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THE DIFFERENCE IS THAT IN ELUL WE MUST PLOW AND SOW

LIKKUTEI SICHOS VOL. 4, HOSAFOS, PG. 1342
TRANSLATED BY BORUCH MERKUR



Regarding the significance of the month of Elul, the Alter Rebbe writes as follows: “In Elul it is the time of the revelation of the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy. In order to understand this – for [the question is begged]: Why [then] are they regular weekdays and not holidays? ... This, however, can be understood in light of a parable of a king, who, before he comes to the city, the city folk go out to greet him, holding a reception for him in the field. Anyone who wants to go out and receive him then may do so, and he welcomes all of them with a pleasant countenance and shows a smiling face to them all. As he makes his way to the city, they follow him. Afterwards, as he enters his royal palace, no one may enter without permission. Indeed, [entrance is granted only to] the elite of the nation and select individuals. So is the matter, in terms of the analogue, regarding the month of Elul: they go to receive the light of His blessed countenance in the field.”

A (possible) explanation of the answer (to the [puzzling] fact that the days of the month of Elul are regular weekdays) is as follows: The concept of holidays is that an increase of light and revelation is drawn into them, [a revelation] that is not encloded within them so much [but remains transcendent]. It is on account of this [revelation] that during these days labor is forbidden. Indeed the performance of labor, regular weekday activities, is in

contradiction to receiving this light (symbolized in the parable by the king being in his royal palace, where “**no one** may enter **without [permission]**”). Whereas the concept of the month of Elul entails the revelation of the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy to each and every Jew, even to one who has sinned, etc., in the place where he happens to be found: a field [i.e., not the royal place, but a place of mundane weekday activity]. The illumination of the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy is a preparation enabling them to repent. So it is regarding the service of love and fear [of G-d] in Elul (for then the love and fear are loftier): they must be aroused through an initiative that precipitates specifically from below, for the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy are merely a prerequisite for [Divine] service.

Nevertheless, the illumination of the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy is in the field, not in the desert. A desert is at the level of “a land that is not cultivated,” which are those deeds, words spoken, and thoughts which are not for G-d’s sake.” In

order to receive the illumination of the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy requires at least the arousal of the acceptance of the yoke of the kingship of Heaven, [represented by] leaving (the desert), to go at least to the field, to greet the king (but this service is at the level of “field” (of holiness), involving plowing and sowing, unlike [the activities permitted] on holidays).

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DEEP SORROW AND GREAT JOY

BY RABBI NOAM HARPAZ, MASHPIA, YESHIVA G'DOLA BEIS MOSHIACH, BEITAR ILLIT
TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY

As long as the matter only has relevance to a Jew's own individual avoda, he must be in a state of tremendous simcha that we have been privileged to be in the final moments of Galus. However, once the matter has relevance to the overall avoda of the entire Jewish people, there is room to feel sorrow and bitterness over the exile. This feeling does not stem from personal distress, but from genuine concern over the great difficulty that afflicts the Jewish people as they suffer in Galus.

The Rebbe MH"M shlita has stated in numerous sichos that in our generation, the generation of the Redemption, our avoda must be specifically through joy. The Rebbe explains that this joy possesses the strength to nullify all things considered undesirable, paving the way to reaching the highest and most wondrous spiritual levels. The Rebbe explains further that the avoda instilled with this inner simcha is a very lofty mode of Divine service, above and beyond anything attainable through the avoda of bitterness. We have merited all this by the mere fact that we are the generation of the

Redemption and through the strength of living in the days of Moshiach.

Furthermore, in the maamer "M'Ragla B'Pumia D'Rabba – 5746," the Rebbe explains that avoda through bitterness has no pertinence in our times, out of a concern that it might cause us to fall into sadness. The Rebbe explains further that this was a relevant form of Divine service in the previous generations, but not in our generation due to the descent of all succeeding generations.

In light of all the aforementioned, it is surprising to note that in the maamer "V'Ata Tetzaveh – Purim Katan

5752," the Rebbe mentions the sorrow and bitterness over the Galus as part of our present-day avoda, together with the joy over the immanency of the Redemption.

How is it possible to be in a state of deep bitterness, when we are presently in a situation where the Rebbe himself has established that our entire avoda must be specifically through joy?

To pursue this point further, the Rebbe explains in numerous sichos that there is no room whatsoever for the avoda of sorrow and bitterness in our generation. We also find that in his interpretation of *Igeres HaT'shuva* in *Tanya*, the Rebbe MH"M shlita compares the service of our generation in relation to the service of previous generations through the two types of avoda on certain days of the week, Thursday night and Erev Shabbos:

On *Leil Shishi* (Thursday night), a Jew must make a cheshbon nefesh of his avoda during the week out of true bitterness. However, on Erev Shabbos (Friday), he must be in a state of joy, as he prepares to greet the holy Shabbos.

Similarly, the Rebbe explains, we find in connection with the service of the Jewish people since the world's creation. In the earlier generations, the avoda was comparable to *Leil Shishi*, when we must focus on our role as "marei d'chushbana," as we make a fundamental personal accounting of our avoda. In such a case, there was

definitely room for serving G-d through bitterness. However, in our generation, we are standing on the threshold of the true and complete Redemption, the eternal Shabbos. Thus, our avoda must be specifically through joy, as exemplified by the service of Erev Shabbos.

When we learn the Rebbe's explanations, this makes the question even stronger: How can we be expected today to act with sorrow and bitterness over the Galus together with the feeling of simcha, when we are holding on the level of Erev Shabbos afternoon (in the words of the Rebbe shlita), the time that our avoda must be specifically with simcha?

In addition, we are faced with another problem on this matter: In his kuntres "*Derech Chaim*," the Mittlerer Rebbe explains that there are two ways for a baal t'shuva to check whether he has fully repented over his past actions. The first method is the tremendous sorrow and bitterness he has over his previous conduct. The second is the great pleasure and joy he has from his closeness to G-d.

If so, how can a baal t'shuva in our generation possibly determine if he is serving G-d with a full heart, when we are standing on the level of Friday afternoon, a time when the service of sorrow and bitterness has no relevance whatsoever?

To understand this fundamental point, we will bring two stories that seem to illustrate two opposing expressions of the Alter Rebbe's conduct towards his friends and colleagues.

The first story revolves around the Alter Rebbe's friendship with a fellow student of the Mezritcher Maggid named HaVolfer. Among the Maggid's disciples, the Alter Rebbe and this student were especially prominent in their ability to comprehend the Maggid's teachings.

The friendship between the Alter Rebbe and HaVolfer was very deep,

penetrating every fiber of their soul. They would review their studies together, spending hours warmly discussing words of Torah.

HaVolfer was extremely poor, and he lived in the home of one of the town's widows. The widow was equally poverty-stricken, living under very dire economic conditions. Her house was broken-down and seriously dilapidated with absolutely no furniture – no chairs, no table, not even a chimney.

Once, the Alter Rebbe went to visit his friend at his lodging place, the home of the widow. Since there were

The Alter Rebbe recalled afterwards that when he heard his friend's remarks, he immediately felt a question gnawing away at him: How can anyone possibly have doubts about the ways and attributes of G-d?

no chairs, the Alter Rebbe and his friend, HaVolfer, sat on the ground, as thick smoke enveloped their heads. They began to discuss Torah subjects, spending hours farbrenging together on their *avodas Hashem*.

As they parted from one another, HaVolfer told the Alter Rebbe that if G-d had granted him, he would like to have a nice house with proper furniture, so he could host the Alter Rebbe in a befitting and honorable manner.

The Alter Rebbe recalled afterwards that when he heard his friend's

remarks, he immediately felt a question gnawing away at him: How can anyone possibly have doubts about the ways and attributes of G-d?

* * *

There is a somewhat similar story with the Alter Rebbe and his friend and *mechusan*, Rabbi Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev: Rabbi Levi Yitzchok once told the Alter Rebbe that if he would have created the world, he would have done so in a way that Jews would have all their material needs fulfilled. However, the Alter Rebbe replied that if he had created the world, he would have created it exactly as G-d did.

At first glance, there is a question here: Why didn't the Alter Rebbe react to what Rabbi Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev said in the same manner as he did in the previous story? After all, wasn't this also a case of someone who had doubts about the ways and attributes of G-d?

Yet, we find that there is an essential difference between these two stories:

In the story with the Alter Rebbe's friend, HaVolfer, the latter expressed himself in connection with own personal feelings of distress, a heartfelt sigh regarding his personal life and his own needs. As a result, when the Alter Rebbe saw that his friend was raising questions about G-d and His ways instead of accepting the Divine judgment, this began to gnaw away at him. In short, he interpreted HaVolfer's feelings as stemming from a lack of faith in G-d.

In contrast, regarding the story with Rabbi Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev, his claim against G-d was not due to his own personal distress, rather his genuine concern for all the Jewish people, similar to Moshe's complaint to G-d, "Why have you ill-treated this people?" If Rabbi Levi Yitzchok had been stricken with harsh physical afflictions, he would have accepted the judgment joyfully and with complete faith. He fully understood that

everything that happens to him comes from G-d, and is for his ultimate good, since he believed with all his heart in His Divine providence.

Therefore, since Rabbi Levi Yitzchok's claim before G-d was based entirely upon his genuine concern for the Jewish people, this aroused within him a feeling of true ahavas Yisroel. In other words, this was not a case of casting doubts about the ways and attributes of G-d; Rabbi Levi Yitzchok's expression of concern for the distress of Am Yisroel was a true and legitimate complaint to G-d regarding their cry in the time of exile – “ad masai?!”

This distinction enables us to make the connection between what the Rebbe said about how inner avoda can only be attained through true heartfelt joy and the feeling of sorrow and bitterness over the exile.

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concern over the great difficulty that afflicts the Jewish people as they suffer in Galus.

In his holy sichos, the Rebbe awakens people to the need to cry “ad masai?!” not just out of a sense of sorrow over the continuing exile of the Jewish people, but also regarding the exile of the Sh'china, as is written, “...Who dwells with them in the midst of their impurity.” Since the essence of the claim of “ad masai?!” stems from this feeling, we cannot stand by indifferently; we must awaken the feeling of sorrow and bitterness over the darkness of the Exile.

May it be G-d's will that we should immediately merit the hisgalus of the Rebbe MH”M shlita, and we will all break out in joyous song from the depths of our hearts as we proclaim before him: *Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu v'Rabbeinu melech HaMoshiach l'olam va'ed!*



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WITH THE REBBE'S SHLIACH, UNTIL THE FINAL MOMENT

BY RABBI DOVID NACHSHON, DIRECTOR OF CHABAD MOBILE MITZVA TANKS

It's difficult to define the week we spent in Gush Katif. On the one hand, it was the apex of emuna, and on the other hand, the biggest calamity. On the one hand, we saw unprecedented mesirus nefesh, and on the other hand, unprecedented simcha. All these forces combined in that tumultuous week. Whoever was there cannot go back to what he was before.

We arrived in Gush Katif on Thursday night, Erev Shabbos Chazon, and were hosted at the home of the shliach, Rabbi Yigal Kirshnzaft. I had the privilege of getting to know this refined man, a Jew with most unusual powers of self-sacrifice for others. He and his wife – it's hard to find anybody like them. Everything that took place that turbulent week will remain etched in me forever.

In the period preceding that week, the mitzva tank carried out mitzvaim with the soldiers and the residents in the area. In the final days, we stepped up activity, and along with doing mitzvaim, warned the soldiers not to carry out this terrible crime.

The pain was unbearable, but wherever a Chassid is he must know

that he is the Rebbe's shliach and has to fulfill his shlichus.

When the army began to break into the yishuv Monday night, screams could be heard throughout the yishuv. They woke me up early in the morning. Media from all over the world were there. I went to where the action was and

It was a lifelong trauma. You saw horrors that you only see in your blackest dreams. Suddenly, Holocaust stories seem more real.

immediately approached the head honchos. I spoke with the platoon commander, and asked him how he could perpetrate an international crime. Did you become slaves? Did you lose all sense of reason?

I spoke to them about Kristalnacht, before they broke into the shuls. I yelled that the only

thing that everybody considers holy is the army and now a criminal was using it for his personal needs in the most manipulative way, and this they call a democracy?

I was interviewed by many journalists, and I said that the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach wants us to say that Eretz Yisroel belongs to us, according to the Bible, and those perpetrating the expulsion are war criminals who transgress the laws of personal property.

I had many conversations with officers and soldiers, but what usually happened was, in the middle of talking, the senior officers made sure to take the soldiers elsewhere. They just couldn't remain indifferent.

I spoke a lot to senior commanders. Some of them I told off in the sternest way, but with lots of warmth and love. After speaking to one of them, we hugged and he literally cried on my shoulder. We knew that by natural means, it was hopeless, but we anticipated a big miracle. Sadly, we did not merit a miracle.

It was the hardest week of my life. Whoever was there left with a wounded soul. It was a lifelong

trauma. You saw horrors that you only see in your blackest dreams. Suddenly, Holocaust stories seem more real.

The sights in Neve Dekalim the last two days of the battle were not of this world. Everything merged: joy and tears, faith and broken-heartedness, bitachon and despair. And in the midst of all this, as shluchim of the Rebbe, we had to uplift the people. We had to continue mitzvaim with the soldiers, while simultaneously chastising them for the crime they were ordered to do. This was a shlichus under the most complex and incomprehensible conditions.

One of the high points was the Hachnasas Seifer Torah that took place Tuesday evening. We danced endlessly and pulled into the dancing as many as possible, so that Rabbi Wolpo and the donor would manage to get there at the last minute. I took charge of the dancing and the simcha didn't stop for a second. Hundreds of people danced nonstop and this was without music. The feeling was that it was the yechida of the nefesh that danced.

Aside from the nonstop mitzvaim they did, they brought chayus and simcha to the residents of the Gush. They gave a fighting spirit, a spirit of bitachon, and strength in the most difficult times.

We returned late at night and met the soldiers who had come to expel us. What took place then was t'shuva ilaa. Everybody cried. The soldiers and the residents cried.

