, and whoever delves into the Torah of the guilt offering, it is as if he is offering a guilt offering,” and the like. The expression, “as if he is offering,” with regard to sacrifices is not only intended as a description of a reward, or that G-d grants atonement for sins on account of this (effecting the same result) exactly like the sacrifice. Rather, it is (according to many opinions at least) considered the actual offering of a sacrifice, to the extent that we say in the context of Torah law with regard to “the [Torah] portion of sacrifices,” “It is only said during the day, for one may not offer a sacrifice at night,” and likewise with regard to **many** rulings and laws in the laws of sacrifices. Thus, it must, therefore, be [said] in a manner reflecting the way it is offered.

Accordingly (and more so) with regard to delving into the form of the Temple, etc. (which is equated, there in the Midrash, to delving into the laws of the sacrifices), as it is understood from the expression used in the Midrash – that

*Even in a time when
the Jewish people
cannot build the Holy
Temple, for reasons
independent of them,
it is nevertheless
incumbent upon them
to build a Temple.*

regarding the complaint of Yechezkel – “Until now we have been given over in exile in the land of those who hate us, and You say to me, ‘Go and announce to the Jewish people the form of the Temple, etc.’ Are they indeed able **to make** it? Leave it for them for when they will come up from exile, etc.” – G-d answered, “For the sake of my children being in exile **the building of My Temple should be neglected?!**” Thus, they should be involved in learning about “the form of the Temple, etc.” That is, through the learning, “the building of My Temple” is not neglected.

A possible explanation of this: The commandment of “Make for Me a sanctuary and I will dwell among you” is a positive commandment applying to all generations; it is incumbent upon Jews as an obligation to build a Holy Temple. Therefore, in a time when the Jewish people cannot build the Holy Temple in actuality and in deed, for reasons independent of them, it is nevertheless incumbent upon them the obligation and the commandment to be involved with “reading about it,” and as a result it is “as if you are building it.”

That is, not only since we cannot build the Holy Temple in actuality, thus at least we shall learn about its form, etc., as a **remembrance** and spiritual connection to building the Holy Temple; rather, delving into learning [about it] is itself considered as fulfilling the commandment of building the Holy Temple.

(To be continued.)



LETTERS TO A SCIENTIST*

PART 14 AND FINAL

Please send copies of the Rebbe's letters to:

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By the Grace of G-d
21st of Shevat, 5746
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Prof. Dr. Zeev Greene
2722 Vale Crest
Minneapolis, Min. 55422

Greeting and Blessing:

For various reasons, including an accumulation of correspondence in connection with Yud-Shevat, etc., I am not certain if all your correspondence has reached me. However, some of your past correspondence has also not been fully replied to for various reasons, and judging by the trend of events in Eretz Yisroel, I think that the questions you had raised before are still relevant now.

According to my evaluation, I assume that essentially the questions are connected with the basic issue, namely what is my attitude towards the various questions that you had raised, and if it still remains the same.

I can say that my attitude and opinion have even become stronger in the course of time. To repeat briefly:

1) A person, especially a Jew, and particularly one who has a prominent position of influence in his surroundings, should try to arrange his plans in a way that would produce the maximum influence and benefit in one's surroundings; with personal benefits and advantages being of secondary consideration. Although in practice, we have seen that Hatzlocho in the area of public good, usually brings a greater measure of Hatzlocho in one's personal affairs.

2) In your case, and your influence, it has been shown, especially in recent years, that you have had a considerable impact on college youth as well as faculties, even more than one might have anticipated.

3) There is no need to point out to you how important is your influence on Jewish college youth everywhere. At the same time, it is obvious that the Jewish college population in the U.S.A. is quantitatively very much greater than in any other country, including Eretz Yisroel. Therefore, your field of influence is so much greater in the U.S.A. than in Eretz Yisroel. This relevant situation does not seem likely to change radically in the very near future.

4) In light of all the above, it is my opinion that your main base of activities has to be in the U.S.A., though it does not necessarily preclude periodic intervals, of several weeks or several months, in other countries.

No doubt you heard that a great deal of attention in recent years has been given to the need to promote the so-called "Seven Noahite Laws" in the gentile society. This has always been a Jewish obligation, except that historically it was impossible to carry it out because of the dangers involved in any effort to influence the gentile society in which Jews lived in the Diaspora. But now that there is no such danger, and, on the contrary, the climate has become quite conducive for such an activity, the said obligation has come into force and is also of "some" consideration. I mention this only as an additional reason for my opinion outlined above. Moreover, such activity in the U.S.A. also has an important bearing on the general situation of Jews and Yiddishkeit, which surely needs no elaboration to you.

I may add also a further consideration, namely that being active as a member of a faculty in the U.S.A., you probably could have a greater influence even on our youth in Eretz Yisroel than you would have if you were to hold a similar position in Eretz Yisroel.

To conclude with the Jewish custom to connect everything in time - we are still in the auspicious month of Shevat, highlighted by the Yahrzeit Hilulo of my father-in-law of saintly memory, the Rebbe, on Yud-Shevat, and are surely still under the impact of remembering his life's work and selfless dedication, with which you are fully familiar.

I have a suspicion that you may not quite fully agree with all, or some, of my remarks relative to your situation, so now I will say no more on the subject.

With prayerful wishes to you and each and all of your family, and

With esteem and blessing,

/signature

THE DREAM PARENT

Part 3

BY ITTY CHAZAN

HOW DO I BEST IMPART A VALUE SYSTEM TO MY CHILD

He trudged through the high mud, his soggy boots matching his doleful face. Wandering aimlessly amidst the tall hay, he knew he must come to a decision – and fast!

Eyeing his two hundred beautiful cows grazing in the meadows, his heart melted in agony. Each cow, sold at the value of 1,000 rubles, now fetched a mere 200 rubles! The worth of livestock in the market plummeted, and he, the owner of the once thriving business, may be left bankrupt!

Suddenly, his mind registered hope, and a sparkle of life was kindled. With a sudden new spirit of energy, his farmer's outfit and boots were traded in for the Chassidic garb of a Chassid visiting his Rebbe.

Harnessing his wagon with alacrity, the Chassid packed his tallis and t'fillin, and rode off in vibrant spirits and recharged vitality...

Reb Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev listened carefully as the Chassid recounted the recession his business was seeing. Waiting for the generous bracha that Reb Levi Yitzchok was famous for administering, the Chassid was shocked to hear, not a bracha, but a question.

"And what else is your profession, aside from cows?"

"I am a mohel."

"And how do you treat a bleeding child at a bris?"

The Chassid described to the Rebbe his procedure. Reb

Levi Yitzchok then produced a herb, and handing it to the startled man standing before him, continued: "Use this herb in the event that a child bleeds excessively at his bris."

And the yechidus ended.

The shocked Chassid thought. "And what about my cows?"

He slowly left Berditchev, believing wholeheartedly, yet

not fathoming a word. His trust did not waver, his staunch emuna unshakeable, yet not fathoming one word of his Rebbe's seemingly unusual instructions regarding his financial distress.

The sun set beyond the hills, and Dovid, on his way home, recognized a Yiddisher inn at the roadside and turned in for the night.

He found the innkeeper, willing to rent a room, yet distraught, teary eyed, and sighing heavily. His swollen face and rigid demeanor told Dovid a story of unusual agony and pain. After many futile attempts and unwavering passionate pleas, the innkeeper relented and confided; "Tomorrow, my newborn son will be eight days old. And I will not circumcise my child. That's my sorrow; those are my tears of a burden heavy as stone."

Dovid waited expectantly, allowing the innkeeper to collect himself. "I

have lost two baby boys in the hour of their bris due to heavy bleeding." Raising his voice with a loud shout, he cried out, "Do you understand? I want to circumcise my child with every fiber of my being, and yet I want a living boy!"

Earth shattering wails filled the room, as the innkeeper placed his wet face in the palm of his hands and wept

"I have lost two baby boys in the hour of their bris due to heavy bleeding." Raising his voice with a loud shout, he cried out, "Do you understand? I want to circumcise my child with every fiber of my being, and yet I want a living boy!"

uncontrollably. Dovid quietly placed his hand upon the father's shoulders and asked, "How much are you willing to pay a mohel who promises a bris and a living child?" Reb Levi Yitzchok was certainly a pillar of promise, reckoned the Chassid.

The innkeeper looked sharply at the guest standing confidently before him and responded, "2000 rubles!"

Dovid placed 2000 of his own rubles on the table and with a confident smile radiating life, hope, and determination, explained. "I am a mohel. I am handing you 2000 rubles as a deposit. Should the bris mila be successful, you pay me 2000 rubles and return the deposit. Should, G-d forbid, a tragedy befall your child, my deposit is your reimbursement."

The innkeeper's heart leapt with joy. Only an exceptional phenomenal mohel would risk a deal as this. And in his heart of hearts, he truly yearned that his Jewish child be circumcised.

"It's a deal – on condition," responded the father. "You must remain at my baby's bedside for one complete month – 30 days!"

The following morning, the baby did indeed bleed heavily, yet Reb Levi Yitzchak's herb saved the child. The radiant parents, instilled with fervor and passion for Hashem's outpouring of love, knew no limits and bounds. Tears of gratitude to Hashem, the holy Rebbe, and the mohel were evident in every t'filla.

And the cows?

Seven days later, the price of the cows unexpectedly rose. From the unprecedented low of 200 to 400 rubles! The Chassid was adamantly refused permission to leave, reminded of a thirty day wait at the infant's side.

Fourteen days after the bris, the price soared to 600 rubles. His pleading fell on firm refusal ears. With mounting anxiety, he fell on the feet of the father as the price reached 1000 rubles.

"Please, I beg you," he frantically cried out. "Your baby is healthy! He is alive and well!"

"The deal, my friend. Recall our pact."

Now it was the mohel, wringing and twisting his hands in unbearable tension and dire straits. Ever so slowly, the minutes and hours dragged by, and the mohel was finally free to return home.

With tremendous tension Dovid rushed to the market,

and staggered in total shock as the price of each cow soared and roared with the unusual 2000 rubles per cow. His pocket reeled as fortune and money flowed in huge tidal waves.

He leapt through the high mud, his soggy boots in total contrast to his exuberance. As the last of the cows was led away, he peered at the meadows, and in a moment of reflective solitude, gazed Heavenward and thanked Hashem for fortifying his belief in Reb Levi Yitzchak, even when he didn't understand.

What secret key did this Chassid possess, enabling him to leave Berditchev in solid faith? What unique gift was bestowed upon him that empowered him with the staggering emuna in a time of tremendous financial distress? Who taught him the cherished simple yet profound and pure bitachon in a Rebbe? In his Rebbe?

Dovid knew that he owed his own dear parents the key to his absolute trust and belief in the Rebbe. It was his parents, he recollected, who lived with the Rebbe, every moment of their lives. It was his parents who imbued him, Dovid, with the steel chain of hiskashrus and connection. It was after all, thanks to his father and mother's pure gold hashkafa, that he, their son, was imbued with the most spectacular value system, imparting life, direction, and hatzlacha in every facet of his own life

* * *

Children learn values from their parents. They sponge in honesty, justice, humility, self-discipline, ambition, and love. Children absorb values even while sometimes simultaneously rebelling against them. Yet the perseverance and justice of their parent's value system will prevail, even when parents often do not meet with immediate results.

The highest forces of imparting values to our children is living them! Are we exacting maximum performance in our davening, learning, and hiskashrus? Are we energetically suffusing our lives with tolerance, respect, and hiddur b'halacha? Are we ready to forgive and forget the evils of our society?

* * *

How do I best impart a Value System to my child?

Home Tips:

- *Analytical Thinking
- *Personal Example
- *Breeding Activity

***"Do as I do" has
finally matched our
Torah viewpoint.
"Do as I do" is
engraved in stone,
cemented in bricks,
and locked in iron
forever.***

Home Tip Suggestions:

***Analytical Thinking**

Teaching children to think and evaluate is the art and start of a record value system. Exchange manipulation and shallow absorption of information analysis. Search deeply and check if a particular action concurs with your lifestyle and value standards. Thus a child brought up as a critical thinker, will not be affected by his immediate surroundings.

He will search beyond, and will travel depth, to understand. He will perceive deep ideas that go way beyond the surface. This enables your child to make a decision based on Hashem's desires, and Hashem's call of action, rather than merely imitating others without a mind of his own.

Boruch: "Abba, I learnt Mishnayos baal peh and received a snack reward. It only has an OU symbol on the snack,



may I eat it?"

Father: "When did you receive this prize, son?"

Boruch: "Last week."

Father: "And you resisted temptation, despite your constant hunger in camp? I am so proud of you, Boruch."

Boruch: "May I eat it?"

Father: "I'm not really sure. I'll check it out for you and call to let you know."

Analytical thinking negates "I think," "I assume," I assume that because camp distributed a food item it's kosher, does not sit well with Torah analytical thinking. A child trained, inspects the label even far away from parental supervision. He sees a kosher label unacceptable for his personal family value. His trained mind does not equate a great camp with an all-clear OK, signaling all food items to

be met with immediate consumption. This boy searches perceives, thinks, and waits, for he is determined to verify if it is permitted. He phones, checks it out, and awaits a response.

***Personal Example**

The ultimate parent imparting values need not express verbally to a given act or circumstance. The parent in him/herself recognizes truth and falsehood, good and inadequate, serious and entertaining. The parent lives a life not swayed by popular opinions, not based on assumptions, nor bought with false figure flattery. The strength of parents, when prohibiting fake fluff, imparts the value of sincerity, p'nimius, and absolute truth. Thus, a parent can look a reporter, salesperson, boss, or co-worker straight in the face, hear their comments and know the truth without saying one solitary word. They see deeply, sense justice and

weaknesses, kindness and cruelty, and silently perceive how they must act. It's the quiet courage and resilience to a fake society. Your child sees you in action on a constant motion.

You do not reject ideas because others do.

You do not imitate before recognizing merits,

You do not puppet others beliefs.

Your child drinks this fountain of excellent ethical and moral behaviors without you having to utter a single syllable. Your child is testimony to observing prior to deciding, and thinking before impulsively rushing.

You have handed them the tool of

Acting instead of reacting,

Caring instead of flaring,

Connecting instead of disconnecting.

