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BEIS MOSHIACH

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REVEALING THE PERFECTION PRESENT IN THE WORLD

LIKKUTEI SICHOS, VOL. 6, PG. 81-85
TRANSLATED BY BORUCH MERKUR



1. It is known that at the time of one's passing there is the gathering together of "all of one's deeds and Torah study and service which he worked on throughout all the days of his life" [*Igeres HaKodesh* Ch. 27, end]. Thus, it is understood that the discourse (*maamer*) entitled "Basi L'Gani" ("I Have Come to My Garden"), which the Rebbe [Rayatz], whose anniversary of his passing we are marking, had given out for the day of his passing, serves as an expression of a central theme of all the service to which he devoted himself throughout the course of his life in this world. (This is especially apparent in the opening and conclusion of the discourse, for the meaning of every concept is more overtly apparent in its beginning and end [since the beginning – the head – **includes** the entire concept, and "everything follows the [concluding] seal" (Brachos 12a) – see Footnote 2 and 3 in the original].)

The following [two examples] are among the central themes of the service of the Rebbe, which he also demanded of all those who go in the ways of his teachings:

a) To disseminate Torah and Mitzvos – including the luminary (*maor*) of the Torah – **to every single place**, including such places which (ostensibly) have no appreciation (*keilim*) for Torah and Mitzvos in general, and certainly not for the teachings of Chassidus.

b) That the work of disseminating Torah and Mitzvos and etc. should be done with the utmost alacrity.

In fact, these two themes are alluded to in the opening and conclusion of this discourse [i.e., "Basi L'Gani"].

2. In the beginning of the discourse, the Rebbe cites the saying of the Midrash [*Shir HaShirim Rabba* Ch. 5,

beg.] on the verse, "I have come to My garden, My sister, My bride": "Here it does not say, 'to the garden' (*la'gan*) but 'to My garden' (*l'gani*), meaning to my private [bridal] chamber (*l'ganuni*), to the place that was My main [place] in the beginning. For the principal manifestation of the Divine Presence was in the lower realms." That is, the indwelling of the Divine Presence in the lower realms, which occurred at the time of the erection of the Sanctuary (regarding which G-d says, "I have come to My garden"), already happened at the beginning of Creation (and not as the opinion of the one who says [in *BaMidbar Rabba* 12:6] that "it [i.e., the Divine revelation precipitated by the erection of the Sanctuary] was a novelty"). However, on account of the sin of the Tree of Knowledge, along with the sins done thereafter, "it ceased." But afterwards, at the time of the erection of the Sanctuary, "it returned to its former state."

In the conclusion of the discourse, the Rebbe cites the Midrash [*D'varim Rabba* 9:3], "One is not in a position of authority to say, 'Wait for me until I may make my assessments and until I command my household, etc.'" Since this is so, we may not defer the work incumbent upon us, for "Who is it who knows his moment and his time [of passing]?"

By bringing in the opening and the conclusion of the discourse these two particular passages of the Midrash, the Rebbe is expressing these two themes mentioned above: With the Midrash brought at the conclusion of the discourse he is indicating that the work must be done with alacrity, and with the Midrash quoted in the beginning of the discourse he defines what comprises the work itself: disseminating Torah and Mitzvos **in every single place**, as will be discussed.

3. [In discussing the present state of the world, the teachings of Chassidus describe that] the world is (as the Alter Rebbe says [in *Tanya* Ch. 36]) “**full** of *klippos* [“husks” that conceal G-dliness] and the Other Side [which opposes the Side of Holiness],” meaning that every aspect of this world is full with *klippos*, to the extent that the very name of this world – since the name of every thing expresses its essence [see Footnotes 8 and 9 of *Likkutei Sichos* Vol. 6, pg. 35] – is “the World of Klippos and the Other Side” [*Tanya* Ch. 6, end of pg. 10b]. Of course, when a Jew considers the [negative] state of the world, he may reason as follows:

Since G-d has **created** the world in such a manner that it should be “the World of Klippos,” it is not conceivable that I should be able to change it. Therefore, I should separate myself from the world and close myself off within the four cubits of Torah and prayer, not being involved with the world!

Regarding this [faulty reasoning], the Rebbe explains right away in the beginning of the discourse: On the contrary. The fact that the world is a world of *klippos* is (not something that defines the **essential nature** of this world, that it is necessarily that way, but) a peripheral matter, a notion that was **added** (after Creation), through the sin of the Tree of Knowledge and etc. In fact, with respect to its essential nature, there certainly is an advantage of this world over the supernal worlds, since the **principal** manifestation of the Divine Presence **was** specifically in the lower realms.

One could, however, continue to argue: It is indeed true that in the beginning of Creation it was different, but now the world is “full” of *klippos* and “the wicked dominate in it” [*Tanya* Ch. 6, end of pg. 10b]!

The response to this comes later in the discourse. Namely, the explanation that the ultimate intent of the creation and genesis of the worlds is because “The Holy One Blessed Be He desired that He should have a dwelling place in the lower realms” [Tanchuma, Naso 16], and the Divine intent will surely be fulfilled.

(Since Creation is (something that occurs continually, **every single moment** [*Shaar HaYichud V’HaEmuna*, beginning]) for the sake of this Divine intent, it is not possible that matters pertaining to

the created beings – the deeds of man (the sin of the Tree of Knowledge and etc.) – should have the capacity to oppose and not permit, G-d forbid, the fulfillment of this Divine intent.)

Ultimately, the world will in fact **become** a dwelling place for Him, may He be blessed. It comes out then, that the present change in the world – the fact that it is now “the World of Klippos” – is “a change that reverts to its former state” (since ultimately there will come a time when, “I will cause the spirit of impurity to pass away from the land” [Z’charya 13:2], as it was before the sin), and “a change that reverts to its former state is **not** deemed to be a change” [Sukka 30a, Bava Kama 96b]. Thus, in an inner sense, also presently the world is a “dwelling place for Him, may He be blessed,” especially since the change (is not only one that **may** revert to its former state, but it) will certainly return to its former state, as mentioned above.

Since the revelation of the future will be in a manner of, “The land will be **full** of the knowledge of G-d as the waters cover the sea” [Yeshayahu 11:9], and “May **everything** that has been made come to know that You have made it” [T’fillas Amida of Rosh HaShana], consequently, also now it is so (in an inner sense) in **every** aspect of the world, even in a place where it appears as if there is an opposition to G-dliness, to there being a dwelling place for Him, may He be blessed. Therefore, we must disseminate Judaism **in every single place** in order to **reveal** the goodness that is **present** in every place.

[To be continued be”H]

*The fact that it is now
“the World of
Klippos” – is “a
change that reverts to
its former state,” and
“a change that reverts
to its former state is
not deemed to be a
change.”*

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MAKING YOUR HOUSE THE REBBE'S HOUSE

BY RABBI CHAIM ASHKENAZI
TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY

In order for everything that we have to belong to the Rebbe MH"M, we must place the Rebbe within our own home through our conduct, all hours of the day and night, every day of the year. As chassidim customarily said in the previous generations: Even the spoon in a chassid's home cries out, "Rebbe!" To put it simply, this means that the spoon is seen as the Rebbe wants to see it, and he sees me using it. Excerpts from a chassidic farbrengen.

R. Mottel Kozliner, of blessed memory, who experienced the frightful period of Communism in Russia, did not speak often about those days. On one occasion, he told a story about R. Chatche Feigin, of blessed memory, who traveled on a train to the Rebbe Rayatz with five hundred rubles in his sack (a huge sum in those days), in order to give the money to the Rebbe.

At the time that this story took place, there was a war in process between opposing factions in Russia, where wild and animalistic mobs of people would inhabit the trains. This rabble would decide without hesitation to throw a person out of the window of a moving train – and nothing could

be done to stop them. One such group of rioters overpowered R. Chatche and took all the money from him, however, they did him a kindness and let him live.

When R. Chatche came to the Rebbe Rayatz and told him what happened, he expected that the Rebbe would probably say to him: *Nu...Baruch Hashem*, you're still alive, "Torah exempts those under duress." However, the Rebbe said instead: "*Nu*, you can pay it off, little by little."

The chassidim who told this story had come to the conclusion that a chassid is neither a paid nor an unpaid keeper – who are exempt from payment, but a borrower – who is

obligated to pay. In fact, a chassid owes everything to the Rebbe, and therefore, there are no excuses (even the most justifiable ones, as in the abovementioned story) that exempt him from his obligations. It was not a viable option for R. Chatche to put up a fight against those hooligans, as the natural end result would be that the Rebbe would have not just no money, but *ch"v* no R. Chatche. Nevertheless, he had to return what was lost, and there was no justification for avoiding the fulfillment of this obligation.

The Rebbe Rashab expressed himself in a similar vein regarding actions taken to nullify certain decrees, efforts that regrettably failed despite the fact that the Rebbe did everything possible to achieve success. When the chassid who escorted him on his return trip saw the Rebbe's brokenhearted expression, he said, "The Rebbe did all that he could possibly do." The Rebbe replied: "*Ahber der zach zich nisht ahpgitahn!* (But the matter was not fulfilled!) If so, how can I be tranquil and calm?" These words are most appropriate in connection with the previous story: The justifiable excuse that R. Chatche was attacked by a band of hoodlums does not change the painful fact that the money intended for the Rebbe in order to spread Yiddishkait, etc., did not reach its destination.

When we consider such stories and

others like them, this must arouse and illuminate within us the need to ask ourselves: What is demanded from us in our *Avodas Hashem*? Do I live to serve G-d and the Rebbe, or do envisage them as existing for me?

HOW DO WE BELONG TO THE REBBE?

This chassidic manner of relating to the Rebbe stems from the way that chassidim relate to G-d. To emphasize this approach, chassidim would tell a story about a non-chassidic Jew who was walking in the street one morning during Chol HaMoed Sukkos, carrying his lulav and esrog in one hand, and his tallis and t'fillin (in accordance with their custom of wearing t'fillin on Chol HaMoed) in the other. Suddenly he got an itch. The man felt totally helpless to stop the itching, as his hands were full with mitzvos. What did he do? He turned to G-d and said: Master of the Universe! You can see that I'm occupied now with Your matters. If so, please if You would, my Master, scratch my back... He naturally felt that G-d owed him one, especially since he's giving G-d such nachas – surrounded by all His mitzvos!

Of course, this is not the way. A Jew owes everything to G-d, not the opposite. By the same token, we must relate to the instructions and the will of the Rebbe, because the Rebbe does not represent himself, but the will of G-d alone.

As a result, it should come as no surprise that there were chassidim such as R. Avraham Pariz, who wanted his salary to go directly to the Rebbe shlita, and also requested from the Rebbe shlita that he accept this formula. Once, when he found a sack of gold coins in his orchard in Petach Tikva, he rode on his horse to the city of Yafo and deposited the money directly into the Rebbe Rayatz's bank account (at the time, the Rebbe had just left Russia and was under much financial pressure). If G-d arranged such a treasure to come his way, it was

obviously meant for the Rebbe!

R. Reuven Dunin, for example, sent the Israel Land Registry documents on his apartment to the Rebbe MH"M in order to have them registered on the Rebbe shlita's name. The Rebbe shlita did not accept this proposal, as this was not his intention. Instead, as he wrote in a letter to Rabbi Dunin, if the home was conducted with the Rebbe in mind, this would make it "the Rebbe's house."

In order for everything that we have to belong to the Rebbe MH"M, we must place the Rebbe within our own home through our conduct, all



Rabbi Chaim Ashkenazi

hours of the day and night, every day of the year. As chassidim customarily said in the previous generations: Even the spoon in a chassid's home cries out, "Rebbe!" To put it simply, this means that the spoon is seen as the Rebbe wants to see it, and as he sees me using it.

This desire of a chassid to have everything in his home belong to the Rebbe is learned from halacha. Torah states that it is not enough to have a mezuzah at a home's front entrance, rather we must affix a mezuzah at every separate doorpost in the house, thereby proclaiming that everything

belongs to G-d. Who is the one who teaches us how to connect every room and every item in the room – even the mezuzah itself – to G-d? The Rebbe MH"M. Therefore, when a person gives and connects all that he has to the Rebbe, he connects it to G-d.

This concept, in its simplest and clearest sense, was heard once from a young chassidic boy, when he said right before Rosh HaShana, "I crown the Rebbe, and the Rebbe crowns G-d..."

HE HAS NOTHING TO HIMSELF

One of the most majestic figures among chassidim whose conduct served as a living example of a chassid totally devoted to the Rebbe and his institutions, leaving not one iota to himself, was R. Chaim Shaul Brook, of blessed memory.

I once heard from one of his acquaintances, a Gerer chassid, how R. Chaim Shaul came into the Poalei Agudas Yisroel shul in Rishon LeTzion on Shabbos to announce a collection for Yeshivas Achei T'mimim. The shul was filled to capacity. Everyone was waiting attentively to hear his words, as they all knew him to be a very distinguished and *emes'dike* person.