The scene that haunts me took place with Yigal's neighbors, the Tashandi family. One son is a member of the elite Raven Special Forces. His children, along with a group of lock-ins were all singing

"Rachem." The soldiers wanted to remove them by force, and we began singing the "Ani Maamin" sung in Auschwitz. The soldiers sang and cried too. As for those who didn't sing, we could see they sang in their heart. The tears choked them up.

And when the soldiers burst inside, the neighbor set his house on fire. A huge flame came out of the house. I said to the soldiers, come say together, "ashamnu, bagadnu, gazalnu..." You could not withstand the test. I cried a lot. Those were crazy days. A week of extremes.

On Shabbos Nachamu, I met Rabbi Shmuel Tal and his talmidim here in Natzeret Ilit. Just the week before, we sat together in his yeshiva and spoke. This Shabbos, he couldn't talk. He was terribly broken. Who could digest it? A special Jew like Rabbi Tal, expelled along with his talmidim.

For those who weren't there, it's hard to explain what it was like. We were afraid to walk in the street because whoever they caught, they put on buses and shipped out. It was reminiscent of police from darker days in our history.

I must mention the holy work done by the mitzva tanks for a month and a half, and the precious T'mimim. Aside from the nonstop mitzvaim they did, they brought chayus and simcha to the residents of the Gush. They gave a fighting spirit, a spirit of bitachon, and strength in the most difficult times. Chabad never abandons Jews and is with them in the most difficult moments, and so the tanks also led the battle and gave a fighting spirit to the residents.

When we went out on Thursday in the convoy with the tank to the sound of "Yechi," the residents called out, "kol ha'kavod l'Chabad," and the soldiers also cheered us on.



Rabbi Dovid Nachshon talking with a settler



At the Hachnasas Seifer Torah

Now, our job is to bring the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach to the people. This week, despite all its

hardships, I felt that the Rebbe was guiding me to come here, and I had the z'chus of being right by the

shliach during this time of sorrow. Chassidim ein mishpacha.

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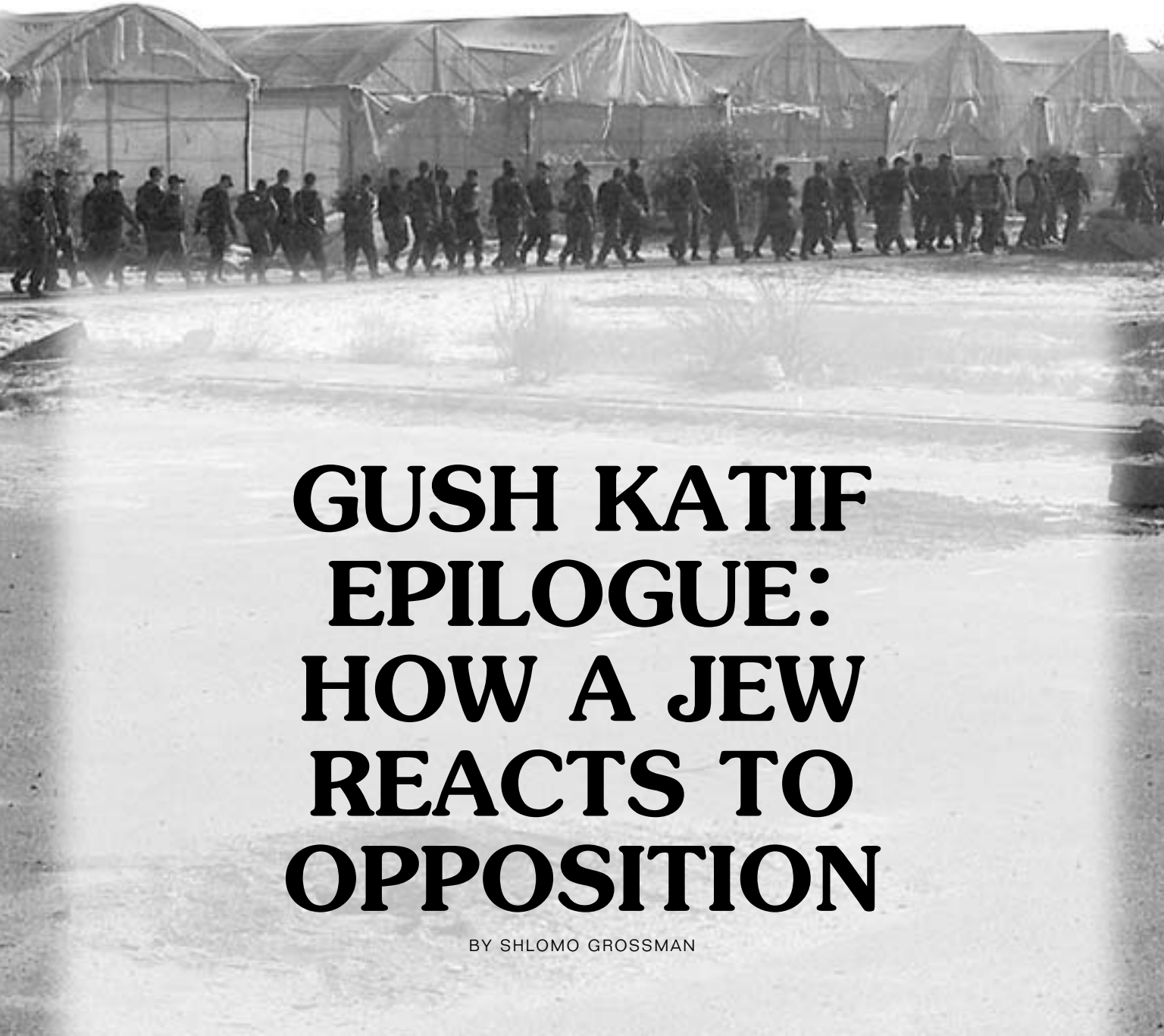
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GUSH KATIF EPILOGUE: HOW A JEW REACTS TO OPPOSITION

BY SHLOMO GROSSMAN

The date August 16, 2005 – the 11th day of Av, 5765 – will go down in history as a day of infamy.

This past week the world's eyes have been focused on Gush Katif. But what they witnessed was far beyond their wildest dreams. Reporters followed police into the homes of the

residents of Gush Katif expecting to record a story that has all the ingredients of a catastrophe. The world's perspective was that there would be a bloody confrontation between 10,000 settlers and 40,000 police. It would be broadcast live, with a blow-by-blow running commentary

worthy of the finest boxing match. Jew against Jew, what could be better.

The settlers have been portrayed in the media as wild-eyed, racist, religious extremists, that were incited to kill Rabin. Who knows what new means of warfare they would resort to in order to perpetuate their radical beliefs. They

seem ready to die for G-d, as would any radical worth his weight in salt. It would be bloody and deadly, who knows how many lives would be lost in their desperate struggle to hang on to their archaic beliefs. The hate is thick, the tension is high.

Police were highly trained for this specific mission: four police would attack one settler. Also recruited were special units that are used to infiltrate Arab terrorists, and are known to be cruel. They are experts in knowing where to hit a person so that they will leave no telltale marks of violence. They know all the weak spots on the body in order to inflict maximum pain. They are so finely trained in martial arts and hand-to-hand combat that their bodies react instinctively.

And on the other side the settlers who will stop at nothing to achieve their narrow-minded goals. Unsophisticated, backward people, who don't know about the modern world; mutants that are barely human, who will stop at nothing. Men, women, and children in a frenzied stupor, will explode in an emotional outburst.

These ingredients will keep all viewers glued to their TV sets, unable to tear away from looking at the horror. Children screaming, women cursing and punching the soldiers, men jumping on the backs of the police; such excitement the world has yet to see.

Now the climatic moment has arrived, the reporter is barely able to hide his glee, the camera is rolling, the microphone is ready, the footage is being sent live to all parts of the world. The police stealthy approach the home of a crazed settler. Upon reaching the door they viciously bang on it. When no one answers they smash it in with a large sledge hammer. It crumples in minutes, the police immediately jump inside ready for combat...

But something has gone terribly wrong; the shock in the voice of the

reporter is hard to conceal, he is speechless and mumbling some incoherent sounds. As they approach the enemy they are disappointed to see, a father, mother, and children quietly sitting on their living room couch, a beautiful family looking in disbelief at the trespassers. There are no extremists here, it was all a myth, a product of the media, trying to smear Judaism and Jews.

The young children look up at their dear mother, who, while in tears,

The world's perspective was that there would be a bloody confrontation between 10,000 settlers and 40,000 police. It would be broadcast live, with a blow-by-blow running commentary worthy of the finest boxing match. Jew against Jew, what could be better.

begins to plead with the young Jewish soldiers, "How can you do such an act against G-d and humanity. Are you zombies who blindly follow orders? How can you evict us your fellow Jews and Zionists from our legally owned homes in the Promised Land. How can you raise your hands to us your fellow brothers and sisters, and throw us out of our home!"

The settlers are pioneers who were originally supported by the Israeli

government, and sent to a place that the Arabs didn't want and who called it the cursed land because nothing could grow there due to the high concentration of salt.

These are the real pioneers, the real Zionists, the ones who believe in the original belief of the founders of Israel – that it is our land and no one is going to take it away from us. "Never again," was the rally cry then. A new country where Jews could live together and strengthen one another, to once and for all be free of the oppression in other countries. They are called settlers for a reason, because they settled the land.

The original pioneers came from the fires of Hungary, Poland, France, Germany, and countless other places to finally proudly raise their heads in the holy land and build the dream from scratch. They rebuilt shattered lives, brick by brick. And now these settlers through many miracles did the impossible, they made the rocks bloom. They built a utopia, they achieved the Zionist dream.

But now they can't fathom what did they do wrong. They were raised on the Zionist philosophy, they sang "HaTikva" at the top of their lungs, and they went out on the front lines, next to the Arabs, daily risking their lives and the lives of their own dear children, enduring rocket attacks and snipers, where Jews were tragically killed and maimed, to once and for all not run, like Jews had done for thousands of years before.

How can it be that after over twenty years of hard work, of building with their bare hands, that now unbelievably it is not non-Jewish anti-Semites that are coming and destroying what they have built, but Jews, Jews, fellow Zionists, coming ready for combat, as though they have uncovered a terrorist nest that has to be eradicated. It can't be, it can't be, it is impossible, it can't be real.

Aren't these police still human

beings, aren't they Jews who understand values, have morals, and realize that ahavas Yisroel is more important than anything else, and that we must remain united and strong against the many anti-Semites in the world, or otherwise we will be eaten up by them. How can this be? How can this be? They must listen to reason, it's for their own good, for everybody's good. How can they look at our children and not breakdown and realize their crime?

But the pleading is useless, these supposed fellow Zionists are not reacting, they have orders to carry out and everything else is just a waste of time. They don't feel the bond between Jews; the settlers are just people who have to be expelled, barbarians and outlaws who do not listen to Israeli law. The police were taught that religious Jews are the source of the world's problems, and this probably is their first encounter with them, and later it will probably be the first time that they ever walked into a shul.

The family, realizing the futility of continuing to plead, slowly rise up from their couch, bewildered and bitterly disappointed, with their eyes red and their heads bowed, they begrudgingly walk out the front door of their beautiful home for the last time.

The reporter is dumbfounded, what happened to the story, a major conflict was suppose to take place. This wasn't suppose to happen, it has never happened before. In all other countries of the world, when two opposing forces met, there was violence. Remember Kent State, Ohio in 1970, four student protesters were shot and killed by the national guard. Remember the riots in universities around America where tear-gas was used when fires were set and universities taken over, remember Waco, Texas, where everybody died – that is how the world reacts to opposition. In other countries, even more violent means were used to deal

with victims of the state in China, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Algeria, and countless other places. But now to peacefully leave? This has never happen in the annals of time. Who are these people, what are they made of?

The Palestinians teach their children that Jews are murders, killers, unfeeling animals. But here we see none of that, only sensitive, caring humans beings. With families, and values, who act like royalty, not

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own right.***

animals, each a King and Queen in their own right.

The Zionist dream has been shattered, torn and left in shreds. A bankrupt ideology that does not recognize that Israel is a holy land, given by G-d to the Jews, and that there is a difference between Jews and non-Jews. Such an ideology was doomed to failure from the outset – and worse, it was self-destructive.

The system of government in Israel

is corrupt and cannot endure. You cannot have anti-Semite Arabs voting on Jewish issues. Any party that gains power can never lead, because it has to please so many divergent factions in the government, which is an impossible task. Any Prime Minister, even a right winger, cannot change this basic flaw in the system, and in Zionism, as Begin, Shamir, and Sharon have proven.

On the left, Barak went as far as any left-wing leader could go in trying to make the holy land unholy, by giving it away to Arafat. Only a miracle saved the Jews from a second holocaust (G-d forbid) when Arafat said no.

Nothing has worked, neither side has any solutions. An entirely new system of government and ideology has to emerge.

When did Arabs ever say that they would accept land for peace? Would they then stop hating Jews? Is land the reason they hate Jews, or is it because they can't stand looking weak.

We need to give peace a chance with a different approach. We do have to give the Arabs something, but instead of land we have to give them a part of what makes us great, our holy Torah, namely the Seven Mitzvos of B'nei Noach. Instead of hating us, they will thank us for sharing our wisdom of the ages with them. Jews instead of being looked upon as competition with the Arabs, will become partners with them, with each partner helping the other to grow. The Arabs themselves can help Jews bring Moshiach!

There will be those that will be against this, saying that we can't give this away to Arabs, but we all must make sacrifices for peace, no concession is too great to achieve this elusive goal. The Arabs have a G-d-given right to this knowledge.

The world's eyes have now been opened, everyone sees that Jews are a chosen people.

There are those in the world who

desperately look for a break in the Jews shining armor because they realize that if we are aren't as cruel as they are, then they will look a thousand times worse in the world's eyes, because of their barbaric histories. They must prove that Jews are like them. How can it be otherwise. But now the truth has started to emerge, Jews are different than other nations. Each nation adds something

to the world, the Jews add holiness.

But some Jews have yet to take pride in their difference and lead the world to greater heights, instead they cringe at their responsibility and deny it in every way. But truth can never be squelched for long.