"Do as I say, not as I do" is the popular new style of families with improper language, corrupt character traits as jealousy and hatred, and shortcomings and failures in davening, learning, or warm family time. However, the all world popular common saying of "Do as I do" has finally matched our Torah viewpoint. "Do as I do" is engraved in stone, cemented in bricks, and locked in iron forever.

Can you laugh to your children at the trouble you caused your teachers when you were a child, or at the havoc you wrought to your counselors, or tests you cheated on with brilliant deceit, and then expect utter revulsion on their part?

(To be continued.)

THE PEACE CURE

BY SHOLOM DOVBER CROMBIE

I heard the following story from Moshe Abbada of Ofakim, who is enthusiastically involved in promoting writing to the Rebbe MH"TM through the *Igros Kodesh*. Moshe's many acquaintances, who themselves experienced miracles of the Rebbe, convince others to write to the Rebbe too.

Moshe is used to getting phone calls from people asking him to write to the Rebbe on their behalf. He is always happy to oblige and he uses the opportunity to influence people to strengthen their commitment to Torah and mitzvos.

Moshe has seen many miracles but the following recent story is special.

* * *

On Chol HaMoed Pesach of this year, Yitzchok Abuksis, an old friend, called Moshe. Abuksis told Moshe that his relative in Netanya was in the hospital and the doctors were planning on amputating her foot in a few hours. The reason for the amputation was a paralysis in the foot that started after she was hospitalized for a sudden heart attack. In short, it was due to a medical complication.

While treating her for her heart problem, they discovered the paralysis and that it was spreading. If they didn't remove the foot immediately, the paralysis was liable to spread to the rest of the body. Only a few hours remained before the operation was to begin, and the doctors were unanimous in their opinion.

Moshe told his friend that he didn't feel comfortable writing since it was

Chol HaMoed, he would simply open a volume of the *Igros Kodesh* to receive the Rebbe's answer and bracha. He mentally thought of what he would have written, said "Yechi," and then opened the volume.

Moshe read the Rebbe's answer but didn't see any connection between it and the woman's problem. The letter was about the power of making peace

While treating her for her heart problem, they discovered the paralysis and that it was spreading. If they didn't remove the foot immediately, the paralysis was liable to spread to the rest of the body...

and how it is the vessel for blessing.

Time and again, Moshe tried to find some connection, and when he didn't see any clear answer about the foot problem, he called his friend and told him what the letter said.

As soon as he began reading the Rebbe's answer about peace, Yitzchok exclaimed that his relative had a long-

standing argument with her sisters-in-law, which had still not been resolved.

Moshe emphasized to Yitzchok that the Rebbe doesn't punish anybody; rather, he instructs us how to resolve our problems in spiritual ways. After Yitzchok heard about the tremendous importance of making peace, he called one of his relative's daughters and told her the Rebbe's answer. He explained to her that according to the Rebbe's answer, they had to end the argument as soon as possible so that the paralysis in the leg would go away!

The daughter was taken aback by the Rebbe's answer. The fact that the Rebbe's letter was about peace, which was so pertinent to her mother, made a deep impression on her. She decided to do what she could to straighten matters out and make peace between her mother and her aunts.

She called her aunts and told them what happened since her mother was hospitalized. She asked them to go to the hospital immediately to visit her mother and make up with her.

When the aunts heard the Rebbe's answer, they acknowledged that the Rebbe sees the Heavenly workings and that they shouldn't take the suggestion lightly. Presently, they were all at the hospital, where seeing the patient in bed made them all want to forget the past. They decided to end the argument and they wished the patient well with heartfelt blessings.

That evening, Moshe was home and in an emotional turmoil. His daughter was getting engaged and he was expecting the bachur's parents to

come to his house and make a l'chaim. He and his wife were making their final preparations for their guests when the phone rang.

When he picked up the phone, he could barely understand the person on the line. It was the daughter of the woman in the hospital, who was so emotional she was nearly in tears. At first, Moshe was afraid that something terrible had happened, but after a few moments he realized that these were tears of joy.

She said that before her mother was brought into the operating room, the surgeon went to her room in order to do some final tests. When he finished, there suddenly began a strange rushing about between the different departments. Other doctors entered the room to check something. They said another round of tests had to be taken.

Only when he was sure there was no mistake in the new tests, the doctor told the family that for the time being he was canceling the operation. This was because all the current tests showed a great improvement in the foot. The blood had begun to flow again and it was all highly unusual and inexplicable. The doctor added that the foot had begun to change color and return to its natural appearance, and this was a highly significant and positive development.

The daughter concluded her report choked up with tears of joy. She said

It was the daughter of the woman in the hospital, who was so emotional she was nearly in tears. At first, Moshe was afraid that something terrible had happened, but after a few he realized that these were tears of joy.

that everybody present acknowledged that this was thanks to the Rebbe that the change had occurred. The daughter wanted to know how to repay the Rebbe in recognition of this miracle. How could she thank the Rebbe for what he did for them?

Moshe told her that the Rebbe has nachas with every additional good deed or hiddur mitzva that a Jew does. He emphasized the learning of Chassidus and suggested that she commit to having a weekly Chassidus class, and he asked that she convince the family to say the Rebbe's chapter of T'hillim daily in addition to the chapter that corresponds to their age.

Moshe finished the phone conversation in great excitement himself, even though he has become somewhat used to miracles! Before he could calm down the phone rang and it was the daughter once again. She asked Moshe to write to the Rebbe again in order to inform the Rebbe of the good news and to say that the family had committed to a weekly Chassidus shiur. They also committed to saying the T'hillim.

Moshe "wrote" to the Rebbe in his mind and opened the *Igros Kodesh*. He saw three letters that had the date 18 Nissan, which was that day's date! When he began reading the letters, he froze in utter surprise. In the first letter, the Rebbe wrote, "I was pleased to receive news of the positive activities." This answer fit the good resolutions the family had made. The second letter was for a chassan and kalla who had written to the Rebbe about their wedding date and the Rebbe was blessing them. Moshe saw this as an answer to himself and his family, for they were waiting for the mechtanim to complete his daughter's shidduch.

Another week went by and the relative was released from the hospital. Not only did her foot heal completely but her previous heart problems had also disappeared. Since this miracle occurred, the family gathers once a week for a shiur in Chassidus in thanks to the Rebbe for his miracles.



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COMING FULL CIRCLE TO IGNITE THE FLAME OF JEWISH SOULS

BY NOSSON AVROHOM

*He was turned on to Yiddishkait in Ksol, a scenic town in northern India. After he became religious, he returned with his wife and began reaching out to others. * An incredible shlichus story.*

The town Ksol, deep in northern India, although similar to many other regions in this idol-worshipping country, including its primitiveness, in some ways surpasses them all. Ksol is one of the most popular tourist attractions as it is exquisite, situated among the mountains amidst fragrant fruit trees.

The place gives tourists a feeling of unusual calm, so it's not surprising that many Israelis who are seeking meaning in their lives, make Ksol one of their stops.

MIRACLES ON THEIR WAY THERE

From the very beginning, Danny Winderbaum of Nachalat Har

Chabad knew that he wanted to spread the wellsprings and the besuras ha'Geula. He planned on setting up a Chabad house after he married, and his only question was where. In his heart of hearts, he wanted to work in Ksol. When I asked him why he chose that town, he said, "It was in that town that I became acquainted with my Creator, and it's important to me to go back there and help other lost backpackers recognize their Creator."

However, Danny heard that somebody from Rechovot was going on shlichus to Ksol, and so he began checking out other possibilities.

"When time passed without

anything happening in Ksol, I called the guy in Rechovot and he told me that he had planned on going there but money problems prevented him from going. I asked him whether I could go there and he happily agreed. "If you think you will be successful there, don't hesitate for even a minute!"

The next step was getting the Rebbe's approval. "I knew that it was the height of the tourist season and I didn't want to waste precious time. I sat down and wrote to the Rebbe about my wanting to go on shlichus, and I put the letter into a volume of *Igros Kodesh*. I found the answer astounding. The Rebbe wrote about success in shlichus and in being mekarev young people to Torah and mitzvos, in a place so distant there was nothing further.

"After getting an answer like that, I continued onward. I turned for guidance to Rabbi Shimshon Goldstein, who operates out of Pushkar, and Rabbi Dror Moshe Shaul, who operates out of Dramsala. After talking with them I



The Chabad house in Ksol

felt ready to go.”

Danny worked for weeks to raise the money he needed for the venture. “We got most of the money

from my parents, my in-laws, and a few other people. The common denominator among them is that they are not yet religious!”

The next step entailed the logistical preparations for the trip. These weren’t simple either, and they also entailed open miracles.

“The first miracle happened at the airport. Before leaving for Ben Gurion airport, we realized that we had 500 kilos of luggage, and there was no way we could get this on the plane without paying a lot extra. Every dollar was counted and we didn’t know what to do. On the one hand, we needed all these things and couldn’t remove any of it. On the other hand, we didn’t have the money for it!

“I wrote to the Rebbe, and the answer in the *Igros Kodesh* was, ‘to go without limitations and Hashem will repay you in kind.’

“I left the house calmly. I knew that with an answer like that, there was nothing to fear. At the terminal, we met two T’mimim who were going to help us in the months to



come, Menachem Katz and Sholom Harpaz. Amazingly, the father of one of the T'mimim who was accompanying his son, knew the director of the airline. After a brief discussion with him, he agreed to let all the luggage on without any extra payment."

And that's how Daniel and his wife and her mother, along with Menachem and Sholom, began their trip to Ksol, prepared to return lost neshamos to their Father in heaven.

WINDING ROADS

When writing about Daniel Winderbaum's shlichus in Ksol, you have to give some background information about Danny himself. His story is a heart-stopping one of a young man from the upper class of society who was searching for meaning in life, and found it while touring Ksol.

Daniel was born in Ashdod into a Leftist atmosphere, which wasn't exactly pro-religion. He studied dance with a modern dance troupe and he spent his childhood performing in shows, events, and on television programs. The world was his, and when it came time for him to be drafted, he joined the air force.

"At that time, I had everything – my own car and my own apartment – and I could do as I pleased. Nevertheless, and perhaps because of that, I began to feel an emptiness in my life. One day, I sat and thought: I have everything but I am missing the Truth. I am living a life of falsehood, I concluded.

"At the library near my apartment, I took out books on Eastern philosophy and I studied them. This was the first time in my life that I realized that this search I was on was a search for spiritual meaning. Even before the army, I traveled in South America, which was another step in my search for

*Many of them told me
that in Israel they
would be
embarrassed to enter
any religious place,
never mind attend
shiurim, but they felt
differently here.*

true meaning in life."

Towards the end of his army service, when he was already deeply immersed in Eastern philosophy, he was once sitting in his room on base and doing some soul searching: "I am searching in distant places while I haven't even examined Judaism, my natural religion."

The next day Danny bought a book on Pirkei Avos and he found it fascinating. "I didn't agree to change my life but it led me to begin observing Shabbos, in my own way. This meant not smoking and not turning on music. If someone else turned it on, I had no problem with that."

One day, however, he packed some stuff and headed off for India. The first city he visited was Ksol. He spent a week there wasting time. "After a week, when the scenery stops fascinating you, you realize it's all emptiness.

"One day, I participated in a party in the city. I sat on the side and watched what was going on. Most of the people were Israelis, and you could see that the Israelis had an energy that the Italians and English did not have. I thought to myself that there was no doubt that the Jewish people were a special nation.

"There, in the filth of India, my

A NESHAMMA FINDS ITS PLACE

During one of the Shabbos meals, an amazing thing happened. Danny tells us about it:

As at every Shabbos meal, lots of backpackers sat there until late at night and told stories and described events of hashgacha pratit that happened in their travels. One of the backpackers, a young kibbutznik named Yonatan, loved the atmosphere, joined in, and was loathe to have the evening end.

After the meal, I went over and spoke to him. With tears in his eyes he told me that he came from a kibbutz and had never put on t'fillin. He said that in his youth at the kibbutz, between milking the cows in the barn and joint activities for children, he had secretly taken a Chumash and read it. His soul was drawn to it and he began to improve his daily behavior, but he was afraid to do more and he abandoned the Chumash.

I urged him to have his bar mitzva the next day. At first he refused, but then, to my surprise, he appeared for davening Sunday morning. On Monday he had an aliya to the Torah and was very excited about it. All the tourists at the davening danced with him and he didn't stop crying. This moving sight was topped off when he put on t'fillin for the very first time.

I keep in touch with him and although his progress is slow, baruch Hashem, it is steady. His fear of Judaism has diminished and the way is open before him.



A special area designated for writing to the Rebbe

pintele Yid became more sensitive to the special uniqueness of the Jew. All my attempts to push these thoughts aside failed. I said to myself that it was because of our being different that the nations of the world hated us, because we are the Chosen People, and this is true even when we are on a low level.”

This was a turning point for Danny, but he still had a long way to go. This inspired feeling returned from time to time during his trip, but apparently it wasn't strong enough, for it was shunted to the side, time and again.

Like many young Israelis, Daniel traveled throughout northern India. He did not forgo a single adventure, no matter how dangerous. Throughout this time, he thought about the meaning of life and the way one ought to live.

“I quickly

reached the point where life's pleasures were not satisfying enough and I needed something more spiritual to live for. At this time I experienced an open miracle that strengthened my faith in Hashem.

“It was on one of my trips on a local bus in Ksol. At one of the stops, I suddenly decided to get off. Just like that, with no special reason for doing so. Afterwards, I found out that at the next stop the bus fell into the abyss and the thirty passengers were killed! Nobody emerged alive! I realized that I had experienced a big miracle and I didn't stop praising and thanking Hashem for saving me.