R. Shaul stood next to the bima and gazed at the congregation for a few minutes that seemed like an eternity. Silence reigned, when he suddenly called out, "Robbers! Give money to the T'mimim!" – that was all. One of the shul's more prominent *baalei battim* approached and said, "Fine, you want money for the students? We understand. But why did you have to call us 'robbers'?"

"Is this your money?" R. Shaul asked him. "This is G-d's money. So why are you holding on to it?" Afterwards, the shul members turned to one another, made a *Mi Sh'Beirach*, and then made generous pledges out of a sense of deep appreciation for R. Shaul's words without the slightest

resentment. They knew that he would never take anything for his own personal usage, as he deemed that everything he possessed belonged to Achei T'mimim.

This mode of conduct is not the sole heritage of chassidic giants. I once heard about a rank-and-file Jew, a Lubavitcher chassid who lived in Russia during the hard times, when Jews were starving for bread. Despite the fact that he was not wealthy and his home was stricken with poverty, he would give much money to charity, saving the lives of many people.

Once he was asked: It is written, "Do not distribute more than a fifth," yet you give much more than this. His reply: I fulfill what is written in its simplest sense. What I take for myself is the distribution of charity, and therefore, I do not take more than a fifth. As for the remaining four-fifths, I give them in a fashion that G-d would want – to tz'daka!

This is the realization of "Give to Him of that which is His, for you and whatever is yours are His" in the simple, earnest manner of a chassid.

BE CAREFUL NOT TO SCRATCH YOUR PERSONAL "DISK"

In order for our relationship towards G-d to be as it should, we must have a comparable relationship towards the Rebbe MH"M, in accordance with the saying of our Sages, brought by the Alter Rebbe in *Tanya* (Ch. 2), "He who cleaves to a Torah scholar is deemed as if he literally cleaved to the *Sh'china*." We have no other way in Torah and chassidus how to cleave to G-d. Therefore, a chassid's entire life revolves around the Rebbe MH"M.

This takes expression in farbrengens and other gatherings of a family or community nature, where all discussions center on one subject: Rebbe, Rebbe! To do the Rebbe's will, to be totally devoted to the Rebbe, to

think about the Rebbe, in short, to breathe the Rebbe – just as physical breathing does not cease for a moment, twenty-four hours a day, 365 days a year, the one hundred and twenty years of a person's lifetime on this earth.

Someone who is not close to Chabad chassidus cannot understand this, and is prepared to say: Go look for something else to discuss, to argue about, to delve into again and again. This is because a Lubavitcher chassid knows that cleaving to G-d means

The justifiable excuse that R. Chatche was attacked by a band of hoodlums does not change the painful fact that the money intended for the Rebbe in order to spread Yiddishkait, etc., did not reach its destination.

nullifying himself before the Rebbe MH"M as the connecting force to G-d.

There's a story about one of the Mezritcher Maggid's students, who told the Alter Rebbe, "If I were in G-d's place, I would have done several things differently." The Alter Rebbe responded, "And I would have done things exactly as G-d did them."

The Alter Rebbe's words express the fact that if there is some outlook of "me," demonstrating a certain will, a certain desire, the slightest anger that certain expectations were not fulfilled,

or even a passing thought that "I would have run things differently than G-d" or "If G-d could have done things this way, then why did He do this to me?" – then this is an approach of "He is there for you," not "you are there for Him." You are not cleaving to Him, rather you attach Him to yourself, as it were.

Such an approach *ch"v* is considered heretical. Subtle as it may sound, who knows the damage that can result from even the slightest and smallest scratch on the brain *r"l*. It can cause cerebral alterations or even unconsciousness – and that's if the person's lucky. Sometimes, it can cause damage to vital limbs, *ch"v*.

If even the slightest physical blow can *ch"v* cause injury to the human brain, liable to bring the person to the loss of his human character, then even the slightest spiritual blow to the "I am His" approach will surely damage *ch"v* his Jewish character.

Chassidus guides us on how to reach the level of "you and yours – are His." As mentioned above, this is expressed through, "Cleave to a Torah scholar, who literally cleaves to the *Sh'china*." Therefore, we must do everything in order "to cleave to him" – you are for the Rebbe, not the other way around.

ARE THERE RESULTS TO THIS DEVOTION?

Is there a way, or a measuring rod, through which a person can measure the level of his devotion to the Rebbe MH"M and to G-d – as one depends upon the other? There is a measuring rod. We can discover this measuring rod from a story about Dr. Zeligson, of blessed memory, who served as a physician in the court of the Rebbe shlita. Due to his great *yiras Shamayim*, when he gave someone an injection, he wouldn't look where he was sticking the hypodermic needle – in order to guard his eyes. Sometimes when he gave the shot and perceived

that the patient wasn't responding, he would ask: Doesn't it hurt? The patient would often reply: When the needle goes into the wall, you don't feel the pain! (Due to his great modesty, he didn't notice that the needle had completely missed its target, and got stuck in the adjacent wall...).

Just as you don't feel the needle if it doesn't touch you, similarly, it is impossible to feel the Rebbe within you and to cleave to him if we do not come close to him. "**To him**" means his inner essence. If you cleave to him, this means that you are totally devoted and dedicated to him. In practical terms, however, if "*der zach zich nisht ahpgitahn*" (the matter was not fulfilled, as the Rebbe Rashab said) – this means that you have not cleaved to him, and no excuses will help, even real and justifiable ones, such as those that R. Chatche brought in our earlier story.

We find a comparable example of this matter in Zohar regarding the Yenuka, who did not want to receive the brachos of the Tanaim because he smelled from their clothes that they had not said *Krias Shma*. However, the Tanaim did so in accordance with halacha, as they were involved in community matters at that moment. Yet, while the Tanaim were exempt, they were nevertheless lacking the relevant spiritual garment.

I heard another story about the Rebbe Rayatz, whom the Rebbe MH^M noticed had taken certain stringencies and mortifications upon himself since his imprisonment. When the Rebbe shlita asked why he had accepted these customs, the Rebbe Rayatz replied, "There had been certain disturbances in Avodas Hashem during the imprisonment. It's true that they were made under duress, since it was naturally not possible to serve Hashem fully while in prison. However, practically speaking, it was lacking, and therefore, it must be repaired to complete the 'produce' yielded through

complete hiskashrus to Hashem."

TO SCRAPE OFF THE "PROTRUSIONS"

We can learn how to do this in practice from the physical process of adhesion. The instructions on any tube of adhesive material state that before application, the place where the material is to be applied must be made

The Rebbe Rayatz replied, "There had been certain disturbances in Avodas Hashem during the imprisonment. It's true that they were made under duress, since it was naturally not possible to serve Hashem fully while in prison. However, practically speaking, it was lacking, and therefore, it must be repaired.

absolutely smooth without any protrusions whatsoever. In connection with our discussion, we can make the following comparison: When we have the protrusions of "I want," "I understand," "I need," etc. – it is impossible to cleave to G-d.

This mode of conduct to nullify all personal whims in order to cleave to the Sh'china has been demanded of

every Jew throughout the generations. for the Torah is eternal, particularly the physical mitzvos connected to our daily conduct, and they must be fulfilled in a manner of "to cleave to Him." To attain this level, we must cleave to the Torah scholar of the generation who always cleaves to G-d. The suggestion that there would be a moment when his body would disturb his connection to the Sh'china is totally irrelevant. His body could never possibly act or function without reason *ch"v* as a separate entity, cut off (as it were) from the Sh'china. This is because the Sh'china is the total existence of the Torah scholar and tzaddik contained within this body.

If this applies in every generation, then it especially does in our generation. That "Torah scholar" has made known that he is the leader of the generation, thus making him the only Moshiach of the generation. Therefore, from that moment forward, the Sh'china to which he cleaves represents the revelation of Moshiach. Anyone who wants to be connected to him – and he represents Moshiach – must be connected to the subject of Moshiach, for it is impossible to be connected to **something else** and think that he is cleaving to him.

Therefore, "cleaving to Torah scholars" today is achieved by preparing for the coming of Moshiach through the recognition and knowledge that he is already here and has begun his activities in the world – as the Moshiach himself has said. This doesn't mean that we have to change *ch"v* any of the details that were demanded of us in the past; all this continues today no less and even more.

CHASSIDUS STRENGTHENS THE "POWER OF THE SOUL"

Even in worldly matters, we can see clearly that the struggle to acquire man's physical needs – food, clothing, and shelter – is far less today than they once were. Decades and especially

centuries ago, the requirements of life were fewer, and what there was – was above and beyond. If so, the spiritual needs were surely not less, but far greater. According to the well-known principle, “Strength in the body is weakness in the soul,” we must strengthen the needs of the soul so there will be “strength in the soul is weakness in the body.”

The difference between then and now is in the level demanded, i.e., in **qualitative** terms. Everyone understands that there has been a descent in the generations regarding Torah comprehension, despite the vast addition of commentaries during the previous generations. Nevertheless, we still do not have the ability to compete with the level of understanding in Torah subjects compared to that era. Similarly, we find in relation to those matters connected to the quality of understanding and recognition of G-d's greatness, which leads to an emotional awakening that was incomparably loftier in the previous generations. Yet, we can say that G-d does not demand according to His strengths, but to our strengths.

However, in terms of practical application, there has been no lowering of demands. On the contrary, there is the revelation of many new matters that can uplift us more and more. Thus chassidus was revealed in recent generations, not the earlier generations, when people were on the level of angels. Due to the doubled darkness that engulfs us, we need greater and stronger light.

There is a well-known chassidic parable that someone who is in a deep pit cannot light a candle with a match due to the lack of oxygen, and therefore, he needs a torch, etc., in order to illuminate the dark pit. To what can this be compared? Due to the coarse darkness in which we live, the great flame of chassidus, hidden during all previous generations, was revealed to us in order to illuminate

the path of *Avodas Hashem*.

In our times, we see clearly (including in the Rebbe shlita's many letters and sichos) that Yiddishkai can be strengthened only through chassidus. The reality in recent generations has proven that those who succeeded in grasping the spirit and the path of chassidus withstood all trials, and neither Communism nor permissiveness could overcome them.

CHASSIDUS FOR ALL THE JEWISH PEOPLE

Thus, chassidus spread forth until it has reached today **the entire Jewish People**, though not always under the explicit heading, “This is the path of chassidus,” nevertheless, the concepts and conduct have spread to all of Klal Yisroel. There are numerous examples: niggunim, immersing in a mikveh, davening with a hat and jacket, davening at length, stringency in mitzva performance, such as wearing a *tallis katan* of ample size, not wearing t'fillin during Chol HaMoed, etc., etc.

All this is because the world cannot properly connect to G-d through Torah and mitzvos without chassidus, and therefore, the Rebbeim sacrificed everything to spread the teachings of this path – not just for their own group of loyal followers, but due to their responsibility to all Jews. It is true that prior to the Rebbe shlita's leadership, it appeared that the Rebbeim turned primarily to Lubavitcher chassidim, who in turn would draw the rest of the Jewish People after them. In the seventh generation, however, the Rebbe shlita did not settle for this approach alone, rather, he made certain to bring the wellsprings themselves outward, in its simplest and most literal sense – to places where the people there would say that this is “far out” – to the slopes of the Himalayas, to the ashrams of Poona, India, and to the gambling tables of Las Vegas.

As a direct result of the wellsprings'

transformation into a heritage for everyone, more and more people are coming to greater devotion to G-d, despite the fact that a considerable portion of such newcomers don't even know that they have drunk from the wellsprings of chassidus.

The “Torah scholar” of the generation has also told the entire generation that throughout the annals of time, G-d has always wanted devotion in one form or another. At a certain stage, “*U'faratzta*” was the way that the world connected to its Torah scholars, and thereby to the Sh'china, through them. Afterwards, this was done through the Ten Mitzva Campaigns, in addition to the mitzvaim connected with the Jewish holidays during the year, until we finally came to the most important campaign of all – preparing the world for Moshiach.

CLEAVING TO HASHEM THROUGH STUDYING MOSHIACH

This is the way to cleave to G-d in our times: The subject of Moshiach and the Redemption must remain a front-burner issue, twenty-four hours a day. Lubavitcher chassidim have been accustomed for nearly four decades that when they meet a Jew in the street, they ask him, “Have you put on t'fillin today?” and it is already a well-known fact in the world that if you meet up with a Chabadnik, the first thing you have to do is roll up your sleeve and put on t'fillin.

In our times, when the “Torah scholar” of the generation has made known that the way to cleave to the Sh'china is through Moshiach – this is the vitality of the world today, and thus we have to cleave to Moshiach in order to cleave to Him. It is impossible to take hold any other way, even through something very good. As good as this may be, this is not cleaving to **Him**, because today, this can only be achieved through the subject of

Moshiach.

