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BEIS MOSHIACH

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THE SILENT PRAYER SAID OUT LOUD

LIKKUTEI SICHOS, VOL. 35, PG. 192-197
TRANSLATED BY BORUCH MERKUR



[Continued from last week]

We may assert that the latter three approaches are emphasized in light of the variations in the exegesis of Chana's prayer: According to [1] the version presented in [the Gemara] before us, "From here we learn that one is forbidden to **raise** his voice in prayer," the lesson derived (as the phraseology is plainly understood) is the **prohibition** to raise one's voice, which is like a tangential prohibition. According to [2] the version of the Rashba and the Rosh, "from here we learn **regarding the person who prays** that his voice should not be audible in his prayer," this [statement] pertains to the concept of prayer itself, but with regard to the manner of **speech** in prayer, [they say that] one's voice must be **inaudible**. [3] Whereas, the version of the Rif – namely, "that his prayer must be in a whisper," which is written in positive [i.e., obligatory] terms – is in accordance with the notion that a whispered prayer is an essential, defining quality of the object (*ha'cheftza*) of prayer, service of the heart.

We may presume that the Rambam and the *Shulchan Aruch* are likewise debating this matter. The Rambam writes [in Laws of Prayer 5:9]: "One should not raise his voice in his prayer, nor should he prayer in his heart [i.e., silently]. Rather, he should articulate the words with his lips and pronounce the words [of prayer] in a whisper to his ears. He should not, however, cause his voice to be heard [by others], unless he was ill or if he is unable to concentrate [with] his heart unless his voice were audible – in such cases it is permissible." Whereas, in the *Shulchan Aruch*, the Mechaber writes: "But one should not pray in his heart alone. Rather, he should pronounce the words [of prayer] in a whisper to his ears. He should not, however, cause his voice to be heard [by others]. But if he is unable to concentrate [while

praying] in a whisper, it is permissible for him to raise his voice, etc."

Although in general the phraseology of the *Shulchan Aruch* follows that of the Rambam, nevertheless, [here] there is an essential shift in the order of presenting the topic. The Rambam begins with, "One should not raise his voice in his prayer," and then continues with, "nor should he prayer in his heart. Rather, he should articulate the words, etc." Whereas, the *Shulchan Aruch* begins with, "But one should not pray in his heart alone. Rather, he should pronounce the words, etc."

Apparently, both Rambam and the Beis Yosef [author of the *Shulchan Aruch*] maintain that the prohibition of praying in an audible voice is by virtue of the very definition of prayer. However, whereas the Rambam is of the opinion that it is a law [that comes to define the proper manner] of **speech** in prayer, the Beis Yosef opines that the law regarding praying in a whisper is of the essential qualities of the object of prayer itself. For according to the definition of prayer, service of the heart, it must be specifically in a whisper.

Thus, when coming to define "the quality of the voice [in prayer] – how should it be?" the Rambam begins with, "One should not raise his voice in his prayer," and only thereafter does he write, "nor should he prayer in his heart. Rather, he should articulate the words with his lips and pronounce the words [of prayer] in a whisper to his ears." In this way he emphasizes that we are discussing the speech of prayer, which is a central principle in the Mitzva of prayer. This is not so, however, with regard to the *Shulchan Aruch*, which begins the section with, "The one who prays must concentrate, etc.," and continues the next subsection

with, “But one should not pray **in his heart alone**. Rather, he should pronounce the words [of prayer] in a whisper to his ears.” Indeed, with respect to the essential quality of prayer, the service (concentration) of the heart, one might consider that one may pray in his heart alone. It is for this reason [i.e., in order to rule out this notion] that it begins with, “one should not pray in his heart alone. Rather, etc.” And therefore, also the fact that one should pronounce the words in a whisper to his ears is on account of the fact that [in essence] prayer is in the heart.

4. The explanation of the matter:

It is known that regarding prayer there are two concepts: 1) beseeching the fulfillment of one’s needs, as the matter [i.e., prayer] is commonly understood; 2) the service of the heart, as we learn [in the beginning of Gemara Taanis regarding prayer], “and to serve Him with all your hearts’ [D’varim 11:13]. What is the service that is in the heart?...that is prayer.”

We may postulate that the respective approaches in defining the law of [praying] audibly, mentioned above (in Section 3), depend on what is regarded as the primary concept of prayer:

If you want to say that the main concept of prayer is beseeching the fulfillment of one’s needs, then prayer is principally a Mitzva that depends on speech, as a person who would request the fulfillment of his needs from a king, for his request is expressed through the medium of speech.

Accordingly, there is room to maintain that the speech of prayer must be specifically in a voice that can be heard by others, for this is the definition of speech: [verbal expression] for the sake of the other. Although the Holy One Blessed Be He knows the thoughts of man, nevertheless, with respect to the person who prays, his requests must be in accordance with and resembling the manner by which people ask of a king of flesh and blood. Thus, it must specifically be spoken. From this it is understood that, in essence, the speech [of prayer] must specifically be audible.

And this is the reason for the opinion that the entire prohibition of praying in an audible voice is only a tangential matter (“among those of little faith,” “among the false prophets”). For in essence, with respect to the definition of prayer, prayer must be specifically in an audible voice; only on account of the concern of [being deemed] “of little faith” is it prohibited, etc.

Thus, we may conclude that this is the opinion of the Tur, [who maintains] that it is permissible to raise one’s voice so that one’s family members will learn from him how to pray. Since the entire prohibition to raise one’s voice is only peripheral, it is permitted even for a reason such as that.

We may propose that also according to the opinion of the Rambam – that it is a law pertaining to the **speech** of prayer – the main concept of prayer is beseeching the fulfillment of one’s needs and that prayer is a Mitzva that is expressed through speaking. Nevertheless, the essential quality of prayer necessitates specifically whispered speech. That is, since prayer is the petitioning of the King, King of Kings, the Holy One Blessed Be He, it must be done with trepidation and awe. Thus, prayer must specifically be in a whisper, for it is not respectful to the king to speak before him in a loud voice. Speaking in a whisper signifies trepidation and fear, standing before the King, King of Kings, the Holy One Blessed Be He.

However, the opinion of the Beis Yosef is that the main concept of prayer is the **concentration** and the thought of the heart, service of [G-d with] the heart. Indeed, [for the Beis Yosef] this is also the reason why prayer must be specifically in a whisper, for speaking loudly is the opposite of deep concentration and inner feelings of the heart. [This does not contradict the notion that at times a loud voice arouses concentration, for this merely evokes the initial stimulation of concentration, but it is understood

When the person is already aroused with concentration and feelings of the heart, a loud voice actually interferes with concentration.

that when the person is already aroused with concentration and feelings of the heart, a loud voice actually interferes with concentration. See Footnote 29]. Thus it comes out that the essential defining quality of concentration obligates a whispered prayer.

This is also the reason why the Beis Yosef prohibits raising one’s voice simply in order that one’s family members will learn, etc., for [in his view] loud speech contradicts the very definition of prayer. Rather, the entire permissibility stems solely from such an eventuality that it is otherwise impossible for him to concentrate were he not to pray in a loud voice. For then, the definition of prayer itself (concentration and the thought of the heart) obligates speech in a loud voice.

[To be continued, be”H]

‘AND HASTEN THE COMING OF HIS MOSHIACH’

ARRANGED BY RABBI CHAIM SASSON
TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY

*In connection with the Rebbe MH”M’s instruction, “Do everything in your ability to bring Moshiach Tzidkeinu in actual deed,” Rabbi Chaim Sasson has gathered a collection of all of the practical advice of Rosh B’nei Yisroel to the generation of the Redemption. * Selected pearls of wisdom from Rabbi Chaim Sasson’s new book ViKareiv Meshichei.*

RENDERED HALACHOS

Through the study of Rambam (rendered halachos), we hasten the time of the days of Moshiach, according to the saying of our Sages that “all of these revelations do not come except in the merit of the Mishnayos” – the rendered halachos – and then there will be revealed the quality of the halachos that “they will never be nullified.”

(Kuntres “Halachos Shel Torah Shel B’al Peh” 5752)

THE SPREADING OF YIDDISHKAIT

The most appropriate avoda and preparation to bring the Redemption

closer demands activities, along the lines of the way of life then, to perfect the world under the sovereignty of the Alm-ghty. In simple terms: The spreading of Yiddishkait, the study of Torah, and the fulfillment of mitzvos in a manner that adds and increases in light. And even if the avoda is arduous, at the same time the avoda is precious and its success is assured.

(Likkutei Sichos, Vol. 23, p. 486)

INVOLVEMENT WITH THE STRENGTHENING OF YIDDISHKAIT

On the heels of Moshiach, when “all of the appointed times have

[already] been completed and the matter depends only upon t’shuva and good deeds” (Sanhedrin 97b), we must strive especially in these two things: a) Ahavas Yisroel; b) love for Torah and mitzvos.

These two things exist simultaneously, when we are involved in strengthening Yiddishkait among the widest circles of the Jewish People, as: a) When a person tries to save his fellow Jew from falling into the depths of sins and transgressions, there is no greater love than this. b) When a person explains to everyone that the Torah is the wisdom and will of Alm-ghty G-d, that it is eternal at all times and in every location, and through which G-d also plants within us the life of this world – there is nothing more important and precious than this.

(Likkutei Sichos, Vol. 13, p. 291)

ESTABLISHING YIDDISHKAIT EVERYWHERE

Every action connected to the spreading of Yiddishkait in general, and all the well-known mitzvaim in particular, has an extremely lofty value. For as is known in the familiar prayer liturgy, “**and because of our sins we were exiled from our land,**”

the reason for the destruction [of the Beis HaMikdash] and the exile is only due to the abandonment of Torah and mitzvos (and due to our sins). Therefore, through the nullification of the reason – i.e., through the strengthening of the outspread of Torah and mitzvos – the effect (we were exiled from our land) is immediately nullified. As a result, it is understood how relevant and vital it is to establish Yiddishkait in every location, particularly in our Holy Land, the land that the eyes of Hashem your G-d are always upon it, from the beginning of the year until the end of the year. All of the toil and effort in the strengthening and expanding of these activities is most appropriate, including naturally and especially, the influence upon young women and their education, through which is established generation after generation of wholly G-d-fearing Jews involved in Torah and mitzvos,...until the end of all generations.

(15th of Menachem Av, 5735)

THE WAY TO BREAK THROUGH THE BARRIERS OF THE EXILE

Through the activities of spreading of Torah and Yiddishkait and the spreading of the wellsprings outward from a sense of Ahavas Yisroel and Achdus Yisroel, we break through the barriers of the exile until the destined fulfillment of “He who **breaks open** the way goes up before them,” “These are the generations of **Peretz**” – Moshiach Tzidkeinu, who will come and redeem us and bring us upright into our land.

(Shabbos Parshas Bo 5746)

SPREADING THE WELLSPRINGS OUTWARD

Through the “spreading of the wellsprings outward,” we hasten and bring about the Redemption.

(Shabbos Parshas VaYeishev 5746)

Through the increasing of Torah and mitzvos with greater strength and greater fortitude, the spreading of Torah and Yiddishkait, and the spreading of the wellsprings outward, we hasten the True and Complete Redemption through Moshiach Tzidkeinu.

(Shabbos Parshas Korach, Gimmel Tammuz 5748)

The fulfillment of the shlichus with sacrifice and devotion (as exemplified by the self-sacrifice of Pinchas) through the spreading of Torah, including especially the inner teachings of Torah as explained in



chassidus, the level of *yechida* in Torah, reveals the level of *yechida* in each and every Jew (men, women, and children) until the revelation of the general level of *yechida* – Moshiach Tzidkeinu.

(Seifer HaSichos 5748, Vol. 2, p. 684)

THE MAIN AVODA IN THE GENERATION OF THE REDEMPTION

As mentioned, with an emphasis that the spreading of the wellsprings outward is **the main avoda** of this generation, to the point that all other

matters of avoda are on the level of “**service that is foreign to him**” (Bava Basra 110a) in relation to the main avoda of spreading the wellsprings outward, since this generation is the last generation of Galus and will be the first generation of the Redemption, when your wellsprings will be spread outward. May it be G-d’s Will that making the resolution to increase in spreading the wellsprings outward will further hasten the immediate arrival of the True and Complete Redemption through Moshiach Tzidkeinu, even before the actual spreading of the wellsprings outward.

(Shabbos Parshas B’Shalach 5751)

We should increase with greater strength and greater fortitude and with reinforced vitality in all of our actions and avoda in the study of Torah and the fulfillment of mitzvos, including particularly the spreading of Torah and Yiddishkait and the spreading of the wellsprings outward, in order to bring **actually and in a revealed state** – the True and Complete Redemption through Moshiach Tzidkeinu.

(Shabbos Parshas Tetzaveh 5752)

PUBLIC TORAH STUDY

The chassidic statement, “Ten people who sit and are involved in Torah,” which explains the great quality to public Torah study... also alludes to the fact that the True and Complete Redemption comes through increasing the spread of Torah, particularly through the wholeness of Torah study in a manner of “Ten people that sit and are involved in Torah,” through which they bring about the transformation of these days into holidays and days of joy and happiness.

(Shabbos Parshas Pinchas, the 17th of Tammuz, 5750)

THOUGHTS OF T’SHUVA

Each and every person should

make a personal accounting in his soul: **When was the last time that he thought about Moshiach Tzidkeinu in his heart and soul...** that G-d – through Moshiach Tzidkeinu – will take **him** out of this galus in **actual deed**, and he, together with Moshiach Tzidkeinu, will go and come to Eretz Yisroel!...

He will enter a room within a room, where no one can see him, and there he will make a personal accounting in his soul... It is clear that when he makes a personal accounting in his soul, and he will judge his state and situation in connection to thinking about the Redemption, he will surely come to thoughts of t'shuva... and then – **he** will immediately bring about the matter of the Redemption – “immediately they will be redeemed,” since the thoughts of t'shuva will tip the scales for him and the whole world to the side of merit, causing salvation and rescue for him and them.

(Toras Menachem 5746, Vol. 2, p. 556)

*We must remember
about the
Redemption, thus
providing the strength
for the overall avoda
during the Exile to
bring the Future
Redemption.*

**“AND YOU SHALL
SPREAD FORTH”**

In this generation, we must serve G-d in a manner of “And you shall spread forth” (B'Reishis 28:14) – without measure and limitation, the level of “with all your might” (D'varim 6:5), and thus we will hasten and speed up the coming of

Moshiach,, of whom it is said (Micha 2:13), “He who breaks open the way goes up before them.”

(Likkutei Sichos, Vol. 20, p. 534)

**REMEMBER THE
REDEMPTION!**

Even when we are in the darkness of the Exile in general, and particularly when a person knows in his soul his state and situation – he must not despair *ch”v*. On the contrary, we must remember about the Redemption, thus providing the strength for the overall avoda during the Exile to bring the Future Redemption.

(Acharon Shel Pesach 5712)

**BRINGING THE
REDEMPTION CLOSER IN AN
INNOVATIVE MANNER**

In the Future to Come, “a **new** Torah will come out from Me” (VaYikra Rabba 13:3), i.e., not only will there be an additional elevation, it will be a totally new matter. This will also be drawn down into the world, and thus there will be made “the **new** heavens and the **new** earth” (Yeshaya 66:22).