“A short while later, I decided to travel to Kashmir. This is a beautiful area, between India and Pakistan. One day, as I

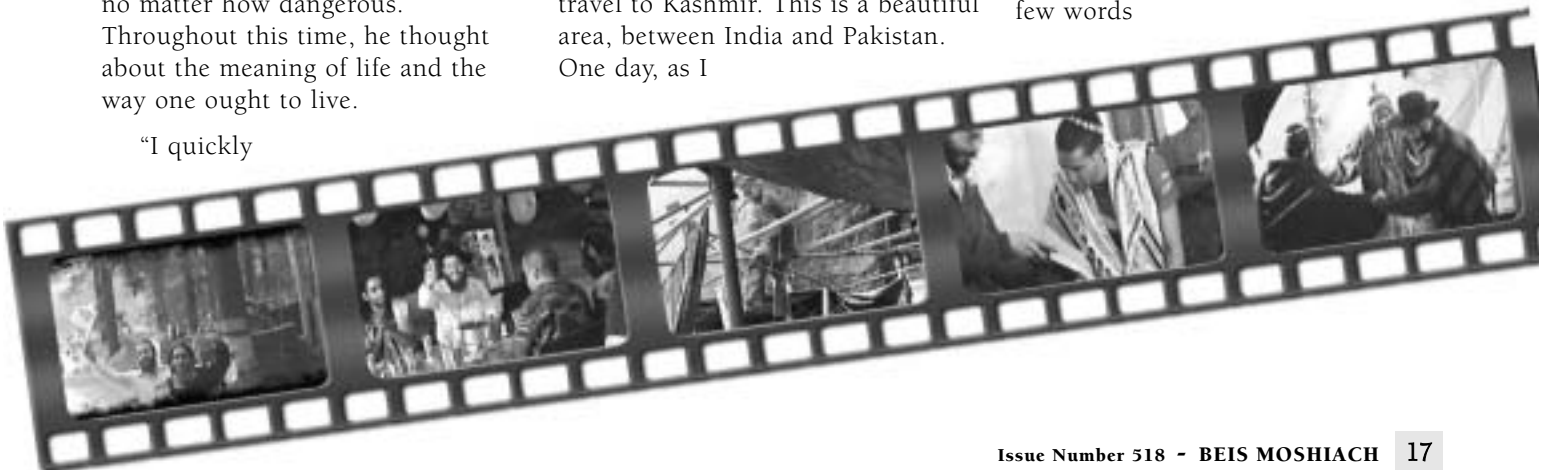
enjoyed rafting on a lake, I found myself deep in thought, and suddenly words I addressed to Hashem just burst forth from me, “You are the one who is lighting my Jewish spark, so guide me on the true path!”

“Not much time elapsed and my prayer was answered when I returned to Dramsala. This city contains all the courses of all the cults, natural medicine, and bizarre beliefs. I figured it was worth my staying there a few days and taking a course. A few hours before carrying out my plan, I walked over to the area where the Israelis hang out, and that's where I saw a sign that announced a course in Kabbala and Chassidus with Rabbi Shimmi Goldstein.

“I was very excited because this was just what I was looking for, and I loved the course. Concepts such as tzimtzum and seider hishtalshlus were a new world for me; I hadn't come across these concepts in the past when I researched Judaism.

“Later on, one of the T'mimim, Elad Oryan, brought me a pair of t'fillin and I began learning the daily Chitas. After the course, I continued on to Thailand, where I got the final push towards Judaism. It was on Shabbos when I headed for the area where Israelis congregate, the main street of Bangkok.

“Suddenly, I heard screams. I saw people running for their lives. There was terrible chaos and from a few words



here and there, I realized that Thai youth (known for their cruelty) were beating up Israelis. By nature, I stay away from mob altercations, but this time something strange happened. Instead of leaving, I went inside the hall, against my nature, where I saw a Thai with an iron bar about to strike an Israeli on the head. I instinctively grabbed the bar away from him, but then I got hit on the head by another Thai and I was injured. The next day I got stitches.

“I spent another little while in Thailand until I decided enough was enough: I couldn’t sit on the fence any more. I decided to do t’shuva. I returned to Eretz Yisroel. My parents weren’t thrilled about my decision. My inner circle wasn’t happy about it either, and it took a long time before they all realized that I was serious about this and it wasn’t a passing phase.

“One of my good friends told me, ‘If you want to do t’shuva then you have to go to yeshiva.’ I went to the yeshiva in Ramat Aviv, where I changed my clothes once and for all. I got a Chassidische haircut and tackled Nigleh, Chassidus and Shulchan Aruch, all in a wonderful atmosphere of hiskashrus to the Nasi HaDor, the Rebbe MH”M. When I got there, I knew this was where I belonged.”

COLLECTING SOULS

“As soon as we landed in India, my wife and mother-in-law stayed in Delhi to rest up while I and the T’mimim headed for Ksol, sixteen hours away. We got there at night and rented a room for the night. I decided that the next day we would begin looking for a place that could serve as our center of operations. After much searching, we found that the best place was right there, where we already were. That day, I signed a contract with the owner. Then my wife and mother-in-law came, and

I saw that we had come just at the right time, for a few days before our arrival, three Israelis had died, two in a bus accident and one when he slipped and fell while climbing.

together we turned the place from rundown and messy into a place with style and order.

“That same day, we went around to the places where Israelis congregate in order to announce our presence. I saw that we had come just at the right time, for a few days before our arrival, three Israelis had died, two in a bus accident and one when he slipped and fell while climbing.

“The atmosphere among the

Israeli tourists was very down. We supported them not only spiritually but also emotionally. One of the tourists put it this way, ‘The Beit Chabad is the place for any Jewish problem, and not just for any matter of Judaism.’

“News of our coming spread rapidly. Many Israelis came to see and be seen. The bachurim with me announced the communal Shabbos meal for the upcoming Shabbos, though I was a bit skeptical that we’d be able to get it together. Aside from a place, we didn’t have anything, but the Rebbe helped out. We arrived on Wednesday and the next day we bought pots, ingredients, vegetables, fruits, and mattresses for sitting on. Unfortunately, nobody was willing to sell us gas because we weren’t locals.

“We couldn’t manage without gas since we couldn’t kasher the keilim, and we couldn’t cook! We didn’t know what to do. We got even more nervous when it was Friday afternoon and we faced the prospect of having to turn away our guests.

“By Divine providence, I had an

“HOW DOES THE REBBE KNOW EVERYTHING?”

“The miracles we’ve seen with the *Igros Kodesh*,” says Mrs. Winderbaum, “are just incredible. Men and women have stood and cried in disbelief when they’ve read their answers.

“One story was with a girl who came from a religious home and wandered around India with a group of non-observant girls. When she came to the Chabad house she wrote to the Rebbe and opened to an answer that was written to a woman which said she should keep away from those things that confused her in her avodas Hashem.

“When she read the answer, she burst into tears. She said that every word was on the mark, and that she thinks about this every day. She felt uncomfortable with the open heresy that the girls spoke. It took a long time to calm her down...

“There have also been endless answers to girls who asked about a shidduch and you should see the looks on their faces when they read the answers. ‘How does the Rebbe know everything?’ many of them wonder.”



Putting on t'fillin at the Chabad house

idea. I took the identity papers of the man who had rented us the place and said I wasn't local, but I was his employee, and they sold me the gas.

"The preparations for Shabbos went into high gear and that Shabbos we had about 150 tourists. Many of them happily remarked, 'We knew you'd come here; there's no place in the world where we haven't met up with you!'

"That Shabbos meal and the ones that followed were the high points of our shlichus. It was wonderful to greet the many Israelis who came early on Friday in order to help prepare the food and set up. On Shabbos, we had

dozens of tourists, usually more than we had expected. The tourists took this opportunity to get acquainted with the real spiritual inner workings of Judaism and saw how the Jewish people are unique among the nations of the world.

"It was moving to sit together at the Shabbos meals, to get to know them, to talk with them, and to be together. When the meal was over, there were always a few people who lingered on to talk some more. Many opened their hearts and you could see that these were lost Jewish souls and all they wanted was to get close to Hashem, but for various reasons they were still immersed in klipa.

"For example, I remember a young tourist who said he hadn't

considered Yom Kippur a special day, and he had never observed it, but the previous Yom Kippur he got stuck in his jeep in the mountains of South America and when he felt he was in real danger he prayed. His soulful description of his first connection with Hashem moved us all.

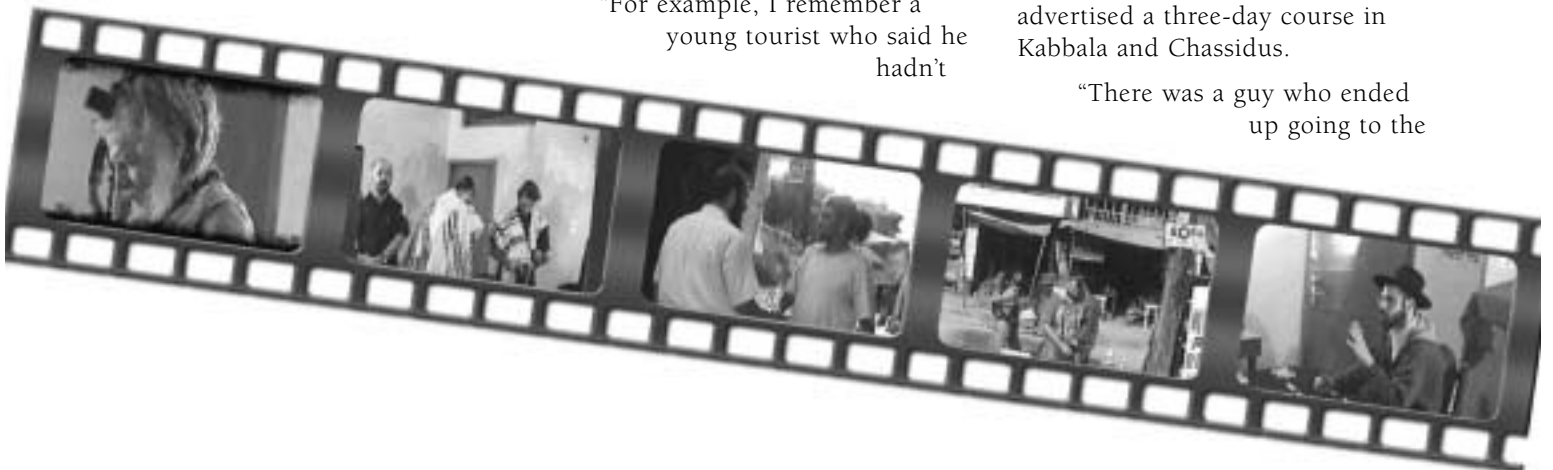
YOUR FRUITS ARE SWEET

"In the meantime, our work began to take shape. During the weekdays, dozens of Israeli tourists began showing up at the Chabad house from early in the morning. Sometimes, they stayed there until late at night. They heard shiurim in Chassidus and the Rebbe's teachings. We also had classes in inyanei Moshiach and Geula, which generated a lot of interest.

"We knew what to expect, for the most part, depending on their background. The traditional ones quickly joined the davening and shiurim, while the kibbutzniks took more time to get into things, but the Israeli enthusiasm didn't leave anybody indifferent. Many of them told me that in Israel they would be embarrassed to enter any religious place, never mind attend shiurim, but they felt differently here.

"Already in the second week, one of the T'mimim fixed up one of the rooms as a beautiful shul. Every day we had lunch and evening meals that turned into rousing farbrengens. When we saw that the thirst for Yiddishkeit was great, we advertised a three-day course in Kabbala and Chassidus.

"There was a guy who ended up going to the



yeshiva in Tzfas and a girl who went to Machon Alte in Tzfas. There were two girls who came to us at the very beginning and lived with us, and quickly became activists themselves and became baalos t'shuva. They are also going to Machon Alte.

“From my experience, for many of them who did not get on the Jewish bandwagon yet, those shiurim were in the category of, ‘cast your bread upon the waters.’”

SPARKS OF THE HIGH HOLIDAYS

“The first holiday we had to deal with was Rosh HaShana 5765. A few days beforehand, with no prior warning, some Israelis showed up and offered to help organize the place for Yom Tov. The girls helped cook and the guys helped decorate and set the place up. Within two days, the place was unrecognizable. The floor was washed and the yard was properly cleaned, and decorative trees were planted. We were ready for business!

“We asked the Israelis to register in advance of Rosh HaShana so we would know how many to prepare for, but Israelis are Israelis and registration was slow. On the last day, 180 were registered but I counted on 250 places.

“At the end of the davening Rosh HaShana night, I went outside and my jaw dropped. I saw an unforgettable scene, for there were no fewer than 400 Israelis standing there and waiting!

“Despite the excitement over the fact that most of the tourists had come for the Rosh HaShana meal, I realized I was in trouble because I had only 250 places. If that wasn't enough, we had a blackout and I had no idea what to do. It was only a momentary nisayon because five tourists came over to me and suggested that we open more tables in the Chabad house. Chairs were

ON THE WAY

Mrs. Winderbaum relates:

A couple once came to the Chabad house and helped us out. They had a religious background and I was very surprised to see that the woman did not cover her hair. I spoke to her a lot about the importance of her covering her hair but she stuck to her position. She was afraid that she wouldn't look good and had another 101 reasons why she didn't cover her hair, but I didn't give up.

Recently I heard that this couple moved to Tzfas and that she had committed to wearing a sheitel. That wasn't all, for her husband decided to strengthen their ties with Judaism and she is studying at Machon Alte and he is studying at the yeshiva in Tzfas.

Try to picture groups of Israelis standing on the street and listening to the shvarim, truos, and t'kios while dozens of idol-worshiping Indians stand around and look on in amazement.

on the street and listening to the shvarim, truos, and t'kios while dozens of idol-worshiping Indians stand around and look on in amazement.

“During the Aseres Yemei T'shuva there was a great spiritual arousal. Dozens of people came to the Chabad house and some of them made handsome donations. The t'fillos were especially inspiring. Dozens of tourists did kapparos, and on Erev Yom Kippur, many came for the Seuda HaMafsekas. The women lit candles and felt spiritually uplifted. For many of them, this was the first time in their lives they were doing this. Their encounter with Judaism, in India of all places, uncovered the pintele Yid, as deep as it may have been hidden.

“At that time, Rabbis Amram, Crombie, and Yaras started a festival of Kabbala and Chassidus. They did amazing work and we sent them many tourists.

“Most of the tourists had left by Sukkos but we built a huge sukka anyway and many of those who remained in town joined us for the Sukkos meals. More than 100 tourists visited the sukka daily, and were moved by the power of the experience. The days of Yom Tov seemed to elevate everyone to a

brought, tables were dragged, and another location for the meal was opened. In the meantime, the lights came back on.

