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# THEN YOU WILL DELIGHT IN G-D - IN THIS WORLD

LIKKUTEI SICHOS, VOL. 30, PG. 125-133  
TRANSLATED BY BORUCH MERKUR



[Continued from last week.]

5. In this manner we may also explain the development of the issues discussed in this law in Rambam's writing:

The law begins as follows: "Shabbos and [the prohibition of] idol worship – each of these is weighted against all the rest of the Mitzvos in the Torah. Indeed, Shabbos is the eternal sign between the Holy One Blessed Be He and us. Therefore, whoever transgresses the rest of the Mitzvos is [merely] considered among the wicked of the Jewish people, whereas one who desecrates the Shabbos in public is considered as one who worships idolatry; both are considered as gentiles for all matters pertaining to them. Therefore, the Prophet recounts the following praise [regarding one who observes the Shabbos], 'The man is praised who will do this, etc.'" And the Rambam concludes, "Whoever keeps the Shabbos according to its law, etc., 'for the mouth of G-d has spoken.'"

In this law, Rambam relates a major principle in defining the Mitzvos of Shabbos. Namely, that Shabbos is not like the rest of the Mitzvos of the Torah, whose fulfillment entails only **an increase** in holiness, supplementary to the sanctity inherent to being Jewish. Of consequence, in neglecting to fulfill them, one is still included among the Jewish people (albeit "the wicked of the Jewish people"). This is not so, however [with regard to neglecting to observe the Shabbos], which is tantamount to idol worship, affecting the very sanctity of being Jewish. Thus, one who desecrates Shabbos is like one who worships idolatry, and "both are considered as **gentiles for all matters pertaining to them.**"

On the latter point, the Rambam continues that just as this is so in the negative sense – that one who

desecrates the Shabbos is like a gentile – so it is in the positive – that the observance of Shabbos is not like something that simply comes to add to one's status of being Jewish, but it pertains to the very essence of the sanctity of being Jewish. And thus Rambam writes concerning the reward for keeping Shabbos: "tradition has already been explicit in mentioning that his reward is in this world, in addition to the reward hidden away for [him in] the World to Come, as it is said, 'Then you will delight in G-d, etc.'" The intent here (as mentioned above) is that one's reward in this world [for keeping Shabbos] resembles the reward **of the World to Come**, for the definition of the reward in the World to Come (as explained by the Rambam in the Laws of Repentance) is the completion and perfection of the connection and bond of the Jewish people to the Creator (for which reason "Dovid pined and yearned for the life of the World to Come" [Rambam, Ibid 8:7] (likewise all the Jewish people yearn for this, [including] their prophets and their sages, etc. [Rambam, Ibid 9:2])). Indeed, by observing the Shabbos one receives **this** reward: he adds strength to the essential sanctity of his being Jewish (cleaving to the Creator in a way that resembles the perfection of this bond in the World to Come).

6. According to all the above, we may further explain why Rambam also quotes the end of the verse, "for the mouth of G-d has spoken," which is not brought in the Gemara. Simply speaking, we may answer that these words ("for the mouth of G-d has spoken") come to teach that since this is an explicit, verbalized promise from G-d, certainly it will be fulfilled [Footnote 44: as the Radak and Metzudas Dovid comment in Yeshayahu on this verse], as Rambam writes in the Laws of the Foundations of the Torah [10:4] – that every positive matter that has been decreed by the L-rd, even if it is conditional, cannot

be retracted. It remains to be explained, though, why this [certainty] is emphasized specifically with regard to **this** reward, something that is not to be found regarding other instances of reward.

According to the above [however] it is understood that with regard to other instances of reward and with regard to promises of material compensation which the Holy One Blessed Be He imparts **in this world**, these are matters that fall within the context of the world and worldly experiences. Even concerning the ultimate [abundance] of good things and the advantages that will be in this world with the advent of the Days of Moshiach, the Rambam writes that no aspect of nature will be nullified [Footnote 46: end of Chapter 9 of Laws of Repentance; beginning of Chapter 12 of Laws of Kings].

However, the reward for keeping Shabbos – to delight in G-d, which is the reward that is hidden away for the World to Come [which follows the Days of Moshiach] – is not something that can be classified within the context of the world, as Rambam writes at length in the Laws of Repentance [Chapter 8:6-7 and other places]. (“This bestowal of good is exceedingly great...to the extent that it cannot be fathomed. Indeed, it has no measure or semblance ... Man lacks the capacity to clearly comprehend it, etc. All the good things which the Prophets have prophesied to the Jewish people only pertain to the body, things from which Jews derive benefit, etc. However, the good of the life of the World to Come has no measure or semblance. In fact, the Prophets did not liken it, etc.”) For this reason, Rambam adds and emphasizes [this point] with the words, “for the mouth of **G-d** has spoken.” That is, this matter, which was not comprehended [by man] and “the Prophets did not liken it,” is granted to one who “keeps the Shabbos according to its law, and honors it and delights in it according to his capacity.”

7. A lesson for every single Jew is derived from this leading “To correct character traits and to straighten all deeds,” as Rambam puts it [at the end of the Laws of Truma]. Namely, by means of increasing and strengthening the study of the inner dimension of the Torah, whose point is, “Know the L-rd of your father” [Divrei HaYamim I 28:9]. Specifically with this approach, one comes to cleave to the Creator and to delight in G-d, as Rambam writes at the end of the Laws of Repentance: “Therefore, one must dedicate himself to understand and to comprehend the works of wisdom and understanding which familiarize him with his Master, according to the capacity man has to understand and to grasp.”

Especially with regard to serving G-d through prayer,

as it says in *Shulchan Aruch* [Laws of Torah Study of the Alter Rebbe 4:5] regarding the pious Jews of an early period – that [notwithstanding the Mitzva to learn Torah, which is incumbent upon a Jew at every moment] they would take a full hour in each of the three daily prayers [as well as a full hour before and after each prayer, totaling nine full hours daily!]: “They did not worry about neglecting Torah study, even though ‘the study of Torah equals all of them’ [i.e., all the Mitzvos put together], because they would connect their minds to the Master of All, blessed be He, in impassioned awe and love and with a true bond, to the extent that they would reach the state of transcending physicality. Indeed, the Mitzva of truly cleaving to G-d with awe and love is [even] greater than the Mitzva of Torah study, and takes precedent over it.”

In fact, this [lesson] pertains to the topic of Shabbos itself, as it is brought in the Maggid Mishna here [i.e., the commentary at the end of Laws of Shabbos in Rambam’s *Mishneh Torah*]: “The reason underlying Shabbos is that it signifies Creation (*ha’Chiddush*), [a concept that is so fundamental that] one who denies Creation denies the

Torah in its entirety. Therefore, one must believe and establish in his soul the belief in Creation and observe the Shabbos, which is its faithful symbol.”

The details and depth of having faith in Creation come through learning and contemplating the inner dimension of the Torah, which elucidates the topic and all its details with comprehensive explanations.

Establishing it [i.e., this faith, in one’s soul] is accomplished through serving G-d through prayer, as it is explained in the Rama: “Before prayer, one should think about the loftiness of the L-rd, may He be exalted, and the lowliness of man, and one should remove all the pleasures of man from his heart.” Specifically with this approach to prayer may one come to cleave to the Creator.

And it is known that prayer is at the level (like that) of Shabbos.

In so doing – by Jews keeping the Shabbos according to its law, both at the inner dimension of Shabbos as well as at its superficial level [Footnote 54: see conclusion of *Tanya*], “immediately they will be redeemed.” Then it will be revealed to the eyes of everyone how “their rest is derived from You, and through their rest they shall sanctify Your name” [Mincha Prayer of Shabbos] – “literally ‘from You’” – with the true and complete Redemption through our righteous Moshiach.

*(From the address of Shabbos Parshas VaYakhel-P’kudei 5747)*

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***By observing Shabbos,  
one adds strength to  
the essential sanctity  
of being Jewish.***

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# LETTERS

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By the Grace of G-d  
19th of Cheshvan, 5742  
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Blessing and Greeting:

Your letter of Oct. 26th, with the enclosures, reached me with some delay.

I was pleased to read the good news about your having settled satisfactorily in your new surroundings, and making progress in Yiddishkeit in the everyday life.

May G-d grant that you should continue in this way, and G-d will surely increase your blessings to you and yours, including also finding a suitable Shidduch.

With blessing *M. Schneerson*

P.S. With regard to a Shidduch, you surely know that in view of the general preoccupation of people in this country, as elsewhere, most people who are interested in a Shidduch turn to a Shadchan, who is in a good position to recommend and introduce a suitable mate. Of course, he only arranges the first introduction, and then it is up to the two parties to decide whether they wish to pursue the acquaintance or meet someone else. I trust you can find out about a reliable Shadchan and follow this procedure, for there is "practically" no other way of meeting the right person. May G-d grant His blessing also in this matter.

# SATISFIED WITH THE SHIDDUCH

*What was the dowry that the Rebbe Maharash received? Why wasn't the Rebbe Maharash present at the wedding of his son, the Rebbe Rashab? How old was the Rebbe Rashab when his shidduch was made? Why did the Rebbe Rashab stop in the middle of the maamer at his only child's wedding? What did Rabbi Meir Shapiro say after he spoke with the Rebbe MH" M at his wedding? \* Wedding tidbits to mark Yud-Dalet Kislev, the anniversary of the Rebbe and Rebbetzin.*

## HE DOESN'T KNOW THE CHASSAN EITHER

The Rebbe Maharash's wedding meal was celebrated with great joy on Friday, Erev Shabbos Parshas Naso 8 Sivan 5608 (1848), when he was fourteen years old. During the meal, R' Hillel Paritcher turned to the kalla's father, Rabbi Chaim Shneur Zalman (son of the Tzemach Tzedek) and said, "You are doing a shidduch with a mechutan you don't know!" (Even though the father of the groom was his own father, the Tzemach Tzedek, R' Hillel meant that R' C.S.Z. did not truly know his own father's greatness.)

Even though the Tzemach Tzedek was sitting some distance away, he

heard what R' Hillel said to his son and said, "He doesn't know the chassan either."

During the week of Sheva Brachos, the kalla fell sick and passed away three months later. In order to console the chassan, his father, the Tzemach Tzedek said a room should be given to the chassan near his own room, so that whenever he (the chassan) wanted, he could enter his father's holy room.

That is what they did, and when the Rebbe Maharash went in to see his father, his father showed him holy and wondrous manuscripts, including those he did not show his other sons.

*(Seifer HaToldos Admur Maharash)*

## SECOND MARRIAGE

The Rebbe Maharash's second shidduch was made a year later and this is how it came about:

Once, Rebbetzin Shayna, wife of the Mittlerer Rebbe, suggested to her son-in-law, the Tzemach Tzedek, that the Rebbe Maharash marry one of her two orphan granddaughters, Gittel and Rivka, daughters of her daughter Sarah and son-in-law R' Aharon of Shklov (both of whom did not live long).

The Tzemach Tzedek replied: They are suggesting a shidduch from the town of Liepli with a dowry of 20,000 rubles. What kind of dowry will the chassan receive with *your* suggestion?

Said the Rebbetzin: It says, "eshes chaver k'chaver" (the wife of a Torah scholar is like him) – I give the chassan forty years of eshes chaver!

The Tzemach Tzedek agreed to her suggestion and chose the younger sister, Rivka. The older sister Gittel forgave her younger sister and gave her consent to her marrying first. The Tzemach Tzedek took care of her too and later on chose a good chassan for her from Niezhen.

During the meal made at the tenaim, the sister, Gittel, asked leave to say something. When the Tzemach Tzedek agreed, she said: The simple meaning of the statement, "*nashim daatan kalla*" (women's intellect is *kalla*, light) is that a woman is always thinking about when she will be a *kalla*.

The Tzemach Tzedek smiled at this explanation. Then Gittel added: Our yichus is Hashem, because He is the father of orphans.

*(Ateres Malchus)*

## THE KOCHOS I INHERITED FROM MY HUSBAND

On the day of the Rebbe Maharash's wedding, his father, the Tzemach Tzedek told him to go to the kitchen and ask his grandmother, Rebbetzin Shayna, for a bracha. The chassan went to ask for the bracha but she told him, crossly, that the day was yet long and she would bless him at the chuppa.

When the chassan repeated what she had said to his father, the Tzemach Tzedek told him to go back to the Rebbetzin and to demand a bracha then and there.

The Rebbe Maharash returned to the kitchen where the Rebbetzin was extremely busy and many women were rushing about, following the Rebbetzin's instructions. The chassan stood in the midst of this commotion and insisted that he receive her bracha now!

When the Rebbetzin saw that the chassan would not give up, she asked for some water to wash her hands and then she placed her hands on his head and in the presence of two witnesses blessed him as follows:

"May it be G-d's will that all the abilities I inherited from my husband should rest upon your head!"

When the Tzemach Tzedek heard what the Rebbetzin's bracha was, he was extremely pleased.

*(Ateres Malchus)*

## THE BLESSING OF A KALLA

On that day, the kalla went to her father-in-law, the Tzemach Tzedek, and received his bracha. The Rebbe asked that she too, bless him. The kalla did so and then said:

"Let not the blessing of a kalla be simple in your eyes." (a play on the words of Chazal, "let not the blessing of a simple person be *kalla*" [i.e., *light*, spelled differently than the word for bride but pronounced the same way] in your eyes).

At the wedding, the Tzemach Tzedek was tremendously joyous and he said much Chassidus. The great Chassidim – such as Rabbi Yitzchok Isaac Epstein of Homil, Rabbi Nechemia of Dubrovna, Rabbi Yitzchok Isaac of Vitebsk, Rabbi Hillel of Paritch, Rabbi Peretz of Beshenkowitz, Rabbi Pesach of Malastovka, and others, who participated in their Rebbe's simcha – farbrenged together with great joy.

*(Likkutei Sippurim – Perlov, p. 131)*

## IN THE FUTURE, I WILL BE THERE TOO

The Rebbe Maharash was not present at his son the Rebbe Rashab's wedding, because of his ill health. Only his wife, Rebbetzin Rivka, went with her son the chassan to the wedding.