This is the subject matter for everyone – even G-d-fearing Torah scholars, not just those dressed in the garments of Eisav (as in the T'fillin Campaign), at all hours of the day, every day of the week, including Shabbos and Yom Tov (unlike in the T'fillin Campaign...), men, and even women and children!

There are no excuses, even the most reasonable and justifiable, not to be involved in the subject of Moshiach. For then, as in the words of the Rebbe Rashab, “the matter will not be fulfilled” – “cleaving to Him” through learning about Moshiach and the Redemption. We must bring others to join as well, as the Rebbe MH”M instructed us in numerous sichos and letters – even if you don’t feel that you can relate to this matter, this does not exempt you from informing and influencing others. For these other people are not to blame if you haven’t internalized the subject, especially since speaking with others about Moshiach and the Redemption will also have a positive influence upon you.

MOSHIACH – INTERNALLY AND EXTERNALLY

If someone says that he is connected to the Rebbe MH”M with every fiber of his being, but he doesn’t engage in activities spreading Moshiach, he has to understand that there simply cannot be any contradiction between *chitzonius* and *p’nimius* in our hiskashrus to the Rebbe. There are, however, instances of “inwardly as outwardly” – i.e., first things are “outwardly,” *chitzonius*, and afterwards, it is made “inwardly,” *p’nimius*, as it is in *chitzonius*, the *chitzonius* has influence internally.

Similarly, we have the example of actors who have come closer to Yiddishkeit through doing role portrayals connected with Jewish and chassidic conduct. As a result of the

need to perform the role appropriately, the external connection was made internal, and they became full-fledged chassidim.

There are those who think that since Chabad is *p’nimius* and garments are *chitzonius*, therefore, it makes no difference how a person dresses, since not only is Chabad not stringent about *chitzonius*, they denigrate those who are. One has to hope that such people don’t think that it makes no difference if men wear dresses or if women wear *kapotes* (as clothes are mere

Therefore, “cleaving to Torah scholars” today is achieved by preparing for the coming of Moshiach through the recognition and knowledge that he is already here and has begun his activities in the world.

chitzonius...). However, it should be clear to anyone that this is sheer nonsense and a disgrace to the laws of modesty, etc.

When we say that Chabad is not stringent about attire, this means that it doesn’t matter if you wear a *kapote*, a *bekitcha*, a long coat, or a short jacket – a velvet Borsalino with a *knetch*, a *shtreimel*, a *spotik*, or a *kasket*. However, it must be clear that you dress as a Torah observant Jew, as all these garments identify you as such. For it is not your mode of dress that

makes you a Lubavitcher, but the fact that you dress according to Torah, as faith-filled Jews have dressed for generations.

By the way, I heard a story that before the Rebbe shlita assumed the leadership, a Jew entered his home to collect money for *tz’daka*. The Rebbe was in the midst of his Torah study and was without a jacket. The man said to the Rebbe shlita that he had been taught that a Jew must have awe and fear during Torah study, and therefore, he must wear a jacket. The Rebbe shlita replied that we have been taught that what matters is what is under the garment. In any event, it is known that the Rebbe shlita was most stringent and desirous that chassidim go out in the street only with an upper garment, and with a long and prominent garment for Shabbos.

HAVE WE BROUGHT ABOUT THE COMING OF MOSHIACH?

This entire discussion on attire was for the purpose of emphasizing that we should not minimize the importance of creating a proper impression towards the “outside.” Thus, once the identity card of a Lubavitcher chassid was his outward appearance – beard, peios, Jewish haircut, kippa that covered the majority of the head (in order to demonstrate that there is a Higher Knowledge), appropriate attire, with t’fillin ready in hand to put on Jewish passers-by – and all this still applies in full force. Today, however, there is something more that anyone who sees a Lubavitcher chassid must say to himself: Here comes someone who will remind us that Moshiach is coming. No excuse of being under duress will placate us, so long as “*der zach zich nisht ahpgitahn*” – Moshiach has not yet been revealed, we have not yet attained the true level of cleaving to the Rebbe MH”M, and through him – the King of all Kings, Alm-ghty G-d.

UNTIL THE COMING OF MOSHIACH

*Before the Alter Rebbe was born the Baal Shem Tov said, “A neshama is coming down that will take responsibility for Klal Yisroel until the coming of Moshiach.” * There is one Jew who fulfilled the purpose of his neshama coming down below, and that is the Alter Rebbe! * A compilation of Chassidic stories that R’ Avrohom Ber Blesovsky wrote about the Alter Rebbe, with the addition of stories about his son and grandson as well as the Baal Shem Tov. * From a t’shura for the Rabinowitz-Yeruslavsky wedding. * Presented for Chaf-Daled Teives, yahrtzait of the Alter Rebbe.*

ONLY A HAIR SEPARATES

The Baal Shem Tov once said to his brother-in-law, R’ Gershon Kitover:

“Between you and me is only a hair, but you will never be able to pass over this hair.”

HE COULDN’T RESTRAIN HIMSELF

The Baal Shem Tov once asked one of his talmidim (apparently R’ Yaakov Yosef of Polonoye known as the Toldos) whether he ever heard how the melamidim of his town taught the children.

The talmid said, “They are Chassidim and G-d-fearing so why should I listen in to their teaching?”

The Baal Shem Tov asked him to go and listen on the next Rosh Chodesh. And so, the following Rosh Chodesh the talmid went and listened to how the melamed was teaching his students the chapter of T’hillim that is customarily said on Rosh Chodesh, “Barchi Nafshi.”

One of the children asked the melamed, “Why did Dovid HaMelech say, ‘How manifold are your works Hashem,’ in the middle of his chapter? It would have been fitting for him to finish the praise of the Creator and only then to conclude with these words, ‘How

THE BAAL SHEM TOV

THE ADDITIONAL REVELATION OF THE TEACHINGS OF THE BAAL SHEM TOV

The Baal Shem Tov said that after 100 years, he would come again to reveal his Torah, and 100 years and five months after his passing, the Rebbe Rashab was born. The Baal Shem Tov passed away on Shavuot

5520 and the Rebbe Rashab was born on 20 Cheshvan 5621.

The Rebbe Rashab once referred to this story at a farbrengen:

“The Ruzhiner [the tzaddik R’ Yisroel of Ruzhin] said that he is the Baal Shem Tov and I say that I am the Baal Shem Tov.”

R’ Chatshe Feigin (may Hashem avenge his blood) said, “This means that Chabad Chassidus is the Torah of the Baal Shem Tov.”

manifold are your works Hashem.”

The melamed answered, “Dovid couldn’t restrain himself.”

THE ALTER REBBE LEARNED TANYA HIMSELF

One of the Alter Rebbe’s children once saw him learning *Tanya* assiduously. He said, it’s understandable that other people learn it but why did he, the author of *Tanya*, learn it so intensely?

The Alter Rebbe answered that it was because he saw chiddushim in it that he did not see in Mezritch.

NO NEED TO RUSH

A Chassid of the Alter Rebbe was once sent by his family to buy coal. On the way, his yearning to see the Rebbe overtook him and he went to the Alter Rebbe. After staying there three weeks, he remembered that his family had sent him to buy coal!

The Chassid quickly returned home, buying coal on the way. When he entered the house, he tripped on the threshold and spilled the coal. Said the Chassid: It’s all because I rushed.

THE REWARD OF R’ ISAAC OF HOMIL

The Alter Rebbe once told his talmid R’ Isaac of Homil (and another one of his Chassidim) that they should be mekarev one of the misnagdim who was a great scholar. After a few weeks, they were successful in being mekarev him to Chassidus.

The Alter Rebbe said to R’ Isaac that as a reward for doing this he would have “ahava b’taanugim” (a level of Divine love attainable only by way of a gift from Above.)

(from R’ Yitzchok Dubov, who heard this from the Rebbe Rayatz)

WHY DID THE NESHAMA DESCEND?

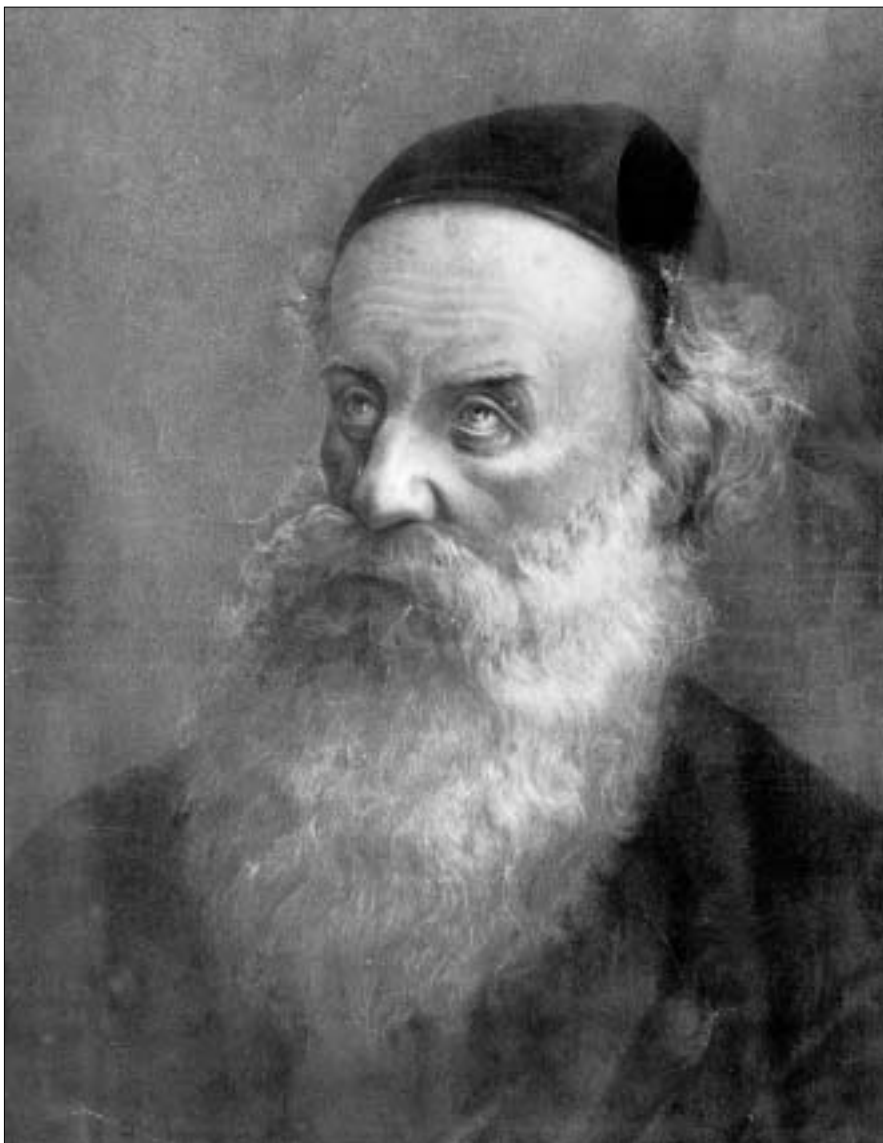
The Alter Rebbe once reminded his attendant to say Shma before it was too late. The attendant turned over and continued sleeping. The Alter Rebbe said in his usual singsong, “It wasn’t for this that the neshama descended below, in order to turn over and continue sleeping.”

WHAT IS THE TRUE INTENTION?

There was a melamed who wanted to be a businessman, and since he was a Chassid he went to ask one of the Poilishe Admurim as well as the Alter Rebbe. The Alter Rebbe told him it didn’t pay to be a businessman. The Poilishe tzaddik told him he could be a businessman. The man said to the tzaddik that the Alter Rebbe had told him no.

Said the tzaddik, “Zalmanyu (what the talmidim of the Maggid called the Alter Rebbe), doesn’t know the intention. There is no need to act as though there is no world, but we must be in the world yet be outside of it, simultaneously.

When the melamed returned to the Alter Rebbe and repeated this, the Alter Rebbe said, “That would be true if you were a businessman and you



wanted to be a melamed, for that would show that even while being a businessman you know that there isn't a world. But when you are a melamed and you want to be a businessman..."

CHASSIDIM ARE BAALEI T'SHUVA

The mashpia R' Shmuel Grunem Esterman said in the name of the Alter Rebbe that at first he wanted to call Chassidim, "Baalei T'shuva," but he did not do so because of those who are not Chassidim. (And now, when Chassidim are called Chassidim, the others are called non-Chassidim and not "Baalei Aveira." But if Chassidim had been called "Baalei T'shuva," those who weren't Chassidim would have been lower than that.)