“I ran the meal at the Chabad house while the T'mimim ran the meal at the outdoor dining room and the event worked out perfectly. Many souls were ignited that Rosh HaShana night. It was an unforgettable evening.

“The next day, we went around the town and blew the shofar, which generated lots of Jewish pride. Try to picture groups of Israelis standing



Daniel Winderbaum (right) with Mendel Katz

miraculous level, which inspired amazement.

“The high point was Simchas Torah. We went on tahalucha and our singing could be heard throughout the quiet town. Dozens of Indians stood by to observe the celebrating Jews, who themselves had just become acquainted with their Judaism.

SAVING LIVES

The role of a Chabad house in a place like Ksol is more varied than in many other places around the world. Aside from spiritual assistance, the Chabad house is also a warm home where tourists share their problems. For example, at the Chabad house, the tourists are able to keep their belongings in a room set aside for their things, and they can send letters to their families. Many tourists who “lost themselves”

were hosted long-term at the Chabad house, in rooms set aside for them. Birthdays are celebrated regularly with explanations about how the Rebbe views a birthday.

“Along with the Jewish content, sometimes we had to deal with Israelis on drugs. We were a big help to them when we contacted their families and helped them get in touch with their child and get him back to Israel.

“An interesting thing happened on one day of Chol HaMoed. Since most tourists had left town, my wife and I thought of going to help out in Rishkash where activities were being held for ‘graduates’ of various Chabad houses in India. I bought two tickets, but on second thought we remembered that we hadn’t asked the Rebbe. I

hurried to do so, sure the Rebbe would approve of our trip.

“Surprisingly, the Rebbe’s answer was to a Chassid who wanted to leave the shul he davened in and the Rebbe told him to stay. With an answer like that, we had to cancel our tickets and remain where we were.

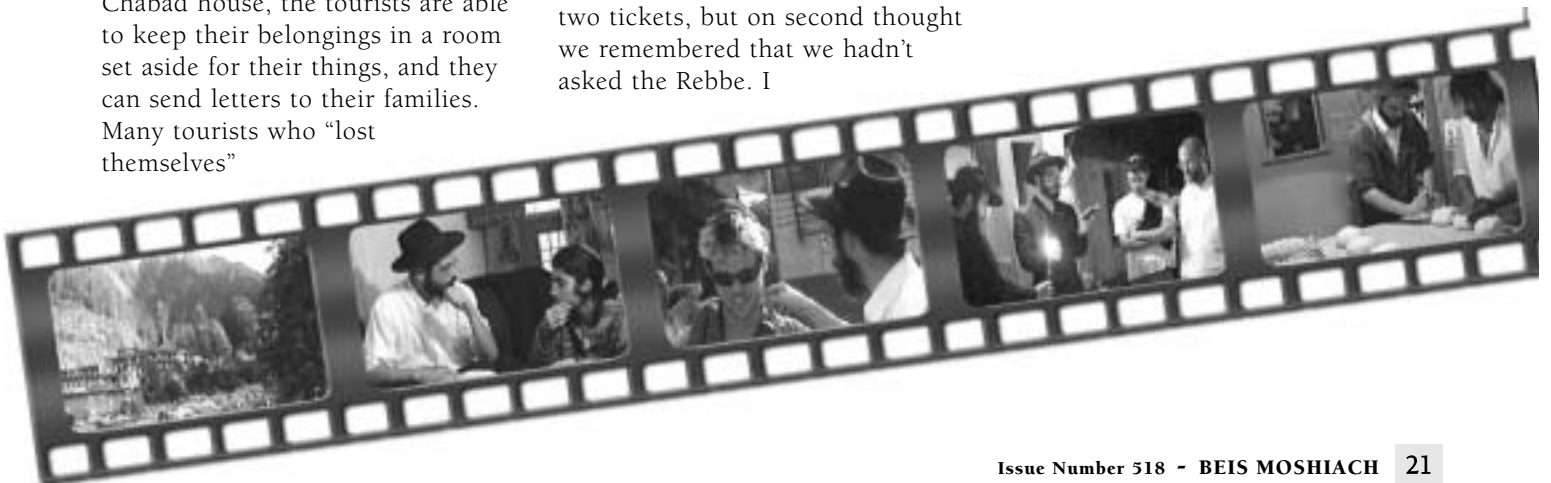
“A few hours went by and then we understood the Rebbe’s answer. That evening, three Israelis came. Two were high and one was in bad shape. The latter had taken a drug that made him crazy. He said strange things and acted menacingly. We saw that if we had left, and he had tried to attack a local Indian, he would land up in jail for years. Worst of all, his condition deteriorated.

“I called his family in Israel and until someone came to take him, we guarded him for three entire days fearing that he would harm either himself or others.

“He went back to Israel and was immediately hospitalized. A few months ago, he called me. He had regained his faculties and was much better. I understood why the Rebbe wanted us to stay at the Chabad house, for it was literally pikuach nefesh.”

* * *

Daniel Winderbaum returned to Eretz Yisroel and then went back to India for Pesach.



A TASTE OF LUBAVITCH

BY RABBI SCHNEUR ZALMAN CHANIN

*Thanks to his Chassidic melamed, young Chaikel got a taste of Lubavitch even before his bar mitzva. * Since the war broke out then, he was not able to see the Rebbe Rashab, and even had to return within a short time. * He spent the rest of the war with his esteemed melamed in the attic.*

CHAPTER 2: HIS TRIP TO LUBAVITCH AND THE OUTBREAK OF WAR

FELLOW TRAVELERS

When Chaikel Chanin turned eleven, his melamed, R' Chaim Shaul Brook decided to send all the children in his class to learn in the chadarim in Lubavitch. Not all the students went, as they did not all have the financial means to do so. It was necessary to rent an apartment and take care of food and lodging, so only those who had the money went.

My father would enumerate the talmidim who went with him: Avrohom Yeshaya Swerdlov, Aharon Leib Lane, and some others whose names I do not remember. Avrohom Yeshaya Swerdlov, who was called Avromke Beshenkovitzer, was from a

poor family, but since he was gifted and extremely diligent, my grandfather paid his expenses to Lubavitch because he wanted the boy to remain within the tent of Torah.

When R' Avrohom got older, he was appointed as a maggid shiur in Tiferes Bachurim in Leningrad (which was founded by the Rebbe Rayatz). He worked alongside his colleague, Rabbi Nachum Trebnik, who later worked in Tomchei Tmimim in Kfar Chabad and later still, served as rav of Kfar Chabad.

In 5698 (1938), an infamous year, the Yevsektzia planted an agent in the yeshiva. Thanks to his informing, both Rabbi Swerdlov and Rabbi Trebnik were arrested by the NKVD (the Russian secret police). The wicked ones tortured them because they wanted to know the names of the rest of the bachurim.

When they realized they wouldn't

get the information out of them they did a quickie trial (known as a troika) with three judges, and for the crimes of giving shiurim they were sentenced to ten years hard labor in Siberia.

After some years, R' Avrohom Swerdlov was freed and his joy was boundless. R' Trebnik on the other hand, remained in Siberia another five years. R' Avrohom's joy was not to last, for as soon as he returned to his home in Leningrad, he was drafted into the army, never to be heard from again. According to a letter from the army, he was killed in battle (may Hashem avenge his blood). Ironically, it was R' Trebnik who remained alive.

A CHASSIDIC RAV AND THE REBBE'S UPSET

Rabbi Yehoshua Lane, a rav in Beshenkowitz, was a great Chassid. He was the successor to our grandfather, Rabbi Yehoshua Nimotin. Since both were named Yehoshua, my grandfather was called "the first Shiya" and he was called, "the second Shiya." Rabbi Lane was a widower and he raised his children himself.

As rav of the city, all the dinei Torah came to him. One time there was a din Torah, and the defendant, a tough and wealthy individual, lost the case. He left the din Torah angrily and said to the rav, "I'll take care of you." Obviously, the rav did not give in, and he certainly did not pervert justice because of the man's threats.

After some time, the rich man made a mockery of the rav, saying he saw him secluded with a woman. Everybody knew that this was a lie perpetrated by the arrogant defendant. Since the rav was a great Chassid and a straight person, he went immediately to the Rebbe Rashab in Lubavitch, since the Rebbe was the one who had sent him to be a rav.

The rav told the Rebbe the story and concluded, "Rebbe, I resign from the rabbanus. Although it wasn't true, if they could say something like that about me, I have to say that in some subtle way I failed somehow, and therefore I do not deserve to be rav. I fully forgive the man who made up this story since it is for my good."

The Rebbe Rashab said, "You can forego your own honor, but you are not in charge of the honor due the rabbanus. Go back and continue in the position of rav." The Rebbe gave him a bracha for long life.

Less than a year went by and the wealthy man died; of his entire family, nobody remained.

My father concluded that when his father told him the story he explained that in Beshenkowitz they said that this happened because of a k'peida (righteous indignation) of the Rebbe, since the Rebbe had sent Rabbi Lane

"Short trousers from Beshenkowitz! Go back to your learning immediately. Is this why you came to Lubavitch - to watch how the lamp is lit?"

to be the rav. When they disparaged the rav, they were also disparaging the Rebbe and therefore the Rebbe did not forego the honor due the rabbanus.

A LESSON IN KABBALAS OL

In Cheshvan of 5676 (1916), my father traveled to Lubavitch to learn. The trip from Beshenkowitz to Lubavitch took three days: one day from Beshenkowitz to Vitebsk by wagon; one day from Beshenkowitz to Rudnia by train; one day of waiting for Faisha the wagon driver and traveling from Rudnia to Lubavitch.

When my father arrived in Lubavitch, they tested him and put him with R' Yehoshua Arsh of Dvinsk who was known as, "Der Dvinsker"; their mashgiach was R' Chatshe Himmelstein (may Hashem avenge his

blood).

The zal in Lubavitch had a large oil lamp on the wall with branches and lamps. When it grew dark, the shamas would come with his special stick that had fire on the end, with which he lit all the cups in the lamp. When my father, who, as mentioned above, was eleven years old, saw the "wonder" for the first time, he got up and watched how the lamp was lit.

Suddenly, he got a ringing slap from the mashgiach, who began to laugh at him. "Short trousers from Beshenkowitz! [The term "short trousers" is how they derisively referred to a child who still wore three-quarter pants, unlike older boys who wore long pants]. Go back to your learning immediately. Is this why you came to Lubavitch - to watch how the lamp is lit? Get back to your Gemara and learn!"

My father responded, "It is dark now and I can't see anything!"

Everybody in Lubavitch knew, explained my father, that Lazer Kantorchik didn't allow the lights to be lit until it was fully dark.

R' Chatshe said, "What kind of excuse is that? It's none of your business! Whether it's light or dark, you sit and learn!"

This was the welcome of kabbalas ol that you got in Lubavitch.

My father said that on Shabbos, after davening and eating the seuda, he would go to the large zal to hear how the older bachurim davened at length. He especially enjoyed listening to Rabbi Yisroel Jacobson's davening. R' Jacobson was "his" bachur — i.e., the bachur he admired. The sweet davening of R' Jacobson lasted until five in the afternoon!

WAR!

As war approached Beshenkowitz, the children from Beshenkowitz received a telegram that they should return home. The Rebbe was no longer in Lubavitch, and apparently,



the parents were afraid to have their children stay alone in Lubavitch. The reason the Rebbe left Lubavitch was not clear to the Chassidim (some knew that he wanted to distance himself from the war front for he absolutely did not want to come under the jurisdiction of the cursed Germans, although the Germans treated the Jews relatively well then, especially in comparison to the Russian Czar). This created panic among the parents who wanted their children home.

[In the foreword to Seifer HaZichronos volume three, it explains why the Rebbe did not want to be under the rule of the Germans for even one minute. This is what it says:

“The Rebbe Rashab regarded Germany as the Alter Rebbe regarded France. He absolutely did not want to fall into German hands, and when the Germans approached Lubavitch, he left with his entourage and with his yeshiva known as Tomchei T’mimim.

“He left for exile in Rostov where he searched for new vistas for his work as well as additional arenas for spreading and bolstering Yiddishkeit. Obviously, this was not due to his love for old Russia, and certainly not for Nickolai’s police. It is known that when Nickolai’s government ended, the Lubavitcher Rebbe said the SheHechyanu blessing.”]

The children went to the mashgiach and asked permission to go home. He scolded them: You just came to Lubavitch and you want to go home!

He did not give permission. Since they were young children who had received a telegram to return home, they began to cry and they said, “What should we do?”

The mashgiach said, “Go learn diligently and clear your minds of all ‘baalabatisha assumptions’ and Hashem will protect you.”

After a few days, they received some more telegrams from their

parents to come home. They gathered their belongings and returned home, without permission from the mashgiach.

WITH R’ SHAUL IN THE ATTIC

When my father returned to Beshenkowitz the city was already in a state of emergency, because they had begun drafting not only single young men but also heads of households. Even my grandfather received a draft

“The Rebbe Rashab regarded Germany as the Alter Rebbe regarded France. He absolutely did not want to fall into German hands, and when the Germans approached Lubavitch, he left with his entourage and with his yeshiva known as Tomchei T’mimim.”

notice. Every day, undercover agents from the army came to see if people were avoiding the army and there were informers too; the situation was terrible.

The first to flee were the melamdin, and then later, anybody under age 50 had to hide from prying eyes.

The melamed R’ Shaul Brook hid in one of the attics, where he stayed day and night. For a young married

man to leave the house when everybody his age was drafted, was extremely dangerous (in addition to which, every so often, there were raids by the military police aided by the informers, who searched for all the hidden draft dodgers).

After some time, R’ Shaul could not be there alone and he asked the children to stay with him for some hours of the day. None of them wanted to since the attic was stifling and had no window. However, he managed to convince my father to stay with him a few hours every day. Here is how he enticed him: R’ Shaul agreed to teach him for one hour and that was followed by another hour in which he tested R’ Shaul on Mishnayos by heart according to the order. As a reward for this, in the third hour, R’ Shaul told him stories of tzaddikim.

My father related that R’ Shaul was a terrific storyteller and would tell a story in a way that made it come alive.

My father said that R’ Shaul was fluent in all six orders of the Mishna as well as in *Likkutei Torah* and *Torah Ohr*. He had tested him himself.