And even our actions and our avoda to hasten the Redemption must specifically be in an innovative manner. It's not enough to add another matter and another matter regarding the avoda of yesterday, rather the avoda must be in a manner of complete innovation, on the level of literally “**new**.”

(Shabbos Parshas Balak 5744)

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FLEEING FROM BESIEGED LENINGRAD

BY RABBI SHNEUR ZALMAN CHANIN



*With heroic effort R' Chaikel managed to get his family out of the misery of Leningrad under siege and they began the journey to unknown parts in the Asiatic part of Russia. * Once again, R' Chaikel's resourcefulness and cleverness enabled him to escape with his life and the life of his family.*

LEAVING LENINGRAD

When World War II broke out, my family lived in Leningrad while my father fled from place to place in Russia. As the German siege of Leningrad intensified in 1942, the danger of remaining in the city grew from day to day, along with the threat of starvation. My father, who was outside the beleaguered city, as I related, was worried about my mother and did all he could to smuggle her out, as well as my two sisters and the rest of the family.

Thanks to his connections and much effort on his part, he managed to get a position for my mother as a nurse in a kinderheim, a government orphanage for youngsters whose

parents were drafted or had fallen in battle. The institution was a sort of hospital and dormitory for children. He knew that with this position, she would be able to get, every day, at least some bread for her and the children, and he also hoped that ultimately the orphanage would be moved out of the city, safe from German shelling.

I should mention my uncle Akiva Segal, husband of my aunt Bluma, who arranged fictitious papers for my mother, which said she was a registered nurse, with the help of his sister-in-law who knew a director of a hospital.

So my mother moved and lived in the institution and she and my sisters

received bread daily. After a short time, after gaining the trust of those appointed over her and becoming acquainted with the head of the staff, she saw that the work was too much for one person and she obtained a position for my aunt Esther Rochel Minkowitz, my father's sister. Naturally, she gave the director a nice gift first.

My aunt Esther Rochel joined the institution while her husband, Chaim had to remain in Leningrad throughout the siege and starvation, but with Hashem's kindness he survived. Later on, he was able to leave Leningrad for safer shores.

When the shelling intensified and the security situation in the city deteriorated, they moved the kinderheim from Leningrad to a place far from the front, about 200 kilometers from the city. Thus, my mother, sisters, aunt, and her daughters were able to leave Leningrad for a safer place. However, then the connection with my father was broken.

A PIECE OF BREAD

My father was happy that they had moved the orphanage but was upset over the fact that he had no

idea where they were. In Russia, any operation like this was top secret, especially in wartime when the evacuation was a military move. The orphanage had been given a number and my father had to locate the family without an address and without a shred of information about which direction they had traveled in. He was forced to go from city to city and ask every passerby whether he knew where the orphanage number 560 that had been in Leningrad had moved to.

In the end, Hashem helped and he managed to find the orphanage in the city of Tichvin. This was only a temporary refuge, as it was clear that they had to flee from there as soon as possible.

His next task was to find a way of contacting my mother in order to inform her that he was in the vicinity. As a man sought by the military and secret police, this entailed serious danger. And for my mother, leaving the institution was like running from the front and you could pay for that with years of exile. Nevertheless, after my father told my mother, through a messenger, that he was in town, my mother found a way of leaving the institution and meeting with him. They rejoiced over this meeting and began to think of a plan for fleeing further.

My father suffered from hunger, for even in exchange for a fortune, bread was unobtainable, and he hadn't eaten in days. He tried to offer ten gold rubles, a huge amount in those days, but he couldn't buy a single piece of bread on the black market. My father said that when he was in the city he thought that if he could locate a Jewish person he could do some business deal and get bread but he couldn't even find a Jew.

When he met with my mother, he asked her whether she could possibly steal a slice of bread or two from the

orphanage dining room and bring it to him when they met the next night. My mother met him again and was brokenhearted for she was empty-handed. She was unable to take even one slice.

In the meantime, suffering from starvation, my father found a river and he drank from it and immersed himself in it a number of times a day, thus reviving himself.

On the second day, my mother managed, with mesirus nefesh, to

The man furtively removed a loaf of bread and asked my father whether he wanted to buy it. My father gave him 50 gold coins. He was so hungry that the smelly bread was mouthwatering and delicious to him. The bread lasted him for several days.

steal a single slice of bread for my father.

COMRADE CHANIN, STOP!

The next morning, my father was walking distractedly in the street when he suddenly heard an authoritative voice yell: Comrade Chanin! Stop! (This is how every citizen was addressed, as "comrade," without any title of respect or names appropriate for the bourgeoisie.)

He saw two military men of high

rank walking towards him. His heart fell, trembling seized him and his teeth chattered. Was this the end? Had he been caught in the net? He didn't know what to do – should he run? Should he remain standing there? He nervously put his hand in his pocket where he always had a small bottle of vodka in case of emergencies. My father explained, "I always had a bottle of vodka on me because I thought it would help me gain courage if I needed it and could help in the eventuality that I needed to give it to someone as a bribe."

Before he managed to think of his next move, someone fell on his neck and kissed him. When he recovered, my father saw it was a Chassidische Jew he knew from his youth. A man by the name of Zelig F., wearing an army uniform with stripes indicating his high rank, but he had no beard. When my father realized who it was, he hugged and kissed him.

They stood there and talked and he told my father that the next day his unit was going to be sent to the front, but when they drafted him they took his t'fillin and siddur and anything Jewish away from him. He yearned to put on t'fillin at least before his trip to the front. He asked whether my father had t'fillin.

My father didn't know what to do. Should he believe him or not? The man was a question mark and perhaps a trap awaited him. In the end, ahavas Yisroel won out: if a Jew wanted to put on t'fillin before traveling to the frontlines, how could he refuse? Could he take that responsibility?

He knew that this could endanger him but he decided to trust in Hashem. My father said, "Yes, I have t'fillin. As for you, Zelig, the army provides food for its soldiers, can you bring a piece of bread in exchange?" They wished each other well and arranged to meet at five that afternoon.

They met and Zelig took the t'fillin and emotionally donned them. He sighed bitterly with the feeling: who knew whether he would remain alive and would ever put on t'fillin again? My father stood off to the side and waited until Zelig finished, and then Zelig explained that he had tried to steal some bread for him but he had come empty-handed since he couldn't get anywhere near the food which was under lock and key. They kissed one another goodbye without knowing whether they would ever meet again and they parted.

Years later, my father found out about the tremendous miracle he had had, for Zelig was caught in the net of the N.K.V.D. and became an informer.

SIBERIA OR ASIA?

That night, starvation tortured my father more than it usually did. He had nowhere to sleep and so he walked the streets and waited for Heaven's mercy. Suddenly, a filthy gentile walked by. The man was dressed in rags and smelled to high heaven. The man furtively removed a loaf of bread and asked my father whether he wanted to buy it. My father gave him 50 gold coins. He

was so hungry that the smelly bread was mouthwatering and delicious to him. The bread lasted him for several days.

When he had broken his fast and had revived somewhat, he began to think of how to get my mother and the children out of the orphanage and flee for safety. My father managed to meet with the director of the institution where my mother worked and he asked for discharge papers for her.

It wasn't easy because my mother was drafted into the war effort when she worked in this educational facility for the children of those who had fallen. My father was persuasive and with Hashem's help and of course, a hefty bribe, he got all the necessary papers for the release of my mother and sisters.

After a few days, my mother, sisters, my aunt and her children, were able to secretly leave the orphanage. They remained in Tichvin for another ten days and tried through all possible means to obtain papers for Chaim, my aunt's husband and my father's brother-in-law who had remained in Leningrad. When they were unsuccessful, they left the city without him, on their way to the

train station so they could flee as quickly as possible.

My father's plan was to flee with his wife and children far from the front. He had two options: to travel in the direction of Siberia or towards the Asiatic part of Russia. My father chose the Asiatic part of Russia for two reasons. The first reason was that this part of the country was warmer and there was no problem with heating during the winter, whereas in Siberia the temperature could plummet to forty degrees below zero. The second reason was that he figured it would be easier to obtain food in a place where the sun shone year round.

They began their trip by train and passed through Yaruslav in order to meet my grandmother, my mother's mother, Mrs. Itta Mera and her son, Refael. When they met, my father asked them to join them and to leave for safer parts, but they refused. They were not suffering from hunger and it wasn't clear to them whether my father would find food in an unknown place.

They were afraid of getting caught by the police because they were under the watchful eye of the N.K.V.D. and they had to sign in every ten days to prove their presence in the city.

TO RESCUE ANYBODY THEY COULD

My father tried to convince them and said it was dangerous to remain in Yeruslava, which was under German fire. Many of the citizens had been killed or wounded. Chaos reigned in most of the neighborhoods and it wasn't known who was alive and who was dead. It was nearly certain that the N.K.V.D. would not look for them because they were busy with their own problems.

By my grandmother refused and said brokenheartedly, "And what if



Main square in Leningrad

they release my husband, where will he go? If I don't wait for him here, would could he go?" She was referring, of course, to Rabbi Shmuel Nimotin who had been arrested and shot a few months earlier, as I related in earlier chapters.

"We all knew the truth, that he was no longer alive," said my father, "but until we received official confirmation from the authorities, we wanted to hold on to a shred of hope and to believe that maybe we would see him again."

In the meantime, the Germans continued to bomb Yaroslava, primarily from the direction of the forest. The city was in a shambles. My father knew the Germans would soon enter and that they had to run for their lives. That same day they had to say goodbye to my grandmother and they left Yaroslava.

At the train station, my father met a childhood friend, Rabbi Shmuel Betzalel Altheus, who had managed to escape from the hell that was Leningrad. Both of them rejoiced that they had made it out alive and they joyfully hugged one another.

My father asked him where he was heading and R' Shmuel Betzalel said he was heading for Siberia. My father warned him to be more careful because with his incriminating file and the police looking for him everywhere in order to arrest him, he was taking a big chance in traveling to a place where he didn't know anybody. Wasn't he entering the lion's den and when he would present himself to the police to be registered, wouldn't he be caught?

But Shmuel Betzalel said that he had a friend in Siberia who would help him arrange papers, and as was his wont, he joked with my father and said that my father was always full of worries and fears and that, G-d willing, everything would be fine.

Unfortunately, when Shmuel Betzalel arrived in Siberia and went

to register, they arrested him on the spot and he sat in jail for two years. When the war was getting worse, the government decided to free many prisoners on condition that they be drafted and go to the eastern front. So Shmuel Betzalel was released and was sent to the front.

Apparently, thanks to the Rebbe's bracha, as I already wrote, they sent Shmuel Betzalel home after he was lightly wounded in the leg in a battle. He arrived in Tashkent and was saved.

It was dangerous to do this in addition to the fear that the train would leave any minute without prior warning, as the engineer pleased, and this meant losing the train and the family left on it. But they suffered from hunger and they had no choice.

GAN EDEN CALLED TASHKENT

My parents boarded the train again in order to travel southeast. On their way, they switched trains but each day brought new travails. After a few days, the Germans began bombing the trains, and they couldn't continue. My father's wits came to their aid once again. They boarded a ship that sailed on the Volga River and it brought them to

where the trains were working. There they boarded another train and continued their trip.

My father related that every evening they got off the train in order to sleep in a town or village. They rented a room for the night so they could sleep but the main reason was in order to be able to wash. Since the trains were packed with humanity, and the compartments were stuffy and filthy, diseases spread among the passengers, not to mention the lice that was everywhere.

My mother, who was quite particular, took care of her hygiene and that of the family with great care. Even while traveling she was able to wash them all with cleansing material that she was amazingly able to procure.

The trip didn't take days but weeks and months! The trains had no timetable and even the route occasionally changed, especially after the Germans bombed the tracks. The trains were stopped either because there was no other recourse or with prior intention, for some unspecified period. They stopped in all sorts of cities and towns and sometimes, even in the middle of a field or forest.

At most of the stations, the Red Cross provided drinking water to the refugees and even hot water, but there was no food. My father had money, but in order to buy something, someone had to get off the train at a station or enter the town in order to buy bread and sugar (which was important for nourishment in those crazy days). So whenever the train stopped, they had to walk into town, look for food, buy it and return to the train.

Needless to say, it was dangerous to do this in addition to the fear that the train would leave any minute without prior warning, as the engineer pleased, and this meant



Typical sight in Tashkent

of foodstuffs, that they would remain and live there, for they would be able to survive there. But if he saw that the market didn't have enough food they would continue traveling and Hashem would help.

On Rosh Chodesh Elul, after some months of travel and tribulation, the train stopped again. As usual, my father ran to town to buy food. He discovered a huge market with large quantities of food, sacks full of rice, sugar, flour, beans, fruits, and vegetables. He couldn't believe his eyes. He hadn't seen such abundance in years!

He rushed back to the train, which was still waiting at the station and told my mother to take the children and their few belongings and to get off the train because they were staying in this place that baruch Hashem, had plenty of food.

This place of abundance, which seemed like Gan Eden to them, was called Tashkent.

losing the train and the family left on it. But they suffered from hunger and they had no choice.

My father took on the dangerous task. He got off the train, ran to

town, bought whatever he could buy and dashed back to the train.

My father said that he had decided that if he ran to a town and found a market with a decent supply

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THE REBBE ON CHINUCH

PREPARED FOR PUBLICATION BY RABBI LEVI GOLDSTEIN

*The Rebbe's view on special classes for the gifted; sending a child out of school because the parents owe tuition money; or because of inappropriate behavior, and even about the attention given a student who sits in the front row. * A compilation of horaos Rabbi Leibel Groner heard from the Rebbe regarding the chinuch of children. * From a speech given at a Melaveh Malka for teachers in Oholei Torah, winter 5761*

A CHANNEL FOR BRACHOS

It is a great merit to be a melamed in a mosad of the Rebbe. It is a special channel for all the brachos. Naturally, the channel is only when you work in chinuch, not when you leave the mosad.

THE TALMID AS AN ONLY CHILD

You must regard every student as Hashem's only child, and therefore, you ought to relate to him only with love and kiruv, along with the necessary discipline.

NOT TO REMOVE A TALMID FROM THE CLASS

Regarding a talmid who is misbehaving and disturbing the rest of the class, can he be sent out of the classroom?

Answer: There is no point in sending a child out to wander around, for this is the opposite of chinuch!

Even if the teacher intends on sending him out for only a few minutes, he is usually busy and completely forgets about the talmid outside, and therefore, the talmid remains outside for a long time.

And sending him out shows the talmid (and implants the feeling) that learning is not necessary and time can be wasted, i.e., bittul Torah.

The child can be sent to the principal, who should deal with him properly.

NOT TO REMOVE A CHILD BECAUSE OF MONEY!

There was once a girl whose parents didn't pay tuition and the hanhala gashmis of the school sent her

home. She went and asked the Rebbe what to do. The Rebbe told her to go to the hanhala and say to them: You are teaching me that money is more important than learning Torah.

When there's a problem with tuition payments, the students should not be involved; this is something between the parents and the hanhala.