A week before the wedding, the Rebbe Maharash traveled to accompany his son, the chassan, to the town of Achrimova, where he spoke words of Chassidus and said wondrous things. When he finished saying Chassidus, he told his son the chassan:

Now is the revelation of the aspect of mochin d'ima, and therefore the mother of the chassan is traveling, but in the future, when the mochin d'abba will be revealed, I will be there too.

The Rebbe Maharash told his son not to wear a shtraimel at his wedding, and in general, not to wear one except in Lubavitch. This is what the Rebbe



Rashab did all his life, wearing a shtraimel only in Lubavitch.

On their trip to the wedding, the chassan and his mother brought a gift for the kalla, a new hat. The gift was in a box in the wagon. The Rebbe asked what was in the box, and when he was told that it was a hat for the kalla, he asked to see it. When they gave it to him, he removed the feather.

*(Seifer HaSichos Toras Shalom)*

## WHO IS GREATER?

In 5625 (1865), when the Rebbe Rashab was four years old, his grandfather the Tzemach Tzedek said he wanted to make a shidduch for him and suggested his granddaughter, the youngest daughter of his son, R' Yosef Yitzchok, Shterna Sarah.

Regarding this, it is told that when he was a little boy, the Rebbe Rashab spent nearly the entire day at the home of the Tzemach Tzedek. One time, when Rebbetzin Shterna Sarah, daughter of his uncle, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok of Avrutch, was there, the Tzemach Tzedek said about them, "Chassan v'kalla."

R' Yosef Yitzchok asked his father, the Tzemach Tzedek: Perhaps, when they grow older they won't be suitable for one another?

Said his father: This young one will be greater than you!

*(Chanoch L'Naar)*

## DRAWING DOWN A NEW LIGHT

Regarding the wedding of the Rebbe Rayatz, it is told that in the middle of the maamer, as the Rebbe Rashab spoke about the inyan of "simcha bursting forth," he suddenly stopped and said that he had forgotten what he wanted to say. He got up and went over to where the manuscript was and looked at the maamer, returned to his place and continued saying the maamer.

On Shabbos Parshas Teitzeh 5714 (1954) the Rebbe MH" M spoke about

the Rebbe Rashab stopping in the middle of the maamer, and explained:

Generally, such things did not happen. How could the Rebbe have forgotten an inyan? Rather, what this means is that the inyan reverted back to its source for a while, in order to be drawn back down again from the source. For in order for the hamshacha to be on a higher level than before, the hamshacha has to be from a higher place, i.e., from its original source. This is like when a person rests, when his kochos rise up to their source and new kochos are drawn down.

Therefore, things like this did not happen except for the Rebbe's wedding, for that time was an "inyan klali" (a matter affecting the entire Jewish people) and the drawing down

***"Generally, such things did not happen. How could the Rebbe have forgotten something?"***

of a new light; there was the simcha and the saying of Chassidus without limits.

## WHAT IS THIS CHASSAN LIKE?

Regarding the Rebbe MH" M's shidduch it is said that before the chuppa, R' Berel Moshe Shmotkin asked the Rebbe Rayatz what the chassan was like, and the Rebbe answered:

"I gave my daughter to this man. He is expert in Bavli and Yerushalmi and knows the earlier and later commentaries and more. At four in the morning he never sleeps for either he still hasn't gone to sleep or he has already gotten up."

## UNDER THE HEAVENS

At the reception before the wedding of a Lubavitcher couple that took place in the winter, they told the Rebbe that because of the cold and ice they were going to hold the chuppa indoors.

The Rebbe replied: My wedding also took place in the winter and the chuppa was held under the sky, i.e., outdoors, and I am, baruch Hashem, satisfied with my shidduch.

## MESADER KIDDUSHIN

The mesader kiddushin at the Rebbe's wedding was the Rebbe Rayatz, and the Rebbe Rayatz also recited the Sheva Brachos himself in a loud and pleasantly sweet voice, with tremendous d'veikus. The listeners were all amazed by his intensity and they all said they had never heard anything like that in their lives.

As the Rebbe said the brachos, one of the Chassidim, who had merited to see the Rebbe Rashab, called out in great wonder: Oy, the Rebbe [i.e., the Rebbe Rashab] is mesader kiddushin!

Chassidim who attended this wedding say that the Rebbe Rayatz went from table to table with a towel on his shoulder like a waiter and he gave out mashke and blessed the guests. This is exactly what his father, the Rebbe Rashab, had done at the wedding of his only son, the Rebbe Rayatz, "he went around...among the guests...and drank l'chaim with each one with beautiful brachos for each one according to his needs."

On Shabbos Parshas Naso 5747 the Rebbe said:

At my wedding, the Rebbe my father-in-law got up and went among the guests to give out mashke and say l'chaim. Seeing this, I could not remain seated as my father-in-law stood and gave out mashke, so I got up in order to try to assist, at least by holding the mashke or holding the cup, etc. But my father-in-law motioned to me to remain seated.



A Jew is stubborn...and seeing how my father-in-law was circulating and giving out mashke (or wine, I don't remember exactly), and he probably held a cup in his hand, I began to get up again, in order to help him.

My father-in-law looked at me (with a sharp look) and I realized that I had to remain seated. I remained there, on tenterhooks of course, but seated, until my father-in-law came back and sat down in his place to continue the wedding feast.

### YOU HAVE TAKEN AS A SON-IN-LAW A GAON OLAM

R' Shmuel Zalmanov, who was the waiter appointed to the head table at the Rebbe's wedding, related:

As a young bachur, it would not have been polite for me to stand close to the table. However, in my role as

waiter, I approached the table several times, and merited to see how the Rebbe Rayatz suggested to the famous gaon, Rabbi Meir Shapiro z"l, rav of Lublin, who sat near the chassan, that he speak in learning with the chassan. So Rabbi Shapiro turned to the chassan and said, "Nu, say something."

In the meantime, I had moved away from the table, to be polite, but I continued to follow what was happening from a distance. I saw how the Rebbe shlita spoke to Rabbi Shapiro for a long time. He spoke quietly and moderately, and throughout, Rabbi Shapiro listened closely and only made brief comments.

This went on for a long time, and at the end, Rabbi Shapiro turned to the Rebbe Rayatz and said: Lubavitcher Rebbe, you have taken as a son-in-law, a gaon olam (tremendous genius).

Then Rabbi Shapiro asked the Rebbe to continue and tell him more chiddushei Torah, but the Rebbe politely refused, saying: Until now, I was commanded to do so, but if I continue, that would be my own decision.

### SON-IN-LAW AND FATHER-IN-LAW DANCING

After the meal, at about three-thirty, the guests and Admurim who had come to the simcha got up and danced together in a circle (as Polish Chassidim dance). When the Admurim sat down to rest, the Rebbe Rayatz took his son-in-law and danced with him, with hands on each other's shoulders, as Chabad Chassidim dance. The Admurim said their goodbyes and went home.

(Nisuei HaNesiim)

#### Good News

We are pleased to announce that this year a group is being organized to travel from the US to:

### **The Ohel of the Alter Rebbe in Haditch Ukraine for the Alter Rebbe's upcoming Yahrtzeit on the 24th. of Teves.**



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# DEFINING SHLICHUS MORE CAREFULLY

*A response to the article about shlichus in the previous issue by an anonymous shliach.*

The author of the article in the previous issue made a number of points that surprised me and gave me food for thought. Maybe I didn't quite understand what the author meant. If so, I apologize.

The author tried to define what a shliach is, and this is certainly no easy task, since the Rebbe MH"M himself defines what a shliach is in a number of different ways on various occasions.

I personally know of a Chassid who was in chinuch, back in the days of the Reshet, and at a certain point he felt that he had exhausted his educational abilities. He thought of changing professions but his conscience bothered him, for wouldn't that be betraying his shlichus? Wouldn't he no longer be considered a shliach? The Rebbe told him that when he works in his new job and smiles at a colleague, "that is also my shlichus."

In other words, as Lubavitcher Chassidim we are ambassadors for the Rebbe. When we smile at a Jew it's not as Yankel Shmerl (or Yente Shprintze) that we do so, but as a Lubavitcher, the Rebbe's representative.

So that would seem to mean that each one of us, all of Anash, ought to attend the Kinus HaShluchim. But

that doesn't happen. Those who attend the Kinus HaShluchim are those shluchim who are on the job 24 hours a day and are responsible for their neighborhood, city, area, country, and even continent.

Obviously, there is no comparison between a shliach who smiles at

***How shocked they  
were when the  
Rebbe's response  
arrived: why invest  
energy and effort into  
a kollel that is not  
run by Chabad?***

someone and is mekadesh the name of the Rebbe at his workplace and a shliach who doesn't sleep comfortably at night because all the Jews in his area are not completely ready to greet Moshiach.

Since the volumes of *Seifer HaShluchim* were published, the definition is clear. A shliach is someone who is responsible, by being appointed by the Rebbe, for the Yiddishkait in his city or area, or

someone working in **Chabad chinuch**. We don't see any Lubavitcher teachers working in non-Chabad schools in the *Seifer HaShluchim*.

The author quotes a letter that the Rebbe wrote to the shluchim who went to Eretz Yisroel in which he lists an order of shlichus priorities. From this list, the author derives that anybody who works in chinuch, even in a non-Chabad school, is a shliach. I can see it now, the next edition of the *Seifer HaShluchim* will have listings like: Alabama, Alaska, Talmud Torah Amshinov, Arizona, Argentina, Budapest, Birmingham, Belgium, Byelorussia, Yeshivas Belz, Brunoy, S. Diego, South Africa, Yeshivas Slobodka, Vienna, Virginia, Kollel Vizhnitz, Volgograd ...

Sounds funny? Of course! Did the Rebbe really intend for our Chassidische yungelait to invest their efforts in non-Chabad schools? What exactly would they accomplish there? Is the letter of instructions to the shluchim who went to Eretz Yisroel, a general list of priorities for all of Anash?

One can similarly say that there were instructions to individual Chassidim to seek chassanim who were not Lubavitchers. Perhaps you would like to quote this answer from the Rebbe and we should all be encouraged to do shidduchim with our daughters to bachurim, b'nei Torah, in order to be mekarev them to Chassidus? After all, it says right there in the *Igros Kodesh* that the Rebbe told

a Chassid to do so!

Indeed, in the past there were roshei yeshivos, melamdim, menahalim of schools, and women teachers who worked in non-Chabad schools, especially in the U.S. (before and after the founding of Tomchei T'mimim). I don't have precise information regarding this but I think they all received personal instructions to do so from the Rebbe Rayatz, and afterwards, from the Rebbe.

In my opinion, that letter to the shluchim in Eretz Yisroel is in the category of a private horaa and not something meant for everybody to follow.

Decades ago, in one of the border towns of Eretz Yisroel, the residents cried out for the services of a shliach. Someone who was familiar with the town from his work there began to get together a group of young men to go together, as a group, on shlichus there. For the residents of that town,

this was a dream come true, since many of them knew Chabad from their countries of origin.

The Lubavitchers were also happy to go as a group, but the question arose about parnasa. No Chabad mosad was able to take on the financial burden of ten young families, many of them with young children.

The organizer approached an organization (not Lubavitch) which had opened many kollelim in development towns at that time. The hanhala of this organization agreed to accept this Chabad group and to provide the money for the project. The Lubavitchers were going to learn in a Chabad kollel, and in the afternoon and evening hours were supposed to work with the residents of the town. The main thing was that the money was going to come from an outside source, namely, a non-Chabad organization.

When all the details were arranged, the completed project was presented to the Rebbe for his approval. It was 100% al taharas Chabad except for the funding and the "title," a seeming formality. How shocked they were when the Rebbe's response arrived. (The following is as I heard it, though I cannot guarantee its authenticity): **why invest energy and effort into a kollel that is not run by Chabad?**

Naturally, the idea was rejected and this answer from the Rebbe became a horaa for the future for each member of the group: Lubavitchers should use their energy and efforts for spreading Yiddishkeit, but with an emphasis on spreading the wellsprings, meaning Chabad, not only in substance but also in "title."

There was another point that the author made regarding children of a shliach who marry and continue to live near their parents. He says that they are not shluchim because they have all the comforts of home. Although I have not been so lucky to have my children live near me to help me as they did when they were single, I will still disagree with his point. Why can't they continue with the same shlichus they were born into? Why aren't they permitted to continue working with the population who were impacted by them and who knows and respects them for years?

Till this day I hear, in my place of shlichus, people saying they miss my children who left for shlichus in greener and grander pastures. I am sure that if my children lived near me on shlichus, their presence would help me far more than ten others who are not related to me!

Even those of my children who are not on formal shlichus in their cities, but who work in chinuch and "u'faratzta" projects, are still shluchim because a shliach is what you *are*, not something temporary. Those born to shlichus will be shluchim forever.



# THE REBBE'S 'ANA AVDA'

BY RABBI SHNEUR ZALMAN CHANIN

*The story of a Chassid who knew of no other life than one of literal mesirus nefesh, in Russia, France, Morocco, and the United States. \* No wonder he ate at the Rebbe's table and the Rebbe lovingly called him, "My 'ana avda.'" \* Few know to whom he owes his rich and amazing life.*

## SOURCE OF THE NIGGUN, "ANA AVDA"

I would like to devote one chapter to R' Shneur Zalman Taibel, one of the Chassidim who was a ben bayis at our home in New York. R' Zalman was so close to us that he considered himself a part of the family. Without thinking twice, he joined the family picture at my wedding. He had a pleasant personality, was refined, had good middos, and was a devoted Chassid. He had a special musical talent. He had a sweet voice and knew how to play the violin.

R' Zalman was one of the fortunate few who for decades merited to eat at the Rebbe's table on Yomim Tovim. At every farbrengen, the Rebbe turned around to him in order to wish him l'chaim. On Pesach night, when the Rebbe gave out small pieces of

matza, R' Zalman got two whole matzos: the food of faith and the food of healing.

R' Zalman was part of the regular minyan that ate with the Rebbe on Yom Tov (when the meals were held at the home of the Rebbe Rayatz on the second floor of 770). One time, during a Shavuot meal, R' Zalman began to sing the niggun "Ana Avda" (from the prayer Brich Shmei, which is said when the aron is opened).