[A few days before R’ Shaul passed away, my father-in-law, R’ Itche Gansburg, asked him how many times he learned *Likkutei Torah* and *Torah Ohr*. R’ Shaul answered, “Nu, you see that I am about to die and you want to have something to eulogize me with, get out of here!”]

YECHIDUS IN INSTALLMENTS

At that time, my father’s father could no longer remain in the city as he had gotten his draft notice. Since he was well liked and gregarious he was known by everybody, both because of his business and because of his public work, which put him in touch with many Jews and even gentiles from the police and municipality. He didn’t know what to do about the draft notice, whether to hide or flee.

In the end, he decided to travel to

the Rebbe Rashab. The trip was dangerous since the army constantly checked people's papers, and also because the roving militias began to take control and they would throw Jews off of trains. However, having no choice he decided to go and ask the Rebbe what to do.

Because of the situation in Russia, with the revolution having begun and soldiers on the roads, the Chassidim were not in constant contact with the Rebbe or the Rebbe's household. Every day there were changes, for the Rebbe traveled a lot, and they did not know where the Rebbe was (at that time, before the Rebbe decided to live in Rostov, and I think he was in Kremenchug at this time).

My grandfather knew that the only way to be with the Rebbe was to join up with the train on which the Rebbe traveled. When the train stopped at a station, the Rebbe sat on a bench in the train station. The way yechidus worked was you got off the train and stood on line. So the Chassidim stood on line, and whoever had a question to ask the Rebbe would do so.

Because of the state of emergency, the trains had no timetables and the train would stand in the station for as long as the conductor or someone else decided, but nobody knew how long.

It often happened that they were standing on line for yechidus and the train began to whistle and the Rebbe had to hurry back on to the train. Those who had not spoken to the Rebbe had to travel until the next station.



My grandfather took some possessions and began to travel and inquire about the Rebbe's whereabouts, until he found out where the Rebbe was. He waited on line and then asked the Rebbe what he should do about his draft notice. The Rebbe

said, "What's the rush?"

My grandfather did not have a chance to ask his next question for just at that moment the whistle blew and they had to dash off to the train. At the next station, he stood on line again and when it was his turn, he asked the Rebbe, "What should I do?"

The Rebbe said he should go to a certain city and buy a passport of someone who had died and begin using that name. Hashem would protect him.

And that's what happened. My grandfather got a new identity, but obviously, he did not return to his city because everybody knew him there. He remained in Vitebsk. From time to time, he would go home and visit his wife and children.

When he would visit, friends would spread out in the surrounding streets and they kept guard and ensured that nobody went to his house and met him there. The fear was lest they begin asking questions: Where are you, what are you doing, etc. Despite the care taken with every word, he

was likely to trip up and reveal the secret that he was going under a new identity. Therefore, they made sure that no uninvited guests went to his home and he only met his family.

This went on throughout the war.

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THE TORAH LEADING THE WAY

BY SHAI GEFEN

WE CAN DO IT

I was there with the tens of thousands in Kfar Maimon who were ready to be *moser nefesh* in order to stop the expulsion decree. Entire families with little children left their homes in order to participate in the march on Gush Katif.

The entire nation saw the determination and the heroism. Whoever saw them said to themselves: Who could stand up against such people? The many Lubavitchers in attendance did *mitvzaim* throughout the days of the march, spread the *besuras ha'Geula*, and danced with the Torah designated for Gush Katif.

If this enormous crowd could get to Gush Katif, there is no question that the expulsion would be stopped. If you saw the crowds and its *mesirus nefesh*, you knew that we could have won, if we wanted to. The police and soldiers who surrounded us were ready to break. If we had stayed another day or two in Kfar Maimon, they would not have stopped us.

We must point out one of the big problems we have with some of the religious Zionist leaders who still worship the idol that is the State. These people cannot bring themselves to implement a unilateral disengagement from the government, and therefore, when it came time to decide to push on for Gush Katif, they wavered and then failed.

Moshe Feiglin said it thus: "If you were present among the tens of thousands who traveled as one cluster leading the way, you experienced a once-in-a-lifetime experience. None of the marchers imagined that this wave would stop, of its own free will, after a

few hundred meters.

"But when this river of holy humanity reached Kfar Maimon, the weakness of the religious Zionist leadership was revealed to all. It wasn't the fences that stopped them, nor the police and soldiers. What stopped us were the old ingrained attitudes. What stopped them was the feeling that in order to be Israelis, to belong, to be legitimate, they need the approval of the old, secular, Zionist leadership."

The Torah tells us that in war, "he who is afraid and faint of heart should return home" in order not to ruin the morale.

I will quote an excerpt from a letter that Rabbi Gedalia Akselrod, a distinguished Chabad rabbi who was at the march, wrote to the Yesha Council about how they shockingly blew leading us to victory.

"Whoever was at Kfar Maimon this week and saw the youth, the children, the women and older people, saw how the *Sh'china* dwells on them and the spirit of victory goes with them. From Heaven, you were given the privilege of leading the battle to victory. What a pity that you did not carry out this lofty mission."

It's not too late. The Yesha Council must decide whether it really wants to win. We have the ability to win, and the people are waiting impatiently for the order to move on to Gush Katif.

We must march towards our brethren in Gush Katif and northern Shomron and bodily stop the evil expulsion. Even if we were disappointed about not marching on Gush Katif, we must continue to participate in protest activities, and with Hashem's help, we will be able to

announce, "didan natzach!"

THE ARON BRIS HASHEM WENT AHEAD OF THEM

The Torah written in the *z'chus* of the Jews of Gush Katif and northern Shomron led the march towards Gush Katif. It wasn't only a symbol of the fight, it was much more than that.

The plan is called "Disengagement," but it is really a plan to tear Am Yisroel not only from its land but also from its G-d and its Torah. It's these two perspectives, the laws of Torah versus the laws of the State that are in a collision course with one another. The Torah scroll that led the march was a powerful expression of the fact that this battle is one between Am Yisroel, who is attached to the Torah, and the government that threw off the yoke of Torah.

It's not for naught that in the worldwide media the Torah that led the march took center stage. When the Jewish people used to march to war, the Torah led the camp, to show that our strength is derived from our holy Torah.

In one of his letters, the Rebbe explains that the aron that was taken to war, *had* to be taken to war, and if they didn't have it, they could not go to war. In our war too, we must know that it is only with the strength of the Torah that we can be victorious. Furthermore, the battle for Eretz Yisroel is a battle inextricably linked with the battle for *shleimus ha'Torah*. Whoever attacks Eretz Yisroel is actually attacking the *shleimus* of Torah.

Rabbi Menachem Ziemba (who died in the Holocaust, may Hashem avenge his blood), a member of the Moetzes G'dolei HaTorah, said that the Holy



Land is compared to a Torah scroll. Just as when one letter is missing in a Torah, this invalidates the entire Torah, so too, if one inch of Eretz Yisroel is missing, it affects the entire land.

Our fight is a fight for the Torah and a fight for Hashem. We are not fighting for some ideology or another. Our fight, the fight of Chabad Chassidim, is for *d'var Hashem zu halacha*. The Torah that leads the way breaks all barriers, and we saw this openly in our march towards Kfar Maimon.

The Torah written at the initiative of the Worldwide Ma'at'ch to Save the Nation and the Land, will be taken to Gush Katif, with Hashem's help, with great pomp and celebration. And with the strength of the Torah we will succeed in breaching the walls of Kisufim and these days will be transformed into days of rejoicing.

WARRIOR AGAINST HIS OWN PEOPLE

"There will be no Disengagement under fire," promised Sharon numerous times. In the meantime, the road towards Disengagement is paved with blood and smoke. The terrorists are butchering Jews. Kassam missiles are being shot in numbers unknown for a long time. Sharon promised retaliation but he's doing nothing, so as not to ruin the Disengagement celebration.

This is what's going on even *before* we withdraw (may it not happen). Can you imagine what will happen *after* Disengagement?

Sharon is showing himself as a brave warrior fighting against his own people. Nearly 20,000 soldiers and police deployed to besiege their fellow Jews in Kfar Maimon, when just the day before, Kassams were shot at moshavim in the area. Sharon, for some reason, didn't use the forces he had amassed in the area in order to retaliate against the enemy that seeks to kill us.

If that wasn't enough, it was revealed that the deployment of the forces against the Jews in Kfar Maimon

was at the expense of abandoning our borders. For about two days, there were dozens of kilometers of the Israeli-Egyptian border that were open, with no military presence. This was after a unit of Border Guards that carried out security operations the length of the border, were sent off to Kfar Maimon, and the reservist soldiers that replaced them showed up much later.

"We didn't even get an orderly rundown of what actions were needed on the border," said one of the reservist commanders. "When we got to the bases, we were shocked by what we saw; there were only support personnel like trackers and clerks. Throughout the day, there were sorties the length of the border. Hesder soldiers who were there did military activities, but it was only limited in scope. They did not carry out sorties, and the sorties were only picked up on Wednesday morning, because Tuesday night we were still busy getting things organized."

Who knows what dangerous implements of terror were smuggled into Gaza while Sharon tried to set brother against brother.

In The Times Online from London, Uzi Mahnaimi said, "Members of Israel's feared Duvdevan (Cherry) commando unit, who have concentrated on hunting Palestinian militants on the West Bank, are training for the evacuation at a dummy settlement in a remote desert location. The commandos, who have killed hundreds of Palestinian militants over the years, are now being told, that in the event of an attack, to be ready to open fire on Israelis, but only in response to an attack on fellow soldiers," Mr. Mahnaimi added.

One of the Duvdevan soldiers told a reporter that their commanders asked them if they were prepared to take part in removing the settlers. "Obviously, we did not refuse because we are a volunteer unit, but I must admit that

We saw police officers crying at the gravesite of Baba Sali in Netivot, asking that they not be forced to be a part of this crime. We saw how soldiers are torn up inside about having to be part of an army that gives orders that go against their conscience.

while I am happy to kill lowlifes in the West Bank, we hope to be unemployed in August. They told us that this task is as important as fighting terrorists.

"We were successful with the Arabs but I am not sure about this operation. They trained us to kill terrorists and I don't know if we can do this to our brothers too."

We saw police officers crying at the gravesite of Baba Sali in Netivot, asking that they not be forced to be a part of this crime. We saw how soldiers are torn up inside about having to be part of an army that gives orders that go against their conscience.

We pray to Hashem, "Avinu Malkeinu, tear up this evil decree!"

BITACHON B'TOCH BALAGAN

BY CHANA KATZ

With less than two weeks to go before the government's planned expulsion of Jews from Eretz Yisroel (starting with Gush Katif and four northern Shomron communities), G-d forbid, the atmosphere around here is getting very tense.

Sometimes things knock you down, but the idea is to count your blessings, say "Yechi," and get back into the ring. Everyone knows how intense things can get Erev Shabbat. So now that it's Erev Geula Shleima, things seem a thousand times more powerful...

The bachurim were hardly settled into their makeshift yeshivas on the Avnei Cheifitz hilltop here and in Sa-Nur last week, when an emergency call went out that some 100 Israeli soldiers were putting up a roadblock at the entrance to Shavei Shomron, which is the last yishuv on the road before Sa-Nur, where tens of families and bachurim are sweltering in tent cities in order to fight against the evacuation.

Within minutes, the bachurim piled into cars and vans and arrived at Shavei Shomron from both directions. They joined settlers in a tussle to disassemble the roadblock. A powerful video taken by one member of Anash shows the struggle in vivid detail. There wasn't any

vicious fighting between soldiers and settlers, but rather a sea of bodies immersed in a sweaty struggle, almost like a football team, with the soldiers locking arms and trying to put up the roadblock and the settlers trying to carry away the pieces of the roadblock. It was a scene of chaos.

It goes without saying that if the bachurim and settlers had not been there that the roadblock would have been put up without a struggle. It shows how important it is for every person who can, to be here. But sadly, even some of the strongest shleimus ha'Aretz advocates are sitting in their homes and shuls throughout Eretz Yisroel and despairingly asking of those who are already here, "How long can it (the Shomron and Gush Katif) last!" It's enough to make you scream out.

(Word has just come that the Army is planning this week to close the northern Shomron roads to non-residents, as they have already done in Gush Katif. For all this time, cars and buses have had free reign to enter here with supplies, Anash, etc. What exactly is everyone waiting for?

(It was also announced today that two more settlements around here are willing to host Chabad yeshivas, since it has been proven that the dedicated and extraordinarily motivated T'mimim, with their

learning and peulos, are having a strengthening effect around here. The rav of one yishuv even said he would clear out his yeshiva so the bachurim can come these summer weeks. But there is a need for the bachurim!)

* * *

There was a very unusual end to last week's Shavei Shomron roadblock incident. About ten minutes after the tug-of-war began, an army commander called off the mission. He said the soldiers didn't want a fight. And the entire situation did a breathtaking turnaround. The scuffle came to a jolting halt and the bachurim started dancing and singing Didan Netzach and then started to dance with the soldiers themselves. Some of them even went to the soldiers and kissed them and hugged them. And the bachurim put on t'fillin with almost every soldier there! It was amazing.

Shomron shliach Uriel Gorfinkle, who was there, said the incredible turnaround showed that the soldiers themselves are really not into the struggle and they just need the support from the settlers and Anash. This underlines the urgency of more bachurim coming, more members of Anash, as well as Jewish American college students and the baby

boomers who experienced the anti Vietnam and civil rights marches. This is the shleimus of the demonstrations of the sixties.

* * *

There are many who are working tirelessly to do whatever they can. One striking example of such help comes from a member of Anash whose struggle with financial problems since the intifada began is enough to keep her occupied, let alone taking care of her children and baby. Yet she has been working around the clock to get people ready to greet Moshiach – and provide for the needs of the bachurim and settlers who are out here. Under the guidance of shluchim and rabbanim she also compiled a comprehensive, practical “to do” list of ways to stop the disengagement in areas of action, Torah, T’filla and Tz’daka that is useful to men, women and children worldwide. (For an e-mail copy, send your request to help4Israel@hotmail.com)

“We have to be so pure with our faith and have bitachon that we will do our part and Hashem will do His,” said Chana Devorah Schwartz of Yerushalayim. “The Rebbe said we’re going to have the Geula, so part of the program is to get Moshiach clothes ready and to have our tambourines. We can’t start losing faith and worrying and crying. That was the mistake of the spies and the whole message of this three week period! We must simply DO everything we can, accompanied with faith that Hashem will bring the Geula. The Rebbe taught us that when we have real bitachon, real faith, that Hashem responds midda-k’neged-midda. There are no giants in the land; only Hashem.”