(from mashpia R' Shmuel Levitin)

A NESHAMA FROM THE WORLD OF TRUTH

R' Shmuel Grunem Esterman related that the Chassid, R' Pinchas Reizes (who was the Alter Rebbe's chozer) once saw how someone was standing ready to enter the Alter Rebbe's room for yechidus and each time he walked over to the door his face changed and he withdrew. He finally entered but R' Pinchas did not see him come out.

When R' Pinchas asked the Alter Rebbe about it, the Alter Rebbe said that it was a neshama that had come from the World of Truth to ask for a tikkun and his face changed because he knew how hard it is for a tzaddik to make such a tikkun.

(ibid)

A NESHAMA THAT TAKES RESPONSIBILITY

The Rebbe Rashab said: Before the birth of the Alter Rebbe the Baal Shem Tov said, "A neshama is descending which will take responsibility for Klal Yisroel until the coming of Moshiach."

(R' Yitzchok Dubov)

HE FULFILLED THE PURPOSE

R' Isaac of Homil once said: There is one Jew who fulfilled the purpose of the soul's descent to this world and that is the Alter Rebbe!

(R' Yitzchok Dubov)

WHO IS GREATER?

The Alter Rebbe once entered the room of the tzaddik R' Boruch of Mezhibozh through a side door without permission from the gabbai. R' Boruch said, "Do you know who my gabbai is? He has revelations from Eliyahu!"

Said the Alter Rebbe, "I have someone who has a gilui neshama,

*The lender presented
his case and the
borrower insisted that
the world is non-
existent and therefore
he didn't owe
anything...*

and a gilui neshama is greater than gilui Eliyahu," referring to the Chassid, R' Binyamin Kletzker.

(R' Yitzchok Dubov)

THE MITTELER REBBE

THE ETZEM WAS NOT REVEALED

They would say about the Mitteler Rebbe that his essence was connected to Nigleh, and the fact that we don't have much Nigleh from him is because "essence" is not revealed, whereas with the Alter Rebbe whose essence was Chassidus, we have a lot in Nigleh from him.

(R' Shmuel Levitin)

WHAT DOES THE NESHAMA ENJOY?

The Mitteler Rebbe once asked his attendant, "Do you have shiurim?"

"Yes," said the attendant.

"In what?"

"In Mishnayos and Zohar."

"Which do you enjoy more, the shiur in Mishnayos or the shiur in Zohar?"

"I understand the Mishnayos and I don't understand the Zohar, yet I enjoy Zohar more."

Said the Mitteler Rebbe, "Yes, you are right. The neshama certainly has more enjoyment from the Zohar."

HE DIDN'T FEEL A THING

Once, during the Yomim Noraim davening, the Mitteler Rebbe's kittel became soaked with sweat. His attendant changed his kittel but the Mitteler Rebbe didn't notice a thing.

(R' Shmuel Levitin)

THE TZEMACH TZEDEK

HOW DO YOU POUR TEA?

The Tzemach Tzedek once asked his son R' Yisroel Noach to copy a maamer for him. The next day, his father asked him whether he had finished copying it. His son said that he hadn't had time since he was busy all day.

The Tzemach Tzedek asked him to tell him everything he did that day, and his son prepared a report. Among the things he enumerated, he wrote that he drank three cups of tea and waited ten minutes until they cooled off. The Tzemach Tzedek said: Why didn't you pour all three cups at once? Then you wouldn't have to wait ten minutes for each one separately!

From then on, whenever R' Yisroel Noach prepared tea he prepared three cups at once so he wouldn't have to wait again. From

this we see how precious time is!

(R' Sholom Ber "ha'gadol" Notik)

THE WORLD DOES NOT EXIST?

There was a story about a Jew who borrowed money from a friend and when the time came to repay the loan he didn't want to pay it because, "There is no world, there is no world!" [In other words, the very existence of the world is nullified in its Divine Source, and therefore he didn't have to pay anything.]

When the lender saw that he wasn't getting his money, he called the borrower to a din Torah before the Tzemach Tzedek. The lender presented his case and the borrower insisted that the world is non-existent and therefore he didn't owe anything.

Said the Tzemach Tzedek, "We will soon take the nothing," and he pointed at the borrower, "and place him on a nothing," and he pointed at the table. "And we will take a nothing and will beat the nothing with it – and we'll really make him into nothing!"

(R' Menachem Zev Gringlass)

LACK OF FAITH

Said the Tzemach Tzedek:

Chametz is forbidden, even a minute quantity of it, because matza is the food of faith and when it comes to faith, even a drop cannot be lacking!

(R' Shmuel Levitin)

MASHKE AND CHASSIDUS

The Tzemach Tzedek once

wanted to drink water before davening and there was a cup of mashke on the table. Thinking it was water, the Rebbe drank it without noticing anything untoward. Then he davened with great fervor.

When he discovered after the davening that the cup had contained mashke, he said, "If I knew that mashke had that effect, I would establish that Chassidim have to drink mashke before davening."

He concluded, "But Chassidim substitute the study of Chassidus for mashke."

(R' Yitzchok Dubov)

THE KLIPA FORGOT

The Tzemach Tzedek said that Czar Nicholas was klipa who forgot he was only a created being. He was referring to the evil Cantonist decree that caused the Jews of Russia such grief.

(R' Shmuel Levitin)

HOW MUCH MASHKE IS ALLOWED?

On certain occasions, the system was that the Tzemach Tzedek provided mashke for farbrengens and a certain Chassid would get the mashke from the Rebbe. One time, this Chassid wasn't available and someone else took the mashke from the Rebbe.

When the Tzemach Tzedek gave the mashke to him he said, "Since you don't know the system, I will tell you.

One cup – must be taken.

A second cup – may be taken.

(R' Shmuel Levitin)

But a third cup may not be taken!"

The Chassid was frightened and when he returned to the Chassidim, he told them what the Rebbe said. One of the Chassidim replied, "But the Rebbe didn't say how big the cup should be..."

PRECIOUS TO HASHEM

The Tzemach Tzedek was asked whether the Shabbos could be desecrated for a critically ill woman who would certainly die, for perhaps she might live for one more hour. The Tzemach Tzedek said they should desecrate the Shabbos for her, "You don't know how precious it is to Hashem that a neshama is in a body for even one moment."

(R' Yoel Kahn)

THE CHIDDUSH IN THE MAAMER

R' Binyamin Kletzker, one of the Alter Rebbe's great Chassidim, once went to the Tzemach Tzedek. The Tzemach Tzedek was sick and not saying Chassidus. R' Binyamin asked him to say Chassidus. The Tzemach Tzedek called for his sons and said a maamer Chassidus for them and for R' Binyamin.

Afterwards, the sons asked R' Binyamin whether there was any chiddush (anything new) in the maamer. R' Binyamin answered that in the middle of the maamer he heard the voice of the Alter Rebbe.

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MAKING IT BETTER IN BOMBAY

BY CHANI NUSSBAUM

*The Jewish community in Bombay, India is one of the oldest Jewish communities in the world since the Babylonian exile. Aside from the local Jewish community there are also many business people as well as tourists who come to enjoy incredible scenic vistas. * In an exclusive interview with Beis Moshiach, Mrs. Rivky Holtzberg describes her amazing shlichus. Hardships? She doesn't know of any!*

"We always wanted to go on shlichus," says Mrs. Rivky Holtzberg of Bombay, India. "Various suggestions came up but when we wrote to the Rebbe through the *Igros Kodesh*, we always got an answer that focused on the importance of chinuch for Jewish children. Since I was a teacher in Eretz Yisroel, we waited and didn't agree to the shlichus proposals that came up.

"When the idea of going on shlichus to Bombay came up, we opened to an answer about kiruv levavos (drawing hearts close) and achdus (unity), and the Rebbe added: **'When you work, you have all the Kochos.'**"

Along with her husband Gavriel, Rivky (nee Rosenberg of Afula)

merited supernatural kochos from the meshaleiach. Today, after a year and a half on shlichus, everybody knows her husband and he is called HaRav Gabi by all.

The Holtzbergs are working assiduously on building a mikva with Chabad specifications. The bor is made already. Who would have believed it? In Bombay, symbol of impurity, a city of avoda zara, the shluchim are planting seeds of k'dusha.

The Jewish community in Bombay is very interesting. Bombay is an industrial city and a port city, which makes it no less important than the capitol, Delhi. The Holtzbergs mainly target Jewish tourists, as the city is flooded with tourists from all over

the world, many of them on business.

The local community is divided into two. There is the Iraqi community comprised of descendents of those who came there, for the first time, 200 years ago. The leader of this community was R' David Sassoon, who fled from Baghdad to India which was then under British rule in 1826, in order to be freed of the oppression the Jews suffered, and in order to serve Hashem in freedom. He also wanted to open a business there and he prospered greatly. He was famous for his large charitable contributions to Jewish institutions including the Tzemach Tzedek Shul in the Old City of Yerushalayim. This was the first connection between India and Chabad.

After him followed his grandson, R' Yaakov Eliyahu Sasson, who built magnificent shuls throughout India, including two that exist to this day in Bombay and Poona (Ohel Dovid built in 1863), where Rabbi Betzalel Kupchik is the rav and shliach.

In 1948, when the British left India (a few months after they left Palestine), most of the Iraqi Jews left India for Eretz Yisroel and only a few remained. The beautiful shul is active until this day and the Holtzbergs maintain it on a daily basis.

The second Jewish community in

Bombay is the Bene Israel community. They have seven shuls throughout Bombay and they number 3500 people. The Bene Israel say their ancestors were oil pressers in the Galil and they are descended from seven families who left on business after the Babylonian exile, survived a shipwreck and settled in India.

During the Holocaust, many Jews fled to India. Over the years, many Jews from Spain and Holland also came to this country. So the Holtzberg home is an ingathering of exiles of various nationalities.

“The language at the Shabbos table,” says Rivky, “is English, so everybody can understand. One of our main goals is to connect our guests with Chabad houses back home.

“We have many tourists who came here to run away from it all and who come to us after they discover the emptiness in their lives and after seeing all the types of idol worship that flourishes here.

“They don’t come here to find themselves, something that was popular a decade ago. Today they come to India to tour or during a semester break.

“Recently, we had an Israeli tourist here who was in an emotional turmoil. He told us that on his tour he was in a city where they have idol worshipping ceremonies and rites at the end of which they put different kinds of ribbons on their hands. He wasn’t exactly thrilled to take part in this but his Jewish friends insisted that he wrap these ribbons around his body.

The tourist said, ‘See how amazing this is? It says here in the letter that saying Chitas is a treatment for the soul.’ He was so bowled over by the answer that he immediately committed to learning Chitas.

“He asked my husband, ‘How can I make amends for this? How can I purify myself from the tuma they threw on me?’

“My husband told him, ‘I can’t give you a tikkun, perhaps you’d like to write to the Rebbe in the *Igros Kodesh* and ask him.’ So he wrote and the answer he opened to was about the importance in observing the enactment of the Rebbe Rayatz to say Chitas every day. The tourist said, ‘See how amazing this is? It

says here in the letter that saying Chitas is a treatment

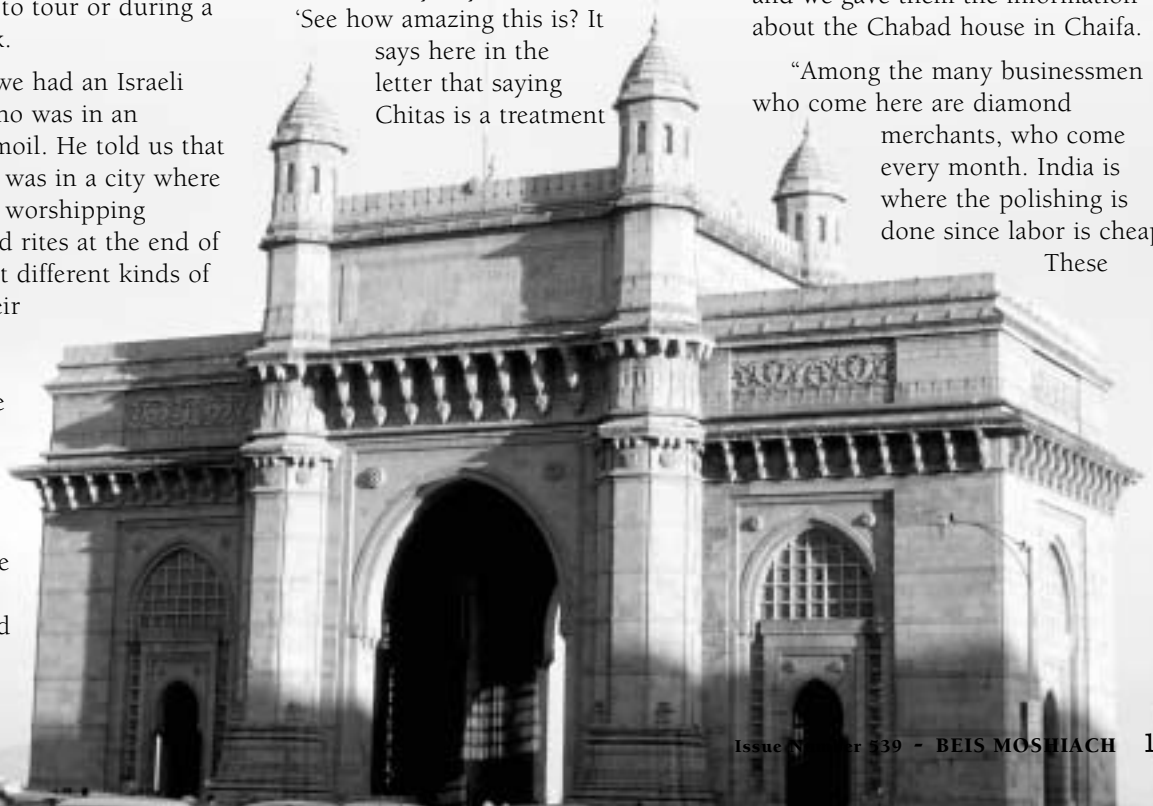
for the soul.’ He was so bowled over by the answer that he immediately committed to learning Chitas. We gave him a Chitas and explained how to do it and he went on his way.”