Later on, at the farbrengen, the Rebbe asked him to teach the niggun to the crowd, and from then on, the Chassidim sang this niggun often, when the Rebbe indicated they should do so. It even once happened that the Rebbe, while passing before the aron on Shabbos, began to sing "Ana Avda" himself!

Occasionally the Rebbe would

look for R' Zalman in the crowd and ask, "Where is my Ana Avda?" The Rebbe gave him this name not only because R' Zalman brought the niggun from Russia but because he was truly an eved.

## THE MIKVA ATTENDANT WHO FOUND FAVOR

R' Zalman was born on the Chag HaGeula of Yud-Tes Kislev around the year 5649 (1888) and was named for the Alter Rebbe. His family lived in the town of Dubrinka, which was one of the settlements that the Mitteler Rebbe founded. The Rebbe's father, Rabbi Levi Yitzchok Schneersohn, often visited this town.

On one of his visits, R' Levi Yitzchok noticed that Zalman, a 17-year-old bachur had still not fulfilled the statement of Chazal, "exile yourself to a place of Torah." On his next trip to Lubavitch, he took Zalman with him. R' Zalman was accepted into Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim and learned there for a number of years.

After he married, he moved to Leningrad, where he took on the job of running the mikva. The rav of Leningrad, R' Dovid Tevel Katznelbogen, respected R' Zalman for his mesirus nefesh.

R' Zalman related that the Rebbe Rayatz also greatly esteemed this

mesirus nefesh. One time, when the Rebbe Rayatz came to immerse in the mikva, he gave R' Zalman a coin of a large denomination as payment. R' Zalman told the Rebbe he had paid far too much and asked why he should get such a large sum.

The Rebbe smiled and said, "Since you are pleasing to me, you deserve such a coin."

R' Zalman was not an active person but a quiet man who ran the mikva. Because of his involvement with the mikva, he had connections with many of the Chassidim and with the askanim that the Rebbe Rayatz sent to strengthen Anash in their religious observance in general, family purity in particular. Because of this, the cursed Yevsektzia decided R' Zalman would serve them well as an informer and since he was a weak man, he certainly wouldn't oppose them and nobody would suspect him.

### MESIRUS NEFESH NOT TO INFORM

R' Zalman was called a number of times to the N.K.V.D., secretly, in the hopes that they would manage to enlist him in their ranks. At



R' Shneur Zalman Teibel playing the violin

first, they promised him a nice salary and benefits and then they threatened him with exile and suffering. R' Zalman was afraid to

tell anybody lest he cause problems for himself and others, but he feared even more that he wouldn't withstand the test and would be persuaded to join them.

At a certain point R' Zalman tried to harm himself in such a way that the N.K.V.D. wouldn't be able to enlist him. When my father discovered this, and asked R' Zalman to explain himself, R' Zalman told him the whole story and said: better he should hurt himself than to give even one name of a Jew to the wicked authorities!

My father sent him immediately to another city for a few months, where R' Zalman could wait until the N.K.V.D. got over their disappointment, and then he returned to Leningrad.



## FROM SHLICHUS TO SHLICHUS

In 1507 (1947), R' Zalman and many other Lubavitchers left greater Russia. In the transit city of Peking the Chassidim set up a yeshiva but for some reason, they neglected the chinuch of the older bachurim, who, for obvious reasons, knew hardly any limudei kodesh. Because of their age, they belonged in yeshiva but because of their limited knowledge, they didn't even know what elementary school children know.

R' Zalman, with great mesirus nefesh, taught them Alef-Beis, Chumash, Rashi, Mishnayos, and after a while even managed, and wondrously so, to teach them Gemara. Most of these bachurim eventually became talmidei chachamim.

From Peking, R' Zalman went with the rest of the Chassidim to Paris. In 5710 (1950), R' Zalman was told by the Rebbe to travel to Casablanca, Morocco to run the Bais Rivka school for girls. A trip like that in those days entailed real mesirus nefesh. It meant being in a distant place, with limited transportation, and enduring difficult travels. In addition, the language was foreign as were the customs and culture, but none of this stopped R' Zalman from following orders.

Before the trip, the Rebbe wrote R' Zalman: "Fortunate is the generation in which the elders obey the young ones" (referring to R' Zalman being older than the Rebbe yet he obeyed the Rebbe).

After some years R' Zalman became sick and had to leave Morocco and return to France. In 5721, he traveled to the Rebbe, where he lived till the end of his life.

## "REBBE" OF THE MEIDLACH

R' Zalman remained loyal to the girls he had educated at Beis Rivka in Morocco. Most of them emigrated to France and the United States while some went to Eretz Yisroel. He called them, "my daughters" and took care of all their material and spiritual needs. Even after he married them off, he kept in touch, took an interest in their lives and helped in the chinuch of their children.

While in the U.S. R' Zalman raised money for Bais Rivka in France, where most of his students had emigrated. Even when he was a very old man, he would still travel all over the U.S. and Canada, each day going to another location, with tremendous mesirus nefesh. R' Zalman would visit various Admurim, who accorded him great respect because of the divrei Torah and Chassidus he would relate.

One of the great Admurim in New York would give R' Zalman a few thousand dollars every year for Beis Rivka in France. When R' Zalman went to see him, this Admur stood up for him and said, "For you I must act with derech

eretz for you are the Rebbe of the meidlach [teacher of the girls] and upon them rests the entire Jewish people."

## BETTER THE MAZAL SHOULD SLEEP THAN TO SLEEP AT A FARBRENGEN

Despite R' Zalman's advanced age, he went to every one of the Rebbe's farbrengens and wouldn't forego a single one.

There's the custom of not sleeping on Rosh HaShana by day and the reason given is so that one's mazal shouldn't sleep. But when R' Zalman lay down to rest after the meal before the farbrengen on the second day of Rosh HaShana, he would say, "Better the mazal should sleep than to sleep at the farbrengen."

R' Zalman was proficient in dikduk (Hebrew grammar) and was also knowledgeable in the study of Chumash and the commentators on the Torah. He had a koch for the Rebbe's sichos on Rashi's commentary. Often, and especially during the summer, he would stay to hear a review of the sichos and



R' Shneur Zalman Teibel standing behind the Rebbe at a farbrengen

he lived with them the rest of the week.

He would write comments to the Rebbe on the Rashi sichos and ask questions on Rashi before the farbrengen. Often, when he would come back to the house after a farbrengen he would say, "I asked the Rebbe a question and instead of the Rebbe taking his holy time to answer me, he came up with an idea. He added more questions and they were sharper questions than my foolishness, and he made an entire farbrengen in order to give us chayus for the week..."

#### FOR R' ZALMAN

When R' Zalman was quite old he remained in my father's house until nearly his final day. My father fed him, washed, and dressed him, took him to shul and treated him

*When R' Zalman lay down to rest after the meal before the farbrengen on the second day of Rosh HaShana, he would say, "Better the mazal should sleep than to sleep at the farbrengen."*

like a brother and a loyal friend.

One year, when my parents went to Florida for the winter, they

took R' Zalman to a senior citizens center. When my father returned, he went to visit R' Zalman and he related sadly that it seemed to him that R' Zalman had lost his humanity at that home. He took R' Zalman out of there and hired an aide to care for R' Zalman until he recuperated.

Thanks to my father's caring for R' Shneur Zalman Teibel, he received a whole matza from the Rebbe every year on the first night of Pesach and another one on the second night. One year my father did not go to get matzos and the Rebbe called him and asked him to come every year.

Often, at dollars, the Rebbe would give my father an extra dollar and say, "This is for R' Zalman."

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# TO LIVE TWICE

BY YAALE BEN ARUYA

*Mrs. Chaya P. of Rechovot received her life as a gift. When she stood before the judges of the Heavenly Court, she remembered an excerpt from a sicha of the Rebbe and she reviewed it for the judges. This is what determined her fate, and in the blink of an eye she found herself back in her bed in the hospital surrounded by despairing doctors. That is when she realized the significance of the bracha she had received from the Rebbe a few years earlier: "Double chayus, double chayus."*

**\* A thrilling first person story.**

The story of Chaya P. is the story of one neshama out of many that broke through the darkness of her personal galus and found its way to the Nasi HaDor, the Rebbe MH"M.

"I was born in Bat Yam but I grew up on Kibbutz Gedot. My first impressions of Yiddishkeit were absorbed from my grandmother a"h, who was traditional. She did not keep Shabbos but she lit candles and had Kiddush.

When I was bas mitzva, the kibbutz gave us a mission. Each of us was supposed to research our roots. My grandmother and I drew a family tree and then, for the first time, my grandmother told me that she came from a religious home, a chareidi

family in Teveria. Her father, my great-grandfather, was the shadar for the yeshiva Rabbi Meir Baal HaNes in Teveria. When he wasn't away fundraising he taught children in school. She also told me that her family was descended from the gaon and mekubal Rabbi Chaim Abulafia z"l.

The discoveries I made about my family thrilled me and inspired me to do more and more research. I was always attracted to religion and now I had found a way to access it.

I thought a lot and asked myself questions about life. I began to wonder about why I was here in this world and about the belief in G-d. If there is a Creator, I wondered, what

did He want of us? I thought about and asked these questions at the age of fifteen, when I was on a kibbutz that had not a shred of Torah and mitzvos."

It was only many years later that Chaya got the answers to these questions, but it happened in a tumultuous way.

\*\*\*

A group of Christian volunteers visited the kibbutz. It turns out they were actually missionaries. They spoke about Christianity and offered their "wares," their goal being to capture souls.

"We didn't know their purpose and were unaware of the danger."

One day these Christians volunteers gave Chaya a book. There, they believed, she would find the answers to her questions.

"The more I read the more I realized it was utter lies. Their entire worldview was false and illogical. It was simply repulsive. It was clear as day to me that the truth was not to be found there."

One day when Chaya's mother saw her with the book, she was shaken to the core.

"Why are you reading their book? Are you studying Christianity? You were born a Jew, go and study Judaism!" exclaimed her mother.

Following this incident, Chaya transferred to a national-religious school in Givat Washington. She was only fifteen. Along with a spiritual counselor who guided her in halacha and hashkafa, she began to undertake



a life of Torah and mitzvos. The more she learned, the more her interest grew. Each detail she learned, she implemented immediately.

When she had vacation, she went to her grandmother in Bat Yam. She was apprehensive because her grandmother wasn't religious. She nearly went to B'nei Brak to find spiritual guidance, but by Divine Presence she found out about Rabbi Zimroni Tzik's shiurim that took place directly opposite her grandmother's home.

"They were shiurim in *Tanya*, and it entered my heart. For the first time I felt I had come home to something I was always missing. I suddenly heard there is a Rebbe that you have to connect with and that the Rebbe is the Moshe Rabbeinu of the generation.

"I thought of leaving the program I was in and switching to a Chabad school, but the families that supported and guided me, the Tzik and Tavito families, advised me to finish where I was. 'You don't leave in the middle,' they said."

Chaya soon took on all of Torah and mitzvos, in her dress, behavior, and learning. One day, while touring in Europe, she read a book about the Alter Rebbe that she had taken along with her.

"For the first time, I encountered the name Shneur Zalman, which moved me. Shneur means two lights. I said to myself that if I had a son, this is what I'd name him. The Alter Rebbe's personality fascinated me. I was amazed by his life story and by his having brought about a nachas ruach Above and below.

"And when I got married and gave birth to my oldest son, it was 12 Kislev, and on 19 Kislev, the Alter Rebbe's Chag HaGeula, he had his bris and was named Shneur Zalman."

Chaya went to Bais Rivka seminary, where she absorbed a lot of Chassidus. She was only 19 years old

and was happy to be in a Chassidic school.

In Elul, she went to Crown Heights with a Lubavitcher family that she traveled with. On Sunday, she went for "dollars."

"The line moved slowly, and when it was my turn the Rebbe looked at me. His gaze shook me up. I felt that the Rebbe was seeing everything I did in the past. After a brief moment that felt like eternity, the Rebbe asked my name.

Chaya  
Family name?

***The birth entailed no difficulties and no anesthetic but while Chaya was still in the delivery room, she began to suddenly experience serious complications. She noticed the midwife turning pale in fright.***

Chayut  
Daughter of?

I told the Rebbe my father and mother's names. The Rebbe looked at me again with a glowing gaze. From a far-off world I heard him say, 'Double chayus, double chayus. Bracha V'hatzlacha.' I said to myself, the Rebbe is probably referring to my name, which is Chaya Chayut and my father's name is Chaim. I didn't fathom any further significance to the bracha. It was only years later that I understood its true meaning."

Chaya flew to Los Angeles to visit

her mother who lives there. Her mother suggested that Chaya live in Los Angeles, and she liked the idea.

"I could not spend Shabbos with my mother since she wasn't religious and I went to the shliach, Rabbi Shlomo Cunin's house. It was exciting to meet a shliach of the Rebbe MH"™M! He didn't know me yet he had suggestions for me. He changed my life.

"Why are you thinking of living here? First of all, ask the Rebbe whether you should remain in America or return to Eretz Yisroel. Ask the Rebbe."

"That's an idea..." I said.

"And he said, 'I will send the question to the Rebbe and you will get an answer.'

"That Wednesday the answer arrived: 'Return to Bais Rivka, return to Eretz Yisroel.' I had to choose and I chose to do what the Rebbe advised. If the Rebbe said to return, then it was certainly the best thing for me to do.

"I spent the month of Tishrei 5746 with the Rebbe, on my way back to Eretz Yisroel. It was thrilling. I received a dollar from the Rebbe on a few occasions. Towards the end of the month a number of single girls passed by the Rebbe in order to get a bracha. When my friends and I passed by, the Rebbe blessed in Yiddish and gave each of us a dollar and a bracha."

Upon Chaya's return to Eretz Yisroel, someone suggested Yosef Nissim P. as a shidduch for her. He too was a young baal t'shuva. His father is one of the activists involved with Chabad of Bat Yam and one of Rabbi Zimroni Tzik's first helpers. He became a baal t'shuva with his family when he was 40. He noticed Chaya at one of the days of mitzvaim on Chanuka and made the shidduch for his son, not before receiving the Rebbe's haskama and bracha.