The world cried when they saw what happened, they felt the pain, suffered the anguish and humiliation.

They were surprised to see peaceful families – not wild-eyed radicals – who love the police and soldiers, as much as they love their own family.

As the police and the settlers firmly embrace one another, and slowly walk out of the house arm in arm, they bitterly cry together...

My friends, the world will never be the same.

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RABBI SHOLOM DOVBER WOLPO IN AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH BEIS MOSHIACH:

WHAT WE ASK FOR IS ONLY MALCHUS BEIS DOVID

The pain is so enormous, so let us start with something positive. You brought a seifer Torah to the shul in Neve Dekalim. What can you tell us about that?

Yes, thanks to the Jews who donated the seifer Torah and those who bought letters in it, we brought a beautiful Torah scroll to Gush Katif, to the Ashkenazi shul in Neve Dekalim. Thousands of Jews rejoiced in a celebration they will never forget. I heard that Shaul Goldstein, one of the leaders in Gush Etzyon, was interviewed on television, and he said that the most moving experience that he had in Gush Katif was the Hachnasas Seifer Torah.

Thousands of Jews, surrounded by the expulsion army of thousands dressed in black, danced for hours around the Torah with overflowing simcha and pure faith, along with the prayer that Hashem would sweeten judgment and transform our sorrow into gladness. It was simcha of a tremendous light that burst forth from the terrible darkness.

I understand that you arrived only in the middle of the simcha.

How did you get into Gush Katif?

From the fact that I managed to get into Neve Dekalim on Tuesday night, along with the man who donated the Torah, R Efraim Julius, I draw tremendous strength to see how much prayer helps. This was completely unnatural. I had an opportunity to enter on Erev Shabbos before the Gush was sealed, but for personal reasons I could not go before Shabbos.

I asked the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach through the *Igros Kodesh* whether I should go on Friday anyway or whether I should wait until Tuesday when there was no rational expectation that I would be able to get in. The answer I opened to was clear about not going on Friday.

After Shabbos, I asked Hashem, from the depths of my heart, to help me get to the Gush for the Hachnasas Seifer Torah on Tuesday. I got an amazing bracha from the Rebbe in the *Igros Kodesh*. Hashem helped, and in a completely supernatural way we arrived in Neve Dekalim in the middle of the Hachnasas Seifer Torah, without walking through fields, without

pleading at the blockades. We went straight through with the help of the very people whose job it is to keep people out. (I can't say any more right now, so as not to get anybody into trouble.)

Throughout the trip, we were in constant phone contact with the Kirschnzafts, and we were extremely agitated when we heard that the Hachnasas Seifer Torah was about to end. I must thank my friend, Dovid Nachshon, who dragged out the dancing for hours until we arrived. And then the simcha kept on for another two hours.

Did any of the security forces join in the simcha?

The parade and dancing in the streets of the moshav took place in front of the soldiers and police. The Torah was carried from the ceremony marking the new mikva to the shul, but they didn't enter the shul. There was another event with the Torah in which hundreds of soldiers and police were present. These were unforgettable moments and I thank Hashem for allowing me to experience them, in the midst of the sea of pain that washed over

us on the two worst days of all.

This is what happened. On Wednesday afternoon, one of the rabbanim suggested to me that we take the new Torah out of the aron kodesh and bring it out to the police and soldiers. At first there were many problems, until I located the keys to the aron kodesh. Then I called Ahroni Butbal to come and help me carry the Torah with the crown, and we went out to the street singing and dancing.

That day it was extremely hot and humid but hundreds of *ketumim* (those in orange), old and young, gathered round, and we went to the center of the yishuv. Suddenly we saw a group of hundreds of Yassamniks (Special Patrol units, a small corps of highly trained anti-terror professionals within the police force, known for their cruelty) in black, marching to carry out their mission.

When we got near them, I asked their commander, whose name is Ben-Yishai, to allow his men to kiss

Of course we had to beseech Hashem to thwart the plans of our enemy and that the settlements should last forever. But Hashem's thoughts are not our thoughts, and now that we did not merit to see the fulfillment of our prayers, we have to find the advantage to this terrible situation, because "no evil descends from On High."

the Torah. He asked that we not come any closer and said he would send his soldiers in small groups. When the soldiers finished reverently kissing the Torah, I said to Ben-Yishai why don't you take the Torah and dance with it? And he did, while everybody sang. The Torah got passed around among the senior officers, and TV crews from around the world photographed the event.

Just then, the rav of the yishuv, Rabbi Alankaveh, came, and he took a microphone and spoke to the soldiers with heartfelt words. Then he began to sing "Rachem" and everybody sang along with tremendous emotion. I saw many soldiers and police crying like children.

Rabbi Alankaveh went from one moving song to another, and then said, now we will accept the yoke of Heaven. He began to recite the Shma Yisroel, Hashem Hu HaElokim, Hashem Melech, and the entire crowd cried, the *ketumim*



and the police together. Halevai, I will feel such a hisorerus during N'ila on Yom Kippur.

Then they began dancing with the Torah again, as it passed among the officers. The chief of police, Moshe Karadi suddenly came by and Ben-Yishai wasn't able to explain to him what was going on, how it was possible that the soldiers were dancing in the street with the Torah instead of carrying out their jobs.

Ben-Yishai asked that we disperse and he promised that for the next hour and a half, the soldiers would not enter the houses. He realized that they needed time to calm down. I was sure that these soldiers would not be able to carry on with this organized crime, but unfortunately, they feel that the State supersedes all. The Torah is Toras Emes, but everything is under the jurisdiction of the State.

Where is the Torah now?

I did not take the Torah out of Gush Katif. Chazal say, from Heaven they only give, they do not take back. My job was to bring the Torah to the Gush, and if the army wants to take it out, what can I do? Today I heard that it was taken by Rabbi Alankaveh to Yerushalayim to one of the hotels where those evicted from Neve Dekalim are staying.

I will take it and put it in the aron kodesh in the Shaarei Geula Shul in Kiryat Gat until we can bring it back again, with great pomp and ceremony, to its rightful place in Gush Katif.

I thank R Efraim Julius, the main donor and R Meir Eichler and R Avrohom Holtzberg, for their help. A special thanks goes to the Roitman family of Lud for donating the crown. We will be producing a CD of the Hachnasas Seifer Torah, including the extremely moving moment with the dancing soldiers

and police.

We all davened at that awesome gathering at the Kosel, and Am Yisroel has been davening for months. How do you explain the fact that we failed nonetheless?

The question about prayers that seemingly go to waste is not a new question. We recently read how Moshe Rabbeinu prayed 515 prayers until Hashem said, enough! Do not continue talking to me about this. Indeed, Moshe did not enter Eretz Yisroel.

But those who learn Chassidus know that there is a situation of, "if we would have merited...and now that we have not merited," that the situation of we did not merit it, is loftier than that of meriting it. As with the luchos, if we had merited it, and there would not have been the sin of the golden calf, we would have had the first luchos, but we didn't merit it, and Moshe broke the first luchos, which were the handiwork of G-d. But we received a second set of luchos that were kiflayim l'tushiya (double in strength). As Chazal say, if they hadn't sinned they would have received only the five books of the Torah and the book of Yehoshua. Since they sinned, we received the 24 books of Tanach, the Mishna, the Gemara, Poskim, etc.

If Moshe had taken us into Eretz Yisroel, this would have been a geula that would not have had a galus following it. But since we did not merit it, Moshe remained in the desert, and soon we will have the true and complete Redemption that will be double the strength, incomparably greater than a geula with Moshe would have been without a churban and galus. This is like the advantage that baalei t'shuva have over tzaddikim, and this concept is explained in Chassidus at length.

So, G-d forbid to say that

Moshe's prayers were ineffective, because Hashem certainly heard his prayers and he will enter the Holy Land and will fulfill the mitzvos that are dependent on the land. But Hashem wants that Moshe's entry into the land be on a much higher level than what Moshe was asking for in his prayers.

So too with us. Of course we had to beseech Hashem to thwart the plans of our enemy and that the settlements should last forever. But Hashem's thoughts are not our thoughts, and now that we did not merit to see the fulfillment of our prayers, we have to find the advantage to this terrible situation, because "no evil descends from On High."

But the rabbanim had announced that certainly Hashem answers the prayers of the multitude, and what we fear will not take place, yet now we have answers ready as to why our prayers were not immediately accepted!

You can see the answer to your question in the breaking of the luchos and Moshe's prayer. Would it have been thinkable, when Moshe received the first luchos, for anyone to have considered that it was worthwhile sinning and having the luchos broken so we could get double the strength? Or would it have been possible for Moshe, while praying, to think that Hashem would not listen to his prayers so we would attain a higher level through churban and galus? Chas v'shalom to say that, and whoever thinks that is an apikoros, because we are supposed to plead for visible and revealed good, but now that we did not merit it, we have to find the advantage of the yerida (descent), which is for the purpose of an aliya (ascent).

So too with us, if someone says he will sin and then do t'shuva, in order to reach the level of a baal

t'shuva, this is unacceptable. From the outset we go by the way paved for us by Torah, but after the fact, we have to seek out the good and ensure that this good is fully realized.

And what good is there in the destruction of Jewish communities and bringing the terrorists ever closer?

Before I try to answer that, I will ask forgiveness from the large and holy congregation that I, and all of us, love deeply, with whom we connected more and more during the previous months. I assume that what I am about to say will upset many people, but if we don't have the courage to say the truth, we will be forfeiting our shlichus as Chabad Chassidim, soldiers of the house of David.

The hidden good that came out over the course of this horror is that the prophecy of Ikvisa d'Meshicha of "they will be clarified and whitened" was fulfilled. **The entire world saw how those who many considered to be Moshiach Ben Yosef, namely, the elected leader of the State, and that which they thought was the natural Geula, "reishis tzmichas Geulaseinu," perpetrated an act, with the agreement and aid, at various stages, of religious and chareidi Knesset members, which decreed open war against Hashem, the Torah, Am Yisroel, and Eretz Yisroel.**

And the army, which was considered the holiest of all, not only did not defend Am Yisroel in its land, but tens of thousands of them, dressed in Gestapo black with the symbol of the State on their chests, worked day and night, with mesirus nefesh, on behalf of Hamas, and the Islamic Jihad, with well-oiled destruction machinery, to destroy dozens of yishuvim, exile thousands of Jews, destroy shuls and battei midrash, and remove the



From the outset we go by the way paved for us by Torah, but after the fact, we have to seek out the good and ensure that this good is fully realized.

dead and murdered from their graves.

None of this could have been done against Jews in any other country of the world. It all took place here, in the State of Israel of Ben Gurion, Rabin, Peres, Begin, and Sharon.

Whoever promoted nationalism and belief in the State of Israel as the beginning of Geula should be hiding their face in shame and klapping Al Cheit for poisoning thousands of youth with k'fira that has postponed the coming of Moshiach and has caused so much bloodshed for generations.

Until now, these groups have claimed that although the prime minister doesn't conduct himself properly, and Minister X and Y are not tzaddikim, still, the State itself, i.e. Israeli sovereignty in Eretz Yisroel is the throne of Hashem's kingdom, and the Geula is a gradual and natural process. They said that with time, those in these jobs would be replaced and then the light of the "holy" State would

fully shine.

But now we see that the problem is not with a particular person, but that the State itself is rotten at its foundations. This is because it is a democratic government that makes decisions not according to Torah but according to majority rule, which includes Arabs and Christians, and l'havdil, an erev rav of Jews, including religious Jews who make their decisions based on the bribes they get for yeshivos or being awarded the job of deputy minister.

And the IDF, that is supposed to defend Jews, received cruel orders from wicked people, and is actively serving the terrorists and opposing their brothers.

It sounds like you think we are living in a democracy.

Of course it is not a democracy. I was only referring to the basis on which the State is supposedly founded, if it did what it was supposed to do. But this false is'chalta d'Geula is actually the last communist country that exists in the world.

The difference between a democratic country and a dictatorship is primarily in its media. In a democratic country, the media is not beholden to the country. In a communist dictatorship, Pravda serves the government. We have all seen how we live in a dictatorship. All the media, with no exception, were drafted into the war against Hashem and His anointed one. Every broadcaster who opened his mouth was happy to announce the progress of the evacuation. Saliva spewed from their mouths as they joyously reported about men, women, and children being dragged from their homes, about the destruction of shuls and homes.

The hypocrisy of the media is truly infuriating. They kept saying

how the soldiers could not be involved in political debate and they should not be told to refuse orders. To force them to act against their consciences and to order them to expel and destroy, is okay, and that doesn't involve them in political debate. But to tell them *not* to do that, is forbidden.

Now there is a new complaint. Why did those who were expelled involve their children in their opposition to the evacuation without thinking about the emotional damage this would cause them? What hypocrisy!

To expel a child from his home is perfectly all right and it passes the rules of the Council for the Protection of Children, to show the child how his school and shul are being destroyed. That is just fine. To leave the child and his parents without *parnasa* and to force them to move to a new environment and to begin life anew, is great. But what was *not* okay was that parents had to explain to their child that the soldiers and police and the Yassamnicks in black who filled the yishuv were actually good angels that dear uncle Arik Sharon, may he live long, sent to help them pack so they could move to a wonderful new home far from the mortars' reach.

So if tens of thousands of precious Jews stop celebrating the heretical, communist holiday of Yom HaAtzmaut; if they stop calling the mosdos that made millions of Jewish children renounce their heritage in the name of reishis tzmichas Geulaseinu, then the disengagement will become an impetus for emuna in the true and complete Redemption through Moshiach Tzidkeinu.

This is the good point to be seen within the terrible darkness of the Disengagement Campaign. Hundreds of thousands of dear Jews need to disengage, once and for all,

from their blind faith in the natural geula through the State of Israel, and seek the Malchus Dovid, the true Geula, through the real Moshiach.

I think many settlers have already come to these conclusions.