Many people connect to the Rebbe through the *Igros Kodesh*, says Rivky. “There was the story with the Chairman of Zim Shipping in Asia, an Israeli who lived here for a number of years. He came to us when we had first arrived and asked for a bracha for a relative, a little boy with cancer.

“We advised him to write to the Rebbe and he and his wife brokenheartedly wrote a letter. They put it in a volume of *Igros Kodesh* and the letter they opened to was the Rebbe’s famous letter to the Chairman of Zim about the importance of Shabbos observance on the ships, which ends with brachos.

“The man accepted Shabbos observance and the boy’s operation was more successful than the doctors had anticipated it would be. He is in remission and they hope the dreaded disease doesn’t return. In the meantime, they finished their job in India and went back to Eretz Yisroel and we gave them the information about the Chabad house in Chaifa.

“Among the many businessmen who come here are diamond merchants, who come every month. India is where the polishing is done since labor is cheap. These



merchants are in constant contact with us, for our Chabad house is located in a nice section of Bombay, near the hotels on the banks of the river. They come to us for a kosher dinner.

“The following story happened to a chareidi woman from Eretz Yisroel who came here regularly for a few days each month for her job in a diamond business in Eretz Yisroel. Each time, before she travels, she asks Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu for a bracha and she also writes to the Rebbe in the *Igros Kodesh*. If she doesn't open to a positive answer, she doesn't go. That is how she comes here every month for twenty years. Her monthly visit is from Monday to Thursday.

“The last time, she wrote to the Rebbe but didn't understand the answer. The letter was about the kabbalistic concept of nesira (about the separation between Adam and Chava). She understood the answer much later.

“Her flight was supposed to leave for Eretz Yisroel on Thursday but it was postponed and she, along with other shomer Shabbos Jews, stayed on in a hotel for another few days. She came to us for Shabbos and excitedly said, ‘Now I understand the Rebbe's answer! I have never been without my husband on Shabbos before because I never stayed in India for Shabbos alone!’

“This greatly inspired her to greater hiskashrus to the Rebbe and she started a shiur in her office and is becoming closer to the ways of Chabad.”

How do you manage as far as kosher food in Bombay?

“My husband is a shochet and so we have chicken, and other things are sent to us from Thailand. The basics can be bought here. No milk products are available. The truth is that we've gotten used to living



Entrance to the Chabad house

without them. If tourists come, they always bring some dairy products.

cereal like our grandmothers made fifty years ago!

What about food for the children?

* * *

At first, they sent me Materna (baby formula) from Eretz Yisroel. Now I cook cereal, which they enjoy. I never believed I would be cooking

“There are thirteen Israeli families that live here including members of the Israeli consulate who work here, employees of El-Al and businessmen,



T'fillin and bar mitzva for the son of the consulate

The view from the porch of the Chabad



Baking matzos with the children

owners of diamond businesses. It's not easy to instill them with Yiddishkeit but we see progress.

“Just this week we convinced a family to put a blech on the stove on Shabbos and we recently sent two boys to learn in yeshiva in Eretz Yisroel. Baruch Hashem, we have heard good reports from them.

“Every Sunday I have a program for children and before every holiday there are special programs. We recently opened a sort of Bar Mitzva course. We were excited to hear that the son of the Israeli consul wants to have his bar mitzva here with us and not in one of the local shuls.

“On Simchas Torah we had a big minyan at the Chabad house. Some of the people who came had never been to a shul before, not even the

local shul. They enjoyed it immensely and got right into the spirit of things because everybody feels comfortable here.”

The project the Holtzbergs are busy with now is, as we said, the mikva. It seems there was never a kosher mikva here previously.

“The closest mikva is in Singapore, a five-hour flight! Since our mikva is underway, I have already begun giving classes in Taharas HaMishpacha.”

What about chinuch?

“I have two children and they are still small but there is a demand that we open a Jewish preschool, so it looks like next year we will be opening a preschool, b’ezrat Hashem.”

The Holtzbergs also work on spreading the Seven Noachide Laws. “We don’t suffer from anti-Semitism or assimilation because the Jewish population keeps its distance from the local Indians and Moslems.”

* * *

It is most pleasant to speak with a shlucha who sees everything in a positive light and who generates a feeling of genuine serenity as well as humor and joy. I wasn’t surprised when she agreed to be interviewed a few hours before Shabbos. She was relaxed and made me feel relaxed too when she said, “Yes, I have time now since I finished preparing for Shabbos a while ago.”

And I didn’t hear about any hardships from her. No surprise either!



A minyan with businessmen



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UNDERGROUND TANYA SHIUR

BY SHNEUR ZALMAN BERGER

Rabbi Meir Bustomsky and three of his talmidim reminisce about the underground Tanya classes in Yeshivas Nechalim. These shiurim, given over decades, motivated dozens of bachurim to switch to Tomchei T'mimim and to change their way of life.

R' Shimon Neuman: Lchaim! Lchaim v'livracha! *Tanya* classes in Yeshivas Nechalim (a high school) began in 5730 by Rabbi Zimroni Tzik, today a shliach in Bat Yam. He began to arrange a weekly *Tanya* shiur in the

yeshiva. Even in the 60's there had been *Tanya* shiurim, but these lasted a short time and then stopped.

After R' Zimroni finished learning in Yeshivas Nechalim, he was drafted and became a Lubavitcher Chassid. The staff at Nechalim was proud of him and when he finished serving, he was

hired as a madrich by the yeshiva even though he was already wearing a black yarmulke.

I heard about the shiur one evening, almost by accident, when a friend told me about the interesting *Tanya* shiur that I should try. Like many other youngsters, I jumped at the opportunity to learn a new topic, rather than sit and learn the usual material and so I went to the shiur and was hooked.

I slowly began to get involved in Chassidus through R' Zimroni, who farbrenged with the talmidim. The study of Chassidus and the frequent farbrengens were a good influence on those who attended the shiur. Some of the talmidim, including myself, began to keep our tzitzis out. We went to the mikva every morning, learned Chassidus by heart, and did other

Chassidic customs. We did this despite the pressure exerted upon us by friends and the yeshiva staff, who expressed open displeasure and even mocked us. Among the staff were graduates of Litvishe yeshivos who were quite opposed to our involvement with Chabad.

RETURN TO NECHALIM!

Some months passed and I wanted to switch to Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim, thus quelling the inner turmoil I was experiencing. I quickly had the right opportunity. I used the vacation of Purim 5731 to visit Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim in Kfar Chabad. Since I was favorably impressed by the life of the T'mimim in the yeshiva, I decided that at the end of vacation I would not go back to Nechalim but would stay in Tomchei T'mimim.

When my father heard about my plans, he didn't take it quietly. He went straight to the yeshiva in Kfar Chabad, to the room of the rosh yeshiva, Rabbi Yaakov Katz, and the shouts emanating from that room could be clearly heard outside. My father asked Rabbi Katz to tell me to leave the yeshiva. My father knew I wouldn't listen to him which is why he wanted to exert pressure in a roundabout way.

After a long and loud conversation, Rabbi Katz came out and told me, "Shimon, go back to Nechalim for now."

I had no choice but to return to yeshiva as thoughts of my next opportunity to

PARTICIPANTS:

RABBI MEIR BUSTOMSKY
ORGANIZER OF THE TANYA SHIUR IN NECHALIM FROM 5731, WHO IS TODAY THE MENAHEL OF TALMUD TORAH CHABAD IN PETACH TIKVA

R' SHIMON NEUMAN
ACCOUNTANT

R' TZVI VENTURA
SHLIACH IN RAMAT GAN AND EDITOR OF THE "BASI L'GANI" NEWSLETTER

R' AMIR YITZCHOK ROSEN
MASHPIA IN YESHIVAS CHABAD B'NEI BRAK

transfer to Tomchei T'mimim raced through my head.

AND THE SEARCH WAS ON!

The desire to learn in a Chassidische yeshiva gave me no rest. One night I said to Zimroni, "I must go to Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim, no matter what." He was there when I needed him. I got on his motor scooter and he brought me to Kfar Chabad. I sat down to learn while

Zimroni went back to Nechalim to do his job as madrich.

Suddenly a thought came to me: as soon as my disappearance was noted, they would know to look for me here. I spoke to

Menachem Kleiman, the first graduate of Nechalim who switched to Tomchei T'mimim in Kfar Chabad, and asked him to take me in the morning to Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim in Kiryat Gat.

At six in the morning, we got on a train that was heading for Kiryat Gat and arrived at the yeshiva. I tried to get into the yeshiva's routine right away; I davened Shacharis with the T'mimim, I ate and learned with them, and I didn't even think about how worried my parents must be. My parents were searching for me with the help of the police!

During the day, I asked the "barber," one of the bachurim who gave haircuts, to give me a haircut that was fitting for a Tamim. "Don't leave any of the long hair in front or any remains of my previous hairstyle," I told him.

After the first time I fled to Tomchei T'mimim, my father decided to end my connection to Zimroni. He asked Pesach Bagad a"h, the brother of Rabbi Yosef Bagad, to separate the two of us. Pesach, who was a junior soldier in the Reserves in which my father was a senior commander, carried out his civilian order too.

On the day that I disappeared from yeshiva, he told my father about my disappearance. My father used his police connections and the police began searching for me. Police went to the yeshiva in Kfar Chabad but I wasn't there, of course. Zimroni was

taken for questioning and was even in jail for a few hours but he said that he brought me to the yeshiva in Kfar Chabad because I had asked him to, and now he didn't know where I was.

The hours went by and the search intensified. Blockades were placed at the entrance to the Kfar and police patrols were sent to Chabad mosdos around the country. I was sitting and learning when I suddenly saw a police car approaching the yeshiva. I realized what was going on and without thinking twice I fled for the bathroom. Policemen entered the zal and demanded to know where the new student was. For some reason, the talmidim said that there were no new talmidim. The police left and I sat and learned.

At the end of the learning s'darim, the T'mimim arranged a place for me to sleep in one of the dorm rooms. And that's how my first day at Tomchei T'mimim ended.

THE TANYA SHIUR GOES UNDERGROUND

At three in the morning, I was woken up by noise that I heard at the door. I opened my eyes and there in front of me was a policeman holding a powerful flashlight. "Where is the new student?" he asked one of the T'mimim who awoke in a fright.

"I don't know," he said, and I decided to give myself in so as not to create a furor at that hour.

"I am the new talmid," I said.

The policeman went out for a minute and then immediately returned with my father. My father looked at me in shock. "Shimon?" he asked. He didn't recognize me because of my haircut.

I was escorted to the police-car and my father angrily declared, "Shimon, you have two choices. A Shomer HaTzair kibbutz, or Yeshivas Nechalim. Which do you prefer?" Obviously, I chose the latter.

The sun began to shine and I went back to my bed in Nechalim. When it was time to get up my roommates were surprised to see me with a Chassidishe haircut.

Because of this story, the *Tanya* shiurim went underground and took place in the moshav's shul, far from the hanhala of the yeshiva.

At this time, Zimroni Tzik went to Bat Yam, where he started the first Chabad house in the country (many years later, Rabbi Bagad was a regular guest at events that HaAguda L'Maan HaGeula, headed by Zimroni Tzik, organized).

Nobody conveyed the message that we had to act out of an inner chayus. We got our joy and enthusiasm from playing soccer and from various rock stars.

YOU'RE A FAKER, GO BACK TO YOUR GEMARA

R' Meir Bustomsky: L'chaim!

I came to Nechalim just at that time, after the shiurim had to go underground. I was asked by the organization Irgun Talmidei HaYeshivos in Kfar Chabad to give a *Tanya* shiur in Nechalim every week. This was meant to be temporary until the person who usually gave the shiur got better. As you know, there is nothing more permanent than something temporary and this "temporary" shiur is going on for 34 years already!