ONLY AN EDUCATIONAL FINE

A monetary fine is a fine for the parents and not for the student, and therefore, nothing is gained! This practice should be refrained from entirely and a more educationally suitable fine should be sought.

24-HOUR RESPONSIBILITY

The melamed has the responsibility of worrying about the chinuch of his students not only when they are within the walls of the yeshiva, but also the rest of the day, 24-hours-a-day!

In earlier years, this wasn't so necessary, because of the environment, etc., but nowadays it is absolutely necessary.

This also affects the yiras Shamayim of the talmidim. For at home, there are those who are completely different than the way they seem in yeshiva, and therefore this interferes with his learning.

The most vital aspect of the chinuch of talmidim is implanting yiras Shamayim!

In connection with this, Rabbi Groner related that in the time of the Rebbe Rashab, at a farbrengen in

Tomchei T'mimim, the famous mashpia, Rabbi Shmuel Grunem a"h, said to one of the talmidim that in order for him to have one percent of yiras Shamayim after he left yeshiva, he had to have 100% yiras Shamayim while still in yeshiva.

Some time after the talmid left the yeshiva he went back to the mashpia and said that he hadn't given the right numbers because the differential is **far greater**, not 100 times but 1000 times!

CLASS FOR THE GIFTED

Regarding gifted children, it is proper to arrange special classes for them where they can excel and achieve more and more. The rest of the talmidim should try to attain their level!

As far as the weaker students, a special class should not be made for them because it causes them to feel bad, but they should be included among the rest of the talmidim.

(Seemingly referring to those weak in learning only but not those who have serious learning problems for whom special classes are needed.)

THE HOLINESS OF THE LETTERS

When teaching the Alef-Beis, the children should learn that it is not merely a "subject," but that the letters are holy and come from the Torah of Hashem! And this implants yiras Shamayim.

WHAT IS THE EDUCATIONAL GOAL?

You need to teach the talmidim in a way that gives them the foundation so that they can learn on their own afterwards. Therefore, the learning should focus not on quantity but on quality. The goal is to be able to learn on their own.

HOW DO YOU IMPLANT YIRAS SHAMAYIM?

A melamed once asked the Rebbe how you implant yiras Shamayim in talmidim. The Rebbe answered: through frequent recounting of stories of tzaddikim.

WHO SHOULD SIT IN THE FRONT ROW?

Each talmid needs to feel that he

is important, and therefore, it's a good idea to make a rotation among the talmidim as to where they sit. This will give each talmid an opportunity to sit, for a while, in the front row.

NOT JUST TO READ

A special emphasis is needed to accustom talmidim from a young age to **say** the words of the davening and not just look at the words.

ONE HOUR

A melamed once complained to the Rebbe about being overworked with his teaching job and not having much time to do his own learning, just one hour. The Rebbe said in reward for being involved in the chinuch of talmidim he would succeed in his learning in that one hour many times over and that he should not think of himself when he had to be mechanech Jewish children.

NOT TO CUT OUT PARTS OF THE DAVENING

Regarding davening, even though young talmidim do not need to daven the entire davening, still, the davening should not be cut in half or a third. In other words, whatever section they say should be said completely. (E.g., not to say half of Ashrei, but the whole thing or not at all, until they are ready to say the whole thing.)

WHAT TO DO WITH A STUDENT WHO DISRUPTS

The benefit of the individual sets aside the benefit of the many, and therefore, the talmid who disrupts the chinuch and learning of the class, cannot remain in the class.

However, since sending him out of yeshiva is not at all acceptable, the hanhala has the responsibility of arranging a learning program for him in accordance with his style, but there is no sending a talmid away from yeshiva!



IGNITING SOULS IN MANALI, INDIA

BY SHAI GEFEN

*The Jewish revolution in India includes Manali. Rabbi Boruch Shinhav, shliach in Manali, ignites Jewish neshamos in the biggest tourist city in the Himalayas. * We present the story of the Chabad house of Manali.*

In the last decade, tens of thousands of Israelis have chosen India for touring and vacation, and there, in the land where idols abound, many Jewish sparks have been fanned into large flames. It's hard to understand why Israelis pick India to visit but when you examine the Jewish revolution taking place there by the shluchim, you realize that they were sent there to get what they were unwilling to get back in Eretz Yisroel.

We have already heard about a number of shluchim in India and their work there, but each time it's exciting once again to read of outreach in this exotic country. Manali is stunning and is considered a first class tourist attraction and one of the most beautiful places in the world. Manali is in the Himalayas at 2600 meters above sea level. The city is surrounded by snowcapped mountains and forests. The jungles are full of monkeys and other wild animals.

It's not only Israelis but tourists

from around the world who flock to Manali to hike in the mountains, raft the rivers, and do other challenging activities. In addition to the physical attractions, Manali has a cult run by an Indian guru, which is a draw for many Israelis, r"l. Manali is also considered a crossroads for all those heading north to the Kashmir district, Adak, etc.

An Israeli typically stays in Manali between two weeks and a month but some Israelis live there for years. Some of them have opened restaurants.

The Government opened a Warm Home in Manali, which is part of the department which wages war on drugs, for the city is flooded with drug users. According to statistics from the Health Department, about 600 Israelis a year return from there with psychiatric problems and some of them need long term hospital care.

It's not surprising then that the Chabad house of Manali has become a place where countless worried parents turn to for help and information. It is

there, in Manali, when the tourists are looking for spirituality that they encounter Rabbi Boruch Shinhav, who provides them with spiritual and Chassidic sustenance.

Rabbi Shinhav: "We are one of the places that worried parents turn to. Besides our connection with the tourists, we are also in close contact with the families of tourists back in Eretz Yisroel. They know they can get information from us about their children, whether through friends who passed through the Chabad house or through other sources. This takes a lot of time but this in itself is mekarev many people to the Chabad house. We have rescued tourists from danger more than once."

And sometimes, R' Shinhav has to deal with the dead. A local bus once overturned and the one Israeli couple on the bus was killed. This was unusual as these buses always have more Israelis on them. It took a few days until they found the girl's body. There are constant phone calls from Eretz Yisroel asking for help in various ways. After this tragedy, the Chabad house was in constant touch with the family until the bodies were flown back to Eretz Yisroel.

I understand you sometimes are involved with Israelis in jail?

Unfortunately, we have to deal with that too, and naturally, we do so

happily because this is pidyon shvuyim. The most famous story we were involved in was when two girls were in jail because of possession of illegal substances. We were in close contact with them and they even asked for the Rebbe's bracha through the *Igros Kodesh* that they be released.

The answer they received was amazing. The Rebbe said that the reason they were in jail was because there was no regret for the past and a positive commitment for the future. When they would undertake to correct the past, they would be released.

Indeed, shortly afterwards, with the involvement of certain senior figures, the two were released after a relatively short time, against all the odds, because India is extremely strict about crimes like these.

* * *

How did Boruch Shinhav get to Manali, you wonder. Eleven years ago, he himself was a tourist in India after completing his army service in the combat engineers corps. Boruch studied industrial engineering and management, and after two years took a year off. Like many others, he toured

India for half a year. At the end of his trip, he went back to school and supported himself as an assistant producer on a media project.

What is your family background?

My parents were not religious, though interestingly, when they married in Russia they had a chuppa and a religious ceremony, which was unusual at that time. Their k'suba says the year 5725, and it was extremely rare at that time in Russia. Other than this, they had no religion in their lives.

My mother's grandfather knew the Rogatchover Gaon, who was their



Boruch Shinhav on the porch of the Chabad house in Manali

neighbor in Dvinsk. He told me that he remembered that the Rogatchover lived two streets away from the Ohr Somayach, the Litvish rav of Dvinsk. In his youth, my great-grandfather learned in yeshiva, but at a young age was captivated by ideas of the communist revolution. He abandoned religion and joined the communist party, where he advanced until he became manager of the bank for the development of Latvia.

The connection to religion was actually from my father's side. My grandfather's brother, on my father's side, was the head gabbai of the shul in Riga. My grandfather's grandfather, after whom I am named, was the Russian Czar's financial advisor.

We moved to Eretz Yisroel in 5734 when I was only four and I went through the Israeli system of school and the army.

When did you begin taking an interest in Judaism?

During my tour of India, I returned from northern India to Delhi and was full of ideas about their religion. I loved the concept of being removed from the material world, from gashmius, in order to attain bliss and spirituality.

It was at this time that a Chabad house opened in Delhi. One day I met up with two friends of mine and went along with them. One friend wanted to go into the Chabad house and the other one didn't. In the end, we visited the Chabad house and I heard the shliach explain that Judaism is not about divorcing oneself from the physical world but to take the physical and elevate it to holiness. I thought this was remarkably serendipitous. I began to realize that Judaism does not negate involvement with the material but guides us in how to use it.

I was involved in searching for spirituality and tried meditation and various spiritual pursuits and other religions until a friend recommended a certain religious book. The book was

the *Yalkut MeiAm Loez* on Chumash B'Reishis. Throughout this time, I was seeking a course of study that focused on p'nimius.

When I returned to Eretz Yisroel, I went into the Chabad house in Ranana, where I was invited to join a shiur every Monday with Rabbi Yair Kalev. He radiated warmth and love. I loved his shiurim and I began attending them regularly. I bought t'fillin and began putting them on

We were robbed of all the money we had designated for a month of work, which included Pesach. All we had left were fifty dollars. We didn't know what to do and how to continue with our shlichus. I remember that Shabbos as one of the hardest Shabbasos of my life. Without money, there was nothing for me to do there.

every morning.

When I finished school, the shliach in Ranana, Rabbi Shadmi, suggested that I try out a yeshiva that had just opened in Ramat Aviv. The first time I went, I felt a very positive atmosphere. It wasn't long before I became a Chabadnik. I went to the yeshiva often and then started going every morning for intensive study for many hours. Baruch Hashem, I absorbed a lot in

yeshiva. In 5759, I married and we moved to Tzfas.

How did you end up on shlichus in Manali?

Right after our wedding, my wife and I began to look for a shlichus. I was in touch with Rabbi Dror Shaul in Dramsala. About a year after our wedding, we joined him to help him check things out there. We were there for Pesach and ran a large public seider.

A year later, we asked the Rebbe through the *Igros Kodesh* and the Rebbe's answer was to travel on shlichus again. I didn't know how I would be able to arrange things and raise money. One Shabbos I was with my brother-in-law and my sister-in-law and suddenly remembered that Rabbi Leiter from Ascent wanted to know if I was interested in making a seider in India. He would help out with the expenses.

I saw this as a clear sign that I was being given the opportunity to go on shlichus to India. That year we made a seider in Manali for the first time. This was actually the first time that a Lubavitcher stepped foot in Manali and that's when the shlichus there began.

After a month in Manali, we returned to Eretz Yisroel to plan for the future. Every so often, we sent bachurim there for brief periods until we went back and began living there on a permanent basis.

* * *

When Rabbi Shinhav talks about staying there permanently, he means only half a year because the tourist season ranges from Pesach until after the Tishrei holidays. After that, the freezing weather is not amenable to hiking in the area and tourists don't go there.

The connection with the Israeli tourists and their families lasts far longer than the encounters in India. In the past four years, Boruch and his wife have organized annual reunions at



Boruch dancing with Israelis in Manali



Aliya to the Torah in India

Ascent. For three days, the “Manali graduates” participate in nonstop workshops and activities. They have had as many as 65 people.

How do you manage in Manali?

It’s not easy, but we see constant miracles. I remember the first challenge we encountered upon arriving in Manali. We were robbed of all the money we had designated for a month of work, which included Pesach. All we had left were fifty dollars. We didn’t know what to do and how to continue with our shlichus. I remember that Shabbos as one of the hardest Shabbasos of my life. Without money, there was nothing for me to do there.

On Motzaei Shabbos we wrote to the Rebbe and the answer was that if resolved to stand strong in the face of the test, the test would disappear. The Rebbe’s answer strengthened me. I realized that this was a test and that I had to pass it. I kept saying to myself that it would all disappear and things would work out.

That same night Daniel Kaley, who

was with us, called Eretz Yisroel and miraculously managed to raise all the money we needed.

* * *

The work at the Chabad house of Manali is around the clock. The morning begins with the study of Chassidus in the Rebbe’s *Likkutei Sichos* and a shiur on the parsha of the week. Then there’s immersing in the mikva, which is actually a local river.

Throughout the day, numerous young people drop into the Chabad house. Some of them learn b’chavrusa, ask questions, or read Jewish material. Many more Israelis come in the evening, about fifty a day, and sometimes more. Many of them are inspired to Yiddishkait.

There are shiurim in the evenings too. Says Boruch: There’s a shiur in p’nimius ha’Torah that I give based on the Rebbe’s sichos, *Tanya*, and maamarim. I’ve designed a certain type of shiur that really appeals to the Israelis. There is also a weekly course in Kabbala and mysticism. It is a shiur that attracts many people and is a

forum for answers to the questions that they raise.

After the shiur, there’s supper which turns into a Chassidische farbrengen, in the course of which stories are told and niggunim are sung. There are people who wait all day for the evening shiur and what follows. The Chabad house of Manali is a ray of light for many Jews.

One story I’ll never forget happened with a girl who wanted to write to the Rebbe. The answer she opened to in the *Igros Kodesh* was addressed to a girl from a chareidi home who went off the derech. The Rebbe was telling her that she needed to do t’shuva.

The girl read the letter and began to cry. She said this was actually her situation, for she came from a religious home. Baruch Hashem, she has since begun doing t’shuva. She had to come to Manali in order to realize that there is a Rebbe.

Stories like this are commonplace here. Jewish neshamos that were hewn from under the Heavenly throne, are

aroused here, of all places. One of the moving events here was the celebration of a Hachnasas Seifer Torah. We had a bachur (who is now learning in the yeshiva in Ramat Aviv) who came to us for the hakafof of Simchas Torah. Since we did not have a Seifer Torah that Tishrei, we had to dance on Simchas Torah with Chumashim and the *Tanya*. The bachur, who was not yet religious at the time, was upset about this and he called a relative who decided to donate a Seifer Torah.

And so we got a Torah. The one who got it for us did not want his name publicized because he said he did it for Hashem. I think this must have been the first Hachnasas Seifer Torah here since the world was created. Hundreds of Israelis participated in this celebration. The joy was tremendous.

There are Israelis who fall prey to the cult in the nearby city of Kolu. Do you work there too?

Unfortunately, many fall prey to that cult and we work to save Jewish souls. There was an older Jewish woman who was there for 16 years. When she heard that we were organizing a seider, she decided to come. After attending the seider she left the cult and she is now reconstructing her life. She is back in Eretz Yisroel and is religious. Her son is still in the cult and we dearly hope that he will leave it too.

I mentioned that there are Israelis who live permanently in Manali. I recently found out that in our area the Indians built bathhouses for women in which the water comes directly from the river. I looked into it and was told that Rabbi Bistritzky z"l paskened that this is kosher l'mehadrin. We felt that this too was prepared by Heaven so we could enable the families here to take on the laws of family purity.

* * *

Boruch Shinhav has plenty of interesting stories to tell:

I once met a tourist with a bandage on his hand. This was Friday morning as I was going to immerse in the river. I asked him what had happened to him and he told me that he was looking for a pushka since he wanted to say the HaGomel bracha.