"It was a Chassidische wedding that gave me tremendous kochos to

continue along the way of Chabad that I had chosen.”

The young couple lived in Bat Yam. A year after her Shneur Zalman was born, Chaya gave birth to her daughter Penina Hodia. The birth entailed no difficulties and no anesthetic but while Chaya was still in the delivery room, she began to suddenly experience serious complications. She noticed the midwife turning pale in fright.

“I felt terrible pain and all the pain I had felt before the birth started up again, as though I was going to give birth again. I asked the terrified midwife, ‘What’s happening? What’s happening?’ She brusquely replied, ‘It’s nothing, it’s nothing, don’t worry.’ I was all of twenty years old, having just gone through an ordinary birth with no epidural, and then suddenly there were these pains. I didn’t understand what was going on. The midwife told me not to worry but then she dashed off for the doctors.

“In the meantime, I lost consciousness. I felt my head spinning around and then suddenly, I didn’t feel my body. I was free, going up upwards in a dizzying spiral, going up and up, liberated from my body. Suddenly, I was in another world, a spiritual world. I realized I was in the heavenly court. Opposite me was a table of judges and in the center was the chair of the chief justice. A pillar of fire hovered above. The judges sat on either side, not visible except for shadowy images that seemed to be sitting in the chairs. One side was chesed, the other side din. I knew all this with an inner certainty. I was riveted by the amazing and awe-inspiring scene.

“I began to think, ‘What’s happening to me? What am I doing here?’

“Suddenly there was a voice from within a curtain of light. It was so strange because the light just illuminated itself but not the darkness

around it and the darkness did not touch the light. From within the curtain of light I heard, ‘What is the purpose of this neshama in the world?’

“I heard this and felt that if I didn’t say something, it would be too late. I would have finished my job. I got up my courage and began to say, ‘I gave birth to a son and now to a daughter, and who will raise them and educate them to Torah and mitzvos? Who, if not their mother?’

***“In the meantime, I lost consciousness. I felt my head spinning around and then suddenly, I didn’t feel my body. I was free, going up upwards in a dizzying spiral, going up and up, liberated from my body. Suddenly, I was in another world, a spiritual world...”***

That is my purpose!

“And I pleaded for my life so I could return to the world to fill my role as a mother. Suddenly I heard myself adamantly saying, ‘I promise to raise them to Torah and mitzvos!’ The judges began to consult among themselves while I wondered where my speech had come from. How did I think to say what I said? And while still up in the heavenly court, I remembered that this is what the Rebbe had said! I felt that the Rebbe

was there with me and he put these words into my mouth.

“I remembered that shortly before giving birth I had read a sicha in which the Rebbe says that the role of the mother is to educate her children to Torah and mitzvos. It seems that Divine providence had prepared me for this moment, so that I would know the right thing to say.

“I felt the Rebbe standing behind me and directing me in what to say and the judges continued to confer. Suddenly, I heard someone say, ‘Return her.’ As this was being said, I woke up, regaining consciousness.

“I was in the same place and in the same condition that I had been before I left my body. They hadn’t done anything with me. They had left me like that. I saw the doctors in consultation, looking somber and tense.

“Apparently some top doctors had been called in but they didn’t know what to do about the complications that had arisen. A moment before I regained consciousness, Dr. Lidor decided to try an experimental treatment. If it would have succeeded, it would have been an open miracle. Other than that, they didn’t know what to do.

When the doctors saw that Chaya had regained consciousness they rushed over with a respirator, oxygen machine, and all their other equipment. ‘She’s back! She’s back!’ they exclaimed. Her heart started beating again. Slowly they all calmed down and the color returned to their faces.

“They tried to calm me but I was feeling relaxed. I knew that if they had made a positive decree up above, I would be fine. One of the doctors said, ‘This particular complication happened twenty years ago and that woman died. You’re really lucky. You’re lucky you’re religious and Hashem loves you.’ This is what a non-observant doctor said. ‘You

should know that we all witnessed a miracle here.”

The amazing thing is that the doctors had basically given up hope, and even the procedure they were considering trying was only an act of desperation. The story ended on a positive note only because of a miracle. And the really amazing thing is that everything went back to normal without any further medical intervention and Chaya went on to give birth to more children, naturally and in good health.

“So I was born twice. When the Rebbe blessed me with ‘two times chayus,’ I didn’t understand it properly. It was only after the miracle that I experienced that I understood it. I realized I had been born anew. Now I see that many years ago the Rebbe anticipated it all and he blessed me with additional life, new life.

“The Rebbe’s bracha is eternal. I see many things that can be connected to this bracha, ‘two times chayus’ – the two lives I’ve merited to live, and on that same date when I got my life back, two of my children were born. This bracha continues to affect me.”

**The Rebbe is with you, in such an open way. How do you maintain your hiskashrus with the Rebbe?**

“First of all, although the Rebbe’s words were few, they were entire worlds. That drop that the Rebbe gave me, gives me strength for so much, for my whole life.

“I try to fulfill the Rebbe’s horaas and that is how I see my hiskashrus to the Rebbe, in the realm of action. I send my children to Chabad schools. For three years, I’ve been running mesibos Shabbos and I feel the increase in strength and hiskashrus to

the Rebbe it provides for both me and the children. With this chinuch, I am fulfilling the promise I made in the heavenly court.

“When I need things I daven for them or ask for them verbally and I see the results of the bracha. I feel that the Rebbe is working for me and that he is with me.”

**Do you remember the promise you made up above on a daily basis?**

“Absolutely. It’s my role. It’s our task as mothers. I know that I have to be stubborn about this and not compromise. Whenever I encounter a problem or difficulty in the chinuch of my children and I make a positive resolution, I immediately see a change for the good. When I commit to some hachlata I need to do it and then I see results. I feel that the Rebbe is here and that he continues to work on our behalf, as always.”

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# SOULS I HAVE SEEN

BY MORDECHAI ZIEGELBOIM

*In my profession as chazan and singer, I've met many shluchim around the U.S. I am happy to accept an engagement not only because of parnasa or the opportunity to make Jews happy, but because I find these visits to shluchim so exciting. I get to see up close, stories of neshamos that for the shluchim are daily fare, but are so special for a guest like me.*

I spend a lot of time with shluchim throughout the US. I'm always amazed to see how they work with such mesirus nefesh. The price they pay is very steep: the loneliness, the constant battle and the logistical difficulties in everything they do. If it's a place that's just beginning to develop, then the most basic things such as a kosher grocery store and mikva are lacking. Everything they do is a complicated operation.

Socially, it's hard, very hard. You don't have the friends you are used to, the members of your congregation regard you as a rabbi not as a friend, and you have to constantly serve as a role model.

In many places, the children attend the local Jewish schools, which are not chareidi, and the rest of their learning has to take place at home. Not to mention social problems such as birthday parties that take place at

school where you can't eat anything, parties for both boys and girls which your nine- or ten-year-old daughter cannot attend. The price is high.

And then there are many shluchim who must part from their children when their children are about ten years old because they are sent to grandparents in Brooklyn so they can attend a Chassidic school and grow up to be shluchim. It's not easy for any parents to send a young child away from home and I don't know if I could do it.

Each shliach is responsible for fundraising for his parnasa, to maintain his mosdos, and for his many projects. This is a constant pressure to find endless funding and it's not easy! The work requires a flow of funds that you can only dream about and it's work that takes up days and nights and gives you plenty of headaches!

Every shliach is a superior entrepreneur who in the free market could earn a fortune. These are people who go anywhere and create a circle of friends and admirers and get them to see the importance of the work they're doing. Then they inspire them to join their work in some form or another.

They also host an endless stream of guests, especially on Shabbos. Sometimes 45 people per meal. In two places that I serve as chazan the shluchos are about to give birth in another month and throughout Tishrei they hosted hundreds of people!

How does a young person land with his wife and children in a place that has no spirituality and nothing materially either? It's all with the kochos of the meshaleiach. There is no other explanation. They know who sent them there, on whose shlichus they're getting up every morning, and who they have to give an accounting to.

As a chazan and singer, I spend a lot of time with shluchim throughout the U.S. At the large shuls they've built, I pray for the Jews there. This is not only on the Yomim Noraim, but also on Jewish holidays and often at simchas celebrated by the members of the community. They want me to grace the event with song and chazanus.

I am happy to do so not only because of my parnasa or because of the opportunity to make Jews happy, but because my every visit to

shluchim is an exciting experience. I get to see, from up close, stories of neshamos that for the shluchim are daily fare but are so special for a guest like me. I have already gotten used to seeing different and unusual things with the assortment of guests at Chabad Houses. It's a golden opportunity to hear amazing stories from shluchim about things that have happened to them.

For example, at a Chabad House in Long Island I met G., a Jew who is not yet fully Shabbos observant, but who wants to daven with a minyan every morning. He knows that to daven with a minyan means to stand and daven Shmoneh Esrei with the tzibbur when they daven Shmoneh Esrei. The problem is that he wants to daven in Lashon HaKodesh and not in English. Although he is allowed to daven in another language, he wants to daven in Lashon HaKodesh. In order to do so, he arrives at the Chabad House every morning at 4:15 and begins to daven, slowly, so that when the minyan begins at 6:45 he can join them for Shmoneh Esrei. This is hard work for him but he's willing to sacrifice a lot in order to do it. Each word takes great effort and he sweats over every verse. One chapter follows another, and one page follows another, and that's how he slowly but surely finishes the morning brachos, korbanos, the P'sukei D'Zimra, the blessings of the Shma, and reaches the Shmoneh Esrei.

Each time he finishes Shmoneh Esrei with the tzibbur, his eyes sparkle with joy as though to say, "I did it again!"

On more than a couple of occasions I saw him Shabbos morning when the davening is longer and the words are less familiar, standing bent over his lectern, wrapped in his tallis, every so often his body strains with the effort it takes. You can see how hard it is for him. I think the word "oved" perfectly suits him.

I met Larry for the first time at the

Chabad House in Las Vegas. Larry is a nice guy in his seventies who is the honorary president of one of the Chabad Houses there. He is a retired family doctor and he spends his day on various hobbies, one of which is traveling around the world. He loves to see new places. After years of hard work as a doctor, he decided to go out and conquer the world. This hobby has a wonderful side benefit, which is visiting Chabad Houses around the world. Last summer, Larry packed his bags and went to discover Croatia.

Larry encountered Chabad in jail, as he enjoys recounting to his listeners with a glint in his eye. His



audience will generally say, "How did a respected Jew and doctor like yourself end up in jail?" and he explains with a smile.

"When I retired I sat at home for a while with nothing to do. I was bored out of my mind. One day followed another and I couldn't take it anymore. Each day I looked for something to do, and one day, I read in the paper that the prison services of the state of Nevada were looking for a doctor to treat the prisoners. I called them up and within a short time began bi-weekly visits to the jail in Las Vegas.

"One day, I met a young rabbi there. I was happy to see him and I introduced myself and asked him whether he knew of a shul in the area where I could daven on Shabbos. 'Sure,' said the rabbi, 'I have a minyan every Shabbos and we'd be happy to host you for the Shabbos meals too.' I went, saw, and remained."

Larry moved closer to the Chabad House so he wouldn't have to drive every Shabbos in order to join the Chabad House minyan. Every Shabbos, Larry goes to the Chabad House and sits in his spot near the bima for Krias HaTorah. Then he eats the Shabbos meal with the rabbi.

When Larry isn't on one of his trips around the world in order to discover another Chabad House where the rabbi and his family live with mesirus nefesh just in order to find "another Larry," he is busy getting friends to join him at the Chabad House on a regular basis. He wants them to begin to feel like they belong too.

Three weeks ago, I was invited to a Shabbos bar mitzva that was made by a member of a certain community where I ended up witnessing a fascinating human drama. It was Friday night when the family came. They were a couple in their seventies with three sons, their wives and children. One son, in his forties, was a successful businessman and he was the father of the bar mitzva boy. The second son is a well-known talmid chacham, who doesn't stop learning. The third son is Young Israel religious.

The grandson's bar mitzva was supposed to take place the next day at the Reform temple on the other side of the street. So why were they at the Chabad House?

The answer is that the grandfather made it clear that even though he had come to his grandson's bar mitzva, there was no way he was going to eat at the temple, nor would he stay there a minute longer than necessary. They

were at the Chabad House because the Reform temple wasn't open Friday night and also because the grandparents and the rest of the family needed to stay there until the aliya l'Torah would take place. The Chabad House was the ideal location for them.

Friday night we learned that this was a very distinguished family, scion to g'dolim. One of this family's sons emigrated years ago to the United States, where he did very well in his business. Although he kept Shabbos and kashrus and always wore a kippa, the chinuch he provided for his children was so-so. The results were that one son was married to a woman who pulled him to join a Reform congregation. Their son, the bar mitzva boy, was fraught with angst.

Although the entire extended family was sitting together and singing z'miros with a Chassidic pronunciation, towards the end of the meal the oldest son, father of the bar mitzva boy, said to his children, "Please get ready and wait outside next to the car because we're leaving." Their mother also hurried them along, "because we have a long trip ahead of us."

After they left I could see that the grandfather looked ill.

The next morning, in middle of Shacharis, the grandfather sadly motioned to me that he had to leave my "Shochan Ad" because he had to cross the street to the temple in order to be present at his grandson's aliya. It was a rachmanus to see him walking like a mourner after the coffin, with bent shoulders. In the lobby, as he put on his coat, he quietly said to his wife, "They're stabbing me in the back."

In the middle of the Shabbos lunch meal at the Chabad House the door opened and another son, the brother of the father of the bar mitzva boy, came in unexpectedly. He had arrived on a direct flight from



(For illustration purposes)

Anchorage, Alaska and had come straight from the airport as a surprise.

He lives in Alaska and is a pilot of cargo transport planes. He had suddenly decided to surprise them but because his flight was delayed, he had come late to temple and the guard there had told him they had all gone to the synagogue across the street.

I sat there and looked at the grandfather who was happy to see his youngest son on the one hand, but on the other hand, this son had traveled on Shabbos. I noticed how he kept smiling and didn't ruin the pleasant atmosphere.