“K’dima (forward),” says Mrs. Schwartz. “We’re already in the land, we’re going to hang on to our land

and G-d willing welcome all the Jews here to greet Moshiach.”

* * *

Last week, two very special girls (with very special parents) arrived from Tzfas in order to make a summer program for the girls here in our yishuv. They came with bags loaded with supplies for the day

There wasn't any vicious fighting between soldiers and settlers, but rather a sea of bodies immersed in a sweaty struggle, almost like a football team, with the soldiers locking arms and trying to put up the roadblock and the settlers trying to carry away the pieces of the roadblock. It was a scene of chaos.

camp (thanks in a big part to donations from Anash in Tzfas) and with enthusiasm and diligence. Within a day, they had already opened the camp with some seven or eight girls, who all reported they had a wonderful time.

Most of the families around here, even those who are “dati” have

televisions in their homes. Baruch Hashem, thanks to the two dedicated counselors who have volunteered to do this project, some of the children around here will have a beautiful – and fun – Chassidishe experience!

* * *

The Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach always stressed the importance of checking mezuzos and t’fillin. A new campaign to do so has gotten underway in the northern Shomron communities. Some of those going out on this mitvza last week said they were shocked to find entrances to apartment buildings completely without mezuzos and even homes with dati families that had no more than mezuzos on their front door.

Money has been pledged by some in chutz la’Aretz for this project. It is a massive task to go house to house and bag the mezuzos that need to be checked and help put up mezuzos properly and affix those to where there are none. Yet how, at this time, can there not be proper mezuzos protecting every home in the Shomron, Gush Katif and in every Jewish home and facility throughout the entire world?

* * *

Last week, three detectives appeared at my door (when I was alone with our three young daughters) and flipped open their badge and asked to see my husband. He wasn’t here, so they left me with a summons for him to be at the police station in Ariel the next day. They told my husband that he had been driving a blue Volvo and was involved in a hit-and-run accident with an army jeep. For two hours they asked him the same questions and my husband answered the same answers: mainly, that his Volvo is not blue, has never been blue, and that he would have stopped to exchange papers if G-d forbid he had been in

that situation.

At one point during the interrogation, the police started to fill out a paper and told my husband that he was going to be arrested. At that point, my husband said he refused to answer more questions without a lawyer present. It turned out later that the paper the police investigator had been writing was actually his release form! He was fingerprinted and finally dismissed.

While this experience was going on, a member of Anash, who accompanied my husband, was saying Chitas in the waiting room of the regional police station. He started with the Chumash, then went on to *Tanya*, and eventually started learning the Rebbe's inyanim on shleimus ha'Aretz. All this was done not in a quiet voice, but rather a voice that could be heard from one end of the police station to the other.

At one point, when this quite-

The entire situation did a breathtaking turnaround. The scuffle came to a jolting halt and the bachurim started dancing and singing Didan Netzach and then started to dance with the soldiers themselves.

loud-learning had just started, there seemed to be a simultaneous shout from almost every office for him to shut up. Several policeman came over and, obviously agitated, asked

him to learn more quietly. But he continued in the loud voice. After awhile, another policeman came over and said, "Continue, we need more like you," others said, "Kol HaKavod," and one officer even got into a discussion about Moshiach.

* * *

A second Chabad Shabbaton was held this past Shabbos at Shavei Shomron with two separate groups – one from Anash led by shliach Uriel Gorfinkle and Rabbi Dovid Drukman – and another consisting of some two buses of bachurim from the Tzfas yeshiva. As the shliach's wife, Esther, looked at the bachurim circling the bima and singing "Yechi" with resounding strength during the Kabbalas Shabbat and Maariv prayers, she said, "This is the Geula. Years ago, there was nothing here. Now look. This is the Geula." The Rav of Shavei Shomron even offered a yeshiva facility for Chabad bachurim to learn in this summer.

The Shabbaton was incredibly inspiring but it was difficult in a way to have to see the buses pack up and everyone leave after the Shabbaton ended. In a few days time, it may not be so easy to get back into the northern Shomron. But then again, maybe we should make plans but we must also keep our eyes only on the leader, the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach.

Everyone should come out here before they put up the roadblocks, but don't forget to wear clothes fit to greet Moshiach!

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LAWYER ELYAKIM HAETZNI ONE OF THE LEADING SETTLERS IN YESHA, IN AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH BEIS MOSHIACH:

'WE MUST CHANGE THE RULES OF THE FIGHT'

INTERVIEW BY SHAI GEFEN

Following the events in Kfar Maimon, lawyer Elyakim Haetzni underscores the great disappointment and declares: We can beat Sharon! Kfar Maimon was a rehearsal for the real battle. If we expect mesirus nefesh from those living in Gush Katif, then we too must demonstrate mesirus nefesh!

Tens of thousands marched on Kfar Maimon, but there was the feeling of great disappointment that we could have broken through and headed for Gush Katif, yet we didn't.

That feeling was justified. A number of factors converged here, namely, the leadership of the Yesha council, the group that led the march, knew that it could not continue to remain in Kfar Maimon although it wanted to stay. Now we know that if we would have remained in Kfar Maimon for another two days, we would have won. The security forces were about to break. The reason we did not stay was because the residents of Kfar Maimon said that they couldn't take it anymore. From the beginning, we

weren't meant to be in Kfar Maimon but in the huge parking lot that was designated for us to sleep in. However, the first morning, after the police swooped down, over 50,000 people landed in Kfar Maimon.



I don't have sufficient words of praise for our hosts in Kfar Maimon. All the systems in the yishuv collapsed, especially the sewage. The evil Sharon government began to persecute Kfar Maimon, not allowing a vehicle in to remove the sewage. Nor did they allow them to work the fields. People in Kfar Maimon said that if this went on for another day, they would be finished. So we didn't have the option of remaining in the yishuv.

So what do you think should have happened?

Wednesday morning, Bentzi Lieberman said that at the end of the day we were going to disperse. The crowds were disappointed and I demanded an explanation. Lieberman denied it and Zambish denied it too. Kradi said it would be over that evening.

Wednesday evening they convened us all. The crowds had already been standing at the gate with the intent to break through towards Gush Katif. The big question is why they didn't break the illegal siege. They laid siege to a yishuv in Eretz Yisroel and the most obvious thing to do was to break the siege. They didn't tell the people they had made an agreement with the police that they had had them

march endlessly within the yishuv only to tell them to go home.

Of course, this was disappointing. I think they blew a historic opportunity. When you ask the Yesha Council leadership about it, they say they were threatened with open fire.

Do you believe that?

I don't believe it.

We expect the people in Gush Katif to lose tens of millions of dollars, and to exhibit mesirus nefesh. What kind of mesirus nefesh did we have? The minimum required of us was to try and break the siege. Even if we failed to reach the Gush, we would have known that we broke the dictator's siege.

That we broke out of Kfar Maimon would have been the ultimate uprising for democracy. It would have broken the morale of Sharon's policemen. Look at how the police presented what happened at Kfar Maimon as their victory.

It would have likely cost us in beatings by the police, right?

Storm troopers like Siso and other sadists like him – based on what he said, which was publicized and made people recoil in horror – would have helped us. I maintain that if they would have beaten women and children, that would have been the end of Sharon's police.

Did the Yesha Council leaders fear taking responsibility?

Okay, let the reader decide. What should the Yesha Council have done? Listen, some would say as you say and some would say as I say. The Yesha Council convened a panel of rabbanim to decide. I know there were rabbanim who said they should break the siege and head for Gush Katif. It's forbidden to cut a fence when besieged?! No one will dispute the fact that violence is prohibited. However, this was their violence against us!

The Yesha Council's perspective was based on the view that you can't do anything against the police and security forces. According to this I wonder why we got together to march on Gush Katif in the first place!

You paint a bleak picture.

If the approach does not change, these people will say that the limits are that you cannot stand up to the police, and when there are these limits, you cannot win this war. Period.

What's next?

It's impossible to carry on with

The Yesha Council's perspective was based on the view that you can't do anything against the police and security forces. Accordingly, I wonder why we got together to march on Gush Katif in the first place!

these limitations which paralyze us. If things continue this way, then Sharon's iron hand will prevail. He oppressed the tens of thousands who came to gather legally, a basic right in a democratic society. What Sharon did was anti-democratic.

As a lawyer, my relationship with the law, justice, and the police is clear. If we didn't have them, we'd have anarchy. What Sharon did here was governmental tyranny. What the police are doing to people, starting with the arrest of children, is terrorism.

What do you think about what

Sharon did with the busses?

Terrorism. No less. In some instances, they forcibly removed people from busses. They beat people. One police officer said openly, "I know I am carrying out an illegal order but it's an order."

So it's hopeless?

Definitely not. If you know ahead of time that the end will be like last Wednesday evening, then there's no reason to go. I think we have to do what was supposed to have happened in the march from Netivot. It doesn't matter from which direction. Maybe it should be from two directions simultaneously, but it could only be on condition that our hands will not be tied. We don't strike at anybody, G-d forbid, but nobody can stop a massive crowd of people who want to march to Gush Katif. Unfortunately, the last time we turned the other cheek.

What did you think of the people who came on the march?

I can happily tell you that Am Yisroel has not been worn down. We have a very special nation. I have never seen such a large number of people together, people willing to go with mesirus nefesh in order to save the Jewish people. The nation is stronger than its leaders, and definitely stronger than the Israeli government.

Can we stop the Disengagement?

The masses that came to Kfar Maimon can block the Kisufim junction. As soon as it's closed, they can't expel anyone. In Kiev in the Ukraine, tens of thousands stood in freezing weather, and here, we stood in extreme heat.

It's not easy, and people have to know that we will need to withstand the threats and may be beaten. They will break bones. We won't lift a finger! They will do it to us. That's what happened with Dr. Martin Luther King. They set dogs on them and water cannons. We're not just talking about jail. The deep hatred

exhibited then is indescribable, but perseverance is what carried the day.

There's no such thing as an "easy fight." There is no free lunch. A fight isn't a picnic. In a fight, you are ready to pay the price in order to walk away with results.

The date for Disengagement looms close.

We are in the final stage of the battle. Maybe what happened in Kfar Maimon was positive after all, because it was a rehearsal for what awaits us and we can learn the

lessons that we need to learn.

We don't want to create factions. We must march together and win. However, the rules must change, the sooner the better.

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FAITH UNDER SIEGE

BY SHOLOM DOVBER CROMBIE

*Among the tens of thousands of Jews who went to support their brothers and sisters, the heroes of Gush Katif, were hundreds of Chabad Chassidim who came from all over the country. For three days, the Chabad Chassidim reached out and spread the wellsprings. * They brought with them the elevated spirit of the Chag HaGeula and the victory against the forces of evil. * A Sheva Brachos was celebrated for a young Chabad couple in a tent in Kfar Maimon. * Impressions from a Chabad perspective on what took place in Netivot and Kfar Maimon.*

It was late at night after a long day in which tens of thousands participated in a huge march from Netivot, and it was time to go to sleep. It was the historic first night in the war for the shleimus of Eretz Yisroel. Tens of thousands left their daily routine, left air conditioned homes, hot food, and evening news behind, and went to sleep on the grass in the South. In the crowd, you could see elderly people as well as families with babies. Some of them put up a tent for the night while others spread out their sleeping bags or some kind of mattress and went to sleep.

Within a short time, the giant parking lot near Kfar Maimon and the agricultural area around it had become a tent city. Entire yishuvim with young and old were there, ready to sacrifice whatever it took, as long as the decree of destruction was abolished. It was humid, and being that it was Yud-Beis Tammuz, the moon was nearly full.

In the eastern corner of the Kfar Maimon parking lot, in an area where a narrow place had been set aside for public stands, a few dozens Lubavitchers gathered. A large white sheet was spread out and shortly after, you were able to watch a video of the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach



speaking about timely subjects.

The projector, brought by Doron Oron of the Moshiach and Geula Center in Yerushalayim, worked like a charm and the Rebbe's voice could be heard from afar. A large crowd gathered and despite the late hour and tiredness, people were interested in hearing what the Nasi HaDor had to say.

The sicha that was shown also contributed to the special atmosphere for the Rebbe was crying out, saying how could a Jew consider giving away parts of the holy land to terrorists!

A few meters away, I could see a Lubavitcher from Yerushalayim running amongst the tents. He explained to me that he was looking

for a bottle of mashke that he had armed himself with in order to say l'chaim, for after all, it was Yud-Beis Tammuz and the Chag HaGeula.