Yes, you hear people demanding the disengagement from belief in the State, and this is a positive development which I hope will grow. What kind of positive regard can someone who was expelled from Gush Katif and the Shomron, and their hundreds of thousands of supporters, have after seeing the men in black with the symbol of the State on their chests and on their hats, uprooting Jews and destroying shuls, preparing the infrastructure for a terrorist Hamas and Al Qaeda state, and desecrating the dead?

A few years ago there was a chase after terrorists in Beis Lechem (Bethlehem). The terrorists hid out in a church and the chase was over. Why? Because obviously, the soldiers couldn't enter the church, even if the terrorists had Jewish blood on their hands. These terrorists ended up the victors and the soldiers of the State of Israel withdrew in shame. Yet thousands of our soldiers broke into shuls, not in order to catch criminals, but in order to destroy shuls.

The Rebbe cried out that during the Six Day War over 700 soldiers were killed in the battle for the Old City of Yerushalayim, simply because the government did not allow the Air Force to bomb the mosques in which the Jordanian Legion were hiding. But the criminal Ariel Sharon and his band of evil ministers, knowingly and willingly destroy shuls where the Sh'china resides, and the media salutes them for their bravery.

When we sat in the Sefardi shul on Thursday, and waited for the expulsion army to come and remove

us, various rabbanim gave shiurim and words of chizuk. One of the rabbanim highly praised the precious youth who came to support the settlers "illegally." He said to them, "You are great kids, there is nobody like you. You will be the future leaders of the State!" I was sitting on a bench in the back and when I heard this I yelled out, "What State? The State is finished! Only Malchus Dovid!"

There was silence. Nobody knew what to say. Then another rav spoke and in the middle he said, "I support what one of the rabbanim sitting here said before, **there is no longer a State!** What we ask for is only Malchus Beis Dovid." Everybody applauded.

Rabbi Chaim Drukman gave an inspirational talk to the hundreds of bachurim before the evacuation of the shul, and he said to them that the menora that Titus had depicted as a sign of his victory over the Jewish nation, has become the symbol of our revival with the Medinat Yisroel.

I couldn't restrain myself and I yelled, "It is not a symbol of revival but a symbol of caving in to terror, a symbol of uprooting and expulsion. This menora is on the heart of every soldier and policeman who destroys our land and makes Gush Katif Judenrein. They repeat the actions of those who burned shuls on Kristalnacht"

When the speeches were over, everybody got up for the last Mincha and after Mincha they took out all the sifrei kodesh from the aron kodesh to say Avinu Malkeinu. At that moment I thought, why shouldn't I go to the Ashkenazi shul nearby and bring the new Torah? But then I saw that someone had spread out a chuppa over the Sifrei Torah, and what was the chuppa? A huge Israeli flag! That's when I said to myself that the Torah we had written will not go under the

symbol of the Medina that expels and destroys.

I heard that there was a gathering of hundreds of teachers who teach in religious ulpanim and high schools and the topic was how to explain our continued emuna in the State as part of the Geula process to children who ask how this makes any sense. One of the participants told me that throughout an entire day, rabbanim who champion religious Zionism came up with all sorts of explanations to show how there is no contradiction. There was no child present to cry out that the answer is simple: it's all a lie. There is no k'dusha in the State and the emperor has no clothes!

I am reminded now of the hardest time for me, throughout the months of fighting, when for many months I believed it wouldn't happen, and then, in one moment, I lost that faith. This was when the huge rally in Kikar Rabin in Tel Aviv was over and after the tremendous hisorerus when Shma Yisroel, Hashem Hu HaElokim, Ana Hashem Hoshia Na, etc., were said, everybody sang "HaTikva."

At that moment I said to myself, if after everything that has happened they are still singing Arik's anthem, which doesn't mention Hashem's name, with words written by someone with no connection to Yiddishkait, then we are lacking the necessary powerful upheaval to show us what kind of "am chofshi" (free people) we are in our land.

But you are insulting rabbanim, g'dolei Torah who built up this shita and the people who follow them?!

Rabbi Shmuel Tal, rosh yeshivas Toras Chaim, certainly also believes in the greatness of the rabbanim who founded religious Zionism, yet he and other great rabbanim have



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long eschewed Yom HaAtzmaut, and they are teaching their talmidim to oppose the waving of flags and other Zionist symbols.

Other good people have gotten Hashem's message after this terrible churban and decided to internalize it. One of them is Rabbi Shimon Riklin, a respected educator of the religious Zionists, who announced on Channel 1, "I have given a *get krisus* (divorce) to the Medina. I will no longer celebrate Yom HaAtzmaut. The army is not holy. I will view it as an educational failure if my students enter combat units."

Other religious nationalists began distributing stickers that say:

there is no way I will be drafted into the IEF (the Israel Expulsion Force).

Is there a chance that something good will come out of this then?

It seems somewhat cruel to put it that way when the destruction has just happened, but we see that Rabbi Akiva (end of tractate Makos) laughed when he saw a fox coming out of the Holy of Holies. This is because after seeing the fulfillment of the negative prophecy of Zion being plowed like a field, he knew that the aliya would be incomparably greater.

In one of the private audiences that the gaon R Efraim Yolles had with the Rebbe, he asked the Rebbe: If the Israeli government continued making concessions is there a chance the government would dissolve.

The Rebbe said: the Medina will not dissolve, but it will be a lowly Medina. As in everything the Rebbe said, this too is based on Chazal and what our early Rebbeim said. Rashi in the tractate Sanhedrin says, on the verse in Daniel, which is also brought in the Gemara, "And after their strength ends **they will be very lowly**, these tzaros will end and Moshiach will come..."

We have reached the depths of degradation and an end has come to the strength of the Zionists. They have become a very lowly State and now is the time for Moshiach to come.

Do you plan on spreading these ideas?

We plan on publishing a brochure on the topic of is'chalta d'Geula, with sichos and letters from the Rebbe. We also plan on making orange flags that say, "The only solution: Moshiach ben Dovid." This is in order to channel the pain, anger, and frustration of the orange crowd, towards faith in

Moshiach, so they forget about Zionism and ask only for the Malchus Dovid.

We are also producing a black flag with orange writing that says, “We won’t forget and we won’t forgive.” We all remember the churban Sharon made in Yamit. We remember what the Rebbe said on 2 Tammuz 5742 (after the big mistake made by Begin and Sharon during the Peace in Galilee War that caused crying for generations) – that Sharon only represents the Arabs, and no one should vote for him or his disciples.

Yet Sharon was forgiven by those evicted from Yamit and everybody else, and they continued to support him and vote for him. Many of us, Lubavitcher Chassidim included, transgressed the Rebbe’s instructions. We invited him to our events, gave him a regular platform in our weeklies, visited him around holidays and called upon our tzibbur to vote for him and his disciples.

So Sharon saw that he would still be called Arik Melech Yisroel. Therefore, this campaign of, “We won’t forget and we won’t forgive,” is vital. We must burn it into the consciousness of the public that Prime Minister Sharon, President Katzav, and all ministers and members of the Knesset who supported the expulsion and destruction, are *muktza machmas mius* [a reference to a halacha of Shabbos which means: off-limits because it is disgusting], and that forevermore, no believing Jew will have anything to do with them.

Unfortunately, there are journalists who call themselves Lubavitchers, who publicize praise of this cruel rasha in the written and electronic media. They rationalize for him in a sycophantic way, how broken he is by what he is forced to do for Am Yisroel! And these journalists continue to daven

in the Chabad shul in their neighborhood and get Maftir with great honor, and nobody speaks up against them!

We plan on building a Yad VaShem memorial, where we will have pictures and videos of all the yishuvim that were destroyed. There will be a special hall called, “Every person has a name,” with the names of the families that were expelled, their pictures and pictures of their homes that were destroyed. There will also be a hall called “Kristalnacht,” with pictures and the history of the shuls, yeshivos, talmudei Torah, schools, and preschools that were destroyed by the Israeli government and the Knesset.

And there will be a hall called, “Everlasting Shame,” with the names of the wicked who coldly perpetrated this crime: the Prime Minister, the President of the State, the ministers (including Netanyahu, who could have stopped the churban, but sufficed with making a show of protest). And of course there will be the names of the representatives of the chareidi parties in the Knesset who will be remembered forever in ignominy. It was only thanks to their being in the Coalition that this churban took place and even while the destruction was taking place they remained in the Coalition of shmad, while they justified their actions in 150 ways.

You are right about the government and the ministers, but how can you blame the army? They simply receive orders and carry them out.

There are those who defend the soldiers and police, many of who carried out this crime with sensitivity and tears. But in my humble opinion you see the klipa of the Medina in this, for if there were only insensitive soldiers without Jewish feelings who perpetrated this

destruction, that would be one thing. But when thousands of soldiers who believe in Hashem, who fervently kiss the Torah, and cry from the depths of their hearts along with the evacuees, and many of them wear a kippa and even have a beard, this is because they were educated from their youth with a heretical education that there is a Creator and He gave us the Toras Emes, etc., but “the State supersedes all.”

This is just the point that we must inculcate in all groups – that the Medina is merely something technical and has no halo of holiness. This technical apparatus can serve Torah and mitzvos. And if it does, well and good. But if not, then it’s bad. Either way, neither the State nor its institutions nor those in senior positions nor the army have any k’dusha whatsoever or represent Is’chalta d’Geula.

One of the most moving scenes in Neve Dekalim was right before the soldiers broke into the shul complex, when the mara d’asra, Rabbi Yigal Kamentzky recited the “Keil Malei Rachamim” for those murdered al kiddush Hashem in Gush Katif. The crowd that numbered over 1000 youth, cried loudly, and as the rabbi continued reading the names, the crying intensified. When he got to the names of Mrs. Hatuel and her four daughters, there was nobody who didn’t cry bitterly from the depths of their broken hearts.

When I saw the incredible professionalism of the expulsion forces, I asked a commander, “Where were you when 6000 mortars and missiles landed here? Was the army just born now? If you are such heroes, why were Mrs. Hatuel and her four daughters murdered? Why were dozens of Jews murdered in shooting attacks on Katif settlements? Why is it that under Sharon’s reign, over 1000

Jews have been killed in terrorist acts? Why have tens of thousands of Israelis become permanently crippled? **Where were you, my heroic brothers, until now?** You have so many professional soldiers and police, yet the “Keil Malei Rachamim” list is so long!”

I had an argument with Rabbi Chanan Porat in Neve Dekalim in which he said: How can you say that the army is not holy? If the army would disappear we would be unable (by natural means) to live here for even one hour!

I told him that based on this reasoning we should say that gentiles on the New York police force are likewise holy, for without them the Jews couldn't live there. Obviously, all these things are not holy but are merely technicalities. If they serve holiness they fulfill their purpose. And if, G-d forbid, the army and police betray their purpose, they have no holiness whatsoever – on the contrary.

You've spoken about the spiritual angle of Geula and Moshiach, but what can be done to fight for shleimus ha'Aretz in order to prevent a repetition of the tragedy with the uprooting of more yishuvim in Yehuda and the Shomron?

In a letter that the Rebbe wrote Geula Cohen in 5741 (a copy of which appeared in Hebrew in the previous issue of *Beis Moshiach*), the Rebbe says that he cannot send his Chassidim to settle the settlements she refers to by name, because it is clear to him that these settlements are only “a temporary demonstration.” This is what the Rebbe says:

“My requests and the like (to the Chassidim to move to the settlements) are possible when they can be based on the strong hope that the settling will be enduring, and not just for political purposes



After the burial of the Zionist lie, this is the perfect time to spread the truth and to have it received in the broken hearts of our expelled brethren.

and to gain popularity in public opinion, even if eventually the settlers will be removed. My inyan is not politics but halacha. According to the shita of those who had and have influence in matters such as these throughout the 32 years (1948-1980), I have seen that it is all in one direction: concessions and withdrawal, etc... They have no regard for the removal of settlers from one, two, or more places. Particularly, when outside pressure intensifies, etc. Especially, when they already actually did this (in Yamit, where they used the IDF for this, and **all** the parties went back to business as usual. As I said, to openly say to settle and at the same time to hint to the settlers that it is only as a temporary demonstration, this is not how I operate.”

From what the Rebbe says we see that he doesn't see a chance for the settlements to remain as long as there is no fundamental change in how the country is run. Nevertheless, the Rebbe continued

to protest and fight against giving away land because you must protest and try to overcome the government's plans and do what you can, via natural means, to topple it and change it for a better government. We saw the Rebbe's efforts along these lines during Shamir's government, nine years after his letter to Geula Cohen.

The media has reported that the United States government announced to Sharon, just as the expulsion began, that this is only the beginning and now he has to carry out the entire Road Map. So the battle for Yehuda and Shomron and Yerushalayim begins, and we must do all we can to tell the public what the Rebbe says in order to take advantage of the hisorerus that hundreds of thousands of people feel after witnessing the horrific expulsion sights, to get public opinion to oppose further withdrawals.

You must take into consideration that all the soldiers and police who participated in the expulsion are bitter and angry at the government that forced them to carry out this crime. We must strengthen them in this feeling by being mekarev them to Torah and mitzvos, in such a way that it should be impossible for any government to do this again in the future.

A helpful thing would be to give out the CD that we produced at the initiative of Shai Gefen. We recently advertised it on a popular website (which cost us thousands of dollars) and tens of thousands of Jews heard and saw the Rebbe.

And most importantly, as I said before, we need to go on the offensive to instill the belief in the real Geula through the real Moshiach, because after the burial of the Zionist lie, this is the perfect time to spread the truth and to have it received in the broken hearts of our expelled brethren.

LESSONS IN AVODAS HASHEM

The Baal Shem Tov says that we must learn a lesson in avodas Hashem from everything. While I was in Gush Katif I learned many lessons:

In Chassidus, iskafia is extolled, especially “closing one’s mouth and not talking,” iskafia b’dibbur, not to speak lashon ha’ra, rechilus, angry words, etc. We had an opportunity to see a living example of this in the thousands of soldiers and police who made believe they didn’t hear the pleading, crying, or insults. I was tremendously impressed by this “avodas ha’middos.” And even though it was from klipa and the consequences were churban and expulsion, but “my enemies made me wise,” and there’s what to learn even from them in avodas Hashem.