Afterwards, he told me that on one of his trips he was caught in a monsoon, torrential rains that pour for hours or days. The flooding can sweep away houses and entire villages. Within a few hours, the monsoon flooded the road he was traveling on and he had to flee from his car. He began walking in the mud and grabbed on to anything that he could see so that the water wouldn't sweep him away.

Then he told me, in tears, how he constantly pictured the T'fillas HaDerech and the picture of the Rebbe, and thanks to this, he felt, he was saved from certain death. Except for the injury to his hand, he was fine.

One day, when I was in Eretz Yisroel, someone called me up and

introduced himself as Ziv. He told me that he had been at the Chabad house in Manali on Simchas Torah and we sang, "Utzu Eitza V'Sufar." He told me excitedly, "You won't believe how much this song means to me. It was the anthem with which we began the trip and with which we ended the trip."

Today, he went on to tell me, one of his friends who was there with him at the Chabad house, is in yeshiva in Yerushalayim and he too was making serious steps of t'shuva.

Many people make the switch with us. Sadly, in Eretz Yisroel love for religion is drowned out by the brainwashing, but in far-off India they begin the journey. Many people who were niskarev in various places, began the process with us.

How does your work incorporate inyanei Moshiach and Geula?

In accordance with the Rebbe's instructions, our work is permeated with the spirit of Moshiach and Geula and the learning of inyanei Geula, etc.

FINDING THE PICTURE AMONG HUNDREDS OF PLANES

On one of my trips to India, says Boruch Shinhav, I took a large picture of the Rebbe to Manali in order to hang it up there at the Chabad house. By mistake, I forgot the picture on the plane on our stopover in Milano, Italy. I ran to the reception area but they told me that I could not get the picture. "It's hard to locate the plane on such a huge airfield," they said.

They suggested that when I returned to Eretz Yisroel via Italy, that I try to contact the airline. I was under a lot of pressure, mainly because I was on my way to Manali and would have to fly shortly.

I felt terrible over having forgotten the picture. At a certain point, I made peace with the fact that the poster would not make it to India. Suddenly, I saw a member of the ground crew and for some reason I went over to her and asked her to help me find the picture. She also said, "Listen, this is a huge airport. It's impossible." So I gave up.

When we were already on the threshold of the airplane, the woman suddenly appeared and asked who the poster belonged to. I saw that she had brought the picture of the Rebbe! I was stunned. She had found a picture that had been on one of a hundred planes, in a matter of minutes.



At a Chassidische farbrengen



Boruch Shinhav with Israeli tourists

In general, the atmosphere here is one of Yemos HaMoshiach. The young people come here to learn Torah and you can literally see the fulfillment of “and the lost ones from the land of Ashur will come and the outcasts from the land of Egypt.”

In the Rebbe’s sicha of Parshas VaYeishev 5752, the Rebbe says that the fact that we see Jews coming from all over the world proves that the refinement of the world has been completed even before the Geula. You can see this in the past decade when Israelis visit every corner of India while

the shluchim bring them the k’dusha and the light.

We provide an atmosphere of Yemos HaMoshiach and convey the message that the Rebbe is already here and we need to open our eyes in order to see the Geula. You can definitely say that in Manali we learn Judaism along with Moshiach. We live Geula!

What are your plans for the future?

We are working on building a kosher restaurant for tourists. There is a big demand and the time for a kosher restaurant in Manali has come.

We are presently in Eretz Yisroel and preparing for our annual reunion. Everything we did last year was bigger than ever. Awareness of our work is at an all-time high. Thousands of Israelis visited our Chabad house last year and many put on t’fillin for the first time in their lives.

Chazal compare the neshama of a Jew to a candle. “The candle of Hashem is man’s soul.” We certainly try to light many candles, candles that will spread the light and warmth of Yiddishkait and Chassidus.



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AFTER VICTORY WAS WON

BY N. SOFER

*The Rebbe said that delving into the details of the court case could be harmful and should not be done. But what happened after the court case, when the great kitrug on the Rebbe's leadership was dismissed, is something we should know and live with. * Reliving the days when didan natzach!*

WAR AGAINST THE NESIUS

The court case about the s'farim, and the victory we celebrate on 5 Teives, was not only about s'farim; it was a kitrug from Above, an attack on the Rebbe's leadership as head of the Chabad movement. As the Rebbe said at one of the yechiduyos to members of Aguch in the summer of 5745, "The other side does not want money; he wants the chair!" [i.e. the Chabad leadership.]

In one of the answers that the Rebbe gave in connection with the court case, he said that this is a war against the Rebbeim: "The war against Chabad begins with the Alter Rebbe, etc."

Since he began speaking in public on 17 Tamuz 5745, the Chassidim saw that the Rebbe was greatly affected by what was going on. The Rebbe

exhibited great merirus (bitterness) and during the court case and the giving of testimony (from 19 Kislev 5746) the Rebbe went to the Ohel daily for three weeks!

The Chassidim, who were mekusharim to the Rebbe heart and soul, were greatly aroused and tried as much as they could to add in Torah study, in giving tz'daka, and saying T'hillim as it is divided up into the days of the week. Some even fasted.

THE CHASSIDIM'S JOY

On 5 Teives at 11:40, when the joyous news reached 770 that "DIDAN NATZACH" (our side won), the Chassidim burst into spontaneous song and dance on the pavement opposite 770. The simcha reached incredible heights.

Wishes of mazal tov and "gut yom

tov" were heard everywhere, and even the brachos of "HaTov V'HaMeitiv" and "SheHechyanu" were recited. The elder Chassidim said that whoever did not see this simcha, did not see true joy in his lifetime.

What took place then is indescribable. Bottles of mashke were brought from somewhere and copious amounts were drunk. Chassidim did somersaults in the street.

The loudspeaker in the yard of 770 played "Didan Natzach" nonstop and the Piamenta brothers and Eli Lipskar joined in, playing their musical accompaniment throughout the day.

The news spread quickly throughout New York and Chassidim, T'mimim, and talmidim began flocking towards 770. The circles of those dancing expanded, and Crown Heights, along with Chassidim around the world, rejoiced.

It was true joy and everybody felt the same way. Everyone's face shone, hearts overflowed, and the simcha was p'nimius and atzmis from the etzem and inner part of the soul: the essence of the soul danced, the essence of the soul said l'chaim, the atzmiyus and p'nimius of every Chassid felt and rejoiced along with the essential joy of the Rebbe.

When the secretaries entered the Rebbe's room to relay the good news

that didan natzach, the Rebbe's face shone and he appeared extremely happy.

In general, it seemed as though the Rebbe was trying to contain his joy.

The simcha and excitement grew with the news from the secretaries that the Rebbe would daven Mincha downstairs in the big shul (in those days, on weekdays, the Rebbe davened in the small shul upstairs). Some of the T'mimim quickly erected the bima that is used during the month of Tishrei, but they still didn't know whether the Rebbe would say a sicha.

The Rebbe came out for Mincha at 2:15. Upon seeing the Rebbe, the crowd went wild with the singing of "Didan Natzach," but the Rebbe didn't show any emotion. It was clear that he was containing his intense feelings.

The davening was recited to the

Yom Tov tune and the simcha was tremendous. After chazaras ha'shatz the chazan began to say Kaddish and the Rebbe looked at the chazan and motioned his surprise with his hand as though asking why Tachnun was not said and the Rebbe began to say Tachnun.

The secretary, Rabbi Leibel Groner immediately went over to the Rebbe and said there was a chassan present and then the Rebbe stopped saying Tachnun. (Here too it was apparent that the Rebbe was trying to contain the excitement so as not to show open joy.)

THE LESSON: TO INCREASE IN SPREADING THE WELLSPRINGS

The big surprise was at the end of the davening when the Rebbe went

over to the lectern used for sichos and began to deliver a sicha.

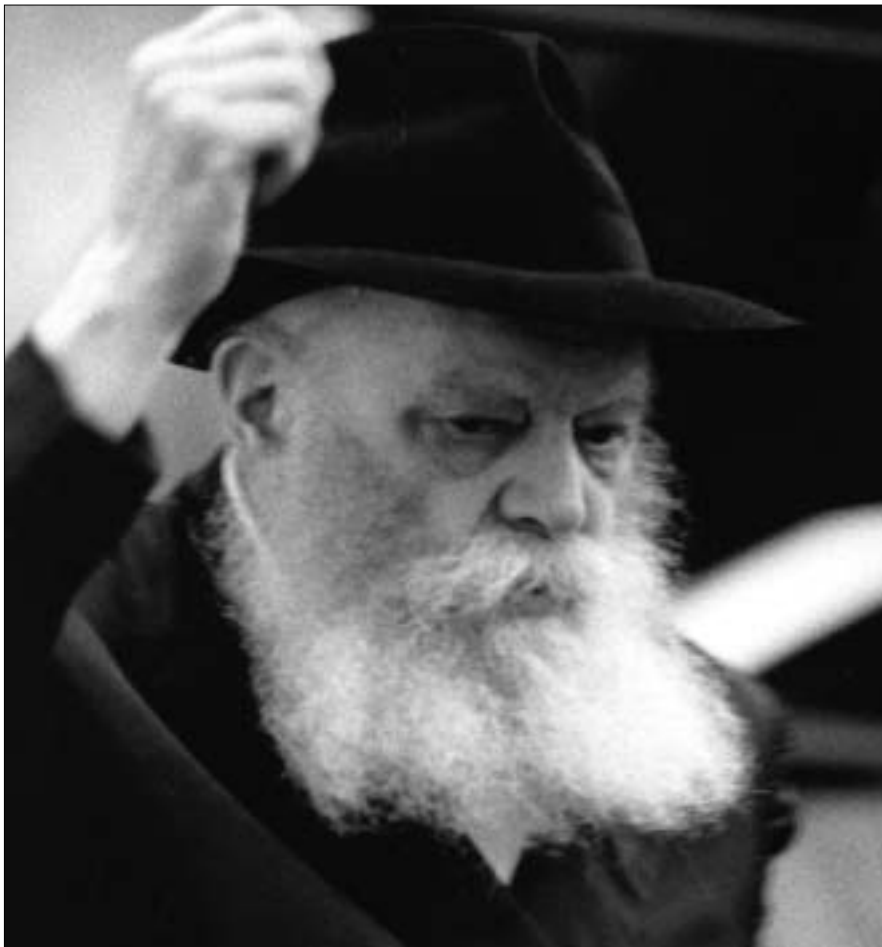
In the sicha, the Rebbe clearly referred to the victory and the simcha and even compared it to the geula of the Alter Rebbe on 19 Kislev, but he immediately announced the practical lesson to be learned. This is what the Rebbe said in the sicha:

The undesirable state that we just experienced was nothing but a shlichus from Hashem. Therefore, it ought to lead towards a greater elevation to the point of an incomparably greater elevation. And [as it says] "from my enemies I became wise," i.e., from the claims made by the other side we can know what particular area needs the additional elevation. Regarding the geula of the Alter Rebbe on 19 Kislev, the claims made by the opposing side – that he was spreading numerous maamarei Chassidus and doing so openly – from this itself the Alter Rebbe understood the horaa regarding his avoda – that he needed to say more maamarei Chassidus with greater explanations.

So too in our situation. From their claims we learn in what area we need to add. Their claim was that Chabad is not active, as though the s'farim and manuscripts in the library are not being used to spread the wellsprings, and therefore the question arose as to whether they belonged there.

(Even though they do tremendous work in spreading the wellsprings outward, and how could there be such a shocking situation that they could cast doubts about the work in spreading the wellsprings? The only explanation that we can find to respond to these claims is that this is a shlichus from Hashem in order for us to increase the spreading of the wellsprings outward.)

Therefore, the horaa that ought to be learned from this, practically speaking, is that **along with the great simcha – "simcha that breaks boundaries," nullifying all limiting**



aspects of measurements and boundaries – the main thing is to increase in the matter of the claim itself: spreading the wellsprings outward with great strength and might, an incomparable increase. The latter should be done in such a manner that every single person makes of his personal home a miniature sanctuary, a house of Torah, t'filla, and g'milus chassadim, so that the entire world becomes a home for Hashem.

* * *

Then the Rebbe explained the end of the daily portion of Chumash: “And the spirit of Yaakov their father lived,” and it was indeed apparent on the Rebbe’s face that thanks to the victory, “the spirit of Yaakov their father lived.”

VICTORY OF NASI DOREINU

The simcha with dancing and farbrengens went beyond all limits for seven days in a row, until the 12th of Teives 5747. Each day, the Rebbe delivered a sicha with special horaos in connection with the events that had just occurred. The Rebbe also went to the Ohel a number of times. On one of the days the Rebbe even said that every person should write *panim* with all their heart’s requests and that he would take them to the Ohel. The next day, when the Rebbe went to the Ohel, the car was full of bags of *panim* that had come from around the world.

On the fast day of 10 Teives the Rebbe spoke “divrei kivushin” (words of inspiration to repentance spoken on a fast day). The Rebbe said that all those who had just proclaimed “didan natzach” certainly meant the Rebbe, his father-in-law, Nasi Doreinu when they said “didan” and therefore they ought to know that everything that follows the “didan natzach” is the victory of Nasi Doreinu.

Therefore, when a project is undertaken, it certainly cannot be done on one’s own cognizance, so that whatever a person thinks – whether

straight or crooked – he does, without receiving instructions as to what to do. Didan natzach means that the victory is the victory of Nasi Doreinu.

The Rebbe went on to tell the story in the Midrash about “didan natzach.” Once, there was a place where an evil spirit wanted to dwell on a spring and

Even though they do tremendous work in spreading the wellsprings outward, and how could there be such a shocking situation that they could cast doubts about the work in spreading the wellsprings? The only explanation that we can find to respond to these claims is that this is a shlichus from Hashem in order for us to increase the spreading of the wellsprings outward.

the people of the city went out and yelled: “didan natzach, didan natzach,” and did not leave until they saw a drop of blood on the water’s surface, which showed that the life-force of the evil spirit had departed.

The Rebbe explained: In every Jew,

there are two spirits: a good spirit and an evil spirit. The good spirit, the yetzer tov, says to do what Nasi Doreinu says; the evil spirit, the yetzer ha’ra, begins to confuse him, and being “expert at his work,” he finds all sorts of explanations to say that this isn’t what was meant, not this time and not this place. And the touchstone is that if you scream “didan natzach” properly, as Nasi Doreinu wants, then the evil spirit is vanquished and utterly nullified, and then you know that indeed, “didan natzach.”

The Rebbe mentioned the limitations on drinking mashke once again – that it is only for special times and even then care must be taken not to overdo it and not to have more than four small cups. The Rebbe said that the rest of the year the inyan of “one with a good heart constantly feasts” is fulfilled through diligent Torah study.

The Rebbe concluded that therefore, for the upcoming yom hilula of Yud Shevat, preparations should be made thirty days in advance in Torah study and by giving tz’daka. During the thirty days people ought to go to their “rav” to be tested every ten days.

With this sicha, the Rebbe channeled the Chassidim’s simcha, and all the Chassidim, Anash, and the T’mimim around the world devoted themselves completely to diligent Torah study.