Shortly after I arrived there, we

brought the shiur back to the yeshiva with the hanhala's permission. The roshei yeshiva knew about my academic background and decided to allow me to give the shiurim as part of the schedule.

The shiur took place in the yeshiva for over a decade and dozens of talmidim attended it. Sometimes, more than fifty talmidim came, but the mashgiach didn't like this and he would come in and decide which talmidim should go back to the beis midrash.

"You came just to hang out, get out. You faker, get back to your Gemara. You're learning Chassidus? First learn Gemara – out!" And so, with various excuses he took away half of the talmidim.

What attracted these boys who were raised with such a different background to *Tanya* and Chassidus?

R' Tzvi Ventura: As one of the talmidim who came to learn *Tanya*, I can tell you that this attraction wasn't always understandable. I personally was searching for a consistent and serious way of life. I came from a Mizrachi background and I was taught that you get up in the morning and then go to work. Davening wasn't significant and didn't demand special thought. The *Tanya* classes refreshed my enthusiasm for mitzvos.

Although we had *machshava* (Jewish philosophy) courses in yeshiva, in which we learned *Guide for the Perplexed* and the works of Maharal, it was just another subject. Nobody conveyed the message that we had to act out of an inner chayus. We got our joy and enthusiasm from playing soccer and from various rock stars. Rabbi Bustomsky opened a window for us and taught us how to bring chayus into our mitzvos with all that entails.

R' Amir Yitzchok Rosen: L'chaim! In distinction to the others sitting here, I come from a Chassidishe



Clockwise: R' Yitzchok Rosen, R' Shimon Neuman, R' Meir Bustomsky, R' Tzvi Ventura

background. Although my parents were “knitted yarmulke” people, their parents were Alexander Chassidim, and therefore, I got a chareidi-nationalist education. This was the reason why, when I got to Nechalim, I always sought to learn more Torah and was drawn to the *Tanya* shiur.

R' Meir didn't convince us to take on Chassidic customs, but his personal example drew us after him to follow in the ways of Chassidus.

My hiskarvus to Chabad took off when I met the mashpia R' Mendel Futerfas. That was on Yud-Tes Kislev and I went with R' Meir to the farbrengen at Beis Menachem and from there I went to the farbrengen in yeshiva, where I was introduced to R' Mendel. I was immediately taken by him. His enormous influence impacted on me for many years.

And your parents?

My parents found it hard to make peace with the fact that I was getting involved with Chabad. My rebbi pressured me to leave Chabad but I insisted on sticking to this new path. At a certain point, I went to visit the yeshiva and stayed there for two days. My parents began to realize that

this was serious. They pressured me to leave the yeshiva and I argued and cried. In the end, I went back to Nechalim and continued to go in the ways of Chassidus.

R' Tzvi Ventura: My parents were more liberal and after they tried a few times to place obstacles in my path, they gave in and let me do what I wanted, but the yeshiva's staff pressured me not to go to the *Tanya* shiurim anymore.

SHIURIM DURING VACATION TOO

R' Meir Bustomsky: The weekly shiur consisted of learning *Tanya* and a sicha of the Rebbe. Naturally, they aroused many questions, some of which were asked in sincerity while others were asked to argue. I found a solution. I said that during the shiur questions could only be on the material being studied, while questions about Toras Chabad could be asked after the shiur. Whoever really wanted to know more about Chassidus Chabad would stay until after the shiur to ask his questions. I tried to answer them in detail.

Over the years, I brought T'mimim with me from Tomchei

T'mimim in Kfar Chabad and they would help me find new talmidim. They also taught *Tanya* in small groups. On special days, we organized farbrengens with well-known mashpiim. I also made sure that the bachurim who were interested would go and visit various Tomchei T'mimim yeshivos in order to see Chabad up close. The visits proved themselves effective.

R' Amir Yitzchok Rosen: For decades, R' Meir would come to yeshiva and give the shiur. He never missed a shiur. Even during vacation, we continued to learn Chassidus at the shul of the Karlin Chassidim in Tel Aviv.

R' Meir: Yes, I noticed that after long vacations many talmidim didn't come back to the shiurim, so I organized *Tanya* shiurim during vacations too. The shiurim were effective and eventually the participants became involved with Chabad. They began to take on Chabad minhagim and even grew beards. These steps showed the impact of the shiurim and that the study of *Tanya* was penetrating their hearts.

There were many parents who couldn't understand how it was possible for them to have sent their sons to a high school which provided a modern, Mafdal education, and have their sons become chareidi, even Chassidic! The yeshiva also had magidei shiur who had learned in the Chevron yeshiva and other Litvishe yeshivos and they fanned the fires because of their hatred of Chabad. It wasn't a simple situation and I had to walk between the raindrops with great care.

In 5736, the shiurim got a boost after the participants of the shiur received a letter from the Rebbe addressed to "Tzeirei Chabad Nechalim." We didn't know what that meant since we weren't a branch of anything!

After consulting with Rabbi Yisroel Leibov, director of Tzeirei Chabad, it was decided to organize the activities with the participants of the shiur within the yeshiva. We founded an organization called "Tzeirei Chabad Nechalim," and every year one of the talmidim was picked to be responsible for the organization. He brought new talmidim and organized various activities, such as farbrengens and going on Mivtza T'fillin with those who attended the shiur.

What motivated the participants of the shiur to begin taking on Chassidic customs rather than just enjoy the learning?

R' Amir Yitzchok Rosen: It was a result of the great esteem with which we held R' Meir. On the one hand, he taught us deep Chassidus, but on the other hand his feet were firmly planted on the ground. He also understood worldly things and even helped us with our math and physics homework.

The fatherly warmth he exhibited towards us, the messages he conveyed so pleasantly, were what did it. For example, R' Meir gave me

Rabbeinu Tam t'fillin after I committed to putting them on every day. There were bachurim who wore one kippa under another in order to be able to say brachos and daven with two head coverings, which was quite weird for that yeshiva.

R' Tzvi Ventura: We knew that R' Meir didn't get paid and that he gave the shiurim voluntarily, and so we really admired him. This admiration made us connect to the values that he taught us and represented.

R' Shimon: We also saw the difference between him and the rebbis in yeshiva. When we asked them questions in emuna, something natural for maturing kids, they stammered some thoughts but R' Meir answered everything straight and without equivocation. The

simplicity and straightforwardness in what he said won us over. We knew that he had the truth.

At a certain point, we began going to the mikva every morning, definitely a Chassidic minhag! Together with some friends, we cleaned out the men's mikva in moshav Nechalim.

The little building smelled bad and was neglected. There was wild grass and even frogs. Since we didn't have a way of heating the water, we immersed in cold water.

R' Tzvi: When they told R' Mendel Futerfas that the bachurim in Nechalim were immersing in cold water, he said, "A cold mikva – warm Chassidim; a warm mikva – cold Chassidim."

THE SON AND THE EXTENDED FAMILY

R' Meir Bustomsky relates:

There were parents who were vehemently opposed to their sons' Chassidic ways. One of them was Dr. Alan Kaye. One day he appeared in my office (which was the vocational school in Kfar Chabad) and began screaming at me for taking his son Daniel from him.

"My son doesn't eat anything. He decided he's only eating glatt. He is taking on hiddurim that I don't do. Who are you to take my boy on a new derech?"

I didn't get angry; I let him continue his rant. When he finished pouring out his heart, I quietly answered that I just give shiurim in *Tanya* and whoever wants to come, comes.

"I don't force anyone to come to my shiurim."

I understood his pain and asked him, "Does he not help out at home? Does he not smile at you?"

Dr. Kaye didn't answer. I had taught the boys to respect their parents according to their expectations and even beyond that so they wouldn't have complaints. Dr. Kaye seemed to soften and left.

Years later, Dr. Kaye told me that by not retaliating, I had won him over.

There was an especially happy ending to that story, for not only Daniel became a Lubavitcher but also his brother Eli, who had at first insulted and attacked me, as well as the parents, Dr. Alan and his wife, who lives in Kfar Chabad for a number of years now, and other relatives. Mrs. Sheindel Marantz is Dr. Kaye's sister-in-law, her husband is Velvel and their sons are Tzvi Hirsh and Reuven.



Tzvi Ventura when he was in Nechalim



Rabbi Zalman Landau at a farbrengen with talmidim of the shiur in Nechalim. R' Yitzchok Rosen has his back to the camera

R' Meir: Some talmidim decided that they would only eat food with a superior hechsher. They transformed their kitchens at home and at yeshiva. One of the "Nachshons" was R' Moshe Dickstein, one of the first graduates of Nechalim who switched to Chabad. He started a hunger strike at yeshiva until they let him get dairy products with a superior hechsher instead of the fleishig lunch meal.

R' Yitzchok: Naturally, this posed a serious problem for the rebbis. They themselves ate the yeshiva's food and suddenly talmidim ages 14-15 were deciding that the yeshiva's food wasn't mehudar enough and began eating dairy foods.

Although the bachurim began keeping Chabad customs, many of them remained in the yeshiva. Why didn't they leave for Chabad yeshivos?

R' Meir: I knew that if they transferred before finishing twelfth grade and graduating, their parents wouldn't be able to handle that. If they couldn't handle it then the hanhala would be angry and the results would be disastrous. It happened that talmidim wanted to leave and it made problems. I

When they told R' Mendel Futerfas that the bachurim in Nechalim were immersing in cold water, he said, "A cold mikva – warm Chassidim; a warm mikva – cold Chassidim."

remember R' Assi Spiegel as one example (today an activist Lubavitcher in the U.S.).

One time, some boys from the tenth grade who regularly attended the *Tanya* class, decided to switch to Tomchei T'mimim, and one of them was Assi. His father is a respected professor in Bar-Ilan University and he tried to convince him not to switch to Chabad but was unsuccessful. Feeling he had no other

choice, he kept his son locked in at home for two weeks! He spoke to his son daily but Assi wasn't convinced. He wanted to learn in Chabad, come what may!

One day I got a phone call from Rabbi Bagad who demanded that I do something so that Assi would come back to learn in Nechalim. "You should know that Professor Spiegel is an important person. With his connections he can close down the yeshiva!"

Rabbi Bagad concluded the angry conversation with a threat, "Don't come back to give a *Tanya* shiur without Spiegel!"

I called Assi and explained that under the circumstances, he should return to yeshiva and when he graduated he could do what he pleased and switch to Chabad. He immediately agreed.

This made the father even angrier. "What I was unable to do in two weeks, the Chabadnik did in two minutes!" he fumed.

Assi finished high school and only switched to Tomchei T'mimim a few years later.

WE CAUGHT 'EM!

After a decade in which we accomplished a lot, Rabbi Bagad was subjected to a lot of pressure. Many parents were upset about their sons' behavior. I remember that one mother waited for hours near my house in Kfar Chabad in order to yell at me for the change in her son. He had become a "big Chassid," and had kicked the TV in the living room. The TV broke and his mother decided that he had crossed the line and she had to immediately call a halt to her son's new derech.

As I mentioned earlier, some yeshiva staff members opposed the *Tanya* shiur. Rabbi Bagad called me and gently suggested that I leave my job. In exchange, he offered to bring Rabbi Dovid Chanzin a"h.

"He is known as a distinguished rav and the parents won't oppose him. We will bring him to the yeshiva and take him home, and he'll give the Chassidus shiur."

I immediately rejected the generous offer for I knew that they would bring Rabbi Chanzin once or twice and then they wouldn't send a car for him any more. And Rabbi Chanzin was so busy that he wouldn't protest and the shiur would stop.

The conversation ended on a negative note, the shiurim went back to the moshav's shul and this time it was with an "underground atmosphere." The hanhala of the yeshiva, which was fearful of the parents' ire, kept close tabs on the shiur. Madrichim and teachers who lived on the moshav were sent to spy on us and one time we were caught in the middle of a shiur.

"We caught them! We caught them!" We heard the shouts out the window of the shul. It was one of the madrichim announcing the news over his walkie-talkie.

It was a strange feeling. It sounded as though they had caught



Shimon Neuman dressed as a madrich for B'nei Akiva on a trip up north

us doing something criminal. But since we were caught, we moved the shiur to the neighboring Amishav neighborhood. The shiur continued there for another few years in an underground atmosphere and the hanhala didn't know about it. I heard, a number of times, that Rabbi Bagad expressed his surprise about why numerous talmidim kept Chabad minhagim when they had no connection with Chabad...