You can also learn from the expulsion army the idea of kabbalas ol. Each of the soldiers and police (aside from a very few) did their shameful work as though “forced by a demon,” with a broken heart, while hearing insults, sharp words, and the cries of men, women, and children. This was in addition to the difficult physical conditions of high temperatures and 80% humidity with backpacks on their backs.

Yet they knew that a soldier must carry out orders and while carrying out an order the mind does not function and the heart isn’t there and the heat isn’t felt. There is only one thing, kabbalas ol, to carry out the mission of obeying orders. And even though the results here were terrible, and it was all the counsel of the Evil Inclination and its usurping the G-dly kabbalas ol for negative things, as I said earlier, “my enemies made me wise,” and each one of us must ask himself:

Do I do Hashem’s shlichus that was given to me by the Rebbe, without being shaken by my thoughts and feelings, without considering heat and cold, without being ashamed by those who mock? Am I also consumed by my mission to the point that I ignore physicality, as those soldiers in the service of the wicked government did?

The Rambam, at the end of Hilchos Melachim, says (in the paragraph eliminated by the censor) that the Nazarene and the Yishmaeli [i.e., Mohammed] paved the way for Moshiach. Here too we can say that the army’s discipline is a preparation for Moshiach, because the soldiers are used to following orders of a wicked government and a

Knesset of non-believers. As the Rambam continues, “And when Melech HaMoshiach truly arises and succeeds and is raised up and elevated, they will all immediately retract and know that their ancestors bequeathed to them a lie and that their prophets and fathers misled them.” Then they will use the power of kabbalas ol they became accustomed to in order to be loyal soldiers in the army of Hashem, of Melech HaMoshiach.

Another unforgettable thing that we can learn from is the wonderful achdus among the youth and among all the supporters of Gush Katif. You could see this everywhere, especially when they danced together with hands on each other’s shoulders. And these were people who came from all parts of the country with ideologies that differed vastly one from the next, but one thing united them all, the goal to save Am Yisroel and Eretz Yisroel.

I had many arguments with leaders, particularly on the topic of Is’chalta d’Geula, etc., but the argument always ended with loving words and a hug. Why? Because we knew that there was more that united us than divided us. Again, can’t we adopt this feeling among our chayalei beis Dovid? Isn’t our powerful goal and shlichus we received to fix the world and to bring the Jewish people to be mekabel Moshiach important enough to melt our differences of opinion and to unite us in victory?

I must mention my awe of the Kirshnzafts. Which of us would be willing to have dozens of people living in our house? At all hours of the day, in every corner sat young and old, learning Chitas and Rambam, saying T’hillim and davening. In every square meter, people slept on the floor, on couches, and on the lawn. People were eating and drinking everywhere and the Kirschnzafts didn’t stop offering to have you wash to eat, to drink a cup of tea, to slake your thirst with a cold drink.

All the rooms hummed with activity. The porches were full. The phone and cell phones didn’t stop ringing. When you walked in you had to be careful not to step on the feet of a bachur sleeping under the table. The Kirschnzaft children walked around barefoot because they lost their shoes in the chaos. So tell me honestly, which of us would be willing to raise such a large family for weeks, under such conditions? And this was after the attack from which Yigal has not fully recovered.

Isn’t our powerful goal and shlichus we received important enough to melt our differences of opinion and to unite us in victory?

THE REBBE'S MONTHS

BY RABBI NAFTALI ESTULIN, SHLIACH, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA
TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY

The fact that so many Jews are being aroused by feelings of t'shuva during these days, and with the knowledge that these are most auspicious days that represent a time of unique segula – stems from the strength of the Moshe of our generation – the Rebbe.

The chassid R. Avraham of Ayor used to say that the two months of Elul and Tishrei are “the Rebbe’s months,” because these months have the special virtue of an “eis ratzon” (an auspicious time), and this is in the merit of Moshe Rabbeinu. One doesn’t need to have a vast knowledge of chassidus in order to know this. It is sufficient to open *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch*, Sec. 128, where it states clearly, “These days have been especially selected and set aside for t'shuva as days of mercy and grace, because Moshe ascended Mt. Sinai on Rosh Chodesh Elul to receive the second *luchos*, waited there for forty days, and descended on the tenth of Tishrei, as the atonement was then completed. Since then, these days have been sanctified as days of Divine grace and the tenth of Tishrei as the Day of

Atonement.”

We see, therefore, that the foundation and inception of these days of grace are directly connected to Moshe Rabbeinu, who was the very first to take action in arousing the Divine will associated with these days. Thus, it can be said with the utmost certainty that the Moshe Rabbeinu of each generation continues to draw forth the auspicious aspect of these days every year.

To put it in simpler terms, the fact that so many Jews are being aroused by feelings of t'shuva during these days, and with the knowledge that these are most auspicious days that represent a time of unique *s'gula*, stems from the strength of the Moshe of our generation, the Rebbe.

Not only must this be instilled

within every chassid, even those Jews who are not yet chassidim should be made aware that the Rebbe is the one who is arousing them to t'shuva and making certain to awaken this auspicious time for them. This knowledge will undoubtedly arouse a special merit, the merit of our holy forefathers up until the Rebbe MH”M, which will arouse an aspect of t'shuva and an *eis ratzon* of an entirely different type.

The Rebbe once explained that the custom to sing the niggun of “*Avinu Malkeinu*” (as composed by the Alter Rebbe) before each t'filla on Rosh HaShana, including Maariv, when we don't say “*Avinu Malkeinu*,” is in order to recall the merit of the forefathers, the merit of the Alter Rebbe.

WHY NINE?

When we live with the Rebbeim and try to connect everything to the leader of the generation, we sometimes discover things that are most interesting, e.g., the number nine.

Many things associated with Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur are connected to the number nine. The chassidic custom to recite an additional three chapters of

T'hillim during these days was transmitted according to tradition from Rebbe to Rebbe when they reached the age of **nine**. So it was established with the Mittlerer Rebbe, the Tzemach Tzedek, the Rebbe Maharash, the Rebbe Rashab, and the Rebbe Rayatz.

During the Musaf service on Rosh HaShana, we recite **nine** brachos in the Shmonei Esrei, and in the Kaparos on Erev Yom Kippur, we swing a chicken over our heads **nine** times.

What is special about the number nine? The Gemara explains at the beginning of the chapter *Tefillas HaShachar* (Brachos 29a): "To what do the nine [brachos] of Rosh HaShana correspond? Rabbi Yitzchak of Kartignin says: To the nine Divine references made by Chana in her prayer."

When chassidim speak about Chana, they immediately recall the connection to Chana, the mother of royalty, who merited to bring to the world the light more powerful than seven days, the light of Melech

Jews are being aroused by feelings of t'shuva during these days, and with the knowledge that these are most auspicious days that represent a time of unique s'gula, stems from the strength of the Moshe of our generation, the Rebbe.

HaMoshiach, the **ninth** generation since the Baal Shem Tov!

It is interesting to note that the above Gemara is quoted in a *maamer* by the Rebbe Rayatz from Rosh HaShana 5689, the year of the Rebbe's wedding, which connected the Rebbe with the chassidim and

turned the Rebbe into the leader of the ninth generation of chassidus.

This year, more than before, the connection can be felt between the Rebbe and the Yomim Tovim, as Yom Tov in Chutz LaAretz comes out with a "chazaka" of thrice three days, for a total of **nine** holy days.

From Chana, the mother of Shmuel HaNavi, who founded Malchus Beis Dovid, we come to our generation and Chana, the mother of the king who brought Malchus Beis Dovid to its ultimate perfection. This year, we commemorate forty years since her passing, together with the sixtieth anniversary of the passing of her husband, the holy *mekubal*, HaRav R. Levi Yitzchak. This also has a connection to the holidays of Tishrei, as $40 + 60 = 100$, an allusion to the one hundred blasts of the shofar on Rosh HaShana, and the *s'chach* (gematria = 100) of Sukkos, as explained in the sichos of their son, the Rebbe MH"M. May it be G-d's will that he will soon be revealed – amen!



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‘EVEN A HEART OF STONE CANNOT CONTINUE WITH BUSINESS AS USUAL’

RABBI ELI POLTORAK, MENAHEL YESHIVAS TOMCHEI T’MIMIM IN NEVE DEKALIM

I arrived in Gush Katif on Rosh Chodesh Tammuz and spent a month and a half there that is hard to describe. Theoretical ideas became real. During these days of spiritual trials of faith, the faith in the coming of Moshiach took on a new, more real significance that was so real you could touch it. It reminds me of 770 back in 5752, when the emuna in the coming of Moshiach was palpable.

There were horrible sights that will remain with me forever. I saw soldiers grabbing a boy and dragging him to the bus. The parents wanted to talk to him but couldn't. They dragged people out of their homes without anything but the clothes on their back. There was terrible cruelty.

Even before the expulsion and churban, my talmidim and I decided that at the moment of truth, we had to fortify ourselves and not go as sheep to the slaughter. Wednesday morning, I got a phone call from Danny Cohen that soldiers were heading to my house. It was early in the morning

and I was in the mikva. I arrived home and saw soldiers standing near the door and my wife yelling at them. We entered the house and locked the doors. We didn't think the soldiers would come so early in the morning. I told the soldiers that they could not enter because I had to daven and we could speak

after davening.

They returned two hours later and I was still davening. I decided to write to the Rebbe and received a shocking answer in volume 5, p. 88 of the *Igros Kodesh*. The Rebbe said that since, for the time being, I was among non-observant Jews, surely I was being mekarev them to



Rabbi Eli Poltorak giving a shiur in the yeshiva in Gush Katif

Torah and mitzvos, at first a little bit and then much more, especially with mitzvas t'fillin.

Then the Rebbe spoke about soldiers and wrote that every Jewish soldier has ways of defending himself, one of which is t'fillin. And when it isn't possible to put them on in the morning, they can do so throughout the day.

Then the most startling sentence which made me tremble as I read it: **One cannot know Hashem's calculations and perhaps this is one of those things for which he is being held there, and when he carries it out then perhaps he will return home, with the agreement of the government.**

This letter gave me enormous chizuk at that terrible time. In the meantime, the Chabad bachurim in the yeshiva began fortifying themselves in the shelter as we had planned. I was in constant phone contact with them. The soldiers realized I was in touch with them and they decided not to wait any more and broke my door in. I fled to an inner room and locked the door.

They asked me to open the door but I said I wouldn't unless they agreed to put on t'fillin. They said they would put on t'fillin and I opened the door. They did indeed put on t'fillin and then asked me to leave. "We made a deal," they said to me. I told them that I had merely promised to open the door but not to leave the house and that I was forbidden to leave the house al pi Torah. They carried us to the buses and from there we went to Merkaz Shapiro.

All of us on the bus were brokenhearted and I got up and read the Rebbe's letter. Everybody was moved. The soldiers with us heard about the Rebbe's letter and also agreed to put on t'fillin.

The biggest rachmanus was on

the soldiers. I said to the soldiers that despite the pain, we could continue to live and build a new home but you cannot create a new soul, and what they were doing would be on their consciences their entire lives. In addition to putting on t'fillin, I said with the soldiers, "I accept upon myself not to expel Jews." Some of the soldiers broke

They asked me to open the door but I said I wouldn't unless they agreed to put on t'fillin. They did indeed put on t'fillin and then asked me to leave. "We made a deal," they said to me. I told them that I had merely promised to open the door but not to leave the house and that I was forbidden to leave the house al pi Torah.

down and said they could not go on. They sat and cried the entire way.

When the bus dropped the refugees off at the Merkaz Shapiro, I saw how they all admired Chabad. They said to me, "Kol ha'kavod to Lubavitchers. We need to learn from you how to stand

strong."

That's when I came to the conclusion that Chabad must lead the battle and give the youth lots of chizuk. We have to give the youth the real Geula, not a forgery. While we stayed in the Gush, we were able to bring the Rebbe's message in the right way and the fact is that everybody loved Chabad. The aid and support we received are proof.

Gush Katif itself is incredible. I never met people like these in my life, people with fine middos, simcha, emuna, and bitachon. A Kassam missile could land at any moment but they continued their routines until the end. It was life with real mesirus nefesh. Each of us could learn from them what emuna, bitachon, and "tracht gut vet zain gut" is.

Yet I was very pained by how they lead these tzaddikim astray with belief in Zionism and the flag. The Rebbe wrote Rabbi Zevin z"l that the belief in Is'chalta d'Geula causes korbanos. I never understood why the Rebbe spoke so sharply when many people have had foolish beliefs. Why is this sin so severe? However, when I was in Gush Katif I understood. The belief in the Medina prevented them from having the true strength to stop the Disengagement, and this can cost us many korbanos and has already cost us many korbanos.

I want to say about the Kirshnzafts – "mesirus nefesh" is not adequate to describe what they did here. Throughout this final period they stood proud and strong, despite Yigal's injury (and his son's a few months ago). They weren't fazed by anything. Yigal helped everybody, without exception. Yigal and his wife Tzippora worked 24-hours-a-day. Their home was a "soup kitchen," a "hotel," and a place for emotional support. People from the Gush came all day to talk to them. Their



house was also a base for constant mitzvaim.

My conclusions are clear. The Rebbe warns that one who already destroyed yishuvim will do so again. The Rebbe said this in open prophecy in a sicha on Purim 5745, referring to the man who did this in Yamit and just repeated the act here.

We knew there was a terrible decree. We did not delude ourselves. But we also lived with bitachon that Hashem would not abandon us. We had beautiful shuls full of people and to think they will all be destroyed. It's just unthinkable.

The Rebbe warns that one who already destroyed yishuvim will do so again. The Rebbe said this in open prophecy in a sicha on Purim 5745, referring to the one who did this in Yamit and just repeated the act here.

Now we realize we need Moshiach and we cannot trust a human being or any government. The only solution is Moshiach. Whoever dreamed that 60 years after the Holocaust, the Jewish State would wreak such a churban on itself?

I will end with what the Rebbe says – that the churban of the Beis HaMikdash is ongoing and does not stop for a moment until the 3rd Beis HaMikdash is built. We witnessed a churban of holy Jewish communities and we must turn the world over! Even a heart of stone can't continue business as usual.