AND ONCE AGAIN, DIDAN NATZACH

After the first victory on 5 Teives 5747, the opposing side appealed the verdict. On Tuesday, 25 Cheshvan 5748, the final verdict was that the s’farim belong to Aguch and the judge issued a special order for the s’farim to be returned to 770.

The happy news brought the T’mimim and Anash out again for dancing on the pavement outside 770 with hearty mazal tovs and l’chaims. Once again, the mashke flowed.

The news spread quickly and



The great celebration in 770 in 5748, the sign on the wall was hung there before Shabbos

Anash and T'mimim from all over the city rushed to 770 to join the dancing. In the meantime, it was learned that the Rebbe was extremely pleased and happy with the news. This added to the simcha, of course.

Before Mincha, the Rebbe's secretaries announced that the Rebbe would come down to the large shul. The Tishrei bima was hurriedly set up. When the Rebbe entered, the beis midrash was full and everybody sang "Didan Natzach," but the Rebbe looked serious.

After the davening, the crowd anticipated a sicha, but there was none. The Chassidim continued rejoicing all night. The fact that the first Kinus HaShluchim was going to take place and many shluchim had arrived from around the world, added to the simcha.

2 KISLEV 5748 – THE S'FARIM ARE RETURNED

On Monday, 2 Kislev, Anash and the T'mimim learned that the stolen s'farim would be arriving. The Chassidim were thrilled that finally, the long-awaited moment had arrived in which the s'farim cherished by the Rebbe would be returned to their



The dedication of the "likut" for Parshas VaYigash 5747

rightful place in 770. A large crowd waited outside.

In the morning, the members of Aguch wrote to the Rebbe about their plan to bring the s'farim into 770 under a chuppa with musical accompaniment (like a Hachnasas Seifer Torah). The Rebbe responded: **Since now it will be in a sustained manner with restfulness of the soul and body, etc., the order now is that it should be given silently. And all of the**

above should also be kept silent as understood. I will mention it at the tziyon.

Some of Anash and the T'mimim understood from this reply that the Rebbe did not want a big deal made of the return of the s'farim. They went into 770 and sat down to learn "Kuntres Rosh Chodesh Kislev" that the Rebbe had published for Rosh Chodesh Kislev. However, many Chassidim still continued to stand outside and wait for the s'farim.

At about two o'clock, the Rebbe left his room in order to go to the Ohel. When the Rebbe saw the Chassidim standing outside he spoke sternly to them and said: Is this "didan natzach" to stand for hours and hours and look at your fingernails! Didan natzach and the return of the s'farim ought to inspire and strengthen the study of Torah and the proper use of time.

So the Chassidim ran into the large beis midrash and sat down to study and the dancing stopped completely.

The following Shabbos, Parshas VaYeitzei, 7 Kislev, the Rebbe said again that the lesson to be learned from the victory of the s'farim is to increase in Torah study. And Heaven forbid that the simcha should cause bittul Torah during the set times for Torah study, which are the s'darim in yeshiva that ought to be observed in a manner of "be killed but do not transgress." So even though they mean well, still, they cannot possibly dance and rejoice for hours upon hours at the expense of Torah study.

And the Rebbe said: As for those who ask why the criticism. They claim that the Chassidim only want to rejoice in this simcha. Well, if they want to rejoice, they should rejoice at the expense of the times for eating, sleeping, etc., but not at the expense of the times for Torah study, when you are supposed to forget the entire world, open a seifer and learn diligently, by order and instruction of

our Rebbeim, the founders of the yeshiva.

WILL THE REBBE CELEBRATE ON 5 TEIVES?

After the Rebbe's stern words on 2 Kislev and the sicha of Parshas VaYeitzei, in which the Rebbe made it clear that the victory of the s'farim demands an increase in Torah study and not simcha and dancing, many Chassidim wondered whether the following year, on 5 Teives, the Rebbe would celebrate the day.

Some brought proof to their position by saying that on 25 Cheshvan, the second "Didan Natzach," the Rebbe did not say a sicha and did not show any signs of simcha. (The Alter Rebbe also did not openly celebrate his second geula on the third day of Chanuka.) Additionally, he even said that the return of the s'farim to 770 should be done quietly. So it seemed that the Rebbe did not want to make 5 Teives into a public celebration.

The T'mimim in 770, however, who always live with the Rebbe, were sure that the Rebbe would celebrate 5 Teives, especially after the Rebbe himself celebrated it the year before.

So the T'mimim and some of Anash, with some trepidation, announced a Chassidic farbrengen for Motzaei Shabbos 5 Teives, and even hung up a large sign on the western wall of 770 which said: "This is the day that Hashem has made, we will rejoice and be glad on it. Chassidishe farbrengen in honor of the auspicious day of 5 Teives **Didan Natzach**. Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu V'Rabbeinu! 770 Shnas Hakhel – 5748."

When they hung the sign, some elder Chassidim yelled that they should take it down because it was not what the Rebbe wanted, but the T'mimim did not allow it to be taken down and watched over it until Shabbos to make sure it wouldn't be removed.

On Friday night and Shabbos, until the farbrengen, the Chassidim were tremendously apprehensive. They didn't know how the Rebbe would react and whether the sign on the wall was what he wanted or not.

"IT WAS ESTABLISHED THE FOLLOWING YEAR"

When the Rebbe entered for the farbrengen, the crowd enthusiastically

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sang, "Didan Natzach," but they still didn't know what the Rebbe would say. To everyone's surprise, the Rebbe began the farbrengen with the following words: "First we ought to begin with the issue of the day as they announced on the wall in a public way, pirsumei nisa." (When the Rebbe said these words, he looked at the western wall where the sign was

hung.) "Regarding the event, which took place on this day, 5 Teives last year, when it was 'didan natzach,' and the victory of the s'farim. **And these days are remembered and done in every single generation.** In other words, on this date the following year (and so too, every year), they are remembered and by doing so, those inyanim of the first year are made into **an auspicious day and time** with everything connected with the victory of the s'farim."

The Rebbe continued: Obviously, in order to know how to celebrate the victory of the s'farim, "didan – **of the s'farim** - natzach," the s'farim themselves need to be asked.

What we learn from all this is that from now on, there must be a strengthening and adding to Torah study, with greater might and strength, and this is the touchstone to the true victory of the s'farim "didan – of the s'farim – natzach."

And the Rebbe concluded: May this auspicious day be used in the proper way and utilized fully to increase the study of Torah of Nigleh and P'nimius ha'Torah. Including, a special increase in the acquisition of Torah s'farim in every Jewish home, and for children too, and for the central library of Aguch Lubavitch for Klal Yisroel. And all this will hasten even further the main "didan natzach" of the true and complete Redemption through Moshiach Tzidkeinu.

* * *

Since then, 5 Teives was established as an auspicious day, the day of the victory of the s'farim, "didan – of the s'farim – natzach." And every year (except for 5750), we heard a sicha from the Rebbe about the significance of the day.

The main thing is that we should immediately merit the "didan natzach" with the hisgalus of the Rebbe MH"M shlita.

(based on personal diaries from the years 5745, 5747, 5748)

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.**



Leaving Wednesday the 18th. Of Teves
(January 18th. 2006) in the evening
Returning to the US on Wednesday
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Shabbos Parshas Shemos we will be staying in Mezibuz
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DIDAN NATZACH = DER REBBE LEBT!

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

From the statements made by the Rebbe MH”M during the period of the court case over the s’farim, we learn that there was a far more important kitrug here: Is the nasi of Lubavitch chai v’kayam or was there a histalkus and a levaya ch”v, and thus the inheritance can be divided... The victory in the court case expressed a celestial victory that established as absolute fact: Lubavitch can not be led without a living leader of the generation. To put it simply, this was a victory of “Yechi.”

AT PASSPORT CONTROL

Every time that I would travel to Eretz HaKodesh to visit my father, of blessed memory, I would get stuck at passport control. It didn’t matter what clerk was sitting there. The moment he saw standing before him someone born in Russia, with American citizenship, who was coming to visit his father who lived in Eretz Yisroel, he started to ask questions... It was not pleasant, especially to someone who grew up in Russia, where every uniformed official made him tremble with fear. Yet, we have to get used to such troubles...

Last year, I arrived again in Eretz Yisroel. Thanks to the brand new

terminal at Lod Airport, there was not a long line, and I quickly found myself standing at the counter before two female clerks. I submitted my passport, and then the usual question came: “Do you speak Hebrew?” There was no one behind me, and I thought that it would not go so smoothly this time...

“A little,” I replied, “why do you ask?” hoping that perhaps some miracle might happen and they’ll leave me alone.

Instead of starting to investigate me, the second clerk took out a picture of the Rebbe with the words “Increase in mitzvos and good deeds to hasten the Redemption,” and asked, “What’s

the difference between mitzvos and good deeds?”

I thought that I would faint at any moment. Here I was, a Lubavitcher chassid from the moment of his conception, and yet I never thought for an instant that I would have the opportunity to speak with these two clerks about the announcement of the Redemption. And what were these two border control officials involved in just before I came along? – The need to bring Moshiach! They just didn’t understand what exactly was the difference between “mitzvos” and “good deeds”...

The Rebbe has said that the world has long since been ready. The problem apparently is that we are not yet ready.

WHO HAS THE LIGHT?

We have just concluded the holiday of Chanuka. We have concluded, but this holiday continues with us throughout the entire month of Teives. The Rebbe notes the marvelous fact that this is the only holiday that starts in one month and continues into the following month, and thus everything drawn forth during the month of Kislev continues into the month of Teives. It is certainly possible to learn from the holiday of Chanuka even after we are well into the month of Teives.

One of the main points of Chanuka is “the many in the hands of the few.” This point is expressed not only in the

victory in the war against the Greeks, but also in the Chanuka lights. The Chanuka light is a physical expression of “You have given over the many in the hands of the few,” as a little candlelight has the power to drive out much darkness.

It is appropriate that we constantly remember this point: We truly are few in number, but the light is in our hands. The Jewish People are the few among the peoples of the earth. The religious are the few among the Jewish People. The chareidim are the few among the religious. The chassidim are the few among the chareidim. Lubavitchers are the few among the chassidim. Even within an individual Jew, the hours that he spends involved in holy matters are few in relation to those he spends involved in mundane matters. Anyone who starts making a precise computation according to hours and minutes is bound to get very confused.

The Chanuka lights, however, come each year and remind us that it makes no difference where you're holding on a quantitative level. In the final analysis, the “few” during the miracle of Chanuka were only “the twelve Chashmonaim and Elazar against several tens of thousands” (Rashi's commentary, Parshas V'Zos HaBracha). The question is: Who has the candles? Who has the light?

The light is with us! Therefore, we must not be affected by the fact that we are few in number, since we have the power to dispel all the darkness. Furthermore, we can also transform the darkness into light. The only thing that we have to do is to use the tremendous strengths that we have been given for the forces of light that exist within us, and then we will see everything much more clearly.

BETWEEN GREECE AND COMMUNISM

Chassidus teaches us that the main war with the Greeks was on the spiritual plain. In contrast, at the time

of the miracle of Purim, the war was primarily on the physical plain. Haman simply wanted to kill, destroy, and exterminate everything *r*”l.

We see here a very interesting point. At Purim, the Jews never thought of going to war. At first glance, since according to Haman's plans, they were all bound to be killed – what did they have to lose? In the manner of military conflict in those days, the Jews would have had to collect money and enlist a large army of mercenaries to wage war against Achashverosh and Haman. If they were to succeed – they would succeed, and if they didn't – they had nothing to lose. After all,

G-dliness, it is very hard to restore his faith in G-d. Learn Torah with him? He learns Torah all day long and he doesn't feel G-d. Fulfill mitzvos with him? He fulfills them, but he feels nothing.

Haman was planning on destroying them anyway... In any event, nowhere is it written that the Jews did anything in this direction. Only after G-d miraculously saved them, they went out and killed their enemies. However, it never entered their minds beforehand to engage in battle.

In contrast, at the time of the miracle of Chanuka, the decree was primarily spiritual in nature. The Rebbe thus teaches us in his sichos that the Greeks focused on one central point: It didn't bother them that Jews learned Torah and fulfilled most of the mitzvos. What bothered them was that

Jews learned Torah as the Torah of G-d and fulfilled mitzvos as Divine commandments. This was the purpose of the decree. They attempted to remove G-d from the Jewish lexicon.

And this was what the Jews fought!

There are different types of spiritual decrees. The Communists also waged war against G-d, but they initiated an overall war against all of Torah and mitzvos. This was their mistake, for when the Jews succeeded in opening a seifer and learning a little Torah, despite the persecution, they immediately saw there is a G-d in the world. When the Jews succeeded in fulfilling mitzvos, they immediately felt the G-dly light within them.

During the war against the Greeks, the situation was far more difficult, as they permitted Torah study and even the fulfillment of most of the mitzvos. But this was Torah and mitzvos without any lifeforce, and when a Jew accustoms himself to learn Torah and fulfill mitzvos without feeling

G-dliness, it is very hard to restore his faith in G-d. Learn Torah with him? He learns Torah all day long and he doesn't feel G-d. Fulfill mitzvos with him? He fulfills them, but he feels nothing.

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The mashpia R. Zalman Moshe HaYitzchaki spoke once about the difference between two types of Jews. In his characteristically sharp manner, he said that the first Jew has doubts about whether G-d exists, while the second Jew has no doubts at all: Of course G-d doesn't exist!

THERE IS NO CHASSIDUS WITHOUT A REBBE

On a deeper level, the entire concept is expressed in the words, “they defiled all the oil.” The Greeks even left the oil of Torah, its most hidden and esoteric teachings, but they defiled it all. Chassidus brings that when a Jew has a problem in his

middos, the matter can be repaired through the intellect, which rules over the middos. Even when there is an intellectual problem, it is still possible to solve the problem through Torah study, the intellect of holiness. But when the Greeks defiled all the oil, including the intellect of the G-dly soul, there is no alternative other than for G-d to do a miracle and create new intellect, which is received through the revelation of the level of *yechida*. The Greeks have no control at this level, where it is possible to rebuild the intellect of holiness that can influence the middos.

Here, we come to the connection between Chanuka and Hei Teives. Anyone who heard the Rebbe's *sichos* before and after the court case, particularly the Rebbe's more personal expressions during this period, understands that this was a much greater *kitrug* than met the eye. The case over the *s'farim* in the federal courts of the United States was a microcosm of a far greater judgment taking place in the heavenly courts. This was a frightening *kitrug* on the *nasi* of chassidus, in the words of the Rebbe, "*Er vill dem beinkel!*" (He wants the chair (leadership)!)

The central point to the claim of the opposing side was that there is no *nasi* in Lubavitch. There was a *histalkus*, there was a *levaya*, and the point of vitality within Lubavitch does not exist. Against such charges, the Rebbe cried out from the depths of his heart at the unforgettable *farbrenge* of the 15th of Tammuz, 5745: "Go and talk to such a person! He claims that the Rebbe has been in the World of Truth for thirty-five years already! He was at the 'levaya' himself!... '*Der Rebbe lebt*' (the Rebbe is alive) physically in this physical and material world throughout the past thirty-five years, and at every passing moment, he becomes '*nach merer un nach shtarker un nach frisher un nach lebidiker*' (stronger and stronger and fresher and livelier).