THE REBBE MAKES A REVOLUTION

At the end of 5747, Rabbi Bagad came to the Rebbe for "dollars." It

MY GRANDFATHER AGREED THAT THE REBBE IS MOSHIACH

"The topic of Moshiach brings people in, it doesn't alienate them," says R' Tzvi Ventura, and he relates:

What attracted me to Chabad was the inyan of Moshiach. R' Motti Gal once farbrenge in Nechalim with the participants of the weekly *Tanya* class. He spoke intensely about Moshiach and this attracted me (many years later I work, on shlichus, for his Chabad house in Ramat Gan).

I joined the *Tanya* shiur in Elul and in Tishrei, I found out that those who attend the shiur spend Sukkos with Rabbi Moshe Dickstein (a graduate of Nechalim who became a Lubavitcher) and go with him on mitzvaim and learn Chassidus with him.

I wanted to join them but the old-timers tried to push me off since I was a new talmid. However, I was caught up with Chassidus and insisted on going to R' Moshe. The nights of Chol HaMoed, R' Moshe farbrenge and focused on the obligation of each one of us to do what we can to hasten the Geula. He mentioned that the Rebbe is Moshiach one time.

The truth is that I was shocked. I wasn't used to hearing nearly anything about Moshiach and suddenly I was hearing that the Rebbe is Moshiach (this was in the early 80's). At the end of the farbrenge, I expressed my surprise to R' Moshe and he simply opened a Rambam, read the halachos at the end of Hilchos Melachim and showed me how the Rebbe is Moshiach.

When I returned home, I told my grandfather, who was a talmid chacham but not a Chassid. He read the halachos in the Rambam repeatedly, until he finally said that I was right and that according to the Rambam the Rebbe is Moshiach!



R' Yitzchok Rosen



R' Tzvi Ventura



R' Shimon Neuman

was Sunday, 25 Iyar 5747 and Rabbi Bagad introduced himself as the rosh yeshiva of Nechalim.

The Rebbe said: **May it be G-d's will that rivers ["Nechalim" in Hebrew] burst forth, especially since you are the mara d'asra there.**

Rabbi Bagad gave the Rebbe his s'farim and the conversation revolved around the s'farim. Then the Rebbe said:

I will bless you that you not be a "wealthy person who is happy with his lot," but someone who "has one hundred and wants two hundred." And when you have two hundred it's not that you want three hundred but again it's double what you have.

Rabbi Bagad said, "Indeed, I have 900 bachurim and thousands of graduates, but I am never satisfied."

The Rebbe was happy to hear this.

After the visit, Rabbi Bagad became an ardent Chassid of the Rebbe and the *Tanya* shiurim were once again given in the yeshiva, officially.

Rabbi Yitzchok Rosen: At the beginning of 5748, the shiurim were given in the yeshiva again but at a certain point too many talmidim were coming and they did not all really want to learn *Tanya*. So we took two

steps back and the shiur returned to the shul on the moshav, where you had to walk a kilometer to get there. We knew that those who really wanted to learn *Tanya* would walk to the shul.

He had become a "big Chassid," and had kicked the TV in the living room. The TV broke and his mother decided that he had crossed the line and she had to immediately call a halt to her son's new derech.

As the years passed, Rabbi Bagad became closer to the Rebbe. The Rebbe's picture hung in his office and he began to regularly attend Chabad events.

How many Nechalim graduates switched to Tomchei T'mimim?

R' Meir (modestly): I don't know.

R' Yitzchok: Over 100 graduates, which are now 100 Chabad families. Many of them were mekarev many others to Chassidus. Many of them serve as shluchim and some of them have children who have already established their own Chabad families.

EPILOGUE

R' Shimon: After I finished school in Nechalim, I was drafted, I got married but I didn't become a Chassid, although Toras HaChassidus was embedded deep in my neshama. Not surprisingly, a few years after that, when I was in a difficult situation, I wrote to the Rebbe and merited an amazing miracle. As a result, I changed my way of life and became a Chassid.

R' Tzvi: I went from Nechalim to yeshiva in B'nei Brak, where I gave a *Tanya* shiur myself. After a short period, I transferred to Tomchei T'mimim in Kiryat Gat.

R' Yitzchok: The road was even shorter for me. After I finished 12th grade in Nechalim, I went to Chabad and I've been there ever since.

The long farbrengen ended with l'chaim and heartfelt wishes: L'chaim, l'chaim v'livracha!

LIVING WITH THE TIMES IN THE TIME OF THE REDEMPTION

BY RABBI REFOEL CHERUTI
TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY

What is the difference between learning about the Redemption as a “segula” and as a way of “living with the times”? How can we live with Parshas Shmos with its emphasis on “descending” into exile? What is the special importance of learning the sichos of D’var Malchus?

This past Shabbos we all stood in shul and proclaim “*Chazak Chazak V’Nis’chazeik*” upon concluding Seifer B’Reishis, Seifer HaAvos, where “G-d gave them a taste of the World to Come – in this world,” and we began Seifer Shmos, which is also called Seifer HaGeula. This is the appropriate opportunity to strengthen our fulfillment of the instruction “to live with the times,” with the weekly Torah portion – in the fullest sense.

Chassidus frequently explains the *pasuk*, “a time for every thing,” as referring to a new light descending from Heaven during every time period, a new revelation of Torah with which we have to live (though every revelation descends at the time appointed by G-d, as we see that during the era of the Mishna, they “managed” without Gemara, similarly, in the era of the Gemara without the inner teachings of Torah, and so on throughout the generations).

As a result, we can understand that after the revelation of Chassidus, studying Chumash with Rashi’s

commentary is not enough in order to live with the weekly Torah portion, as it should. We must also learn the “*chassidische parsha*” as elucidated in the teachings of our Rebbeim, particularly in *Torah Ohr* and *Likkutei Torah*.

However, we must be not satisfied with this alone. In our generation, we must also learn the weekly Torah portion with an emphasis upon how it is reflected in the new and special innovation of our times: greeting Moshiach. This is achieved by learning the holy sichos of this era (5751-5752). Without this, the main point is missing.

To illustrate the matter, when someone tries to read a story to a small child, he often comes up against the familiar question, “How does the story end?”

Studying the weekly Torah portion as explained in the commentaries, even in chassidus, leave us with the question, “How does the story end?” To answer this question, we must learn the sichos from 5751-5752.

HOW DOES IT END...

Let’s bring three examples:

In Parshas VaYeira, “And G-d appeared to Avrohom,” we have the revelation of G-d to the first “*Rosh B’nei Yisroel*,” the starting point for self-sacrifice in the spreading of Yiddishkai. Only someone who peruses the D’var Malchus in 5752 from this parsha is made aware that in our times (in addition to the aforementioned), there is G-d’s revelation to the last *Rosh B’nei Yisroel* – the Rebbe MH”M shlita, revealed and sent by G-d Alm-ghty (as he began the fulfillment of “Please send the one who You will eventually send”). Therefore, there is not only the existence of Moshiach, but also his actual revelation.

In Parshas Chayei Sara, the Alter Rebbe already explains in *Torah Ohr* how the substance of the first shlichus mentioned in Torah – the shlichus of Eliezer to join Yitzchak with Rivka – is the *yichud* of *ma”h u’ba”n*, and their wedding gives the Jewish People the strength for their avoda throughout the generations to join the physical with the spiritual.

However, only someone who takes the D’var Malchus in 5752 on this parsha will read the end of the story.. We learn from this sicha about the final shlichus of the thousands of emissaries of the Rebbe MH”M shlita, who are working to complete the *yichud* of *ma”h u’ba”n* – the physical and the spiritual, and bring the True and Complete Redemption.

In Parshas VaYishlach, when we go through the “*chassidische parsha*” in *Torah Ohr*, we learn about the inner meaning of, “And Yaakov sent messengers to his brother Eisav”: Yaakov was ready for the Redemption, and he sent messengers to determine if his brother Eisav was also ready.

Anyone who lives with this alone surely thinks that he has just learned some marvelous things about the Redemption, and that he is living with Moshiach. However, when we contemplate the sicha from Parshas VaYishlach 5752, we understand that our knowledge of the facts that we learned in *Torah Ohr* merely scratches the surface. In our times, Eisav is also ready for the True and Complete Redemption, as expressed by the fact that those nations that are descendants of Edom are helping Jews in the fulfillment of Torah and mitzvos, as opposed to previous generations.

These are examples brought from Seifer B'Reishis. Similarly, we find in relation to all the holidays and other auspicious days throughout the year – e.g., the direct connection of the Tzemach Tzedek's birthday to “the revelation of Moshiach's name” – the cruse of oil at Chanukah turns into “I have anointed him with My holy oil,” in reference to Melech HaMoshiach.

In addition, we find examples in connection with all the weekly Torah portions (and all other events in our daily lives). For example, this week's

parsha, Parshas Shmos, deals externally with the arrival of the children of Israel in Egypt, the beginning of the exile. However, in the D'var Malchus of Shabbos Parshas Shmos 5752, the Rebbe shlita MH”M shows us that the true nature of the galus itself is actually “geula.” Throughout the sicha, the Rebbe says that we already have the aspect of “*b'chezkas sh'hu Moshiach*,” telling us that just as the Redemption already exists within the Galus, Moshiach already exists with us at the end of the time of Exile (the aspect of *b'chezkas Moshiach*, according to halacha).

In all these examples, we see how the weekly Torah portions are instilled with the subject of Moshiach and the Redemption. If we take a look at the sicha from Shabbos Parshas VaYeishev 5752, we find that it deals in its entirety with the subject of Moshiach and the Redemption, to the point that the Torah portion is almost not mentioned at all. (Note: This is not the only sicha where this occurs, see sicha Shabbos Parshas Acharei-K'doshim 5751.)

“NOT ONLY AS A SEGULA...”

There are two ways to learn about the subject of Moshiach and the Redemption. The first is as a “segula” to hasten the Redemption, where the study of all previous sichos of the Rebbe, the preceding Rebbeim, and general sayings of our Sages are quite sufficient. However, there is another

much loftier mode of studying about Moshiach. This happens when we “live” with this unique time, showing with our finger that “*Hineh Zeh Moshiach Ba*,” studying in a way that opens our eyes, our ears, and our heart to see, hear, and feel the Redemption in this world where we live now in its simplest sense. For this purpose, it is not enough to learn about the Redemption in general, rather, it must include the sichos from 5751-5752, where the Rebbe MH”M shlita gives us the strength to see the Redemption now in this world.

On Shabbos Parshas Mikeitz 5751, the Rebbe shlita MH”M explains that when someone is steeped in a certain matter, he immediately connects everything he sees to that matter, even if it doesn't seem to have any relevance to it. Similarly, every Jew who is steeped in, “I will await every day that he should come,” connects everything to the subject of Moshiach. Thus, when he comes to Parshas Mikeitz, even though it seems to talk about the two years after the butler forgot Yosef, nevertheless, when he hears the word “Mikeitz,” he says, “Ah-hah! *Keitz HaYamim, Keitz HaGeula!*” (the end of days, the time of the Redemption).

Similarly, when we come to Parshas VaYeichi, we immediately recall and cry out the proclamation that will hasten the Redemption:

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



IN THE IMAGE OF THE ALM-GHTY

BY NOSSON AVROHOM

A Lubavitcher woman from Migdal HaEmek wrote the pamphlet entitled, “The Importance and Obligation to Grow a Beard.” Why did a woman write a halachic work on beards? Mrs. Chana Moses explains in an amazing story.

Thousands of people have seen the Hebrew pamphlet entitled, “The Importance and Obligation to Grow a Beard.” It is distributed to mekuravim in Chabad houses and can be found in nearly every yeshiva, shul or Chabad mosad. It is an anthology, which clearly explains why a man should grow a beard, and was written by a woman, Mrs. Chana Moses of Migdal HaEmek. Why a woman?

* * *

The story began seven years ago. I was studying with a group of Lubavitcher women for our degree in Bais Rivka in Kfar Chabad. We had to write two papers, one on a secular subject and one on a kodesh subject. I wrote the secular subject paper fairly easily and handed it in. But when it came to the kodesh subject I encountered inexplicable difficulties.

It wasn't easy picking a topic. Any topic I chose was taken already by other women. I had come with a dozen ideas, including some that I never dreamed other women would

take, but they were all taken. I was at my wits' end.

One day my husband suggested that I do my paper on “growing a beard.” He doubted that anybody else had taken the topic but considering what I had been experiencing I wasn't convinced it was available.

When I suggested the idea to my mentor, I found out that it was available. I was thrilled, especially since the woman in charge, Mrs. Tziri Lavnoni, liked the idea. I began doing research and put in a lot of work. After three months of work, I was done and I handed in my paper.

I was pregnant at the time with my youngest son and shortly after I handed in the paper, I took a break from school. It was going to be Adar soon and I threw myself into cleaning and organizing the house for Pesach.

I will never forget the incredible dream I had. It was a few days before Pesach after a tiring day of work when I went to bed and immediately fell asleep. I dreamed that the door of

the house opened and the Rebbe walked in, holding his t'fillin and tallis. He did just what my husband does every morning after Shacharis. He went over to the bookcase and put his t'fillin in their usual place.