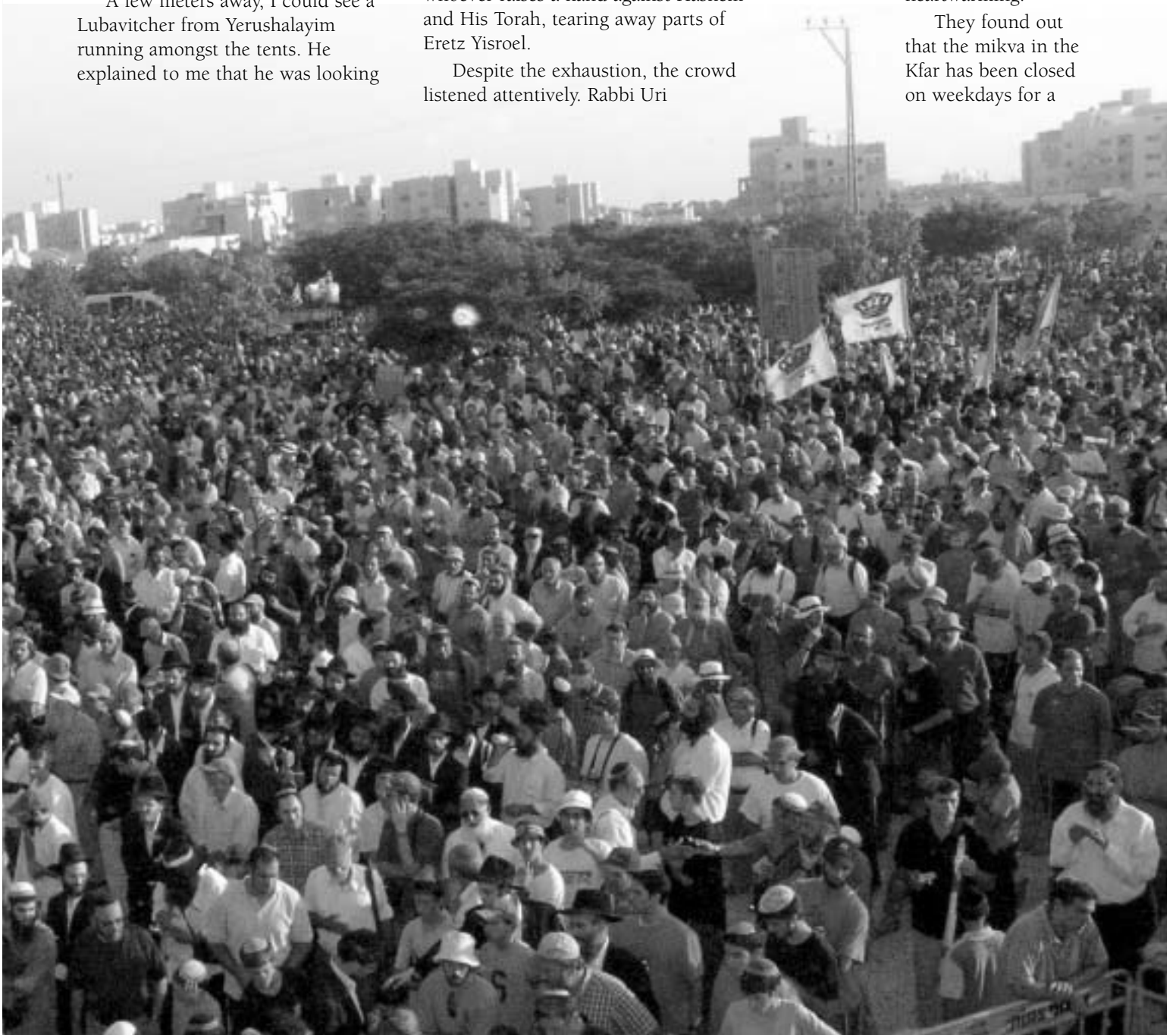
He found the mashke and the crowd sat down to a Chassidische farbrengen. There was a strong feeling of togetherness. The Rebbe's sicha concluded and the crowd sang a niggun. Afterwards, Rabbi Shimon Veitzenhandler of B'nei Brak spoke. He strengthened those who came and wove together the Rebbe Rayatz's fight against the Russian dictatorship and the Rebbe MH"Ms fight against whoever raises a hand against Hashem and His Torah, tearing away parts of Eretz Yisroel.

Despite the exhaustion, the crowd listened attentively. Rabbi Uri

Lemberg, mashpia in the Chabad yeshiva in Chaifa, joined the farbrengen. He too focused on the connection between this giant march and this special date in the Chabad calendar.

A few Chassidim wound their way through the pathways of the Kfar, looking for a mikva for the next morning's immersion. They were welcomed at the entrance to the Kfar by Rabbi Dovid Dudkowitz, rav of yishuv Yitzhar in the Shomron. He warmly shook their hands and said, "When you see Chabad Chassidim, it's heartwarming."

They found out that the mikva in the Kfar has been closed on weekdays for a



number of years now. Despite the late hour, they didn't give up. They had a brief discussion with the person in charge and this problem was solved. Thus, the basic requirements for avodas Hashem in the morning were assured.

The large numbers of people were not taken into account by the organizers. They did not anticipate that so many people would join the march. The area designated for sleeping in the fields around Kfar Maimon was full, and latecomers had to look for alternate places in the Kfar's gardens.

The residents of Kfar Maimon happily opened their homes to the guests. In some gardens, tables were set up and food was set out. Some residents offered the use of their electricity while others offered showers.

The first stage of the march had reached its peak with tens of thousands of people determined not to give in, and despite the discomfort and difficulties, they stayed put.

My brain worked slowly at this hour as I tried to recall the day's events. It began with police orders not to allow the crowds to get to the opening event in Netivot. In the afternoon you could see leaders of the Yesha Council moving uncertainly in the area of Baba Sali's gravesite in Netivot. They were afraid that the police had managed to scare off the crowds, which would have made all their work of the past weeks go down the drain. However, they soon discovered that their worries were for naught. At 4:00 o'clock thousands gathered, despite the police blockades and despite the inability of bus drivers to get through. People made their way to Netivot with Jewish determination.

Yesha Council representative, Yaakov Ben Zimra went up to the podium and assured the crowd that the march would take place. "It won't be easy," he said. "The sun is beating down and the weather forecast is that

I am positive that we will win; there's nothing to discuss. The truth is that we already won the real war, and for that, we must thank Arik Sharon. Look at these great children, look at this huge crowd that came here despite everything and how it is demonstrating with Jewish pride to be a part of those who hold the Torah dear.

tomorrow will be even hotter. The police chiefs have promised to do what they can to stop us, but Jewish persistence will prevail."

The crowd cheered. Ben Zimra

said they could have begun the opening session, but the organizers of the march decided to wait for the thousands who were still making their way to Netivot.

Moshe Arens, former defense minister, also attended. He used security considerations to explain what a disaster uprooting the Jews from Gaza and northern Shomron would be. He didn't speak as a politician; his words were clear and honest, reminiscent of what the Rebbe said, to listen solely to the military experts, who don't take politics into account.

An hour later, you couldn't help but be impressed by the determination of the tens of thousands who had arrived. A group of people standing behind me exchanged notes about how they had managed to get there despite the blockades. One had taken a rented car, another accompanied a friend.

Rabbi Boruch Abuhatzera, rav of Netivot and son of the mekubal Baba Sali z"l, opened the event, ending his silence on this subject. He prayed that Hashem would abolish the plans of our enemies. He concluded by encouraging the heroes in Gush Katif.

Rabbanim, mekubalim, and public figures from all walks of life, filled the dais. Rabbi Natan Bukovza led the



The shul in Kfar Maimon was packed



Achdus in T'filla – Soldiers and those besieged in Kfar Maimon daven Mincha together

recitation of T'hilim as the d'veikus of the crowd intensified with each verse. Verse by verse, we poured out our souls with prayers from a broken heart.

The t'filla gathering ended and the crowd continued to grow. Am Yisroel does not give in. It rises up above the obstacles and lifts its head to declare: The holy land is our eternal heritage.

The color yellow joins the orange. Dozens of yellow Moshiach flags are visible in the crowd and highlight the special ko'ach of this war, the ko'ach of Melech HaMoshiach. When the crowd bursts into song, the flags are waved and are seen in the distance. The Lubavitcher contingent, which stands out in the crowd, is acknowledged by some speakers who stress the unique quality of this gathering.

The organizers of the march decide that despite the large crowd already

there, the march would be postponed to later in the evening to enable the thousands who hadn't arrived yet to arrive at the start of the march.

The waiting period was used by the Chabad contingent to begin the special Hachnasas Seifer Torah that was written in the merit of residents of Gush Katif and northern Shomron.

The large crowd gathered at the gravesite building of the Baba Sali. Rabbanei Chabad marched at the head, holding the Torah. You could see Jews of every stripe in the crowd, not-yet observant Jews alongside chareidim, residents of Netivot and Lubavitchers, all taking part in this simcha shel mitzva.

The uplifting atmosphere swept up the Jewish heart and removed all barriers. A large crowd gathered to rejoice together with the joy of the Torah. Rabbi Sholom Dovber Volpe spoke, explaining that since, in all

wars of Hashem the aron led the way, here too, the Torah leads the way.

Outside the gravesite was a car that had a crown, decorations and lights, and to the sound of music from the loudspeakers, the crowd danced. The joy was contagious. Then they danced with the Torah within the tziyun. Chabad niggunim and hakafof niggunim were played, and although it was hot and humid the spiritual atmosphere was great.

At nine in the evening, the march got under way. We all knew that many obstacles still awaited us. Nobody was afraid despite the knowledge that the march would be stopped by the police.

We all wore backpacks and walked in the dark. We sang and everybody felt the same feeling, that this was the Exodus from Egypt. Just like in the illustrations of the Hagada.

About two kilometers from the entrance to Kfar Maimon, all our fears came to pass. Rows and rows of soldiers and policemen were spread out into the fields, an obstacle on our way to our destination. Hundreds of young people did not waste time. They approached the soldiers and spoke to their hearts. One spoke about Jewish mutual responsibility while another addressed security concerns. Heart to heart, they stood lovingly as brothers and pleaded: Don't do this. You could see the soldiers and police melting.

Other young folk decided to take tactical action. They gathered at one of the points along the chain and broke in, breaking apart the hands of the soldiers and continuing onward. The first blockade was broken. A few minutes went by and all the police blockades that were set up on the road leading to the Kfar were removed.

In the morning, we heard the sound systems announcing, "We are surrounded. Get organized quickly and enter the Kfar. Every second counts and every minute is critical."

The crowd of tens of thousands didn't wait and like soldiers in uniform the people listened amazingly quickly. From information that got passed around we learned that around the giant parking lot, that had turned into a tent city overnight, we were surrounded by close to 20,000 soldiers and policemen. A frightening sight. We were under siege. This is something we only read about in books, and now it was taking place around us! It was easy to see how the soldiers and police were not pleased with their job and they allowed people to enter Kfar Maimon.

A police helicopter patrolled the Kfar with equipment generally used to keep tabs on Arabs. The helicopter and the enormous police presence caused the heart to beat faster. We kept reminding ourselves that we weren't interested in war but in

helping our brothers and sisters, the heroes in Gush Katif. We were going to do this with mutual love and respect, and this is why the crowd forwent its personal comfort and went to rest in the fields of Kfar Maimon.

Within a short time, the Kfar turned into a huge shul. Jews gathered on every grassy knoll to daven Shacharis and hundreds of minyanim began davening. In the big shul, we met the rav of Kiryat Mochkin, Rabbi Dovid Meir Drukman, surrounded by people asking halachic questions.

A group of Lubavitchers showed up fresh from their morning immersion in the mikva. They sat on one of the lawns near the shul and studied one of the maamarim for 12-13 Tammuz. More Lubavitchers joined them.

Many took advantage of the positive interactions between the Lubavitchers and the Gush Emunim guys and spent the time learning *Tanya* with those who expressed an interest in it.

The organizers of the march announced over the loudspeakers that as long as the order wasn't given to move, the people were asked to stay put. Outside the shul yard, dozens of shelters were put up to shield people from the heat of the day and a number of shiurim were given.

As people finished Shacharis, they joined the shiurim and you got the impression that in the area of Kfar Maimon there was a major split between two utterly different realities.

Outside the Kfar boundaries were

thousands of soldiers and policemen. They stood arm in arm, their faces closed, their presence a live siege on the people in the Kfar. Many police cars came and went, bringing more and more police and soldiers. The police helicopter continued to hover. Huge numbers were deployed to the area, but within the Kfar, the spirit ruled. This spirit, built on emuna, not only didn't break at the scenes beyond the fence, but on the contrary. It seemed as though the harsh reality beyond the fence dissipated as you crossed into Kfar Maimon.

In the area of the shul I saw a huge crowd gathered under one of the shelters, listening to Rabbi Dudkowitz. He mentioned that it was Yud-Beis Tammuz: "We have here among us many Chabad Chassidim. We all read about the strength of the Rebbe Rayatz, who didn't fear anybody and who was unafraid to loudly say the truth of Torah. It's no coincidence that we are gathered here on this significant date in order to tell the world, strongly and with determination that Eretz Yisroel is our eternal heritage."

He quoted another few sentences in Yiddish from the Rebbe Rayatz's writings and translated them into Ivrit. The crowd took it all in.

Chabad's work amazed people as some men and T'mimim went beyond the fence of the Kfar with t'fillin, and offered the soldiers and police a chance to do this mitzva. Some of the soldiers found it hard to agree at first, but many others willingly agreed to



Mass Shacharis in Kfar Maimon



Rabbi Elimelech Shachar and Rabbi M.M. Gluckowsky with Elie Yona



Rabbi Zimroni Tzik and Rabbi Refael Cheiruti



Rabbi Y.Y. Yeruslavsky



Rabbi Moshe Havlin speaking at the main gathering. Behind him is Rabbi Gedelia Akselrod

put on t'fillin.

The soldiers said that they too felt that Am Yisroel is one entity and that its achdus should not be breached. Many soldiers said they were only following orders because of lack of choice, but on Judgment Day, they would make it hard for their commanders to implement the Disengagement.

As the dialogue between soldiers and the group of Lubavitcher went on, they bonded. They felt how they are members of one nation. Other soldiers rolled up their sleeves and the Shma Yisroel rolled off their lips. This verse breaks all barriers that separate one

from another. They testify that Am Yisroel does indeed have what it takes to be victorious in this battle.

Within the Kfar, Chabad Chassidim used every minute to prepare the world to greet Moshiach. One Lubavitcher was learning Chassidus with a group of men from different backgrounds while another Lubavitcher got into a conversation with a bearded man wearing a large knitted yarmulke and discussed shlichus.

In the afternoon, a group of men gathered on one of the lawns of the Kfar to learn a maamer and farbreng. Someone brought a bottle of mashke

and some cake. Stories were told, and the significance of the Chag HaGeula was discussed. One person took out a copy of *The Arrest and Liberation of the Rebbe Rayatz* and a few curious boys sat down with him to read it. They expressed their amazement over the story.

While walking through the Kfar it became apparent that this wasn't the only farbrengen taking place at this time. Near the main plaza of the Kfar sat a group of men around Rabbi Peretz Friedman of Emanuel. They were studying a sicha of the Rebbe from 12-13 Tammuz. They didn't have s'farim but they learned from photocopies.

Close to 5:00 p.m. it was announced that a large gathering would take place with the participation of the tens of thousands who joined the march, at the central shul of Kfar Maimon. The media broadcast the estimate that about 40,000 people were present, while others were certain that many more tens of thousands were in the crowd.