For without a Rebbe, *chai v'kayam*, all of chassidus is merely a body without a soul. The Rebbe fought this approach with a force never before wielded.

Subsequently, on Hei Teives 5747, the Heavenly Court rendered its decision: Chassidus cannot exist without a Rebbe *chai v'kayam*, and

It makes no difference where you're holding on a quantitative level. In the final analysis, the "few" during the miracle of Chanuka were only "the twelve Chashmonaim and Elazar against several tens of thousands." The question is: Who has the candles? Who has the light?

Lubavitch lives and exists, and the leader of the generation is *chai v'kayam*. As a result, the federal court in the United States ruled that there is nothing to discuss regarding inheritance! *Didan Natzach!*

Thus, anyone who wants to celebrate the auspicious day of Hei Teives must remember first and foremost that we're talking about the holiday of victory of the same Lubavitch of the Rebbe MH"M, where we are not impressed by what we see with the naked eye, and we establish (in the words of the Rebbe): "*Der Rebbe lebt!*"

It is impossible to celebrate this "holiday of deliverance" on the one hand, while repeating the charges of

the opposing side on the other hand, e.g., there was a *histalkus*, a *levaya*, etc. When we try to uproot everything and continually use expressions of *histalkus*, how can we possibly celebrate the auspicious day of Hei Teives?

When we are prepared to split Lubavitch and arouse disputes and quarrels, when we inform on *bachurim* and hand them over to the police, how can we possibly celebrate this "holiday of deliverance"?

On Shabbos Parshas Chayai Sara 5747, the Rebbe said that the difference between the Chabad approach and other approaches is that when there is a store that sells non-kosher meat, there are those who would enter a dispute with the storeowner. In Chabad, the Rebbe says, we fight against the sale of non-kosher meat, not against the salesman personally. Personally, I am ready and willing to provide help and assistance to any Lubavitcher chassid, even if he doesn't maintain my views. I speak out against harmful opinions and modes of conduct, some of which we experienced in the Soviet Union (and even those originated from people with chassidic roots), and that we never dreamed that we would meet up with ever again!

Hei Teives is the holiday of chassidim who believe that the Rebbe is *chai v'kayam*, notwithstanding what we see with our flesh eyes. Hei Teives is the holiday of chassidim who see clearly that there is no concept of inheritance concerning the leadership of Lubavitch. In Lubavitch, there was, is, and will be only one *nasi*: The Rebbe shlita, Melech HaMoshiach!

Since the Jewish People are destined to do *t'shuva* at the end of their exile and immediately be redeemed, we have been promised that all Lubavitcher chassidim, without exception, will eventually stand in the rays of light and proclaim:

Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu v'Rabbeinu melech HaMoshiach l'olam va'ed!!

THE REBBE AS SHADCHAN

BY T. YANKLOWITZ

Chana is a typical seminary student who went through the Israeli Chabad educational system: elementary school, a Chabad high school, counselor in a Tzivos Hashem club, seminary, day camps, shlichus and all the rest. In Elul, she began to think about whether she had enough money saved up to make the trip to the Rebbe in Tishrei.

Yes, Chana had the money. Boruch Hashem, she would be able to begin getting ready, preparing her passport, visa, ticket, place to stay, friends to travel with etc. When everything was ready, she began to concentrate on her spiritual preparations. Then all she had left to do was pack her suitcase and go!

Naturally, Chana wasn't the only one preparing to go to Beis Chayeinu. Her married sister Frayda (pseudonym of course) and her family were also preparing to spend Tishrei with the Rebbe. Frayda had a baby who was only one month old but she wasn't nervous about taking him with her to celebrate his first Tishrei with the Rebbe.

When the two sisters, Chana and Frayda, spoke they discovered that they were flying on different flights a few hours apart. What a pity! Chana could have helped Frayda with the baby on the long flight and could have shared a cab together to 770.

One phone call to the travel agent

and the sisters were placed on the same flight, like in the old days, when they were little girls and traveled to the Rebbe with their parents.

Everything was packed, they had received brachos from the Rebbe for the trip as well as warm brachos from relatives and the taxi brought them to the airport.

Levi, Frayda's brother-in-law was

The Rebbe's answer was clear: there was nothing to worry about. If matters didn't work out in a natural way, they would work out supernaturally.

supposed to be waiting for them at Kennedy airport. Levi was single with a number of brothers and sisters who had married before him. They all blessed him to find a good shidduch soon!

While the plane made its way to New York, the girls' mother sat at home and thought about her

daughters, her son-in-law, and grandson who were somewhere above the clouds. She smiled to herself about how nicely it had worked out, that Chana was able to help Frayda on the flight. She was also happy that Levi, that sweet brother-in-law of Frayda, would be there to greet them at the airport so they wouldn't have to stand and wait for a taxi.

Suddenly she had a brainstorm. Levi!!! How many times had she thought about him and how he had not yet married? In another few hours, he would be meeting her daughter Chana! Hmmm. Levi was a somewhat older bachur who had finished K'vutza and shlichus some time ago. He wasn't exactly what she wanted for her daughter Chana who was still quite young.

When the time came she would look for someone who had just finished K'vutza and smicha and after marriage would learn in Kollel for a year and then go on shlichus, just like her sons and sons-in-law.

Chana's mother continued preparing for Yom Tov and didn't share these thoughts with anyone. All was seemingly forgotten.

* * *

The mother (whom we will call Rivka) got up to answer the phone. Her son-in-law was on the line, calling from Beis Chayeinu, which was rather unusual.

What happened? Why didn't Frayda call?

Before she could ask anything, he hesitatingly said that he had something to ask. He didn't know exactly how to explain it so that what he said would be well received but ...

Rivka cut him off and said, "It's a shame to waste precious time on a long distance call, from a cell phone no less. I assume you want to talk to me about your brother Levi and Chana ..."

It took some time for her son-in-law to find the right words with which to continue the conversation (which was unusual for him, it should be pointed out). He was stunned by her perceptiveness.

"How did you know? Who told you?"

"A sixth sense. A mother's intuition. Let's not waste time. The answer is no!"

"But why? You don't know my brother Levi. He's a solid, Chassidishe bachur, nice with Chassidishe middos..."

"Chana is very young and we haven't begun looking into shidduchim for her. It's nothing personal and it makes no difference who the person is and what his good qualities are. Chana is not ready for a shidduch!"

The son-in-law was not happy with his mother-in-law's answer and he was forced to concede that someone irresponsible had already said something to both parties and both had agreed to the suggestion. A bit too late, the enthusiastic people involved remembered that Chana had parents and it was only right that they be consulted before Chana and Levi were spoken to.

This information did nothing to convince Rivka. She truly did not believe that Chana was ready to get married and certainly not to Levi. Despite her positive impression about

Levi in general, she did not think he was suitable for Chana for various reasons.

In order to end the discussion forthwith and to prevent further discussions, persuasion and confusion, Rivka declared, "If they are both available in another six months, we can look into it." She said this merely so that her son-in-law would realize that there was nothing personal here. Levi was a fine boy but the timing wasn't right.

Her idea was brilliant and when she hung up the phone she immediately dialed her mashpia in order to verify that she had done the right thing. Then she called some matchmakers. There was a lot to do before the deadline that she had given herself and Levi had to be a chassan by then. His lovely bride would be someone other than her daughter Chana!

* * *

It was partly cloudy and a bit drizzly in New York. The weather matched Chana's mood when she heard what her mother had to say. But Chana wasn't one to accept defeat. She knew whom to turn to and she didn't lose any time.

After washing her hands and giving tz'daka, she wrote a letter to the Rebbe about the suggestion, about the agreement of both parties, and about her mother's nixing the idea. The Rebbe's answer was clear: there was nothing to worry about. If matters didn't work out in a natural way, they would work out supernaturally.

Fortunately, for Chana, her mashpia was in New York for Tishrei too. She went to her mashpia, told her the story and showed her the Rebbe's answer. The mashpia promised her that sooner or later there would be good news. It was just a matter of time.

Tishrei flew by and Chana returned to Eretz Yisroel to continue

learning and shlichus. She devoted herself to various activities, mitzvaim, and everything a girl her age was busy with. The shidduch topic was not raised at home, not even once. She knew that the time wasn't right.

The months went by, much faster than usual for some reason; way too fast for Rivka's liking.

One day, Rivka's daughter Frayda called. After talking about this and that Frayda said, "You may not have noticed what month this is. Levi called to ask what's going on. You promised six months and since they are both single ..."

Why did Rivka feel suddenly dizzy? Why did she look pale after this conversation? What was she supposed to do? She had given her word and now she had to get out of this gracefully.

She called her mashpia with an update. There was silence on the line. This was an unexpected development. Both Rivka and her mashpia had been sure that Levi would get the hint and would look elsewhere. Now what?

While they spoke, Chana appeared with an answer from the Rebbe that she had opened to in the *Igros Kodesh* in volume 19 p. 169.

Chana was keeping track of time too apparently, and she saw that the six months were coming to an end and she asked the Rebbe for the shidduch to work out as he had promised, "if not in a natural way, then in a supernatural way."

This time the letter was addressed to a bachur who had been suggested a shidduch but the parents of the girl were not interested. It sounded familiar ...

In answer to your letter ... in which you write about the shidduch which they both approve of but the family of the girl are preventing the matter.

Although you write the reason for her family's refusal, the impression is

that the inner reason is that they want more yiras Shamayim from him. If so, obviously, he ought to fulfill this demand and not only because the family demands it but primarily because it is a commandment in the Torah, and we are commanded to rise in k'dusha ...

Along with that, and since a person must do what he can through natural means, they should try through friends and acquaintances of the family to convince those who are refusing to change their minds.

It couldn't have been more clear. The parents had given a reason for their refusal of the shidduch but the Rebbe said it was only an excuse. The truth was that they wanted more yiras Shamayim. So they needed to work on both issues and all would end well.

Rivka is a Chassida who tries to give the Rebbe nachas. She also got

the hint, especially when the hint wasn't too subtle. Rebbe, you don't need to send friends to convince me. I am ready to do everything it says here but what needs to be done?

After hours of discussion in which the phone company benefited tremendously, Rivka, with the advice of her mashpia, had a plan. She photocopied the Rebbe's letter and added a letter of her own to Levi. She mailed it before Pesach.

In her letter, she had respectfully written what she expected of a future chassan for Chana. That she knew he was no longer in yeshiva but since the Rebbe had written what he had written in the letter, she permitted herself to make a condition in order for the shidduch to continue, that Levi commit to learning in Kollel for a year. She added a few more paragraphs that her mashpia thought were necessary.

She didn't expect a reply. She thought that her daughter Frayda would call to say that her brother-in-law Levi was deeply insulted by the woman who wrote him and told him what to do with his life and that he had said the HaGomel blessing that he was rid of a mother-in-law like this.

However, a person plans and Hashem laughs. On Chol HaMoed Pesach, Rivka got an unexpected phone call from Crown Heights. It was Levi on the line! He wasn't offended but excited. This is what he had to say:

"A gutten moed! This is Levi. I received your letter. You have no idea what it meant to me. You know, I write to the Rebbe a lot but never get a clear, specific answer in the *Igros Kodesh*. As Yud-Alef Nissan was approaching and I knew that my chances at this shidduch were zero, I wrote to the Rebbe and asked for an answer. Just this time Rebbe, answer me. It seems hopeless, please answer me!

"A few days went by and today I got your letter in the mail. And what does it contain? A letter from the Rebbe. Just what I asked for – a clear answer!

"I accept the condition. I have no problem leaving my job for a year in order to learn. This is really what I've wanted to do, to get back to learning. I am happy and willing to do this!"

* * *

At the end of the school year, Chana went to meet with Levi. This time, Rivka was satisfied with how things had developed and she felt that it was an enormous z'chus that the Rebbe himself had been the shadchan.

What a fitting day for Chana and Levi to marry – the 14th of Kislev, the Rebbe's anniversary and the date that marks his eternal connection with us.

Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu V'Rabbeinu Melech HaMoshiach L'olam Va'ed



COMPUTERS IN THE JEWISH HOME?!

RAANAN SHALOM ISSEROFF

Many non-Jewish books, studies and publications already exist to verify or vilify the computer, its benefits and problems.

However, for us, we have a Torah and it tells us and we do.

What? The Torah talks about a computer?

Today (that I am writing this) is Yud-Tes Kislev. A day which celebrates the mesirus nefesh it takes to be a Chassid and a Jew. We have each “purchased” our connections to being a Chassid through mesirus nefesh, many of us in not too different ways than our forefather Avraham Avinu had in his numerous tests and trials. For others, their connection to being a Chassid is one that they were born into it and the trials and tribulations albeit they look to us to be smaller, but in reality they are no less a trial than someone who foregoes a life eating delicious treif, living with a goy or goya or other unimaginable difficulties that Jews are faced with today.

The challenge of being a Chassid today and having true mesirus nefesh is not in finding the most primitive place to do Shlichus or being mekarev the most Baalei Tshuva. Rather the challenge of today’s modern day and age is measured in small things. How does one keep up the Chassidic tradition of Avoyda surrounded by all the “toys” we each have: the cell phones, pocket computers, home computers, videos and other

distracting elements that if used in one way help us to be “Maalim BeKodesh” and if used in just-slightly another way not only detract but entirely distract us from our souls’ mission of turning over the world for Moshiach?

So I will go into this a little bit and give you some food for thought on this very relevant subject. Hopefully, we will each reach our own conclusions about this subject and please G-d, they will be the right ones according to the traditions of our Rebbeim and going back further than that to the Baal Shem Tov and even from before this time to Rabbi Adam, Rabbi Yoel and Rabbi Eliyahu Baal Shem and his roots in the Spanish expulsions of 1492.

We live in an age where Eliyahu HaNovi is about to come. Will he have to scream at us once again that we stand on two sides of a doorway? One side containing the Chassid within each of us and the other a completely non-Jewish house that contains television, videos, Internet and non-Jewish and non-Tznius ideas of how to live a life?

Lets see.

All the experts, books and studies agree that for a business the computer is a most necessary tool. There is nothing like it.

In Chassidus, the computer falls into the realm of a certain spiritual force called Klippas Noga. It is the name of a type of “Klippa” that contains a “parve” spiritual force which

is either potentially kadosh / holiness or the opposite (called: “LeUmat Zeh” in Chassidus) depending on how we use it.

For something that is from Klippas Nogah, whether it comes out kadosh or tumah depends on us. If we use this thing in a way that enhances our avoda of keeping mitzvos or learning Torah, so its koach, its spiritual force is turned to k’dusha. If on the other hand, we use this thing out in a way that detracts or distracts us from our soul-mission of keeping the Torah and its mitzvos, so then its use falls into the realm of the 3 completely impure forces of tumah (G-d forbid).

For the religious business community, one can keep Shabbos, wear a beard or a shaytel and make a “faceless” business to support a Jewish home or do Hafatza. Here and in this way the computer becomes elevated to the realm of “K’dusha.”