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**RABBI YIGAL KIRSHNZAFI, SHLIACH IN NEVE DEKALIM,
IN AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH BEIS MOSHIACH:**

‘OUR SHLICHUS HASN’T ENDED!’

INTERVIEW BY SHAI GEFEN

Thursday morning, soldiers burst into my home. I woke up and nearly used my gun. I thought terrorists had invaded...I will never forget what I saw. I saw soldiers bent over R’ Zalman Notik and dragging him out to the bus. The same thing happened with the shliach from Kfar Tavor, Rabbi Sholom Ber Freiman.

All the talk of expulsion on the one hand, and the fight we waged for twenty months on the other hand – all came to a head when we witnessed that which we never even dreamed of.

The Strip was sealed, but Jews with mesirus nefesh knew how to get in. They came to our house and other houses from all over. It is still impossible to say how this happened, but masses of people came and were hosted in Gush Katif.

I was the first resident of Neve Dekalim. My first caravan was near Khan Junis, when there were only sand dunes. Before our eyes, there blossomed forth a fantastic yishuv, a city council, banks, parks, gardens and trees – a fantastic yishuv. Now it will be a wasteland for terrorists.

Throughout the final week, there

were two points of light that Chabad brought to the residents. The dedication of the mikva was one moving event. We made no rational calculations about what might happen. We invested tens of thousands of dollars to complete the building. Until the last moment, we did not lose hope. And we finished it all with simcha and non-stop dancing. All residents of the yishuv came and received unusual kocho.

The atmosphere at home the past few weeks was very special. Everybody came to encourage and strengthen us. We will remember this forever. We had many people who stayed with us. I want to mention Rabbi Wolpo, Rabbi Nachshon, Rabbi Mochkin, and Rabbi Notik and there were dozens more.

The Chabad mitzva tank did great work within the yishuvim. We saw

how they feared the power of Chabad. They spoke about how Chabad are extremists and how only Chabad knows how to take serious action. This is also the time to thank the Matteh HaOlami to Save the Nation and the Land, led by Rabbi Kutli Rapp and Rabbi Wolpo. They encouraged the residents of the Gush, with pictures of the Rebbe that they distributed, with CD’s on shleimus ha’Aretz, and many other activities that gave the residents the strength to handle the situation.

One of the dramatic moments in that bitter week was when the national police chief, High Commander Moshe Karadi, came to my house. He wanted to visit me after I was wounded, as we’ve been good friends for decades. On Wednesday, he was in the area and his office chief called me to say he wanted to come, but he was afraid they would puncture his tires. I said I would come out to the gate to bring him in.

We came to my house in Neve Dekalim, and my friends Leibel Mochkin, Dovid Nachshon, and I sat with him for a long time. Rabbi Mochkin explained what a crime this is and told him stories from Russia. I told him that one can acquire his world in one hour. You can be the hero of history. Dovid Nachshon asked him how could he do this to his good

friend.

As Dovid spoke to him with great passion, the police chief said to him: You have no idea what I'm going through now.

The conversation went on for about an hour but the police chief didn't have a real response.

Thursday morning, soldiers burst into my house. I woke up suddenly and nearly used my gun. I thought they were terrorists. I will never forget the sight I saw. I saw soldiers bent over Zalman Notik and dragging him to the bus. Then the same thing happened to the shliach from Kfar Tavor, Rabbi Sholom Ber Freiman. I told them to get out of my house, but they said they had come to catch the unauthorized visitors.

The commander was nervous and threatened to take me too. I told him that Karadi had been here yesterday and had said we could remain in Neve Dekalim until the end of the expulsion. Suddenly another officer showed up and I told him that in this house lived three terror victims. They acted brutally regardless. They tore the picture of the Rebbe that was on the door and broke the door. I strongly demanded that they bring back the

The dedication of the mikva was one moving event. We made no rational calculations about what might happen. We invested tens of thousands of dollars to complete the building. Until the last moment, we did not lose hope.

two rabbis they had kidnapped.

All the children woke up. Chaos ensued. Cries and screams. The crowd in the house began to speak to the soldiers. Then suddenly, they simply walked out. Slowly, they gave up and left the yard. A lieutenant colonel came to smooth things over. I said, first of all, bring back the two rabbis they

kidnapped. The female soldiers present began to cry. They finally had to bring back the rabbis from the bus, the only time this happened throughout the expulsion.

The soldiers were shocked. Spirit had vanquished might.

A colonel came who guarded the house so nobody would enter, but during the day we packed and went out to the bus. We wanted to stay until the end but under the circumstances, we could not stay any longer. The situation was intolerable with all the children.

On Friday, after the despicable expulsion, they cleaned all the shuls. In Yeshivas Yamit, they prepared food. Each person thought he was alone and that aside from himself, nobody remained in the Gush, but it turned out that there were hundreds of people. It was just like after the Holocaust, after the liberation, when people came out of their holes.

I got reports that there was great simcha in the yishuv. Even this week (the week after the expulsion), I made the announcement I always made every Erev Shabbos, to announce the arrival of Shabbos, with music. I made it over the phone from Yerushalayim.



Rabbi Yigal Kirshnzaft,
shliach in Neve Dekalim



"Thursday morning soldiers burst into my house."

Thursday night, we went to the Caesar Hotel in Yerushalayim. I told my children they could cry until Shabbos, but no more crying when Shabbos arrived. The only place my kids know is Neve Dekalim. They were born there and it's their home.

You have to understand that what happened is not the tragedy of individuals. We represent Am Yisroel. The problem is a national problem, not just the problem of those from the Gush. The tremendous chilul Hashem is very painful. The biggest pain is the pikuach nefesh that this situation has created. They are busy putting up defenses in the northern Negev.

I am asked whether I felt like this was the Holocaust. I tell everybody that there is no comparison. This is much worse than the Holocaust! In the Holocaust, murderous gentiles perpetrated crimes against humanity, while here the perpetrators were Jews. Jews who fled Poland can get their homes back today.

Many people ask how I have any strength. I ask myself the same question. The answer is that even under these terrible circumstances there has to be "mind ruling the heart."

It's sad to hear that we are the first Chabad house to be expelled by Jews. However, one thing is clear to me: the shlichus isn't over. Back in 5748, in the first letter the Rebbe wrote to us, he said that our job is to rejoice and to make others rejoice. Today I understand the deeper significance of that letter: to make the residents, who for now are scattered all over the country, rejoice, to bring them simcha.

Although I was wounded last month, we strengthened others and made the residents rejoice. We gave out thousands of key chains with the saying of the Tzemach Tzedek on it, "think good and it will be good."

Our shlichus continues to be to make everyone rejoice. There are 50-year-olds who are beginning life anew. Some of their possessions were

On Friday, after the despicable expulsion, they cleaned all the shuls. In Yeshivas Yamit, they prepared food. Each person thought he was alone and that aside from himself, nobody remained in the Gush, but it turned out that there were hundreds of people. It was just like after the Holocaust, after the liberation, when people came out of their holes.

damaged or stolen. Even now, I go around and cheer people up. I go around to the hotels to encourage everyone.

I must say to those who stand on the sidelines and say the battle could have been fought like this or like that, that you never saw the tail of a mortar. The residents here are not angels. They endured 17 years of Intifada, stone throwing, shooting, burning tires on the roads, and in the last five years nonstop mortars, and people still didn't leave. Taking a child to school in the morning was nearly impossible. Nevertheless, people didn't cave in to the hard-hearted disengagement council and Sharon's dictatorship. There was endless wiretapping and I had a Trojan horse spying on my Internet activity. The Jews of Gush Katif were heroic and had incredible mesirus nefesh. Their dedication will be etched in the annals of history.

We saw tens of thousands of soldiers, and endless trucks and convoys, but the emuna lasted until the final second. Even now, we still believe and wait to return home. As long as the Gush is still ours, there is still hope. No prayer and no good deed are for naught. Our perspective is G-dly.



Rabbi Kirshnzaft with Police Chief Karadi

Everything we did was directed towards Hashem. We know that everything that happens is G-d's will, and we accept the din, but I ask how the tremendous chilul Hashem and the endangering of the entire country can be forgiven?

It's hard to draw any conclusions just yet. We are still within the "Shiva." The time will come when we will definitely have to draw conclusions and make a cheshbon ha'nefesh.

I must say how dear Jews continue to envelop us with love. Jews from Har Nof adopted us and bring us s'farim and whatever we lack. I want to personally thank all the Chabad Chassidim who helped us and stood by our sides during these trying times. Those who stood silently on the side can still do t'shuva. It's not possible for a Chassid of the Rebbe to sit quietly while Eretz Yisroel burns and Jews are expelled from their homes. Chabad has a great ko'ach and there's a reason why they only fear Chabad.

The Gaza Strip was assigned to the

tribe of Yehuda, the tribe from which Moshiach comes. We believe with complete faith that we will return there together with all our possessions and our children and will merit to immediately see the hisgalus of Melech

*Thursday morning,
soldiers burst into my
house. I woke up
suddenly and nearly
used my gun. I
thought they were
terrorists. I will never
forget the sight I saw.*

HaMoshiach. All the tzaros and yisurim we are undergoing lately are the birth pangs of Moshiach, as it says, "for a small moment I leave you and

with great mercy I will gather you."

Nobody can take our spirit from us. You cannot stop k'dusha and imprison faith. No blockades, no barbed wire, and no mortars can stop the flood of emuna, which goes forth from here to conquer the entire country and to finally bring Moshiach. We will always remember our departed brethren, who are under the wings of the Sh'china, and we will always pray for brethren wounded in body and soul, who watered the sands of the Gush with their blood.

Those expelled from Gush Katif did everything, physically and spiritually, to annul the evil decree. We davened, gave tz'daka, made the desert bloom, went out to be mekarev our brethren around the country, and sacrificed many korbanos to sanctify Your name. We ask and cry: **ad masai?! We can only ask of You, our dear Father: please, immediately bring the Geula!**

And even though he carries, still and all, we await him every day that he should come.

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UNTIL THE FINAL MOMENT

BY RABBI DANNY COHEN, SHLIACH IN CHEVRON

I arrived in Gush Katif Erev Shabbos Chazon and remained there until the shliach Rabbi Yigal Kirshnzaft and his family were expelled. The sights that I saw during the expulsion were horrifying. The comparison between the Holocaust and what took place in Gush Katif is not farfetched, and I am well aware of the anger expressed by various people with this comparison.

Our great expectation was that we would be inside and the country would be in an uprising on the outside, but this didn't happen. The

second disappointment was that many anticipated a mass refusal to obey orders, but this didn't happen either.

In the final two days of the expulsion, I walked around with a megaphone and simply told off the soldiers and police. I did this sometimes in anger, sometimes with love, and sometimes screaming. It all depended on what was going on at the time. I told them explicitly what they are: Sharon's Defense Force. Sadly, they turned the soldiers into robots.

Despite it all, I greeted all of

them with a certain measure of tolerance except for one soldier, a religious officer with a rank of major. I just could not accept his presence there. A Jew who wears a kippa which symbolizes yiras Shamayim, came to expel Jews!

I gently asked him how he dared to perpetrate such a crime. He didn't answer, just motioned arrogantly. I took a picture of the father of the Gobi family (may Hashem avenge his blood) who was recently murdered, whose children were about to be expelled. I pushed the picture into his face and said, "Take a good look so you can identify him when he will be your accuser in Heaven. What will you say then? What excuse will you have?"

The officer was shaken up.

Whoever was there knows that the Medina prepared the army in the most depraved way against the settlers. They prepared them for all eventualities and presented the settlers as subhuman, as others in our history have done.

It's hard to describe the expulsion days. There were many times I yelled at the police and they broke down. They hugged me, and me them. The day before we were expelled, I met an officer whom I had yelled at a few days before. I



Rabbi Danny Cohen with Rabbi Yigal Kirshnzaft



Rabbi Zalman Notik, a soldier, and a Tamim

felt I had to talk to him. I told him that a few days earlier, I had yelled at him and although I wasn't sorry about what I had said, I hadn't intended on personally hurting him. The police officer shed a tear and hugged me.

There was an amazing phenomenon. Soldiers cursed Sharon over what he was forcing them to do. They said they hoped it would all be canceled at the last moment, either something would happen to Sharon or that they would be given the order to invade Khan Junis.

Near the Kirshnzaft house was a family whose oldest son serves in Golani. He deserted his unit in order to defend his home. The unit commander called him and said: As far as I'm concerned, you're a hero and not a deserter. You don't have to come back.

The family stood strong until the end. It was only when they saw that it was all over, and that there was no choice that they left. The boy

from Golani called his company commander and asked that the Golani soldiers, those who did not participate in the expulsion, help him pack. He didn't want the hands of the expulsion soldiers to touch his family's belongings. And his chevra in his troop got their troop's trucks, and officers with ranks as high as major came, and within two days they packed everything up.

I went over to these guys and put t'fillin on with them. They spoke about the officers overseeing the expulsion in very strong terms, and said they had been talking with their commander and when he told them they were going to take part in the Disengagement, they all got up and walked out. This is why no Golani soldiers participated in the expulsion.

One of the things that shook me up was when Rabbi Yigal Kirschnzaft packed the Chabad house sign in a box. I felt how they were fighting the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach, just as when Titus entered the Holy of Holies, he cut

the paroches and blood came out and he was sure he had vanquished G-d. That was my feeling.

Another very difficult moment was watching the old Chassid, R' Leibel Mochkin, when thousands of soldiers suddenly entered our area. He burst into tears and yelled at the soldiers. Watching this 81-year-old Chassid, who was in Russia and fought the Communists and prevailed, was terrifying.

The scenes amidst the chaos were like from another world. To see my friend Dovid Nachshon standing and screaming at the soldiers in great pain; Rabbi Wolpo standing and crying.

The situation I saw in Gush Katif made me feel how deep we are in Galus. The Rebbe's saying that the Medina is double and redoubled darkness took on a deeper significance. The Rebbe didn't delude us for even a moment. He prophesied that everything would have to be re-conquered. It's amazing how although the Rebbe

knew ahead of time what would happen, he still protested and did what he could to prevent it from happening.