In the middle of the meal, after the pilot had eaten to his heart's delight, he wanted to sing z'miros. He began with "Menucha V'Simcha" with a Chassidic pronunciation. He certainly hadn't forgotten the z'miros he had heard while growing up.

After enjoying his audience's positive response to his singing, he decided to sing "Anim Z'miros" to the Chabad tune. When I asked him how he knew the niggun, he said that on those Shabbasos that he doesn't fly, he goes to the Chabad House in Alaska and the shliach there loves to sing it. That's where he learned it.

I looked in amazement at this human drama and wondered whether when he flew at ten in the morning from Alaska to Seattle he also hummed Menucha V'Simcha...

These stories and others teach me about hundreds of thousands of neshamos that wander the world and cry out for their tikkun and the shluchim on the frontlines, who welcome them heartily and are mekarev them with love and compassion, with the ko'ach of the meshaleiach.

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# BREAK THE SILENCE

SHAI GEFEN

## THE MITTELER REBBE AND STANDING STRONG

The ostrich approach to the problems in Eretz Yisroel is the sad reality for too many of us. Involvement in shleimus ha'Aretz is seen by many as just another headache, and who needs that? We recently marked the birthday and yahrtzait of the Mittlerer Rebbe and the following day, his Yom HaGeula. What can we learn from the Mittlerer Rebbe regarding what we need to do for shleimus ha'Aretz?

The Rebbe tells us:

**This is the horaa learned from the yom hilula of the one whose birthday and yahrtzait it is, the Mittlerer Rebbe:**

**He was Rebbe while the Czar reigned, and when there was religious persecution in addition to parnasa problems. Poverty was widespread, yet he raised money from poor Jews, and with this money he said land should be bought in the city of our fathers, in Chevron, and said this would be his portion since it belonged to him, with all the details this entails, however, this is not the place to recount them.**

The lesson to learn from this is that even when we are in situation that is similar to the material situation in the time of the Czar in Russia, then even without looking at his desires, his nature, his chinuch, and at those around him who mock, a Jew must have the strength to openly say that there is

**nothing to debate about regarding Chevron! Chevron belongs to Eretz Yisroel and its borders!**

**Chevron is within Eretz Yisroel with all the details inherent in this. The goyim know this no less than the Jews. And as said previously, a few weeks ago they said to the Israeli representative when he was in Washington: You are giving more than we expected of you!**

**We must stress what we see actually happening: We still have the Mittlerer Rebbe's deed to the land in Chevron. This is aside from the strongest and greatest "deed" of all – what is written in the Torah. And this is so not only regarding Chevron.**

*(Parshas VaYeitzei 5740)*

The problem we have today is being ashamed to say the truth – that Eretz Yisroel belongs to the Jews!

## THE SILENCE IS DEAFENING

Since the churban of Gush Katif and northern Shomron, the entire land is open before our enemy. It's just a matter of time, Heaven forbid, until the missiles reach Ashkelon and Netivot. Daily we see greater and greater chutzpa on the part of the terrorists. The settlements near Gaza are falling apart and military figures are saying that there has never been such danger as there is today. The Rafiach Pass is open and thousands of weapons are being smuggled into the Gaza Strip.

Remember how they promised us that as soon as the Jews are expelled from Gush Katif, if we were attacked we would respond swiftly and strongly? Ha! Life goes on as usual. The Arabs are laughing, seeing how the Jewish nation is willingly self-destructing.

So why are we quiet? What are we waiting for? Why is it that when Jews gather nobody makes a commotion about the perilous situation?

## LOOKING THE OTHER WAY

26 years ago, the Agudas Yisroel party held its sixth convention in Yerushalayim. It was an impressive event attended by Admurim and Rabbanim. The Rebbe sent a letter to the convention in which he brought up the issue of shleimus ha'Aretz and quoted the p'sak in *Shulchan Aruch* and the Moetzes G'dolei HaTorah against giving away land.

The Rebbe's letter was not read at the convention and the issue of pikuach nefesh was not raised. The Rebbe referred to those who ignore the most burning issue of all – that of pikuach nefesh:

**When many dozens of Jews gather, all of whom are shomrei Torah and mitzvos, who review the parsha every Shabbos, including those Shabbosos when it talks about the true borders of Eretz Yisroel. In addition, some of them read the newspapers and know what is going on in the world. And**





being that this convention is for the purpose of strengthening Torah and Yiddishkeit, how is it possible that they spent three days together and spoke about the most important matters, and made good resolutions, but regarding actual pikuach nefesh of more than a few dozen Jews, they didn't say a word? And nobody protested either!

And then they printed up a report in which they enumerated the good resolutions, without mentioning even one word about the danger the Jewish people are in! You don't want to mention it openly? What does it mean that it is not out in the open? It is public knowledge throughout the world and cannot be made secret!

The only excuse I was given was: since they are past their bar mitzva (i.e., they are adults), go and ask them directly! I asked one individual and was told: he already did his part... I asked: What was done about the situation of pikuach nefesh? He answered me: This is not the place to get into that and on another occasion he would speak with so-and-so about pikuach nefesh, but in the meantime there were many other good resolutions made and these will be implemented.

I said to him – you can ask him about it – there is a din in *Shulchan Aruch* that one who is quiet or one who waits until they come to him and ask him about pikuach nefesh, is called, “disgusting!” And he knows this din too!

Since he is a Jew who knows how to learn, he answered me, it says in the Gemara, “Just as it is a mitzva to say that which will be heard, so too, it is a mitzva not to say that which won't be heard.” And since he knows that they will not deal with this issue - it is something that will not be heard – therefore, he doesn't want to rule

on the matter.

So I asserted: That is not according to *Shulchan Aruch*! The meaning of “do not stand by your brother's blood” means, according to *Shulchan Aruch*, that even when there is a doubt, and a shadow of a doubt, and even the thousandth of a doubt that perhaps the protest will help, he must protest!

Therefore, there is no basis to claim that the discussion is about this piece of land or that piece, a conquered territory or a liberated territory. This is because the din refers to land even outside of Eretz Yisroel that is not “our land” and “our earth,” territory that did not originally belong to Jews. Yet it is paskened there that since there are such and such a number of Jews there (and regarding pikuach nefesh, one Jew is enough) then even when this land truly belongs to others, since it is outside Eretz Yisroel, still, since a Jew is there and there exists the concern lest “the land be open,” this din applies in full force.

This phenomenon has afflicted our camp too. With various excuses and the dominion of the left side over the G-dly soul, the looking away and silence continues.

Whoever is mekushar to the Rebbe needs to know that an inseparable part of our connection to the Rebbe is to carry out his will and to quote him publicly, including a massive protest against endangering Eretz Yisroel. The crying out is not sourced in ideology or nationalism but from the danger to the welfare and existence of the Jewish people!

Each of us must take part in this protest in whatever way he or she can. Nowadays, when a gathering or farbrengen takes place, the topic of Eretz Yisroel must come up! Whoever silences the protest with

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various excuses, is a full partner to the bloodshed taking place.

## CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

For the nearly thirty years of its reign, the Likud party has given away land time and again (Yamit, through the Madrid Conference, giving away Chevron, the Wye Agreement, the destruction of Gush Katif and northern Shomron), each time with a different excuse. This party used the votes of Jews who observe and love Torah who believe in the holiness of the Torah and the

land, in order to perpetrate the most serious crimes.

Now, this same party has fallen apart, an unheard of situation since the party was founded thirty years ago. Some of its members are joining the worst of the extreme Left in order to continue destroying our land and eradicating any trace of Yiddishkait.

Who remains in Likud? Fearful cowards, who enabled the prime minister to implement one of the greatest crimes, while ignoring the wishes of those who voted for them. At this point though, they roll their eyes heavenward in acts of piety.

“Crime and Punishment” perfectly describes what happened to Likud. The lie has been exposed. The game in which there was supposedly a Right and a Left, is over. We knew a long time ago that there is no longer a Right and Left. We’re with the *Shulchan Aruch*, and as the Rebbe said at dollars to R’

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regarding Chevron.*

Yitzchok Nachshoni, “We are not with any parties, but with the Beis Yosef, who paskened against giving away land. If a certain party conducts itself according to *Shulchan Aruch*, it should be supported.”

### A RELIGIOUS FRONT

Naturally, we anticipate the imminent revelation of the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach and the final Geula, yet in this still-Galus state we must remember one of the things the Rebbe cried about, which was prophetic in nature. The Rebbe said that all those parties that rise up to destroy us (from both the Right and the Left) are opposed to Hashem and His anointed one!

In recent years, we have seen the damage they have caused to Yiddishkait in Eretz Yisroel, while those who are supposedly representing those loyal to Torah and the land, are not doing their work.

The Rebbe asked that all forces unite in a religious front. Since 1951, the Rebbe has pleaded for a religious front and yet, it still hasn’t happened. As the enemies of Hashem rise up like Lavan did, to uproot us, the only way is to unite. Let’s do it!

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# 'I WILL NOT VOTE IF THERE IS NO UNITED RELIGIOUS FRONT'

INTERVIEWED BY SHAI GEFEN  
TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY

*The Rebbe MH”M worked for many years for the establishment of a united religious front among the religious and chareidi parties, with the objective of attaining achievements in the form of preserving the Jewish nature of Eretz Yisroel, Torah institutions, and other various interests. Ten years ago, Professor Hillel Weiss worked towards the establishment of a united religious front, yet failed due to the narrow interests of certain askanim. Even today, Professor Weiss continues to use his influence in this matter, warning that “the situation on religion and Eretz Yisroel is deteriorating from day to day, and the ruling parties are using the religious parties for their own purposes.” In this exclusive interview with Beis Moshiach, Professor Weiss also discusses the Rebbe’s unique and holy campaign to establish a united religious front.*

With the political machinery in Eretz Yisroel currently involved in tumultuous activities leading up to the approaching general election campaign, efforts are being made among some of the religious and chareidi parties to unite among themselves. Politicians, businessmen, and lobbyists are working hard to create a joint religious front, or at the very least, a technical bloc in order to cater the needs of the religious and chareidi communities in Eretz Yisroel.

The Rebbe MH”M’s position on this issue is well known, as he worked and pushed very hard for a religious front in the various election campaigns, even sending out numerous letters and shluchim for this purpose. We can learn about his investment in this matter from one of his letters, where he writes, “It was my great desire and aspiration to establish it, and it seems that I have done what I could do in the ways of pleasantness.”

One of those who have spent much time working for a united religious front is Professor Hillel Weiss, who has devoted considerable effort to this cause since the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzchak Rabin. Professor Weiss understood then that without a unity of strength, the left-wing and anti-religious parties will obtain greater power, while the religious parties are

# THE REBBE MH”M’S POSITION ON THE ISSUE OF A UNITED RELIGIOUS FRONT

## “A RELIGIOUS FRONT SHOULD FINALLY BE ORGANIZED”

In a letter from Erev Rosh Chodesh Sivan 5711, the Rebbe wrote to Rabbi Yitzchak Meir Levin, minister of welfare and head of Agudas Yisroel:

“I am most distressed about the prevailing situation in Eretz HaKodesh, which brings the saddest news every day. In addition, the crumbling relationship among the chareidim themselves is a very painful shortcoming. In any event, it is my hope that a united religious front will finally be organized, particularly after my discussion on the matter with the minister of the interior, Mr. Moshe Shapira.”

## “GREAT IS THE SORROW AND HUMILIATION”

“Great is the sorrow and humiliation that the front does not exist at this hour of tremendous responsibility. In any event, may it be G-d’s will that the party leaders will now find for themselves the strength to give preference to the general interests of chareidi Yiddishkait over the perceived partisan benefits, and thus it will prove valuable to the party to establish a front, at least after the elections.”

(22 Tammuz 5711)

## “MY ASPIRATION IS TO ESTABLISH A RELIGIOUS FRONT”

“There is no need to elaborate on the great sorrow and damage that comes out of its dismantling, and he justifiably writes of my great desire and aspiration for its establishment. It seems that I have done what I could do in the ways of pleasantness, because for several reasons, I didn’t want to use other methods.”

(Igras Kodesh, Vol. 11, p. 289)

## “PRESSURE FROM THE LEFTISTS”

In another interesting letter from this same time period, the Rebbe writes that a chance has been created to form a religious front, now that “pressure and coercion has come from the outside – i.e., the leftists – there is more and more room to pass up the perceived benefits to one party leader or another in order not to cause damage to the religious situation in Eretz HaKodesh.”

(Igras Kodesh, Vol. 10, p. 65)

## “EVEN FOR PARTISAN CONCESSIONS”

In a letter to Dr. Yosef Burg from the 9th of Sivan 5711, the Rebbe writes further:

“I turn to him as a chareidi to try with all his power and influence to form a united religious front, even if it is connected to partisan concessions.”

## “THE GREATEST AND MOST UNAMBIGUOUS PUBLIC PRESSURE”

“According to recent reports that have reached me, which have been confirmed for me via outside sources, the situation in Eretz HaKodesh is as it was prior to the elections there, if only the results would have been

different from what they were then, when there was no front. The truth is that it is no wonder that the situation has not changed, because the people who decided then against the front are the same people in charge of such matters today, and the reasons that motivated them to prevent the front then exist today as well. It’s a terrible pity that they don’t want to learn the lessons from the failure in the last elections, and they don’t even want to learn from the changes that have occurred since then until now.

“As I wrote at the time of those elections, if there will not be the greatest and most unambiguous public pressure to show that they are seriously preparing, to our greatest regret, the chances will be as they were before.”

(Igras Kodesh, Vol. 25, p. 260)

*It’s a terrible pity that they don’t want to learn the lessons from the failure in the last elections, and they don’t even want to learn from the changes that have occurred since then until now.*

merely used as their tools, without bringing any useful purpose to the religious community. Professor Weiss established then a movement that worked towards the establishment of this front, meeting with various rabbinical leaders and askanim. To his great regret, there were political forces that preferred the prevailing situation and torpedoed this initiative, which would have made substantial improvements for the religious and chareidi communities.

Ten years later, in cooperation with other public figures, Professor Weiss continues his efforts to establish a united religious front. He sums up what has happened over the last decade, as everyone now sees how right the Rebbe was about the need to form a united religious front.