Obviously, use of a computer for business or Hafotzah means at a place of work that is **out of the house!**

In this way, there is a definite limit from Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm in a way that is mutar (permitted). Even the “computer addict” in all of us (Oh No! Not me....couldn’t be...!) (Heaven forefend) is kept at bay as the serious business of making money and its challenges keep our usage within the “necessary” (Please G-d).

The problems come when we bring a computer into the Jewish home.

Even worse problems abound for someone who has dedicated the house to be a “Mikdosh Me-At,” the mini Bais HaMikdosh that we each have (“We” meaning really every Jew!).

What Jewish home should not have the holy fire from above falling into it? Plain Pashut.

This is something we all need. Not only that, but as Chabadniks, we even need for our neighbors house to have it too!

Like the old joke: How many Lubavitchers does it take to screw in the light bulb?

One to screw it in. One to write to the Rebbe for a bracha. Two to tell everyone else how they should be screwing in their light bulbs!

What?!

This is too much Raanan. You want fire in your house, so great!

But for me, stay out of my house....

You have your fire, I have mine....

Why is it that we need for such holy flames to fall into our neighbor's house too?

The reason is that my kid is going to play by the neighbor's house and if my child is going to play someplace, I want that place to be 100 percent!

And even if my little mutchkins-pooch is not playing there, so that child is taking the essence of the cold fireless house (nebech) to yeshiva and is in my kids' class!

A conspiracy!

Lets put the unexcited people and the computer addicts aside for a moment.

Tanya two days ago says it all: (page 162 amud alef)

“The main avoyda in the time of “ikvay moshichay” the (very imminent) heels-of-moshiach, is Tefillah (Davening / Prayer) as Rabbi Chayim Vital says in Eytz Chaim and Pri Eytz Chaim. How much more so and Kal-veChomer, that it is proper and correct to give our souls over to tefillah” (and not only that but) “It is an obligation of the Torah mamash to those who

understand (madah) (philosophical works such as Chassidus) the importance and benefit of meditating (Hisbonenus) and depth of thought (UmKat HaDaat) a little bit, each one (of us) according to the measure of our faculties. (That govern concentration, abstract thought, depth of understanding, memory, ability to sit, etc).

If you will notice, “Hisbonenus” (Meditating on Chassidic principles and ideas) is considered basic for one to be able to properly occupy in the Avoda of T'filla. T'filla is considered to be the basic building block of being a Chassid (or Chassida). How many

If used in one way help us to be “Maalim BeKodesh” and if used in just-slightly another way not only detract but entirely distract us from our souls’ mission of turning over the world for Moshiach?

stories, abound about the Baal Shem Tov and the secret society called the “nistarim,” Reb Mordechai, Binyamin Kletzker, the early Baalei Shem: Rabbi Eliyahu, Rabbi Yoel and Rabbi Adam Baal Shem and how they occupied in davening for hours and hours? How many sichos, maamorim, letters about the benefits of being “me-arich” (lengthening) in Tefillah do we have from every one of our Rebbeim?

All of our chinuch, our homes, our yeshivos, our ideals are all centered around this one fundamental building block of being a Chassid in all its different names: “The Avoyda of

Davening,” “Masinus,” “Being MeArich in Tefillah,” Being an “Oved.”

To achieve such a coveted goal means that our children have to be trained to concentrate and focus on ideas, gemorras, mishnayos, maamorim, pasukim, etc for extended periods of time. This involves learning to memorize Tanya, Mishnayos, Gemorras, pasukim, etc.

And this means that a child has to learn to read and use his or her imagination to excite her or himself about very deep Torah ideas.

In order to do this, and develop an excitement and appreciation of these subjects, it goes without saying that the child needs to be infused and living with Torah standards and ideals. These ideals prepare the vessel, our children to accept ideas from Mishnayos, Gomorra and Chassidus.

Knowing the picture above, lets now look at the computer in a Jewish home.

Where does this fit into the ideal picture we have painted above?

The challenge of today is applying new technology and situations to a model that Chassidus presents us of what the world should be like.

Is it “kedusha” or is it complete tumah?

The Rebbe asks the same question about television in his famous sicha of Erev Rosh Chodesh Elul in 1954. There the Rebbe points out about TV:

“No-one ever argued that they got a television set to increase in yiras Shamayim (fear of Heaven).”

Lets give the computer a “litmus-test”:

*Can we say that the computer is helping us to increase in Yiras Shamayim?

*Does the child who uses the computer in the house learn more or better from a computer?

*Will it help the child to be more a part of his class in school? How about more attentive?

*Does the child develop more

“Umkat HaDaat”: depth of imagination and thought, memorization and the ability to think into long intricate ideas that help him or her to be a bigger “Oved Elokim”?

*Will little Shterna or Mendel daven longer and with more excitement after spending the last two hours checking emails, chatting, surfing the net and checking out “kosher” videos?

These are serious questions to consider when we are on the one hand spending a fortune in chinuch and going into debt to ensure that our little ones get the most chassidisher that money can buy in camps, schools and education and on other trying to satisfy “tayvos heter” to keep shalom bayis due to a bored spouse or social pressure to be like “the Jones” (Joe-Shaliach?) who all have computers in the house. (And next to the gemorra.)

Listen.

You gotta prepare for “Shlichus”!

There are increasing stories of computer addiction, homes plagued with less-than Chassidish idea(l)s and besides the arguments of a child’s time being wasted for hours and hours on games, emails, chat so we run into the problems of dragging our neighbors kids down with ours and the even bigger danger of Internet.

You know, that when the Rebbe spoke his famous sicha in 1954* on wearing a Shaytel (instead of a snood or matpechet) and then continued to discuss the subject of television, so there the Rebbe points out that the ideas and images pictured on a TV are foreign for a Jewish home. They exert a subtle influence that destroys the image of a Jew in one’s mind, destroying the foundation of a Jewish house at the same time.

Non-Jewish images of dress, relationships, expressions, mannerisms and ideas that are even protested by vigilant non-Jewish groups concerned with the ethical content of TV are all “beamed” into one’s head by the television set.

A computer goes one step further: Whereas, with a TV, you have to have a satellite antenna or buy cable to access non-tznius material, the computer has no such limitation. Just a few keystrokes away and you have 42nd Street in all its glory in your living room!

Obviously, one at work could be fired for going into these things. Occupying in work keeps one from wasting time to consider visiting such places. But then again, at work we are dealing with serious adults who have a boss on their heads, money to make and far from being bored are usually too occupied and overloaded with deadlines and work to even think of going to such sites! Not to mention that many employers have programs

Amazing! All the “so important” emails and “important work” are suddenly “not-so-important.”

that monitor which sites employees are visiting. These programs are well advertised and G-d forbid if an employee is found wasting his bosses money and time!

The stories abound.

At home we have children, bored housewives and inquisitive young adults.

Lifnay Iver...

Obviously, it is a “Kal-VeChomer” that whatever stringencies the Rebbe applies to television apply to video (which contains a built in TV set) and even more so to Internet.

(Nowadays, you even have “Internet TV”)

The Rebbe says: “Say a frum Jew has a television set and only watches

Public TV, “nature channel” and the news. But, his neighbor will see that here is such a frum-guy and a yirat-shamayim at that, and look! He has a television set!

The neighbor doesn’t know that his friend only watches “the news” and “nature channel” and perhaps: “Bambi” (Listen, it’s a kosher animal. Right?)

So now the neighbor goes out and buys himself a TV. But, whereas his frum yirat shamayim friend only watched “the news” and “nature channel,” the friend doesn’t know this and watches everything!

To him “HaKol Mutar,” everything is permitted.

I will not tell you about the frum guy who went to daven from the omed for Musaf one Shabbos in a Chabad House I visited and the song he used for musaf was “Silent Night.” (A church melody) (No. Not a Lubavitcher)

The same here is true with the computer. Whether or not a person has Internet, whether or not they only watch “Rebbe CD’s.” The neighbor sees and assumes “She has Internet.” She thinks: “My neighbor is such an “aydel maidel,” such a frum girl and from such a good family (Geza!) and look! She has Internet.

I can too.

Then she goes out and buys a computer, but whereas her Aydel Maidel neighbor (Geza even) only watched “Rebbe CD’s” and had nothing to do with the Internet (not even “Kosher-Net”).

By the neighbor, “HaKol Mutar,” all is permitted and the worst smut now becomes “kosher” under such illustrious auspices as she checks out EVERYTHING.

I did not even get into the sheer wasted time that is spent on the computer!

As I look around, I see my friends involved in the same problems. Mitzva charts and shopping lists “must” be done on the computer! (So, I see) with

the most involved graphics and font-faces.

I was by a friend one day and her son tells me "Mommy has no time for me as she is constantly on the computer." I look and watch a ballet. Mommy needs to make a shopping list. Didn't this used to be a five-minute chore? First, you have open Word. Then you have type each thing. But mommy is not 50-words-a-minute. Then the fonts need to be formatted. Of course, you have to go back and forth from the computer to the fridge. Of course, you can't get to the fridge for everything and what with a screaming kid on your lap, and you have to yell to the kids to look for missing items. Then baby needs attention (and diapers). And she drags on the mouse and sits on the keyboard (sound familiar?). Then the list needs to be printed off and faxed... But, the

printer needs this and the fax needs the roller changed or to be plugged in...

I think more than an hour passed in order to do a simple five-minute shopping list, which the grocer will throw in the trash anyhow.

What was gained?

I myself went through such a turmoil and after finally realizing that I was addicted to my emails (don't ask) and other "Hafotzah" that I learned myself, I got smart and rented a desk in an office for my computer. There it sits. When I have time once every two weeks or so, I go and visit to see if it is lonely. Somehow, I always find that it is not.

Amazing! All the "so important" emails and "important work" are suddenly "not-so-important." I see here a lesson for all of us. Especially the challenge of our Shluchim who use

their homes as the main office of their Bais Chabad.

Better to rent a closet (get someone to donate a room) and quickly develop an office where you can have volunteers come in and yourself during work hours and keep our homes and families warm with the fire and excitement of Chassidus and the never-ending work of bringing Moshiach Now, Now, Now!

HaMayvin Yavin....

**See Sichos Kodesh for 1954*

Raanan Shalom Isseroff is Operations Manager for Shtetl Foundation, a Holocaust Foundation that is building a new museum town on 123 acres of land in Rishon LeZion, Israel called: "The Shtetl - The Living History Museum Of The Jewish World." When completed, "The Shtetl" will be a living model of a European Shtetl replete with people dressed in period dress and teaching the way of life of a typical prewar Jewish town. His email: Raanan@shtetlfoundation.org

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BY ELI SHNEURI

*The Chassidic world just lost a unique personality with the passing of the Chassid, Rabbi Levi Yitzchok Shapiro, who served as shliach tzibbur not only when he stood before the amud while davening but in everything he did. * Portrait of a Chassid.*

Rabbi Levi Yitzchok Shapiro was a familiar figure to thousands of Chassidim, to those who visited Crown Heights for Tishrei and especially to those living in Crown Heights. One could not help but remember the old Chassid, short of stature, who walked with a youthful step as he went about one of the dozens of projects that he did on behalf of the community.

Despite the suffering that was apparent on his face, he also had a big smile. And beyond all that, his being a shliach tzibbur whose voice played upon the heartstrings. He read chapters of T'hillim or recited the chazaras ha'shatz many times in the Rebbe's minyan.

Rabbi Shapiro died at the ripe old age of ninety a few weeks ago, and is survived by numerous descendents, Chassidim and shluchim.

* * *

R' Levi Yitzchok Shapiro, or as he

was known, R' Levi Itche, was born in Karalevitch on Shmini Atzeres 5676 (1915). His father was Rabbi Nachum Shapiro and his mother was Rebbetzin Raizel. Rebbetzin Raizel was a tzadeikes with refined middos. People who lived in the area would consult with her and seek her advice.

When the Enlightenment movement spread, many young Chassidishe boys and girls fell prey to the propaganda and threw off the yoke of Torah and mitzvos. This seriously affected the T'mimim who came of age and had a hard time finding frum girls to marry. At that time, the Rebbe Rashab told one of the Chassidim that it was a good idea to marry the daughters of R' Leibel Shapiro of Karalevitch, R' Levi Yitzchok's grandfather.

R' Levi Yitzchok had the privilege of growing up in a family with a Chassidishe atmosphere and mesirus nefesh for a Chassidishe chinuch. When he turned nine, his uncle, the

well-known Chassid, R' Moshe Akselrod (about whom the Rebbe Rayatz said: "If I had another ten Chassidim like R' Moshe, I would overturn all of Russia"), came to visit. He asked R' Nachum in surprise why his son was still home, and suggested that he attend the underground yeshiva in Ramen.

Despite R' Levi Yitzchok's young age, R' Nachum agreed and sent him to the yeshiva in Ramen, where R' Yaakov Gurary was mashpia. His parents weren't sure whether he should "esen teg" (eat his meals with a different family each day) or pay for a permanent situation. His mother finally said that if he ate teg he would be more Chassidish!

Life wasn't easy. It happened that young R' Levi Yitzchok went to the home of his volunteer host and when the woman opened the door and saw him she said, "Oy yingele! I forgot about you," and he had to spend the rest of the day hungry.

After two years the yeshiva had to move to the Chassidic town of Kremenchug where R' Yisroel Noach Blinitzky and R' Mendel Gribov were mashpiim. Despite the hardships and persecution, the T'mimim sat and learned with great diligence.

One day there were loud knocks at the door of the yeshiva. How frightened the boys were when they saw the angels of destruction, the

N.K.V.D. agents, at the threshold of the yeshiva. Having been prepared for such an eventuality they knew that their first order of priority was to save the melamed, for he was considered the greatest criminal of them all.

One of the boys, Yoske Perman, jumped out the window and ran to warn the melamed at his house. One of the policemen who noticed something suspicious, chased after him. When the child realized he was being followed, he changed direction repeatedly in order to shake the agent off his trail.

Since it was not forbidden for children to learn Torah, the police began to question them about their melamed. The children denied his existence and insisted that they learned on their own, without a teacher. The police ordered the children to follow them and brought

them through the streets under armed guard to the local police station.

Since the children insisted on their story, they interrogated them under threats, but the children were smarter than their captors, and were able to avoid the traps set for them. Having no choice, the police finally released the boys.

This is why the directors of the yeshiva decided to move it to Karalevitch, R' Levi Yitzchok's hometown.

When R' Levi Yitzchok was 17 his mother passed away. The financial situation at home was precarious and he had to leave his learning and help support the family. That year, the family moved to Leningrad and Levi Yitzchok found work in a factory.

R' Levi Yitzchok's charming manner helped a lot in developing



connections with senior police officials and the local draft office. He used all his connections in order to



The Rebbe looking into R' Levi Itche's siddur on Hoshana Rabba

gain exemptions for his fellow Chassidim from being drafted into the Russian army. He often had to give bribes to officials from his own money. This entailed great personal danger and required mesirus nefesh.

In those days, any guest that arrived in any city had to present himself to the local police station and get a permit that allowed him to stay there. One time, the famous Chassid, R' Chonye Morosov, secretary of the Rebbe Rayatz, came to Leningrad and asked R' Pinye Altheus, whom the police liked, to get him a permit.