If someone would have told me that Chevron is in danger, I would have looked at him like he was hallucinating. Now I know that it can happen.

A Jew must make hishtadlus, and we tried our best to prevent the expulsion. We see how the ideology of endowing the State with biblical kingship status and Is'chalta d'Geula, causes tragedies and compromises in midst of the battle.

But even within this impossible situation in Neve Dekalim, I knew that I'm the Rebbe's shliach and throughout the battle I had a pair of t'fillin with me to put on the soldiers. By the last day, my anger

The Rebbe didn't delude us for even a moment. He prophesied that everything would have to be re-conquered. It's amazing how although the Rebbe knew ahead of time what would happen, he still protested and did what he could to prevent it from happening.

had disappeared. I thought a lot about this bizarre phenomenon and came up with the famous Chassidic vort, "the world (*olam*, concealment) was created for me" – the concealment is for us so we can learn the lessons. If these soldiers would have been properly connected to Yiddishkait and the Rebbe, we would have likely prevented the whole Galus situation.

I grew up in a religious Zionist home and it was hard, at first, to accept what the Rebbe says about this era, that it's double and redoubled darkness. Now I think that the youth all understand that the only solution is Moshiach ben Dovid. We need to go all out to be mekarev these wonderful young people to Chabad.

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A TIME TO HEAL: ONLY CHABAD HAS THE MEDICINE

BY ALIZA KARP

It is as if everyone is under anaesthesia. There seems to be a haze that is covering the reality of the most absurd and one of most evil chapters in Jewish history. Perhaps it is the absurdity that makes it so hard for us to deal with the scope of the evil that was perpetrated in Aza, and, at the time of this writing, we can expect in the Shomron, G-d forbid.

It is a time when all sensitive people will be wondering and questioning. The soldiers were told that they can cry with their victims, but must follow orders because it was in the best interest of the country. How do they feel today? The parents and grandparents and children who find themselves homeless victims of the heartless regime – a regime they themselves support – when they regain their sense of feeling, how will they feel? The thousands of supporters of Gush Katif and the Northern Shomron, those who understand that an untold injustice has been done and untold dangers have been formulated, how are these people feeling?

The wounds are deep. They need medicine. Without medicine, they risk infection.

Much of the soul searching will revolve around Zionism. Being evicted from their homes and being left to fend for themselves is something Jews have lived through before. They know how to deal with it, they will not be sitting for generations in the squalor of refugee camps waiting for the UN to feed them and redeem them.

Religious Zionists have a dilemma. Some of their rabbis said that soldiers had to obey orders, some said the opposite. They had to choose between the law of the state and the law of the Torah. To us that is bizarre, but to them it is a real question.

Deportation and resettlement are not the issue.

The question is how to relate to the fact that it was Jews who evicted Jews from their homes? The country that was built in order to provide a place where Jews will not be mistreated just because they are Jews, has now acted contrary to one of the basic tenants of why it was created. What was Zionism, what is it and what will it be?

People do not know how to relate. Do they remain loyal or do they turn their backs on all they have believed in? Some people prefer a philosophy that evades the reality. They hold onto the belief that the state is Holy and the beginning of the Geula. Instead of seeing the deportation as a sign of a deep and dark Galus, they accept their fate with hope that this is part of the Geula process. Others are saying, the first state has failed, lets start a second state. Yes state, no state, maybe a state.

Years ago the Rebbe addressed this issue. His teachings are the medicine so many people need in order to set themselves straight so they can continue to lead productive lives. If we do not instruct them in what the Rebbe

said, infection could enter their wounds in the form of alternate, harmful philosophies, quick fix answers to life long questions.

Religious Zionists have a dilemma. Some of their rabbis said that soldiers had to obey orders, some said the opposite. They had to choose between the law of the state and the law of the Torah. To us that is bizarre, but to them it is a real question. They have been taught that the state is holy. They have lived incredible lives, observing the Torah while devoted to the state. They do not know where they went wrong... but we do.

I am not for a moment saying that the victims are responsible for the devastation. The guilty parties

are anyone in the Knesset or cabinet who voted for the disengagement plan, the budget, or gave support to the government in a non-confidence vote. The same goes for abstention. The victims are not guilty, but they do need to heal.

The previous Lubavitcher Rebbes encouraged Jewish settlement in Eretz Yisroel, but were opposed to a secular Jewish state on the land. Our Rebbe MH"M taught us to live on the land, with the government, as law abiding citizens. Unlike the groups who defy the state or use it but disrespect it, and unlike the other extreme who "worship" the state, the Rebbe's way is to maintain the focus that we are Jews are living in Eretz Yisroel, the land given to us by Hashem. We

have no need to abhor our fellow Jews nor honor them (for their political stature); we are focused on the truth.

Explaining the Rebbe's view about Religious Zionism and his analysis of their concept of the beginning of the Geula, has always been a sensitive issue. But now the people need to hear it. They need to be given a clear picture of what has happened, and the Rebbe's view of how to relate to the state is the answer that will heal their wounds.

Our job is to learn the Rebbe's teachings and teach them to others. In America the Jews need answers as well as in Eretz Yisroel... we all need to do our part.

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STRONG VOICES BREAK THE SILENCE: WHEN SILENCE IS A SIN

BY ALIZA KARP

“When Silence is a Sin,” was the title of a protest in front of Israeli Consulate, on Thursday evening, Chaf Menachem Av, the 25th of August. The powerful program broke the silence in New York following a week of tragedy in Aza and the Northern Shomron.

“How could the Arabs have won this victory against us, how could they rid areas in Eretz Yisroel of Jews?” asked the first speaker Rabbi David Hollander, a spiritual leader who has served the Jewish community with staunch Jewish values for decades – all the while being a staunch follower of the Rebbe MH”M – Rabbi Hollander’s spirit and sharp wit has only strengthened with time. “After the 1967 war, an Egyptian was quoted as saying that the war was not fair, because the Arab armies were at a disadvantage – they did not have any Israeli

soldiers. The tragedy of the past few weeks is that this time the Arabs did have Israeli soldiers. This is how they won.

“Everything comes from the Chumash,” continued Hollander. “In the story of Yosef and his brothers we learn that many Egyptians were unable to handcuff Shimon, but one tap from Menasheh and Shimon was subdued. ‘This came from my father’s house,’

said Shimon.

“What a disgrace!” cried Rabbi Hollander. “No other country in history has done such a thing.”

“Why are we here?” challenged Hollander, “It already happened, it’s over.” Again, Hollander found the answer is in the Chumash. He went on to explain how when Yaakov was shown the bloodied shirt that made him draw the conclusion that Yosef

was no more, Yaakov mourned but he did not accept consolation. Yosef was still alive.

“We are mourning, but we are not allowed to accept consolation for that which is still alive,” declared Hollander. “The Rebbe would never accept consolation, the Rebbe would never give up.”

The Rally was held on the twentieth of the month of Menachem Av, the yahrtzeit of Reb Levik, the Rebbe’s father. It is the day on which the Rebbe said, in 1979,



that “When you are in pain, you need to cry out.” The Rebbe expounded, “It is irrelevant whether the protest will or will not be effective. The reason for crying out is not based on the assumption that it will be effective, but rather because the situation is painful... When we are dealing with matters of life and death we cannot be silent! This is a clear ruling in the *Code of Jewish Law* and in the Talmud that it is forbidden to remain silent in matters of life and death!”

Rabbi Tzvi Lang, Vice Chairman of the Crown Heights Jewish Community Council, was the Master of Ceremonies, speakers included: Rabbi Sholom B. Kalmanson, Director of Chabad of Southern Ohio, Rabbi Yehoshua Hecht, Spiritual Leader of Beth Israel Westport/Norwak, Connecticut and Rabbi Mendel Morozov, Shliach of Brooklyn College.

Rabbi Hecht cried to the audience, “Who gives the right to any government to displace its citizens from their rightful homes and who gives the right to any government to endanger its population to attain short term political gains? My voice is not one of hatred, it is not a voice of brilliance, it is the voice of a hurting heart, and an understanding mind. Close to two thousand citizens have died, close to ten thousand have been maimed, hundreds of thousands have been traumatized. When will the people at the consulate realize the truth? They fly the flag with such joy, yet they do not realize that the events of last week were a debacle of horror for all decent people, a nefarious and terrible plan of rewarding terrorists. Ad Masai? Until when?” Then in unison, the crowd called out “Ad Masai?”

“There are those who claim that American Jews should be silent,” said Rabbi Hecht, “but the *Shulchan Orech* tells us differently. We are obligated to be concerned for Jews wherever they are... including Jews in Eretz Yisroel.

“This time the major Jewish

organizations were co-opted into silence and approval. We cannot let that happen again.”

T’hillim was led by Rabbi Yekutiel Rapp, and 12 P’sukim of Torah and T’filla were led by a group of children. In order to make the gathering one of Torah, T’filla, and Tz’daka, money was collected, in care of Congregation Yeshivas Reinis, 718 Empire Blvd, Brooklyn, 11213, for a special fund to be taken personally by Ms. R. Lebovic, to the people of Gush Katif, who are among those whose possessions and livelihoods were stolen and destroyed through the agency of the Knesset, in the name of democracy.

Rabbi Kalmanson addressed the issue of democracy in Eretz Yisroel. “The Rebbe told us what it was like in the former Soviet Union,” explained Kalmanson. “When votes were needed, the ones in control would sit with the voters until they could convince them that what their own conscience wanted was what the party wanted. But in Eretz Yisroel, they tell the MK’s, we do not care what your thoughts are, you have to vote our way. And if the MK says he wants to stay home and abstain, the MK is told



Reciting the 12 P’sukim



Rabbi Kalmanson speaking at the rally

on no uncertain terms, you will come and you will vote.” In the process of passing the Disengagement Plan, the prime minister openly fired cabinet ministers who would stand in the way of passing his bills, or if they would vote against his plan. He openly bribed parties – including religious parties – to vote with him, and yet Kalmanson revealed, “I spoke to a young man the other day who said he could not understand why the religious community has problems with giving land to Arabs if it was democratically decided.”

Rabbi Kalmanson further clarified the Rebbe’s relationship to Eretz Yisroel, “The Rebbe was asked by right wingers why he did not use the name Israel. ‘This is not Medinas Yisroel,’ the Rebbe answered, ‘it is Eretz Yisroel.’ Four thousand years ago G-d made a covenant with Avrohom, Yitzchok, and Yaakov, giving them this land. The term Medina is only since 1948. It was given by the UN and it can be taken back by the UN. Eretz Yisroel is permanent and not dependant on the UN.”

The event was a coalition effort by Herut America, Crown Heights Vaad HaKohol, Americans For a Safe Israel and Chabad Chassidim to Ensure the Safety of Jews in Eretz Yisroel, and www.truepeace.org.

THE CHASSID THE REBBE WANTED NEAR HIM: RABBI NOSSON GURARY A”H

The Chassid R' Nosson Gurary passed away on Wednesday, the 5th of Av. He was born on 11 Adar I, 5687 (1927), in the city of Dvinsk, and his parents were R' Chaim Shemarya and Chaya Shaina Michla.

He was named Nosson after his grandfather, R' Nosson Gurary, who was one of the distinguished Chassidim and very close with the Rebbe Rashab. In addition to being a distinguished Chassid, his grandfather was also a successful and influential businessman.

R' Nosson grew up in Riga within the beautiful Chabad community there. His father was also a distinguished Chassid, and for a time he served as the Rebbe

Rayatz's secretary.

In 5694 (1934), his parents emigrated from Riga to Eretz Yisroel, as per the Rebbe Rayatz's instructions, and settled in Tel Aviv. His parents arrived with next to nothing nevertheless, their house was open to all. R' Nosson was often sent by his parents to secretly give tz'daka to the needy, and this chinuch remained imprinted on his soul forever.

The Gurary family arrived in Eretz Yisroel along with three other Chassidic families: his brother the maskil, Moshe Gurary, R' Chaim Yosef Rosenblum, and R' Dovber Chaskind. These four families settled in Tel Aviv and together with Rabbi Eliezer Karasik, who

came shortly afterwards, they laid the foundation for the Chabad community of Tel Aviv and Eretz Yisroel. R' Chaim Shemarya was a leading public figure who built up Chabad in Eretz Yisroel.

Soon after they arrived, his uncle R' Eliezer Karasik started the elementary and Yeshivas Achei T'mimim. R' Nosson was one of the first children who attended the elementary school. When he grew older, he learned in the Yeshiva Achei T'mimim under the guidance of the noted mashpia, R' Chaim Shaul Brook. R' Nosson threw himself into his learning and excelled in Nigleh and especially in Chassidus. He would often review, by heart, long maamarim in a clear fashion.

In 5707 (1947), R' Nosson realized his dream of going to see the Rebbe Rayatz. This was after his father went to the Rebbe Rayatz for Tishrei 5707 and asked permission for his son to come and visit. The Rebbe granted his permission and R' Nosson went to Beis Chayeinu for Shavuot and stayed for two years. During this period, he had five private audiences with the Rebbe Rayatz.

In those years, it was hard for people to understand the Rebbe, so the secretary would be present during the yechidus and he would repeat what the Rebbe had said, but R' Nosson asked his uncle, R' Shneur Zalman Gurary to go with him. To R' Nosson's joy, he



R' Nosson Gurary (third from the right) standing near the Rebbe

understood the Rebbe on his own. The Rebbe told him, among other things, "Physical avoda and spiritual avoda are interdependent. Physical avoda is for the sake of spiritual avoda and spiritual avoda must illuminate physical avoda."

In the private audiences he subsequently had, he went alone, without the secretary.

The first farbrengen he participated in was on the Chag Ha'Geula, 12 Tammuz, even though bachurim in those days were not given permission to attend the Rebbe's farbrengens. R' Nosson also participated in the t'fillos in the Rebbe's minyan on the Yomim Noraim.