The emcee called upon rabbanim to speak, one after the other. The rabbanim spoke about the strength of the Jewish people in the face of harsh decrees. Jews always struggled and they were victorious over forces that seemed invincible.

The atmosphere was electric with the feeling of victory, for nobody can

stand against the unity of the Jewish people. The gathering was powerful, fueled by the true strength of emuna that Am Yisroel would be victorious and that the Word of Hashem would endure forever.

The rabbanim finished speaking and the crowd burst into song. Circles were formed and thousands danced. What a Kiddush Hashem it was as tens of thousands gathered together to say, *d'var Hashem zu halacha* and to protest the uprooting of Jews from their land. On the side of the dais, I saw the rav of Tzfas, Rabbi Shmuel Eliyahu, speaking with a group of Lubavitchers from Tzfas.

The singing changed to the Chabad niggun of “*Utzu Eitza*” – how our enemies plan but their plans will be thwarted. Singer Aharon Razael thrilled the crowd with his song and thousands joined in. It reminded me of hakafof with the Rebbe. We were on an island of sanity in a sea of bereavement and pain, an island of fiery, eternal, and pure emuna.

On the other side of the shul, I saw Baruch Marzel of Chevron, reviewing Mishnayos by heart with his children. He said, “History is being made here. This is a once in fifty-year event. Whoever thought that Am Yisroel forgot what Jewish pride is should come here and see where we are today!”

So you think it's possible to win?

I am positive that we will win; there's nothing to discuss. The truth is that we already won the real war, and for that, we must thank Arik Sharon. Look at these great children, look at this huge crowd that came here despite everything and how it is demonstrating with Jewish pride to be a part of those who hold the Torah dear. Who dreamed of this, 25 years ago, during the expulsion from Yamit?

Why is it so clear to you that we will win. Look at the soldiers out there!

They think they can break us with force for they still haven't caught on to how strong the spirit is. They were



Learning Chassidus before Shacharis

sure that a month before the expulsion half the people would have left Gush Katif and northern Shomron, and look at what's going on! There isn't a single place in the yishuvim that can be populated that is still empty. Two families are living in one house, the main thing being to stop the expulsion.

Kids are being thrown into jail and they are forgoing their right to be released only because they refuse to accept the terms that are presented to them. Is that how they will win over us? They might have strength but we have the spirit of emuna that nobody can break.

* * *

Late at night, while thousands were sleeping, hundreds of Lubavitchers continued with the Hachnasas Seifer Torah. As long as the march was halted in Kfar Maimon the Torah was with us, but the tzibbur wanted to take the opportunity to rejoice with the Torah. The Torah was taken out of the main shul of Kfar Maimon, where it was placed for safekeeping, and hundreds of men and T'mimim went out to dance with the Torah. Leading the way was Rabbi Gedalia Akselrod and Rabbi Zimroni Tzik. As we approached the gates of the Kfar, we could see huge numbers of police at the ready. Since we

couldn't leave via the gate, the dancing continued near the exit with circles within circles rejoicing.

Many people joined in and after a while, we sang the niggunim of the Admurim. The d'veikus and elevated spirit made us forget our circumstances. Hearts felt ready to burst with the pure feelings that rose up and poured forth their pure song.

Despite the dust, the heat, the humidity, and the exhaustion after standing on our feet for so long, the crowds sang and sang, ending with the Rebbe's “Hu Elokeinu” and “Yechi.” All present promised to be present at the conclusion of the Hachnasas Seifer Torah in Gush Katif.

Some of the people attended a Sheva Brachos for the chassan Levi Yitzchok Nachshon, who had gotten married the evening before to the daughter of the mashpia, Rabbi Levi Yitzchok Ginsberg. He chose to have his first Sheva brachos in Kfar Maimon. The kalla's father spoke warmly in honor of the chassan and kalla, and the rest of the farbrengen centered on the Rebbe's war for shleimus ha'Aretz.

The crowd finally dispersed. Each of us felt that we are on the verge of a victory that will be remembered for generations to come as the turning point in the battle of Torah against political considerations.

Wednesday, the third day of the march, was a decisive one. Some people wanted to push on for Kisufim, however it was decided to continue as on the previous days. Many more people joined us in Kfar Maimon. They had heard about the incredible march and decided to be a part of it.

After Shacharis, the crowds were called to assemble near the shul. Head of the Hesder Yeshivos, Rabbi Chaim Drukman, went up to the platform and in a voice choked with emotion he began to sing, “Hashem will not abandon His nation, and He will not leave His inheritance.” The crowd joined in. The song turned into a

mighty prayer that wafted upwards from tens of thousands of throats.

On my right was a man who looked like he was over eighty. I looked into his eyes and saw the emotion they conveyed. The man's face crumpled and tears coursed down his face. I offered him a tissue but he didn't even notice me. He seemed to be in a different reality, a reality of fiery emuna.

Once again, there many speakers. Well-known rabbis and roshei

yeshivos spoke words of chizuk. Some of them mentioned the Rebbe. Then we heard from the organizers of the march. Tzviki Bar Chai said that while we were besieged, the huge numbers of police and soldiers there with us were being prevented from continuing their preparations for the expulsion.

He spoke about the reports he got from all over that expressed solidarity and admiration for the determination of the thousands in Kfar Maimon. Jews were announcing, "We will not allow you to rip away parts of our

holy land and give them to terrorists." He told us that until the next announcement we would continue to remain in Kfar Maimon.

After the successful Mivtza T'fillin of the day before, a larger group of men and T'mimim went out to meet with the soldiers. The z'chus of the mitzva would certainly stand by them, said a non-Lubavitcher to me, as he watched the Lubavitchers in action with amazement.

In the afternoon, a group gathered near the shul to hear a shiur on shleimus ha'Aretz from Rabbi Yitzchok Lifsh of Tzfas, who explained how the entire struggle is to be seen as the fight of the Rebbe the Nasi HaDor. Other shiurim were given afterwards on sichos of the Rebbe. A special shiur was given by Rabbi Shlomo Katz, shliach in Ohr Yehuda, which stressed the special connection between the Rebbe's war for shleimus ha'Aretz and the Rebbe's work in preparing the entire world for Moshiach.

Then we saw an incredible sight, the likes of which has never been seen before. In the back of the Kfar, hundreds of young people gathered and engaged the soldiers in a dialogue. This wasn't planned but it happened when some soldiers wanted to daven Mincha with a minyan and so they called someone passing by and asked him to get some more men to complete the minyan. They got to talking, and that's how dialogues with the soldiers began. The youth passionately explained what a crime the expulsion is and the soldiers listened.

* * *

Our Jewish heart does not allow us to despair. The burning emuna felt during the three days of the march made its mark on each one of us. The three-day march ended and the thousands were sorry to have to go home. We had created a reality completely removed from the reality "out there." We left with plans to continue the fight until victory is achieved.



In the morning it was a Chabad shul, at night it was a dormitory



Farbrenging

'THE TIMES DEMAND IT' IS NO EXCUSE

On Yud-Beis Tammuz there was a rally in support of Gush Katif in Times Square. Posters went up announcing a program of Torah, T'filla, and Tz'daka. This rally was not an exclusive Chabad event, but the largest group in attendance was Lubavitch: men, women, and children of Lubavitch day camps.

I went to this rally, as did many other women who thought it was important to devote a chunk of our day, in the 90 degree heat, to show our support for shleimus ha'Aretz. The children were seated separately, boys and girls, while unfortunately the adults had no designated areas and mingled freely.

I would like to bring the following excerpt from a Yud-Beis Tamuz sicha (what irony!) that is printed in *Sichos Kodesh* 5731, vol. 2, p. 362 that I looked up after the event (I had come across it some time before, but put it out of my mind. I was taken aback when I finally looked up the source to see how strongly and clearly the Rebbe words it):

The following is a close translation from the Yiddish:

The participation of women and girls in public demonstrations is altogether astonishing (a peleh). Where does one find permission (a heter) in Jewish law for women and girls to participate in open public demonstrations? This is not in keeping with "kol k'vuda bas melech p'nima..."

Particularly so when these demonstrations take place in a manner where men and women intermingle, with all that this entails. I need not go on at length about such a painful subject.

Therefore, it was extremely astonishing that in educational institutions conducted according to Torah, the girls took part in public

demonstrations and nobody speaks up! True, the girls have already gotten used to this behavior but the directors of the institutions have done nothing about this matter. Either they did not mix in at all, or they said, "it doesn't matter," "the times demand it," and the like.

For those women who wonder what they can do for Eretz Yisroel in this troubled time, I recommend that you read the interview with three women in Issue 517 of *Beis Moshiach*, who give practical advice.

Mrs. Yehudis Homnick

Where does one find a heter in Jewish law for women and girls to participate in open public demonstrations?

PAYBACK ON A HUGE DEBT

I am the organizer of a large grassroots Achdut (Unity) flight of Americans to Israel to arrive shortly before the scheduled Expulsion, G-d forbid. Amongst the potpourri of individuals that are committed to travel with sleeping bags and backpacks in order to demonstrably show our complete opposition to this horrific decree upon the lives of Jews, are Righteous Gentiles willing to sacrifice their money, time & physical safety in order to show solidarity with the Jewish People and the Land. The following incredible letter was written to me in mid-July by one such Righteous Gentile.

May G-d Alm-ghty redeem us from this dark Exile due to the self-sacrifice

of individuals such as John from Minnesota below!

Leib, Massachusetts

* * *

I found out recently at work that I will not be granted a leave of absence. This means that I will have to resign and reapply for work upon return. I will lose accrued seniority and benefits plus a big share in the profit sharing for this year. I don't care. What could be more important than this trip?

Besides the obvious reasons for going to Israel at this time, I feel it is necessary for me in the spirit of "Tikkun ha'Olam" to mend what is within my reach.

My ethnic group and forebears have behaved hatefully and viciously against the Jewish people, most often in the name of Christianity. Strong roots of anti-Semitism could be felt in my close family and hateful libels could be heard. I won't enumerate.

It's time and way past time for me to act, even in some small way, to mend relationships with Jewish folk that have been so deeply scarred by willful ignorance, treachery, and hate on the part of my forebears and those of my ethnicity. The small sacrifice I might need to make pales into insignificance compared to the huge losses suffered by Jewish people at the hands of my forebears in times past and with the destruction that threatens to be unleashed by this evil decree in our day. I am very upset that American policy is pushing for this immoral and unethical move by the Israeli authorities.

No one owes me any honor for this tiny act; I see it as the beginning of payment on a huge debt. Am Yisroel Chai! Eretz Yisroel l'Am Yisroel!

On a personal note, at this stage in my life, to receive the epithet "righteous gentile" is about the greatest honor I could conceive.

Shalom, John

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ב"ה

CHABAD BOOTH AT JEWISH FESTIVAL IN KRAKOW

For the third year in a row, thousands of Jews, young and old, enjoyed a taste of Judaism when they attended the largest Jewish festival in the world in Krakow, Poland. Tamim Oriah Ohana, who participated last year at the festival, went to Poland again this year, along with Shneur Zalman Hertz, Eliyahu Nachum, Mendy Tzeitlin, and Meir Stambler who are learning in the Machon HaSmicha in Warsaw. They set up a stand where they put t'fillin on dozens of Jews every day and provided Jewish

information. For many Jews this was the first time they were putting on t'fillin.

They organized a Kabbalas Shabbos davening which was followed by the Shabbos meal accompanied by Chabad niggunim. This was attended by about 70 Jews.

Many Jews came for the Shabbos lunch meal, some of them influential people including a reporter from Fox News who spoke nostalgically about his ties with the shluchim in Hawaii and about his glowing articles about

their work.

The festival is a week long and various Jewish organizations take part in it and display their wares. Every evening famous chazanim perform and Jewish movies are shown. In the early years, the Conservative and Reform were there in full force which spiritually endangered the many innocent Jews who attended the festival. Starting with the previous year, it was decided that authentic Judaism would also be represented.

24,000 VOLUMES OF SEIFER HAMITZVOS TO BE DISTRIBUTED

This year marks 800 years since the passing of the Rambam. This inspired Rabbi Naftali Estulin to do something to encourage more people to join in the daily study of Rambam. The kick-off for this huge project took place at the beginning of the year, when Rabbi Estulin convened the chief rabbis of Israel, rabbis of cities and mashpiim, as well as hundreds of Chassidim, at the gravesite of the Rambam in Teveria. He held a farbrengen there with an emphasis on increasing the daily study of Rambam.

From talk to action – the Chish printing presses in Ramle have been churning out 24,000 copies of the Rambam's Seifer HaMitzvos, which Rabbi Estulin ordered in memory of his father, R' Zalman Leib, who passed away this year. Rabbi Shmuel Frinland, who is involved with the practical details of the printing, tells us of the goal:

“My uncle, Rabbi Estulin, plans on distributing these volumes for free to every child around the world who promises to join the daily study of Rambam.”



The front and back covers of the seifer

When contacted and asked about this unprecedented huge project, Rabbi Estulin said excitedly, “The number of volumes was chosen to correspond to the 24 volumes of the Tanach, and as we know, the Torah was given with its commentary. The Rebbe explains that aside from the achdus Yisroel that unites those who study Rambam, every Jew will become familiar with the entire Torah. Many more people need to join those who are already learning Rambam on a daily basis.

“The Rebbe always explains that the name RaMBaM is an acronym for **R**'vos **M**ofsai **B**'eretz **M**itzrayim (to increase My wonders in the land of

Egypt). We need huge miracles now whether because of the threatened expulsion in Eretz Yisroel or the attacks in London and around the world.

“The Rebbe refers to the power of Jewish children. This is the Rebbe's chiddush, to emphasize the power of women and children. With Hashem's help, by doing something to promote the study of Rambam, especially by the children whom the Rebbe said are the *Meshichoi*, all the concealments will disappear and we will merit the hisgalus of the Rebbe MH”M.”

Rabbi Estulin is finalizing his plans to visit camps around Eretz Yisroel and abroad in order to explain to the children the importance of studying Rambam daily, and to give each child a Rambam.

“We must do what we can to get more and more people to join the Rambam learning cycles, so it becomes something everybody does and not just a Lubavitcher inyan,” concluded Rabbi Estulin.