**What led to your decision ten years ago to work for a united religious front?**

There were a number of developments at that time, and anyone who reflects on them can clearly see that we were heading towards an empty trough. As a result, we took action to establish a united religious front and a central religious council of Torah authorities.

**What is being done to establish this religious front?**

This is possible only with the approval of the Torah leaders. From the very outset, we understood the situation and worked in this direction. We opened an office for the religious front, where we managed to bring representatives of all the parties and even drafted an agreement. However, to our regret, this was to no avail and no concrete steps were taken.

**Who was in favor of this front?**

The individual most in favor of a united religious front, understanding its implications and even pushing things in this direction, was the Gerer Rebbe, the P'nei Menachem, of blessed memory. Regrettably, after his passing in Adar 5756, the entire issue was

buried. We met with him three times, and he encouraged us as he actively sought to advance the idea.

**What was the reason that certain forces opposed this initiative?**

The opposition stemmed primarily from party workers who were concerned over their political position and authority. In a situation with a united front, the prevailing status of certain party officials would become less distinct. As a result, these people regrettably preferred sectoral political parties and sectoral Torah, and

*We are going in the direction of retreat and decline in all aspects of our lives, while the religious are relegated to the status of mere splinter parties without any meaning. The only possible advice is the establishment of a religious front!*

therefore, that's exactly how we appear. The rabbanim do not receive full information from the various askanim. In my opinion, if they would know clearly what the situation is, they would order greater action in this direction, according to the needs of the hour.

**Don't these askanim understand the obvious? We're talking about a struggle over the most basic religious legislation, a Jewish state, and the preservation of the world of Torah?**

There is a fear of laying all the

cards on the table, when the objective has always been to keep the cards hidden. This situation didn't just start today, and even in the worst possible circumstances, there have always been political divisions. In the Warsaw Ghetto, for example, there were as many as twenty factions! It's true that there were those who understood the great responsibility that prevailed on the battlefield, but they represented the minority view.

A very similar set of circumstances exists in Eretz Yisroel today. The Sharon Government has uprooted many religious characteristics from the national landscape. It dismantled the Ministry for Religious Affairs and slashed budgetary allocations to Torah institutions and child allowances for large families. The public is crying out for help! The situation today leaves us with only two alternatives: either we unite as one people or *r"l* we dig our graves right here. I turn to our nation's community leaders and I ask them with much sorrow: Who will we depend upon afterwards, when Sharon acquires even greater power and his edicts become more severe?

**What essentially has happened over the past few years?**

Sharon has broken the country's entire political framework. He betrayed the citizenry, taking millions of votes cast for him to fulfill an entirely different objective. Sharon ran amuck and destroyed everything good that had been built in this country with great toil over the past half-century. The anti-religious way of thinking has pervaded today's society in every direction. Sharon and [Labor Party Chairman Amir] Peretz are riding a wave that is extremely dangerous for the future of the Land of Israel and the Torah of Israel. The agenda of the Shinui Party from two years has today turned into the agenda of all the country's major political parties. Only the immediate formation of a united religious front can possibly stop this wave's murky waters. The reality of

today's situation categorically demands the establishment of this united front.

As a result of the *Galus'dike* mentality of capitulating to the paritz and the endless disputes within the Torah-observant community, its members have become both despised and degraded. All that has happened over the past three years to all the previous achievements in religious matters is merely a promo for what will happen in the future. Who would have believed three years ago that Tommy Lapid would receive fifteen Knesset seats and his party's platform would turn into an inheritance for the whole society? This is the very situation that prevails today, when one of the founders of the Shinui Party becomes the candidate of Sharon's new party for the position of Minister of Education.

We are going in the direction of retreat and decline in all aspects of our lives, while the religious are relegated to the status of mere splinter parties without any meaning. The only possible advice is the establishment of a religious front!

**Is the whole concept of a religious front meant only to solve problems on religious matters?**

Absolutely not. Everything that we have experienced here in the past several years – the deterioration in all aspects of our lives, especially since the expulsion of Jews from Gush Katif and the northern Shomron – everything stems from the collapse of the powers of faith against the powers of democracy. There is an uncontrollable push to destroy everything of value, consuming all that is good. Abomination, emptiness, and crime fill the public agenda. We find ourselves confronted today by the issues of violating the sanctity of marriage, Shabbos, conversion, and the ever-present judicial activism of the Israeli Supreme Court. Yet, to our great regret, the religious and chareidi communities are not dealing with the real problems threatening the very

existence of the Jewish People. What is happening today is that Tommy Lapid has expanded his anti-religious strength, and now there is no longer a need for Shinui, as the more mainstream political parties in Israel have adopted its positions, making them appear normative. The only thing that can stop all this is a religious front.

***Voting in elections is not a Biblical commandment. We vote in order to wield influence so that we can change things for the better and help Judaism prevent further regression. If we see that the religious parties are not acting in this spirit, turning instead into the servants of the left-wing and anti-religious agenda, then what's the point of voting?***

**How many of the religious party representatives are talking about unity after the elections?**

If there will not be a united list of Knesset candidates among all the religious parties – chareidim, Ashkenazim, Shas, the National Religious Party – which will serve as

the first tangible expression of unity, any such talk is simply devoid of any true meaning. All that has happened over the past two years – the erosion in religion, religious legislation, Torah institutions, and the horrific disengagement – stems from Sharon's "divide and conquer" approach. These people who are forcibly trying to prevent the formation of a united religious front are criminals who are abandoning their flock and the Jewish People as a whole.

I know of many people who have considerable influence over the public, and they are on the verge of calling upon citizens to abstain from voting in the upcoming elections unless there is unity.

**What good will that do?**

Anyone who thinks about what has been happening over the past few years will reveal an amazing fact. Not only are the religious parties not dealing with religious issues and thus not carrying out their public responsibilities, they have turned into the willing servants of the ruling party in all its crimes. We can see this quite clearly from the Sharon regime. Every political party has assisted Sharon in its time. The NRP and Ichud HaLeumi, together with Shinui, helped Sharon to bring destruction upon religion. They helped him get approval for the disengagement plan, causing severe damage to religious interests and child allowances for large families. This continued afterwards, when Yahadut HaTorah joined the Sharon coalition, giving him its support in the expulsion of Jews from their homes and the destruction of the religious councils and other religious services in Eretz Yisroel. I ask a simple question: If that is the case, then who needs them?

The Lubavitcher Rebbe saw all this so clearly fifty years ago, and he warned against the results that we are all feeling today. From my point of view, if the religious and chareidi leadership can't understand that they are sinking the whole ship, we should

not participate in this ugly game.

**What will be achieved if we don't vote?**

I ask you the question in reverse: What will be achieved if we **do** vote? As a result of what has happened over the past few years, we can see that it has only caused damage to the Jewish People. In recent years, the religious parties have done nothing in the area of religious legislation. The religious status quo in Eretz Yisroel has been utterly destroyed on every issue, and no one does a thing.

**What will happen if ch"v the efforts to establish a united religious front fail once again?**

I state here publicly that if there is no religious front, I personally will not vote in the elections and I will openly call upon others not to vote as well. Voting in elections is not a Biblical commandment. We vote in order to wield influence so that we can change things for the better and help Judaism

prevent further regression. If we see that the religious parties are not acting in this spirit, turning instead into the servants of the left-wing and anti-religious agenda, then what's the point of voting?

Anyone who learns about this situation clearly and who is not infected by some narrow political interest can see how serious things really are and how the penetrating words of the Lubavitcher Rebbe apply specifically to these times. The time has come, once and for all, to put a halt to this ugly game of the religious and chareidi parties. What is needed now is a united religious front on every level – if we could just see the need.

**What are you thinking about doing on a practical level?**

I am planning to get tens of thousands of people to sign a petition declaring that they will not vote if there is no religious front. This is apparently the only way that we can

force the issue. We must work towards this goal. Now is the time to forget about all the disputes and personal interests. It's time to shut ourselves up in one room and not to leave until there is an accepted united list of candidates for the Knesset. We will make it very clear that anyone who does not participate in this united religious list will receive no legitimacy in the eyes of the voter. There is an overwhelming majority in the religious and chareidi community supporting this proposal. Everyone understands that there is no alternative, and it's only the askanim who are standing in the way.

I hope and pray that before the elections, we will already merit to see the revelation of Melech HaMoshiach, Malchus Beis Dovid, with the building of the Beis HaMikdash and the ingathering of the exiles of Israel.

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# SUSTENANCE

BY RABBI DOCTOR YOSEF FREEDLAND  
SURGEON, PATENT ATTORNEY

*A first-person account of Doctor Yosef Freedland's insightful experiences on his path to t'shuva and with the Rebbe. \* Part 2 of 2*

Several weeks later, Yankel called me in Montreal and related that Irwin was waiting for my response to the accusations against Lubavitch. Yankel recommended that I describe my Yeshiva goals in a positive light and enlist Irwin as my advocate to convince my parents to cease and desist from their campaigns.

I conferred with my friends in the Montreal Yeshiva and decided to write a letter featuring a story in which a Chassidic merchant traveled with his wife to sell goods at a fair in Eastern Europe. After selling most of the goods, the merchant went to a Chassidic synagogue to pray the afternoon prayers.

After prayers, the merchant joined a Farbrengen populated with some powerhouses of D'vekut, experts at cleaving to the Almighty. The time passed swiftly as the merchant heard stories and explanations about increasing one's attachment to the Almighty and purifying the *Neshama*.

The Farbrengen was suddenly interrupted as the merchant's wife entered the synagogue, demanding her husband's assistance in selling the last of their wares. The merchant asked his wife, "and what will be when we sell these final wares?"

"We will have extra money", she replied.

"And what will we do with the extra money?" he asked.

"We can buy nice items to brighten our home."

"And what will we have when we brighten our home?" he asked.

"Then we will be happy." She replied.

The merchant smiled and asked, "Why should I leave this synagogue right now and go through all that trouble, when I am already very happy?"

I concluded the letter, asking Irwin to convince my parents and uncles that no harm would come from staying in Yeshiva long enough to build a Torah framework that would serve me throughout life.

Sometime thereafter, my parents reported that Irwin not only called to chastise them for their interference, but had reportedly read my letter verbatim, to at least one group of country clubbers, including an embarrassed uncle or two, assembled in the club sauna of all places. Irwin's apparently aggressive intervention effectively thwarted any further plans to contact other benefactors of Lubavitch or, for that matter, begin a new campaign.

After my first year in Yeshiva, I extended my studies a number of years, learning several years in K'far Chabad, followed by 770 and eventually obtained an institutional "S'micha", Rabbinical Ordination, from *Tomchei Timimim*, 770, and a private S'micha from Rabbi Hirschprung A.H., Chief Rabbi of Montreal.

In 1975, prior to my wedding, I was fortunate to meet the Rebbe Shlita personally in Yechidut for marital blessings and directives on "*parnaseh*", earning a livelihood; a tremendously important Yechidut that can cause the very Heavens to shine upon one's soul, now and in the future.

The soul, upon completing a sojourn on this physical world, is asked several monumental questions about what transpired during the sojourn, including:

Did faith and ethics guide your work?"

Did you work to produce *Yiddishe* children to carry on the legacy of Torah?

Did you maintain "*kevius itim*"; set times for daily Torah study?

Posed before an infinite, boundless, all-encompassing and unfathomable Creator, these questions are multi-dimensional. For example, the very actions imbued with faith and ethics bring holiness into the world, encourage peers to do the same, and leave a legacy for progeny to follow.

The words, "infinite, boundless,



all-encompassing and unfathomable”, should not be taken as redundant but emphasize the multi-dimensional nature of the Almighty: not an infinite line represented by a geometric symbol comprising a line with an arrow head at each end; not a boundless plane; not even an all-encompassing volume existing forever in time; but unfathomably beyond the four dimensions and our comprehension.

The Rebbe is the embodiment and our connection to our Creator. Carefully following the directives from a marital Yechidut can unify *Ruchniut* and *Gashmiut* so that “*tachlis*”, *parnaseh*, functions like the physical “*techel*” on the *talis*; a physical fringe that connects the physical body with the highest realms of spirituality.

I consulted with many friends, some who were Shluchim like Yankel Kranz, A”H whom I accompanied on his first trip to Shlichut in Virginia, and offered me a Shlichut position. I buttonholed many “*mashpi'im*”, guidance counselors, particularly from the Montreal and New York Yeshivas, like Rabbi Schwei A”H who suggested I ask about learning for a Professional Career. I also spent considerable time with my personal *mashpiah* Rabbi Zalman Dworkin A”H, the “*Posek*”, Rabbinical Authority, of Lubavitch who advised that I include concrete examples of both options in my *k'vital* to the Rebbe.

Yechidut occurred following a gathering of Israeli soldiers who, Heaven preserve us, were crippled while defending the Holy Land. The soldiers, some in wheelchairs, others with white canes, and many disfigured, gathered as the Rebbe, having a very serious demeanor, sometimes with tears flowing, spoke words of consolation that included the following, paraphrased, observations:

There are those Jews whose lives contain quantity, lived over a long period of time. There are those Jews whose lives are filled with quality. You have dedicated yourselves to defend Jewish souls against murderers who wish to destroy the Holy Land and therefore, each one has, in the least been granted the latter; a life of quality, in holiness...

Following the address and meeting with each soldier, the Rebbe came upstairs to receive those waiting for a private audience during the long night ahead. I entered the Rebbe's holy room and handed my



*k'vital* to the Rebbe's holy hand. The Rebbe read my *k'vital* faster than in my first Yechidut and without pausing to underline any words; as though the Rebbe had been waiting to reveal guidance that had been formulated long before; perhaps at my first Yechidut. I felt as if I was being read like an open book when the Rebbe gazed on me and said, “You may choose any *parnaseh*, but you must be certain to maintain a “*kevius itim*”. The Rebbe concluded with blessings for establishing a proper Yiddishe home and family, a

“*Bayit Neeman B'Yisroel*”.