In the summer of 5708, his uncle R' Eliezer Karasik came to the Rebbe Rayatz. When he entered for a yechidus, he wrote to the Rebbe about the shidduch suggestion for his daughter Tema with his nephew, R' Nosson. The Rebbe referred to R' Nosson as a "bar daas v'shakdan" (intelligent and diligent).

That summer, R' Nosson traveled together with his friend, R' Uri Ben Shachar on Merkaz Shlichus to Chicago. The Rebbe MH"M personally took care of all the arrangements and arranged for their arrival in town to be written about in the papers. The Rebbe also called the gabbaim of the shuls and arranged for the bachurim to speak in the shuls.

After they returned from shlichus, R' Nosson and all the bachurim who had gone on Merkaz Shlichus went for a group yechidus to the Rebbe Rayatz.

R' Nosson became close with the Rebbe's son-in-law (later to become the Rebbe MH"M). The Rebbe even chose R' Nosson to type the Rebbe Rayatz's sichos on the typewriter in his room. By way of payment, the

Rebbe gave him one copy of the sichos so that he could send it to his father.

One time, as he reviewed a maamer, the Rebbe's other son-in-law, Rashag was present. Rashag enjoyed the way he reviewed it but pointed out that in one inyan it was not as R' Nosson had explained. R' Nosson argued with him about the correct meaning and Rashag went to the Rebbe Rayatz, presented both explanations and asked which was right.

Years later, when the Rebbe said

R' Nosson was utterly mekushar to the Rebbe MH"M. Shortly after the Rebbe took on the Chabad leadership, R' Nosson went to see the Rebbe. His yechidus with the Rebbe lasted four hours!

the Rebbe Rayatz's sichos should be printed, and certain sichos were missing, the Rebbe said they should ask R' Nosson if he had them.

In one of R' Nosson's yechiduyos with the Rebbe, R' Nosson did not understand what the Rebbe said. The Rebbe repeated it but R' Nosson still did not understand. After the yechidus, R' Nosson wrote to the Rebbe that he had not understood the yechidus. The Rebbe Rayatz wrote out the content of the yechidus, which was a very unusual thing for the Rebbe to do.

In 5709, R' Nosson received smicha from the roshei yeshiva.

The last yechidus R' Nosson had with the Rebbe Rayatz took place in 5709, days before his trip back to Eretz Yisroel. The last Shabbos with the Rebbe was Parshas Sh'kalim. Since R' Nosson was going to sail back to Eretz Yisroel, the Rebbe MH"M farbrenged that Shabbos (Mevarchim Chodesh Adar) about the lesson in avodas Hashem that we learn from a ship.

Apparently, this was in connection with R' Nosson's trip, for the Rebbe was personally involved in the details of the arrangements for this trip. After fearing to return to Eretz Yisroel lest he be drafted into the army, he received a special bracha from the Rebbe Rayatz, who promised him he wouldn't hold a gun.

That Shabbos, R' Nosson was honored with Maftir in the minyan that took place in the Rebbe Rayatz's apartment. This was after R' Nosson had publicly reviewed the famous maamer, "V'Yodaata Moscv'a." The gabbai, R' Yochanon Gordon, was impressed by how R' Nosson reviewed the maamer, and honored him with Maftir in the Rebbe's minyan.

Some time after R' Nosson had returned to Eretz Yisroel, he married Tema, daughter of Rabbi Eliezer Karasik. The wedding took place on 5 Elul 5709 and was a big simcha for the Chabad community. The new immigrants, who had arrived from Russia and had settled in the new Chabad yishuv, Kfar Chabad, attended the wedding and saw their first Chassidic wedding in Eretz Yisroel. Throughout the Sheva Brachos, R' Nosson reviewed long maamarim.

R' Nosson was one of those actively involved in spreading Chassidus, and even received

letters from the Rebbe MH" M with instructions in this holy work.

R' Nosson was utterly mekushar to the Rebbe MH" M. Shortly after the Rebbe took on the Chabad leadership, R' Nosson went to see the Rebbe. This was for Purim 5711, and apparently, he was the first who came to the Rebbe from Eretz Yisroel at this time. His yechidus with the Rebbe lasted four hours!

The Rebbe spoke with him about spreading the wellsprings, since there were differences of opinion about how this should be done. The Rebbe said that Chassidus had to be spread among the b'nei yeshivos as well as the public at large. The Rebbe also spoke to him about the situation of the Chassidim in Eretz Yisroel in great detail.

On R' Nosson's way back to Eretz Yisroel, he made a stop in Brunoy, France, where he reviewed the newest maamarei Chassidus that the Rebbe had said at farbrengens. In those days, when Chassidim hardly ever traveled, they were thrilled to hear the maamarim of the new Rebbe. R'

Nosson's review of the maamarim made a deep impression on the Chassidim in France and this strengthened their hiskashrus to the Rebbe.

R' Nosson had had a special relationship with the Rebbe even before he married, and once he married, the personal relationship grew. His father, R' Chaim Shmarya, was wealthy and he had arranged a fine business position for his son in Eretz Yisroel, for it was only natural that after he married that he would settle in Tel Aviv, near his parents and his wife's parents. But R' Nosson had understood from the Rebbe that he should move to New York. He didn't think much about it but left behind a life of ease and being near their families, and in the winter of 5713, he arrived alone in New York to prepare a home for his family and a means of parnasa.

This wasn't easy, and for months he was unable to make the necessary arrangements. But R' Nosson felt that it was the Rebbe's desire that he remain in New York, and he finally heard this explicitly from the Rebbe, "I see that you

need to be here."

His wife and two small children, Sarah and Eliyahu Yochanon, arrived for Rosh HaShana. When R' Nosson informed the Rebbe that his wife and children were coming, the Rebbe was very pleased. R' Nosson rented a room at 788 Eastern Parkway, where his family stayed until he found a suitable apartment. Erev Rosh HaShana, when he passed by the Rebbe and gave his pidyon nefesh, the Rebbe asked him what arrangements he had made for his family and whether he had prepared food for Yom Tov for his wife and children. When R' Nosson said he had made soup with noodles, the Rebbe asked whether Yochanon ate noodles!

All beginnings are difficult but they had the Rebbe's guidance to stay in New York and the Rebbe's continued encouragement. Every so often, the Rebbe inquired about how he and his family were doing. In a rare move, the Rebbe said to the elder Chassidim that R' Nosson was a Chassid who listened to him.

Slowly, the Rebbe's brachos were realized and R' Nosson did well in business. At one of the Rebbe's farbrengens, the Rebbe told him to say l'chaim, referring to him as "the future wealthy man."

R' Nosson and his wife Tema enjoyed special displays of affection from the Rebbe. When their oldest son turned three, the Rebbe cut his hair. When their son, Yosef Yitzchok, turned three, R' Nosson wanted the Rebbe to cut his hair too. The Rebbe said, "Why should other people be jealous of your simcha?" And the Rebbe added that he would participate in the simcha in spirit.

One of the children didn't start talking at the usual age, and R' Nosson and his wife expressed their concern to the Rebbe at a



R' Nosson Gurary receiving a Tanya from the Rebbe

yechidus. The Rebbe asked them how many languages they spoke at home and they said, three. The Rebbe told them to eliminate one language, which would make it easier for the child to speak, and this advice quickly proved itself.

One of the times that Yochanon had a yechidus on his birthday, his father was not in good health. His mother gave him his father's X-rays to give to the Rebbe. The Rebbe put on his glasses, looked at the X-rays for a while and then asked Yochanon just where his father felt pain and motioned to his chest. Yochanon stood silently, not knowing how to respond.

The Rebbe got up and once again, pointed at his own body and asked where his father felt pain. Yochanon said he did not know. When he repeated what happened to the rest of the family, they were amazed at the degree of concern and involvement the Rebbe had shown.

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R' Nosson opened a s'farim store on the East Side of Manhattan, which dealt primarily with the import of s'farim from Eretz Yisroel and their distribution in the U.S. Then he started printing s'farim. When he began printing the beautiful Shas Meoros, he received encouragement and specific instructions from the Rebbe.

At the beginning of the project, the Rebbe even instructed Kehos to be partners in this project. The Rebbe also told him to add the chiddushim of the Tzemach Tzedek to the Shas and to add the Einayim LMishpat. The Rebbe told him how to arrange payment with the author, Rabbi Arieli.

When the work was finished, R' Nosson gave the Rebbe a Shas as a gift. The Rebbe accepted the gift

and donated his old Shas to the R' Levi Yitzchok library.

While the printing job was going on, R' Nosson had a yechidus. The Rebbe got up, went over to the bookcase, took out a Gemara and showed him that pages were missing from the chiddushim of the Maharam Schiff. It was interesting that nobody who learned with the new Shas had pointed out this error.

A fire once broke out in his s'farim store and caused great damage. A few days later, when the Rebbe came to 770 from his house, he met R' Nosson near 770. The Rebbe stopped and began speaking to him about the fire and even gave instructions and many brachos.

In 5725 (1965), when the Rebbe printed the new edition of *Likkutei Torah*, R' Nosson was one of the minyan who paid for the printing. Afterwards, his wife (because she edits the *Yiddishe Heim*) received a copy of the new *Likkutei Torah* with the Rebbe's handwritten dedication in it.

For many years, R' Nosson would give the Rebbe a nice sum of money every Erev Rosh Chodesh, some of it for maamud, and some to be distributed as per the Rebbe's wishes. Each time he gave a larger amount than the time before. Even when business wasn't rosy, he continued to give considerable sums of money to the Rebbe.

It once happened that before the Rebbe went to the Ohel on Erev Rosh Chodesh, the Rebbe asked whether the money from R' Nosson had arrived, since the Rebbe wanted to receive the money before he went to the Ohel. The Rebbe once said that he used this money to give out dollars on Sundays.

When R' Michoel Teitelbaum a"h started Oholei Torah, R' Nosson

was one of his first supporters and he was also a member of the board from the day the school was founded until he passed away.

When the Rebbe told Nichoach to start putting out records of Chabad niggunim, R' Nosson participated in this project.

In 5734, R' Nosson and his wife were among the main askanim in founding Machon Chana on President Street, which is run by his daughter, Sarah Labkowsky. More recently, he and Mr. Gelman bought Machon Chana's new building on Crown Street.

Although R' Nosson was a businessman, he used his free time for shiurim, learning Nigleh and Chassidus, and also reviewing maamarei Chassidus. His davening was with a Chassidic sweetness, but he tried not to stand out and did things in a modest way.

At one of his meetings with the Rebbe, he spoke about the learning in the yeshiva in 770. The Rebbe said they needed to take a yungerman to learn Chassidus with the talmidim, and he did not have to be from Yekatrinslav or Samarkand... On the other hand, the Rebbe told him that he has to know that this is America.

R' Nosson's son-in-law, R' Shneur Zalman Labkowsky, relates that after that yechidus, the Rebbe instructed that every bachur who had a yechidus had to bring along a sealed letter from the hanhala about his learning.

When R' Nosson's daughter, Sarah, became bas mitzva, he began learning *Tanya* with her and when she became 17, he finished learning the entire *Tanya* with her and then learned maamarim in *Likkutei Torah* with her. Some years later, R' Nosson learned Chassidus with his granddaughters.



R' Nosson Gurary at kos shel bracha

R' Nosson made no significant decision without getting instructions from the Rebbe or the Rebbe's agreement. When he traveled on business, he always asked for the Rebbe's bracha, and if he did not get a clear answer he canceled the trip.

After his father passed away, R' Nosson had the z'chus of presenting the Rebbe with the seifer Torah before Kol Nidrei, as his father had done for dozens of years, and he paid for this privilege with a large sum of money.

After his father passed away, R' Nosson started a gemach (free loan fund) in his father's name, as per the Rebbe's instructions. Many people benefited from this gemach, and when some borrowers did not return the loan on time, he continued to lend them money. Some never returned the loan but R' Nosson did not pressure them to return the money.

In recent years, when his son Motty started the girls' school, B'nos Menachem, his father was one of the prime supporters of the school.

R' Nosson and his wife visited Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka often and were in touch with her regularly. In the winter of 5748, shortly before the Rebbetzin passed away, the Rebbetzin invited R' Nosson to visit her. After she passed away, R' Nosson understood the invitation as a farewell visit.

R' Nosson and his wife were also in close touch with Rebbetzin Chana. On Motzaei Yom Kippur, after she heard Havdala from the Rebbe in his room, R' Nosson drove the Rebbetzin, along with his family, home from shul. The Rebbe would stand in the doorway of 770 and watch them leave.

When the Rebbe announced "asei lecha rav," the mitvza of having a mashpia, R' Nosson asked R' Michoel Teitelbaum to be his mashpia. Twice a week they learned the Rebbe's maamarim together.

About twenty years ago, when R' Nosson suddenly became sick and had to undergo a serious operation, he received a special bracha from the Rebbe. Shortly thereafter, he miraculously recovered. Since then, whenever he

spoke at family simchos, he would thank Hashem for receiving additional years of life together with his wife.

On another occasion, R' Nosson received a promise from the Rebbe in the *Igros Kodesh* that in the merit of his involvement in the tahara of Jewish daughters he would recover, and he did.

In recent months, R' Nosson became sick and he accepted his suffering with love and tried to hide his suffering from even his closest family members. When he celebrated his most recent birthday, he reviewed a maamer, as he did every year, for fifty minutes, with the same clarity he always displayed.

In recent weeks, his family saw that he was preparing himself for his final trip with spiritual preparations. When he passed away, all his children and sisters who came from Eretz Yisroel were at his bedside and said Shma Yisroel with him. His funeral passed by 770 and was attended by numerous people. R' Nosson is buried in the cemetery of Agudas Chabad of New York, near his father and near the Ohel.

R' Nosson is survived by his wife Tema, who edits the quarterly, *Di Yiddishe Heim*;

his daughter Sarah Labkowski, director of Machon Chana; his son Eliyahu Yochanon Gurary, shliach in Eretz Yisroel and chief Rabbi in Cholon; his son Yosef Yitzchok; and his son Mordechai Shmuel, founder and administrator of B'nos Menachem; as well as grandchildren who serve as rabbanim, roshei yeshivos, and shluchim around the world, preparing the world to greet Moshiach.