R' Pinye tried to get the permit but was unsuccessful. R' Chonye asked young Levi Yitzchok for help, and after some effort, thanks to his connections, he was able to get a permit, and R' Chonye remained there for Shabbos too.

At the farbrengen on Shabbos, R' Chonye thanked Levi Yitzchok in the presence of the people present when he said to R' Pinye, "What you were unable to do for me, this young fellow did!" And the next day, R' Chonye knocked at the door of R' Levi Yitzchok's home and thanked him again for his help.

R' Levi Yitzchok married the daughter of the famous Chassid, R' Peretz Mochkin, in 1941.

When World War II broke out and the Nazis besieged Russian cities, the Russians announced a general draft, enlisting anyone who seemed fit. People knew that anyone who went to the draft office was sent to the front and the chances were good that he would never return home. The authorities were tough and every young person who walked the streets would be stopped and brought to the nearest draft office. R' Levi Yitzchok used his connections in order to release Anash and T'mimim from the draft.

Because of the war, there was a severe famine in Russia, especially in Leningrad, which was under siege by

the Germans. Tens of thousands of people died of starvation in the streets and all was chaotic. The government ordered women to be drafted in order to dig graves for the dead who filled the streets.

The Germans continued the siege and closed Leningrad in on three sides with only one side open. The Shapiro family packed their belongings and traveled to Omsk in Siberia.

A few months later, in the middle of Sukkos 5702, they packed their belongings again and fled to Tashkent

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in Bucharia along with many other Chabad Chassidim. Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim went to nearby Samarkand and was under the hanhala of the famous Chassid, R' Nissan Nemenov.

As soon as R' Levi Yitzchok arrived in Tashkent, he opened a weaving business. As always, he did not think only of himself and immediately got to work helping find places of work for others.

He ordered large quantities of merchandise, much more than he could ever use for himself and he gave

the work out to families of Anash, especially to widows and large families. This really saved people's lives, since Anash were poverty stricken and yearned to bring some food into their homes.

R' Levi Yitzchok did well and earned a lot of money. He used his profits to support Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim in Samarkand and got by on the little that he kept for himself.

R' Reuven Kaminetzki, one of the talmidim in the yeshiva in Samarkand, would tell about an unusual event that took place in yeshiva. One day, R' Nissan Nemenov said all the rooms in the yeshiva should be cleaned as one would prepare for an important guest.

A few hours later the talmidim saw that the important guest was R' Levi Yitzchok Shapiro, who was one of the main supporters of the yeshiva. R' Levi Yitzchok, noticing that something was out of the ordinary, expressed his dismay to R' Nissan and said that among Chassidim this was unnecessary. But R' Nissan insisted on giving him a tour of the yeshiva, saying, "When you give support, you deserve it."

One day, his brother Yehuda Leib became sick with typhus. Since the disease was contagious it was dangerous for anybody who came near him and he was put in isolation. R' Levi Itche wasn't afraid though, and he slept near his brother in order to help him. He did this until his brother passed away as he held his brother's hand.

R' Levi Itche had connections with the authorities there because he supplied merchandise to the army, and he used these connections to help gain exemptions from the army for his fellow Chassidim. Again, this entailed personal danger and mesirus nefesh.

In 5706, R' Levi Itche and his family left the country, with many of Anash, on the *echelons* to Poland. One of the first things he did when he

crossed the border was to inform the Rebbe Rayatz of his whereabouts. He received a letter and bracha in reply from the Rebbe: **I was happy to hear that you left the gates of Russia and arrived in a safe place.**

R' Levi Itche went to Poking, a large refugee camp in Germany. He did not remain there long but went from there to Paris, where he opened a restaurant.

In 5713, his wanderings finally came to an end when he arrived in the United States. He was sent by the Joint to Cleveland, Ohio, with his brother R' Lipa.

Their home soon became a center of hafatzas ha'Chassidus and many Chassidishe farbrengens took place there that even attracted talmidim from Litvishe yeshivos who secretly attended them.

Like every Chassid whose role is to be a lamplighter, R' Levi Itche soon became a key figure involved in Jewish life in the city, and even concerned himself about things that most from people of the time were not worried about. For example, in those days you couldn't get chalav Yisroel milk in Cleveland. R' Levi Yitzchok, with great devotion saw to it, despite the mockery of the local Jews.

Similarly with chinuch, R' Levi Yitzchok did not compromise and he made sure his sons received a Chassidishe chinuch. When his son, Nachman turned nine, his father sent him to Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim in Montreal, a twenty-hour trip!

When R' Levi Yitzchok was asked why he insisted on a Chabad chinuch so far from home when there were good Jewish schools in Cleveland, he said, "I wasn't moser nefesh in Russia in order that my son learn by the misnagdim."

For about ten years R' Levi Itche lived in Cleveland, where he did all he could for Torah and Chassidus in

the city. In 5723, because the school system in Cleveland was not geared to meet the needs of Chabad Chassidim, R' Levi Yitzchok moved to New York, where he rented an apartment near the Rebbe, opposite 770.

Their home soon became a regular meeting place for dozens of Chassidim, going there to make Kiddush between davening and the farbrengen. On Yomim Tovim, especially on Simchas Torah, the house was full of Chassidim, guests as well as residents of the community who came for Kiddush and to eat a meal before hakafos.



His father, Rabbi Nachman Shapiro

After each farbrengen, some of the chozrim, friends of R' Nachman, came and did a chazara of the farbrengen. Other Chassidim came in order to hear the chazara and so this special farbrengen continued until late Motzaei Shabbos.

In Crown Heights too, R' Levi Itche soon became a familiar and beloved figure, who worked energetically on behalf of others. He was a member of a special committee founded at the time for Tomchei T'mimim, and he was often called by Rashag to participate in meetings of the committee. He helped with money

matters as well as spiritual matters.

At one of the events arranged for the yeshiva, he delivered an impassioned speech in the course of which he enthusiastically said that in Russia they always knew that the Rebbe is our father and Tomchei T'mimim our mother. And the Chassidim gave everything for the Rebbe and for Tomchei T'mimim. Here in the United States, for some reason this is not inculcated. We must raise awareness so that everybody knows that Tomchei T'mimim is our mother, and for a mother you do everything!

His official positions working for Crown Heights began in 5746 (1986) when elections were held for the first time for Vaad HaKahal.

The story is told that even before elections for the gabbaim and the Vaad HaKahal, the gabbaim of 770 wanted to put the responsibility for financial matters of the shul in the hands of someone responsible and trustworthy. When they asked the Rebbe, the Rebbe suggested R' Levi Yitzchok, saying that he was very honest and could be relied upon.

R' Levi Itche served as a member of the Vaad HaKahal and did this job with great devotion. When new elections for rabbanim in Crown Heights were held (to replace Rav Dvorkin a"h), R' Levi Yitzchok was an active participant in the entire election process.

After the rabbanim were elected and the beis din was set up, R' Levi Yitzchok was chosen as secretary of the beis din. This was a new role and R' Levi Yitzchok with his high energy and talent for community service, saw to it that the position would have as its primary goal to help others.

One of the first things he did was set up Mishpat Shalom, which helps couples and litigants make shalom, thus preventing numerous dinei Torah. Along with his official position as secretary of the beis din, he also

served as gabbai tz'daka on behalf of the beis din. Before every holiday, he distributed money to needy families in Crown Heights. He put all his energy into this and worked with great mesirus nefesh, and all this was done happily and graciously.

* * *

A few years ago R' Levi Itche had a heart attack and needed an operation. When he returned home, he was extremely weak. He suddenly remembered that there was a sick woman who still hadn't received her check from the tz'daka fund. Despite his weakness, he went and climbed up to the fourth floor to personally deliver the check.

R' Levi Itche also served as a member and gabbai for the Chevra Kadisha of Aguch, a job that he performed devotedly.

When Shmira in Crown Heights was started, he was an active participant in the organization. When he was asked why he was involved in this organization when younger people were more suitable, he said that when younger people didn't get involved then *he* had to get involved.

R' Levi Itche was also the chazan and baal t'filla in the Rebbe's shul. For many years, he led the recitation of T'hillim on Shabbos Mevarchim. He poured out his heart when he said these chapters, one by one.

When he passed by the Rebbe for "dollars," the Rebbe gave him a dollar and said, "Hatzlacha in chazanus."

After 27 Adar 5752, R' Levi Itche would lead the recitation of the entire T'hillim for the Rebbe's refua. When he got up to the Rebbe's chapter, he would say it loudly, verse by verse, his voice pleading to his Creator. How moving it was to hear his "Shma Koleinu" and "Avinu Malkeinu" during especially critical times. And he proclaimed "Yechi Adoneinu" in recent years with great feeling at farbrengens and other special

occasions.

R' Levi Itche had especially fine middos, a big heart and he loved everyone. It is rare to find someone like him nowadays, someone within whom Ahavas Yisroel burns so fiercely. His Hachnasas Orchim was unparalleled. Many Chassidim who came to see the Rebbe knew that they had a place to stay and eat at R' Levi Itche's.

Many people relate that when they were in need of some help, R' Levi Itche realized this without their saying anything and he came to their aid. When they even began to tell of their problem, he already knew the extent of the problem and devotedly helped them out. His Ahavas Yisroel was practical, not just something nice to talk about. He simply loved to help others and found it to be the greatest pleasure. It was an inseparable part of his personality.

His home phone was available even late at night to people who were in need of help. R' Levi Itche did what needed to be done modestly and discreetly. If someone called for his help and he was in a room where other people were present, he would leave the room and continue the conversation elsewhere.

R' Levi Itche's was remarkably consistent in his daily routine. Every day, for decades, he woke up early and at 4:15 he was out walking in the dark, heading for the mikva on Union Street in order to open it. When one of his granddaughters asked him why, he said, "Maybe another Jew will immerse himself because the mikva was opened early."

After immersing in the mikva, he would sit and say the chapters of T'hillim that corresponded to the ages of all his children and grandchildren, mentioning each one's name and needs.

When he arranged a meeting, he would arrive a quarter of an hour early so as not to cause anyone to

have to wait for him. He arrived early for family gatherings and stayed until the end in order to make the baal simcha happy. This didn't stop him from getting up early the next day in order to open the mikva at the usual time.

The following story illustrates his devotion to his jobs:

A few years ago, R' Levi Itche didn't feel well and an ambulance rushed to his house. When he got to the hospital, he was told he would have to spend the night there. Hearing this, he asked that someone get him the phone number of a certain person whom he called and asked that he open the mikva the next morning instead of him.

"Devotion and responsibility were fundamental to him," says one of his sons. "What was he thinking about? That the mikva be opened on time."

Each grandchild got R' Levi Itche's full attention as though he was the only grandchild. Even friends of the grandchildren got R' Levi Itche's attention! Before the birthday of each of his grandchildren, he would call and ask what time the celebration would take place since he wanted to be there.

R' Levi Itche's hiskashrus to the Rebbe and his devotion to the Rebbe's mitzvaim were boundless. Until the

SAVED BY THE REBBE

R' Levi Itche always asked for the Rebbe's advice and bracha. When he lived in Cleveland, he had the opportunity of buying a successful bakery. Before doing so, he asked the Rebbe but to his surprise, the Rebbe negated the idea. A few days later, he understood why when a fire broke out that destroyed the bakery and caused a tremendous loss to the owner.

past two years (and remember, he passed away at the age of 90), he walked with the Tahalucha to Boro Park, an hour and a half walk each way.

“After I saw such an elderly person going on Tahalucha with such mesirus nefesh, I couldn’t stay behind and I too went on Tahalucha,” Chassidim told his children.

One year on Sukkos, the temperature was especially cold. R’ Levi Itche, who was not feeling well, put on his coat, poured himself a cup of water, and went out to the sukka. When his daughter said that in his state of health and in that weather there was surely no halachic problem with his drinking indoors, R’ Itche pointed at a child sleeping nearby and said, “It’s for his chinuch!”

“But he’s sleeping,” she protested.

“Even while he sleeps he must be educated,” said R’ Levi Itche with typical Chassidic simplicity.

This past Tishrei his daughter saw him walking on Kingston Avenue looking exhausted. He told her that he had just returned from visiting someone in a hospital in Manhattan who was in critical condition and unconscious. He was only allowed to stay in the room for five minutes.

“I went to visit him but the trip was hard for me,” he admitted.

When his daughter asked why he traveled for an hour in order to stay in the room for five minutes when the person was unconscious and didn’t have any enjoyment from the visit, R’ Levi Itche said that when you visit the sick you remove one sixtieth of the sickness, “and just for that you need to go.”

Despite his advanced age, R’ Levi Itche continued to work as secretary of the beis din, and didn’t relinquish any of the other jobs that he had taken upon himself over the years.

This year, after Yom Kippur, his granddaughter suggested that he

come to her apartment nearby, in order to break his fast. He politely declined, “out of respect for Bubby,” he explained.

“His body was weak,” said his granddaughter, “but his spirit was young! That is what enabled him to push himself beyond his natural abilities.”

His children and grandchildren were deeply affected by the example R’ Levi Itche set for them. This past Rosh HaShana, during the farbrengen at the end of Yom Tov, R’ Levi Itche

When his daughter said that in his state of health and in that weather there was surely no halachic problem with his drinking indoors, R’ Itche pointed at a child sleeping nearby and said, “It’s for his chinuch!”

suddenly stood on a table and began to dance like one of the youngsters. It was a moving sight to see a 90-year-old Chassid dancing and encouraging the singing.

The extended family came from around the world to celebrate his 90th birthday on Shmini Atzeres. This was the last family gathering with R’ Levi Itche.

Two months ago, a day before he fell sick, he called one of the people who works for the Crown Heights

beis din and gave him all the beis din paperwork that he had. He also took him to the office and showed him where everything was located. He also gave him the keys to the office. When the employee suggested that they make a copy of the key and he would give R’ Levi Itche back the original, R’ Levi Itche said it wasn’t necessary and that if he needed it, he would ask him for the key.

That night R’ Levi Itche went to the daily Rambam shiur, which he participated in daily, since the Rebbe’s takana, even when he didn’t feel well, and he was the first to open the kollel. His son, R’ Nachman, who saw him walking slowly from 770 in the direction of the Kollel Tiferes Z’keinim, was shaken up by his father’s slow walk and asked him to return home. But R’ Levi Itche insisted on going to the Rambam shiur.

The next day he did not feel well and was rushed to the hospital. A bris was going to take place that Shabbos for his grandson and in a weak voice he told his daughter that they had to return home before Shabbos so he could be present at the bris.

When he realized that he couldn’t leave the hospital so quickly he asked that they bring in Shabbos early. This is what he did every Erev Shabbos. He always finished his Shabbos preparations before midday.

R’ Levi Yitzchok Shapiro was a Chassid who incorporated many wonderful traits: Chayus, simcha, Ahavas Yisroel, help for another, erlichkait, good middos, and mesirus nefesh. He was devoid of outside (secular) influences and was utterly devoted to the Rebbe. He was a Jew who was moser nefesh for Yiddishkait in Russia and the United States.

R’ Levi Itche, who constantly demanded the hisgalus of the Rebbe, is surely creating a great shturm up above. May we see the hisgalus of the Rebbe immediately.