Coming out of Yechidut, I knew that a profound event had transpired, and that in a few sentences, the Rebbe had given me sustenance for a lifetime, but what did “*any*” *parnaseh* mean? Perhaps “any” includes Shlichut options that had I not yet encountered. According to Rabbi Zalman Dworkin I was right on one account, that I should consider options not specifically presented in my *k'vital*, but wrong on another, because the Rebbe's answer was not about Shlichut options.

In fact, Rabbi Dworkin stood up, shook my hand and said, “*Mazel tov*, you are headed for college.”

“How are you so sure? Maybe I should take a teaching position?”

“No,” the venerable Rabbi replied, “to become a teacher, the Rebbe wouldn't emphasize maintaining a *k'vias Itim* because you would be engaged in Torah as a livelihood and wouldn't need such a directive. Now tell me,” he continued, “how do you want to make a living?”

I told Rabbi Dworkin that my father wanted me to follow in his footsteps and become a dentist, explaining the benefits of joining my father's large dental practice. Rabbi Dworkin interrupted with his trademark focus on *tachlis*. “No,” he said with a smile, “I didn't ask you what you ‘*could*’ do or what others ‘*want*’ you to do. I asked ‘*you*’ what ‘*you*’ want to do.”

We discussed many options and, along with several weeks of investigation into possible careers, agreed that I would attend college to become a foot surgeon, a Podiatrist. A letter to the Rebbe about my career choice (and with news that I had established a *k'vias Itim* along with my daily routine of typesetting English “*Tehilas Hashem*” at Empire Press), received a positive response and blessings, confirming Rabbi

Dworkin's interpretation of my *Yechidus*.

From that moment on, the Rebbe, whom I always considered like my father, became a father in fact. After consulting with Rabbi Dworkin about a particular problem in medical College, I would hand Rabbi Binyamin Klein, the Rebbe's secretary, a letter briefly describing the dilemma. Rabbi Klein would tell me how many days, or weeks, answers from the Rebbe Shlita were backlogged. Yet, time after time, when the Rebbe was not at the *Tzion*, not an hour or two passed and I received an answer.

One notable incident involved my first orthopedic invention of a fastener for anchoring ripped ligaments back in place; a fastener that could reduce surgical time, install through smaller incisions, and promote faster healing. The cost of writing a patent, about \$3,000, was an astronomical sum, particularly while taking student loans to pay for part of two College tuitions at a time when interest rates were in the double digits. I entered the 770 secretariat with a large notebook of perhaps 30 pages describing the invention, its many applications throughout the body and a brief letter about financial considerations, concluding with the simple question, "Should I patent the invention?"

I gave Binyamin a brief rundown on the invention, "it's something like a wall anchor, but sterile and with strings attached" and received a recommendation against submission: "There is a long wait for answers period, perhaps weeks, with the exception of answers relating to marriage or health." I told Binyamin to submit the material to the Rebbe anyway and "see what happens". Not expecting an answer any time soon, if at all, I filed the memory of the orthopedic anchor somewhere in a

"non-executable file" located in a "forget-about-it" corner of "Daath", Intellectual Summation, somewhere in my grey matter.

I walked down Kingston Ave. toward my home, picked up some clothes from the drycleaner, and waited in line to buy some eggs and milk at a small corner market. I don't remember all my stops or how many other packages I was about to drop as I balanced them on my knee and held the drycleaner hangers aloft. While turning the key with my one free hand, I could hear the familiar rings of the standard pre-deregulation phones connected to a "Ma Bell" junction box with beige cable stapled along substantial lengths of the wooden molding



around sagging floors and door frames.

Something told me it was important. The door, freed of its lock, burst open, the plastic bags dropped, and I ran up the stairs, the cleaner bag fluttering above my head like one of the angels described as accompanying shul-goers home to a Shabbos meal.

It was Binyamin: "You have an answer." I ran back to 770 to receive an affirmation that my invention wasn't just a sterile wall bolt. The Rebbe put a symbol inverting the reading of "Should I..." to "I Should apply for a patent." and added "with agreement from an expert surgeon... Blessings..."

BH, the chosen expert surgeon was enthusiastic about the invention and, with the Rebbe's encouragement, became the first of many inventions and patents throughout the ensuing decades and a basis for switching careers to become an Israeli Patent Attorney specializing in medical patents.

Getting into Podiatric College was only possible with the blessings and at least one miracle wrought by the Rebbe Shlita.

I carefully filled-in a blank undergraduate "770" transcript with four years of Yeshiva courses disguised in secular clothing: There was "Talmud 101 through 472", representing four years of Yeshiva Tractates *Pesachim* through *Kedushin* that fulfilled my "Talmudic Study Major"; then there was Chassidut 103 through 461" fulfilling the social study requirements; not to forget the "S'micha track" fulfilling my "Jewish Law Minor". I made sure that my four-year transcript in United Lubavitcher Seminary "College", varied from "good-plus" to "excellent", with a few "good-minus" ratings to make it look kosher and had the transcript embossed with the 770 corporate seal by Rabbi Mentlik, A"H, the warm-hearted Head of the 770 Yeshiva.

The Bachelor of Arts degree was a good start but couldn't fulfill science requirements including two semesters of Organic Chemistry, Physics, and Biology; courses that I would only finish by June, a few months before the beginning of all US Podiatry Colleges. In spite of the warning on the "Universal Application" to all Podiatry Colleges that stated that all science courses must be completed by the December before admission, I filed my application while pending many subjects, and requested the Rebbe's blessings for success.

At the beginning of the solemn

three weeks, culminating in a fast commemorating 9th of Av tragedies, a letter came from NYCPM, informing us that the freshman class had been filled for the upcoming College year and that we should apply the following year.

Prior to leaving the next morning, I submitted a letter to the Rebbe Shlita that concluded: "Since we were denied admission in New York, I request blessings for our move to Philadelphia."

The preparations during the few weeks remaining before College were formidable, including renting an apartment within walking distance of the Chabad House, buying a car for the commute to the Podiatry College.

I took a whirlwind tour of Philly, confirmed my enrollment at the Podiatry College, and looked at affordable housing. Almost into the 25th "courtesy" hour, courtesy of Hertz Grand Army Plaza, I parked the rental car on Eastern Parkway and went to meet my *shviger*.

.... and bumped into Binyamin Klein. "Where have you been all day?" He asked, "You have an answer". The answer was: "wait until the beginning of the month of Elul and then decide, it will be remembered at the 'Tzion'" (the grave of the Previous Rebbe).

The first day of the month of Elul fell on the second day of all Podiatric College sessions and would result in a huge discombobulation if we had to relocate to Philly, but we waited to decide anything about College attendance ... and waited. Finally "*Rosh Chodesh Ellul*" arrived, two days ringed with circles and arrows on a calendar boldly sponsored by "**Your One Hour Service Dry Cleaners of Crown Heights**".

By 8:10 am, on the first day of *Rosh Chodesh Ellul*, the last day of the month of Av, I already had been

informed by the admissions officer that there were no further developments. Before the final salutation, though, there was a slight pause at the other end of the line, followed by "make sure to call back tomorrow". "Of course I would call tomorrow", I thought, "Tomorrow, not today, is first day of Elul, apparently the day scheduled by the Rebbe for something to happen."

The next day, the first day of the month of Elul, I called several times, finally reaching the dean's secretary who informed me that two places had opened in the freshman class, "Dean Valdez wants to know if you



are still interested in attending?"

Two days into the college semester, the dean led us into a large lecture amphitheater with 120 students sitting in semicircular tiers of lecture seats, one tier above the other. A smiling dean Valdez introduced the class to "your newest colleagues and our latest additions to the College Alumni Association"; and proudly extended his arm and open palm toward us; me, with my large fedora and black suit; and my then wife, with a long "*tichel*" on her head and a bulging midriff.

There was no applause, but

deafening silence, or shall I say a "pregnant" silence. 120 jaws dropped as if they had just gotten Novocain shots at the Dentist and 120 pairs of eyes followed my then wife's "labored" progress, with me in the lead, toward two empty seats on the side of the upper tier.

Eventually the Novocain wore off and I became part of the student body and the unofficial representative of the "*frum*" contingent, for example working with the faculty to ensure that examinations were not scheduled on Jewish Holidays.

Living in Brooklyn and commuting everyday to College at 120th street in Harlem meant leaving the house when the winter sky was still dark. My first concern was how, or when, to pray each morning. Prayers shouldn't begin until its light enough to discern blue from white. Considering the lengthy pilgrimage up the FDR highway to the College in Harlem, I couldn't discern myself praying in the morning. Rabbi Dworkin *paskened* that under the circumstances I could rely on certain Rabbinical opinions that allowed prayer before sunup.

BH, Rabbi Dworkin could be relied on for any and every question; like when the Gentile Dean requested a "religious ethical" response as to what to do about an observant Jewish student who had mailed a threatening letter to a professor. Rabbi Dworkin looked at me and said "*gornisht*", nothing. "Tell him to do nothing"; an answer the dean appreciated immensely, apparently informing the Professor that he had followed Jewish ethics by exercising restraint.

With the onset of the holiday of *Succot*, the early prayer regimen posed its own bevy of "*sheilot*", questions. Virtually every freshman College day began with several hours

in dissection laboratory, bent over one of a cadre of cadavers reeking with formalin, a chemical that could evoke dry heaves from an empty stomach. A trot through the “Heart of Darkness”, home to the “Harlem Globetrotters”, wouldn’t turn up a single *Succah*, a Chabad requirement for drinking even a glass of water. Further, the *Lulav* and *Esrog* require a blessing in full daylight, making a snack in a cold, pre-dawn Brooklyn *Succah* out of the question – leaving sustenance in *Ruchniut* and *Gashmiut* to our return late in the afternoon.

My then wife and I stood at the door as Rabbi Dworkin was speaking in his study with a Chassid named Chaykel. Upon seeing us, Rabbi Dworkin interrupted the conversation and motioned us to enter. I presented the *sheilot*, and ended by expressing a willingness to drop out of Podiatry College for the sake of maintaining the *Succot* mitzvoth.

“Not so fast” Rabbi Dworkin responded holding up one hand, “You can pray in the morning as usual, eat and bless the *Lulav* and *Esrog* when it gets light, either in College or when you come home before evening.”

“During the day, you can eat food outside the *Succah*, like cheese and meat.”

“I mean cheese *or* meat,” he added with a smile, “don’t eat them at the same meal”.

We discussed related issues like whether I could eat “*mezonot*”, cake, outside the *Succah* and Rabbi Dworkin patiently answered each question.

Chaykel, waiting for me to finish my questions, suddenly exclaimed, “*Ribbono shel Olam!* You treat them as if they were your own children.” Rabbi Dworkin who had no children, apparently enjoyed the rebuke and a low “heh, heh, heh” emitted from an ovate, smiling

mouth.

“*Un azoi darf es zein*”, “That is how it must be,” he responded.

Some of the guidelines for my studies came from Chassidim who had attended college. Yosef Shurpin, for example, told me that prior to entering college he had vowed never to study on the Sabbath; a rule Rabbi Dworkin strongly endorsed. I kept the rule virtually throughout the many years of study and surgical training. I say “virtually”, because there was one semester when the last set of lectures was to be given on a Friday, followed by final exams that would begin on Sunday.

That was the year of the New York blackout, and the subsequent riots had kept NYCPM closed so that upon resumption of classes, each lecture was packed with important information. I debated the dilemma while making my way from car to College, through the makeshift sidewalk “*shuk*”, piled with boxes of “Macy’s-Class” merchandise “obtained” during the blackout.

Rabbi Dworkin *paskened* that I could review previously studied information during that one Shabbos, but any new material that I hadn’t yet reviewed, could only be studied on “*Motzaei Shabbas*”, following the conclusion of the Shabbos.

I was still some two years away from my purchase of a 22 pound, “luggable” Compac with a built-in seven-inch green display, protected during lugging by the snap-off keyboard. I was still three years away from buying my first computer; \$6,000 plus for a screen, keyboard, loud dot matrix printer and a malfunctioning 20 Megabytes (“Meg”, not Gig) CMI Hard Disk whose replacement, including credit from IBM, came to \$2,000).

As a result, in the weeks before the exams, I organized and hand copied my lecture notes on dozens of five inch by seven inch filing

cards to review on the pre-exam Shabbos. The Shabbos before exam week, after prayers and the Shabbos meal, I began reviewing the cards, until realizing that by spending so much time on their preparation, I already was in command of the information; a point in favor of hand-written filing cards over their computer-printed equivalents, *mutatis mutandi*. So, with the exception of the time spent on that single Shabbos, my four years of College went by with my Shabbos intact.

Finding a residency program for learning and perfecting surgical skills was a big hurdle. Many Doctors are what I call “anti-symmetric”. Jews removed from their allegedly “shameful” ancestry by one, perhaps two, generations; Jews laden with guilty memories of “ancestral” customs; Jews who lavish great respect on turbined Moslems and bearded, round-brimed Mormons, yet reserve open disdain for those who appear “*frum*” and/or keep Shabbos.

The Rebbe Shlita directed me to apply to hospitals in my hometown of Detroit, but in spite of excellent grades and high scores on the medical boards, my beard, yarmulke and Shabbos observance were palpable stumbling blocks.

In one interview, at Detroit Beaumont Hospital, a Podiatrist by the name of Dr. Stanley Marks badgered me in front of the catholic administrator, trying to prove that my religious observance would create undue problems. “You don’t work on Saturday,” he began, “this means you can’t perform elective surgery on one of the busiest day of the week.”

“Correct”, I replied, “but I spoke with the second year resident who would gladly trade making patient rounds on Sunday for a Saturday packed with surgery.”

The hospital administrator

nodded his head in agreement, but Stanley wasn't finished.

"You're gonna wear that black cap on your head, against hospital protocol."

"I need a cap, but not necessarily black," I replied, "In fact, I plan to wear a green surgical cap."

Again the administrator nodded, but Stanley was fuming.

"What about the Jewish holidays when you can't tend to your duties? You're going to forfeit important training and lose certification by missing too many days."

I answered that many Jewish holidays fell on Sunday that year, "a day that has no bearing on surgical training or certification because no elective surgeries are scheduled. And the remaining festival days add up to less than the maximum of 10 sick days allowed for each resident."

A Podiatrist friend of mine at the meeting, Dr. Burton Leib, told me that after I left the meeting, Stanley, totally infuriated, stood up and proclaimed, "Over my dead body will he be a resident in this hospital", effectively terminating my chances at Beaumont Hospital.

After finding that I was still in the running for a position, I visited Detroit Dearborn Hospital and spent a pleasant day with the Chief of Podiatric Surgery. While inquiring why I was turned down for further consideration, the Chief put me in touch with the Residency Supervisor named Dr. Shlaff who quickly got to the point, asking me, "You're religious, aren't you?" I responded affirmatively and gave my explanations why Shabbos observance wouldn't impact my training or the program. Before hanging up, he concluded with the words, "We don't have any room for religious Jews here".

Hospital after hospital closed

their doors to me until there wasn't a single Detroit-based residency program remaining. While discrimination against medical students who appeared "frum" was universal, appearing as a "frum" student at residency interviews was not. One student, after shaving his beard, told me that he planned to attend interviews without a yarmulke and would, during his residency, perform surgery on Shabbos and Festivals. His plan was to wait outside the surgical suite until the lead surgeon made the first surgical cut, enter the suite and, upon seeing the huge wound he would exclaim "*Pikuach Nefesh*". Supposedly the rubric that permitted saving a life on Shabbos in an



emergency could be applied to elective surgery.

Shaving a beard, removing a yarmulke and claiming that elective surgery may be performed on Shabbos does not go unnoticed, particularly after the formerly avowed observant Jew participated in four years of rescheduling holiday exams. Possibly as a result, it seemed as if my Torah observance became a cause celebre among the student body and I was honored with presenting the final convocation at our graduation.

I recited a passage from Pirkei Avos, reading each section of the Mishna "*Rabbi Chanina S'gan HaCohen*", followed by its

translation. I told those assembled the Lubavitcher Rebbe Shlita's interpretation and applied it to our careers as Foot Surgeons: "Each graduating doctor must adopt 'fear of a physical King', a representation of our spiritual and Almighty Ruler, as a prerequisite for maintaining humility and compassion in treating our patients." After the ceremony, the shorn *frum* student congratulated me on a great speech, the criterion for "great" being "the smiling approval of the gentile" student in the next seat.

In my next "*Duch*", update to the Rebbe, I included the text of the speech. The answer included "*T'ach, T'ach*", an abbreviation that signifies the Rebbe's approval and a blessing for success in my residency quest. The latter seemed to suggest applicability of Yogi Berra's saying, "It ain't over till it's over" — and that's exactly what happened.

A month after graduation, a totally new program opened in North Detroit General, a very busy hospital, and I was invited to join. During training, I performed some 1,200 surgical procedures; far more than I could have performed at most of the other residency programs.

"*Boruch Hashem*" (*BH*), thanks to the Almighty, I maintained a daily *k'vias itim* during College, residency and beyond, *IYH* making quality count for quantity, as per the Rebbe's instructions to the soldiers. *BH*, the Rebbe's fatherly spiritual guidance and blessings and Rabbi Dworkin's warmth and sharp "*Halachic*" analysis, allowed me to imbibe the Pitcher Plant nectar even though I couldn't leave behind a *klepah* of secular concepts. A concluding thanks: *BH*, throughout college and beyond, my Neshama received proper sustenance; sustenance that truly began with my first *Yechidut* with the Rebbe MH"™.

# A HOLY ALTERNATIVE TO THE VACUUM OF LEADERSHIP IN THE HOLY LAND

BY C. KORN

*Beis Moshiach recently discussed northern Shomron shliach Uriel Gurfinkle's view that a clear leadership must emerge, a leadership that is dependent only upon the Torah, the true teachings of the Rebbe MH" M, and Am Yisroel. Gurfinkle further stated that this leader must, therefore, be pure in his detachment from the state of Israel and offer leadership that will pose a clear and holy alternative to the corrupted mechanism controlling Eretz Yisroel today. Gurfinkle explained why he feels this leader is Rabbi Yitzchak Ginsburgh. \* This interview with Rav Moshe Genuth, secretary to Rav Ginsburgh and an editor of the Rav's English-language books, is a follow-up on that article.*

The Rebbe, MH" M, once explained: When you amputate someone's limb and replace it with another limb, the person is still the same person, and so it is – even with a transplanted heart. Yet, when you change a person's brain and spinal chord, the person is no longer the same person.

\* \* \*

Beis Moshiach: What is the current state of the "patient"?

MG: Today (Israel) exists on the concept of statehood as developed in the Western world in the last 150 years and is overbearingly anti-religious and specifically anti-Jewish. The Zionist

spirit upon which the state of Israel was founded still seeks to make the Jewish people, a people like all others.

As Rabbi Ginsburgh notes in one of his books: "Every day the Zionist dream is shattering before our eyes. The State of Israel is in desperate need of a breath of new life...to rekindle the hearts and imaginations of Jews and non-Jews all over the world!"

\* \* \*

Beis Moshiach: The situation in Eretz Yisroel indeed seems to require not elective surgery, but an immediate emergency operation, not of the heart or limbs, but of the brain itself... What would be the equivalent of a brain transplant for the people living in EY?

MG: This (transplant) is the recognition of the true and sole authority from which all the directives of national rectification will issue: the Torah.

Beis Moshiach: You are saying that a radical change must occur – nothing short of a revolution – even though the call for such is couched in the least offensive ways possible.

MG: Each of us must explain to others that the Torah is our only legitimate claim to the Holy Land. Many non-observant Jews, when they are not feeling attacked or threatened by reactionary ultra-orthodox Jews also understand that our only true claim to legitimacy in the Land of Israel comes from the Bible. Nonetheless, they are

still afraid of the implications of what a full-fledged embrace of the Bible may entail.

Our heartfelt belief is that, though many Jews fear to admit it, their innate sense of truth tells them that this is the case: the Torah, and the Torah alone, is the ultimate source of authority in every step toward our national rectification. Chassidut specifically teaches us to believe that every Jew has a Divine soul and that even if it has been tarnished and made weak from years of misuse or abuse, it is still there, and with encouragement, love, and kindness, can be brought out. This is true of all Jews.

Beis Moshiach: What is the specific message?

MG: The message must be spoken loudly and clearly, for all Jews to hear: The Torah alone is our authority. As human beings we are required to study it and interpret it, but it is the source to which we look in our thoughts and for making our plans.

The government has no authority to order any Jew to perform an aveira. If it does so, its orders are null and void. The Torah requires us to follow the "laws of the land" (*dina d'malchuta*) only where they do not contradict the Torah; when they do, they carry no weight for us.

Foreshadowing the sad day when the government ordered soldiers to uproot Jews from the Land of Israel, Rabbi Ginsburgh wrote: "If soldiers in the Israel Defense Forces are commanded to uproot Jewish settlements in the Land of Israel, the order must be disobeyed."

Thus, for months before the disengagement, Rabbi Ginsburgh spoke again and again about the importance of educating the soldiers of the IDF on this point and explaining to them how real Jewish unity and real sustainability of Jewish life in the Holy Land are dependent on performing their duties to defend the people, but just as much on their refusal to obey

orders that would contradict the Torah and contradict their role as soldiers defending Jews.

\* \* \*

Beis Moshiach: Can you tell us more about the considerations behind the call to disobey the order to evict Jews from Gush Katif?

MG: While many pondered the issue of calling upon soldiers to disobey their orders in the past year,



Rabbi Ginsburgh has been considering its different aspects for many years. This is because in truth this is not the first time that the ruling elite in EY has used the army to commit atrocities in the name of democratic rule.

In the past he has written that, "It is obvious that when Israeli law doesn't clash with Torah law, the former should be obeyed, for it is the law of the land, established for the well being

and protection of its citizens. But when they conflict, we must ask the question: 'Who is to be obeyed? Who is the real father?'

"The answer to this question is couched in a well-known saying of the Sages that when a teacher's words differ from a student's, one must obey the teacher. In this saying, the 'teacher' refers to G-d while the 'student' refers to any created being."

\* \* \*

Beis Moshiach: Why did we as chassidim of the Rebbe fail to stop the disengagement? Was there anything more that we could have done?

MG: "The Rebbe always wanted us, as teachers and spokespersons for the Torah, to remain independent, so that we remain free to criticize and correct that which needs correction, whether it be at the communal or the national level. When you owe so much to the government and to the ruling establishment in the Holy Land, you're not going to be able to say the right thing when the time comes. Rabbi Ginsburgh has always taken care not to lose his independence. Unfortunately, much of the Chabad establishment has fallen into the money/influence trap and no longer enjoys the same freedom.

Case in point: one prominent and wealthy Chabad Chassid said during a radio interview that the call to soldiers to refuse orders **was** even worse than the disengagement itself! This is a harsh example of what losing your independence to think and to criticize leads to.

In its current state, the Chabad establishment, like the Religious Zionist and the Shas establishment, is too tied into the infrastructure of the secular state to provide a real counter-measure to the anti-religious and anti-Torah sentiment that are the foundation of the ruling elite's ideology.

As a result, before and during the disengagement, the Chabad establishment was giving a mixed

message at best, a resounding slap in the face to the Rebbe's fight for Shleimut HaAretz, at worst. After the fact, things are even worse, because it seems that all has been forgiven and forgotten and things are back the way they were. The need for a complete "brain transplant" in our communal thinking is not even discussed.

Beis Moshiach: So isn't Rabbi Ginsburgh calling for us to adopt the attitude taken by groups like the Satmar Chassidim for all these years?

Absolutely not. Just as we do not want to become dependents of the establishment, it is easy to fall into the trap of becoming an isolationist.

There is a fine line between staying independent and being isolationist. Independence is required when there is a deep care and a sharing of destiny with people. To save a patient, a doctor has to remain at some level objective (to paraphrase the metaphor offered many times by the Rebbe), but his

*The Torah requires us to follow the "laws of the land" only where they do not contradict the Torah; when they do, they carry no weight for us.*

objectivity is a result of his care for the patient. Isolationism is just another example of caring about oneself. The Sages call the isolationist attitude the (at least) I-will-have-saved-my-own-soul syndrome. Everything about the Rebbe and about Chabad says the opposite. But this is a clear case where in order to help you have to remain independent. When it comes to

dealing with our communal reality in the Holy Land and the problems that the secular state presents in that reality, it is important that we not toss out the proverbial baby with the dirty bathwater. The baby here being the Jews as individuals and the dirty bathwater the derelict views of the state. There are many wonderful well-meaning rabbis and chassidim who aim for independence but end up using too much of a g'vuradik approach.

Many of the people involved firsthand with the fight for Shleimut HaAretz view Rabbi Ginsburgh as representing the Rebbe's true voice in these difficult times. He at once speaks freely and sharply about our duty to Hashem and to the Torah but at the same time expresses the love and caring for every Jew that gives people the feeling that Hashem believes in them, believes that they – all of us – are up to doing the right thing.

*(To be continued.)*

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## THE GOVERNMENT IS OUT TO MAKE LIVES MISERABLE; THE REBBE SENT YIGAL TO MAKE THEM B'SIMCHA

BY CHANA KATZ

Last week Chabad shliach Yigal Kirshenzaft received an official government notice informing him that he and his family were not entitled to receive any compensation for the evacuation and demolition of their Gush Katif home.

It was just another shovelful of misery that the government has been heaping into the small, cramped, Jerusalem hotel room where he, his wife, and their 12 children have been sorting out daily life – and the lives of many others – in the wake of the expulsion nightmare.

But in an interview with *Beis Moshiach*, Kirshenzaft asked from the outset that the focus not be on him or his family's plight. Because what his family is going through – and those who are not close to the family can only imagine – so too are thousands of other families. As far as he's concerned, the notice was just one of many acts by the government that boil down to one basic reality: to make the lives of thousands of Jews as miserable as possible and still try to come out smelling like a rose to the public.

\* \* \*

As a shliach of the Rebbe, MH"M, Kirshenzaft received a special blessing that only became apparent in recent months – that his mission was to be b'simcha and make others that way also. Thus, the blunt letter from the Disengagement ("Expulsion") Authority, which stated that he was not eligible, and gave no further explanation, was an irritant, but not by any means a priority for Kirshenzaft.

Yud-Tes Kislev is rapidly approaching and Kirshenzaft, along with a small but dedicated group working with him, was up late into the

night planning farbrengens as well as special Chanukah children's programs – to bring the encouraging message of Moshiach and Geula to some 30 locations across Eretz Yisroel where the former Gush Katif residents were scattered.

\* \* \*

Kirshenzaft did note the sad plight of even those who received compensation, for they are using those monies to live off of now in their temporary – and often inadequate – trailer homes, and many won't have

*"The money was set aside for this and they better get it," said Kirshenzaft. "The government is just looking for ways to make people miserable."*

the money to afford a new home.

"The government has an interest in tearing them apart," said Kirshenzaft, who fought loudly and clearly against the expulsion plan, which ran diabolically opposite to the Torah. "The way the government is acting is very disgusting."

Many of the former Gush Katif residents who had given their prime years of life to toil and labor to turn a barren, sandy land into a thriving, productive community, still have not found jobs and are using up what

precious little compensation they did receive.

Before the disengagement, the very idea of accepting government money as compensation was repulsive, and many didn't believe the evacuation would ever happen. But now that they are homeless, jobless, traumatized and struggling, they believe that the government must be forthcoming to them with compensation for the property they confiscated and bulldozed into shards. Not the other way around – that they should go begging for what is rightfully theirs?

And there is no reason actually why compensation should be denied. While the government did send out letters before the evacuation threatening that anyone who didn't leave their home by a certain date would not be compensated, the Knesset subsequently voted that all former residents were entitled to compensation, regardless of whether or not they applied early or refrained entirely.

"The money was set aside for this and they better get it," said Kirshenzaft. "The government is just looking for ways to make people miserable."

As if their lives were not miserable enough... And yet, at the depths of this misery, Kirshenzaft was specifically charged by the Rebbe to spread simcha. It's an awesome job, yet as one person who has been working very closely with Kirshenzaft to help the expulsion victims with their physical and spiritual needs, told *Beis Moshiach*: "He [Yigal] is always looking ahead to what he can do to help people – and to make sure it doesn't happen again."