I looked at the Rebbe in great awe. Suddenly the Rebbe turned to me and showed me the paper I had written and said, “This work on *bigdei Aharon* (priestly garments) should be published.” Seconds later, he had disappeared.

I woke up and couldn't sleep anymore because of my great excitement. I told my husband about the dream and I wondered what connection there was to Aharon when I had done a paper on beards.

My husband thought a moment and then said that he didn't see any contradiction since Aharon is the only one in Tanach about whom it says explicitly that he had a beard, “the beard of Aharon that descends upon the edge of his garments” (T'hilim 133).

After Pesach, when I met with the mentor and told her about the dream she was also excited and said that she also thought the paper had to be published. There are few s'farim about the significance of a beard and awareness about the importance of beards is diminishing.

Well, I just wasn't ready to do this

and I dismissed the idea by saying who was I to publish a Torah work, on beards of all things!

A few weeks went by and I went to a shiur given by Rabbi Sholom Dovber Wolpo. One of the women, who knew my dream story, urged me to ask his opinion about it. When he heard the dream, he got very excited and he said that dreaming about the Rebbe is no small thing. When I tried explaining why I didn't want to publish it, he dismissed my reasons and urged me to hurry up and publish it and to even put my name on it.

He made me think about it seriously but that didn't last more than a few days, for as soon as I found out the cost to publish it, I realized there was no way I could pay the astronomical fee.

Then I started getting one answer

after the other in the *Igros Kodesh* about the importance of publishing. At that time, I was writing to the Rebbe on behalf of other women who asked me to write for them, and time after time, there were answers about publishing. It didn't matter what the question was, the answers in any volume I opened were about the importance of publishing.

Here are just three examples of many:

Volume 17, p. 66: ... **it would be proper to confer together about whether to publish the pamphlet, which will contain ...**

Volume 14, p. 36: **It's surprising that you do not write more details about disseminating the s'farim ...**

Volume 14, p. 195: **Naturally, I would be very interested to know whether, in your collection of manuscripts, there are writings of**

Chassidus by the Chabad Rebbeim or manuscripts of the Baal Shem Tov and HaRav HaMaggid which have not been printed yet.

Some of the answers were explicit: **It's surprising to me that you still haven't published your writing.**

It reached a point where I was simply afraid to write to the Rebbe. When people from the shiur wanted help in writing to the Rebbe, I would write it for them and then ask my daughters to put the letter into a volume of *Igros Kodesh*. But I still couldn't run away for the Rebbe would give me reminders now and then "about the publishing..."

Four years went by and when I think about it now, I can't believe that I didn't rush to do what the Rebbe wanted after so many clear answers. It was definitely the Satan who caused me not to fulfill the Rebbe's repeated requests.

It was before Pesach when I had something personal for which I had to ask for the Rebbe's bracha. I wrote a long letter and put it into a volume of *Igros Kodesh*. When I opened the volume, I had to sit down. The Rebbe hadn't given up or forgotten. The words danced before my eyes, "**It's surprising to me that you still haven't published your book...**" In a long letter the Rebbe wrote how to publish in a way that wouldn't be too expensive, like by using a copying machine instead of going to a printer.

My son Mendy who was learning in Migdal HaEmek at the time heard this clear answer, and decided to help me. In his free time, he sat and prepared the material. This was difficult work, which took up a lot of his time, but he stuck with it. We decided to make 100 copies.

On 17 Nissan, my birthday, the work was done. My daughters organized a surprise farbrengen for me and invited everyone. My son came with the booklets, and to me



this was the best birthday present I could receive. It also turned out that in the T'hillim of that day is the chapter that contains the verse, "the beard of Aharon..." and in that day's parsha, it spoke about the prohibition of shaving the beard!

In front of everybody, I put a copy of the new pamphlet into a volume of *Igros Kodesh* and the answer I opened to left everyone openmouthed in amazement. The answer was in volume 17, p. 197: **Thank you for your article and the booklet you sent me, and surely you will do so in the future. Thank you in advance.**

It was clear to us all that the Rebbe wanted us to send him a copy and we did. I gave a woman who was going to the Rebbe a copy of the pamphlet to submit to the Rebbe's library. Since then, there were no more answers from the Rebbe about publishing!

At the time, I advertised in *Sichat HaGeula* that whoever wanted a copy of the pamphlet could order one for free through me. Within a few days, my supply was used up. The impact was great for I personally know some men who, after reading the pamphlet, decided not to shave. With that, I thought my shlichus was over, but that's not what the Rebbe thought.

Two years ago, my oldest daughter became of marriageable age. I hoped that it would all go quickly but that didn't happen. One of my friends who I confided in said that it was

It didn't matter what the question was, the answers in any volume I opened were about the importance of publishing.

surely because there was a great demand for my booklet and I needed to reprint it. I dismissed what she said. I figured I had already done my duty.

But a few days later, when I wrote to the Rebbe and asked for a bracha for my daughter, the answer was about publishing! I nearly fainted. It was in volume 16 p. 208: **I have received your book ... and thank you for thinking of sending it to me.**

This answer and other answers about publishing were so clear that I rubbed my eyes in amazement each time. I just couldn't believe it. It was just too much "light" and apparently, I wasn't a "vessel" for it.

At that time, I participated in a women's convention that took place at Nir Etzyon. Someone brought up the topic in front of everyone. I said it was too expensive to print and I couldn't do it. At the table sat Mrs. Hoshiar of Natzeret Ilit. When she heard the problem, she suggested that perhaps she could help since her

husband produced videos and he had connections with graphic artists. Maybe he could arrange it to be done inexpensively.

Some women made contributions on the spot, and after a few days, when I put another letter into the *Igros Kodesh*, I opened to an amazing letter in volume 9, page 206. There the Rebbe writes an entire letter about selling a book and publishing it – that the job should be given to a young man, which would make it easier to disseminate.

Rabbi Hoshiar did indeed lower the costs considerably and the printing was underway. Divine Providence was openly with us. I didn't have to worry about a thing and once I made an advance payment to the printer, things began to move.

That day I wrote to the Rebbe that I was about to print 2000 copies. The answer was that since all the obstacles regarding my oldest daughter were out of the way, it should be with mazal tov. I was flabbergasted and excited by this answer. I was convinced that everything would work smoothly from that point on.

On the day my daughter was engaged, all the copies were ready and we thanked the Rebbe for his brachos and thanked Hashem for giving us the Rebbe and for giving us the privilege of being mekusharim to him.

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R' BERKE

BY SHNEUR ZALMAN BERGER

*It was enough just to see the Chassid R' Berke Chein a"h to be captivated by him, by his wise eyes and his warm smile. He was a Chassidic figure who was able to bring his life of mesirus nefesh in Russia to modern civilization in Kfar Chabad. * Beis Moshiach brings you the biography of the famous Chassid, R' Dovber Chein, starting with his childhood in Russia, his fight for religious observance, and his surprising release from jail. * Part 2*

LEAVING FOR TASHKENT AND SAMARKAND

At the beginning of 5703 (1942), Mrs. Miriam Klein, one of the Chassidic women on the kolkhoz, received a letter from her brother, R' Yisroel Chasidov. He told her that he was in Tashkent in Uzbekistan with many other Lubavitcher Chassidim who had fled there during the war. He suggested that she join them.

The family announced to all the Lubavitcher families on the kolkhoz what the letter had said and they all immediately began to plan the trip. That's when they realized there was a great obstacle to their leaving. Since the war was still at its height, the authorities demanded that every citizen who moved from city to city receive an invitation from someone who lived in that city.

The refugees wrote to their brethren in Tashkent and a few weeks later received forged



R' Berke davening in 770

documents that were sent for all the Lubavitcher families on the kolkhoz. This enabled them to leave the forsaken kolkhoz for Tashkent.

The documents were not professional forgeries, but those who made them, as well as the Lubavitchers families on the kolkhoz, relied on the fact that the local security forces barely knew how to read and write. R' Eli Lipsker had signed the documents instead of a representative of the Interior Ministry, and R' Zalman Sudakevitz signed instead of a representative of the Justice Ministry!

The families packed their belongings and parted from their Tatar neighbors who had treated them well, for the most part. They got onto wagons hitched to horses and were on their way.

Their first goal was to safely descend from the cliff upon which the kolkhoz was built. The trip was exceedingly slow. The women and children were on the wagons with the bundles while the men walked beside them. They experienced some terror-filled moments as they descended the cliff such as when one of the horses suddenly galloped forward and the passengers in the wagon fell into the piles of snow and ice on the side of the road.

After three days of travel, they all arrived safely at the train station. At the station they met, for the first time in two years, ordinary people who knew how to read and write, and speak Russian.

They also met Jews who told them the little bit they knew about the war, especially about the terrible Holocaust that began with confining Jews into ghettos and labor camps and ended with extermination camps where millions of Jews were killed. All were horrified by the bloodcurdling news.

After two weeks of travel by train, the group of Chassidim arrived in Tashkent and joined the Chassidim who were already there. Some of them remained in the city while others, including R' Berke and his family, continued on to nearby Samarkand.

BEGGING THAT HIS LOAN BE ACCEPTED

Upon his arrival in Samarkand, R' Berke was asked to teach Torah to the children of the Chassidim in a branch of Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim. The yeshiva included children and bachurim and it was divided into small groups so they wouldn't be caught. Distinguished Chassidim taught the talmidim Nigleh and Chassidus with mesirus nefesh. They knew that the authorities were constantly trying to catch the Chassidim teaching Torah.

"R' Berke Chein taught us Chumash in the courtyard of his house," remembers R' Michoel Mishulovin, who was a boy at the time and is today a mashpia in Nachalas Har Chabad. When he lived in Samarkand, he continued to teach Torah with mesirus nefesh without thinking about how he would support himself.

"R' Berke wasn't removed from the material world, because he was especially concerned about *others'* material needs! The family of R' Meilich Kaplan, (who later became a rav in Shikun Chabad in Lud), suffered from hunger, like many other families in Samarkand during the war. He didn't have food to feed

his wife and children. Some more time passed and the situation became so bad that there wasn't even a piece of bread in the house.

"One day R' Berke met R' Meilich. R' Berke knew his situation and offered him a loan, even though his own financial circumstances were no better. R' Berke's offer was refused but he asked R' Meilich to think it over. After R' Meilich refused time and again, R' Berke burst into tears and said, 'Meilich, I know that things are awful at your house and you have no money with which to buy food. If you don't take a loan, I feel that I just won't be able to survive!'"

*I had no choice but to
tell him that a
holiday would begin
that night called
Chanuka, when we
light candles, but I
had no holiday and
no candles and that is
why I was sad.*

SAY LA'M'NATZEIACH, ASKED R' BERKE

At the end of the war, R' Berke and a group of Chassidim moved to Chernovitz. Shortly afterwards, he heard that many Chassidim were preparing to smuggle themselves over the border via Lvov with false Polish passports. He took his family to Lvov, where he lived for a short time in a house rented by his brother Dovid Leib, who had arrived in Lvov a few months earlier. Then he found another apartment, where he lived until he got the documents

and tickets with which he could leave the Soviet Union.

R' Berke prepared to leave but he didn't know that the police were constantly following him, and as soon as he asked to leave the country he was jailed. His son Mottel remembers the moment well:

"We waited at the train station in Lvov, my parents, my brother Meir Simcha and me, along with my Kalmanson grandparents. Suddenly, a police car drove up from which a policeman emerged. He called my father over and told us that he was taking my father for just a few minutes, but my father realized what was going on. He whispered, 'Say La'm'natzeiach,' and that was the last we saw of him for many years.

"My mother and her mother decided to remain in Russia while my brother my grandfather and I left the Soviet Union. Mumme Sarah (Mrs. Sarah Katzenelenbogen, may Hashem avenge her blood) arranged for me to be the "son" of R' Refael Wilschansky, and my brother Meir Simcha went as the "son" of another family. My grandfather traveled later and we met him on the way."

FROM A DEATH SENTENCE TO TEN YEARS IN JAIL

From the train station in Lvov, R' Berke was taken to the interrogation cellars where he was interrogated and severely tortured. The government wanted to know who had organized the mass smuggling of Chassidim via the Polish border but R' Berke didn't say a word.

After extended interrogations and torture, R' Berke was given the death sentence. A miracle occurred and his sentence was mitigated to eighteen years of hard labor in Siberia. His sentence was reduced yet again to ten years of incarceration.

When R' Berke would tell of his suffering in Soviet jail, he would



R' Berke with his son R' Dovid in Kfar Chabad

to children and spreading Judaism and Chassidus. I was always able to avoid them but when I tried to leave the country, I was caught. After the arrest, they began the terrible interrogations and torture. The sentence was death, but thanks to Hashem's kindness, I was sentenced to many years in Siberia.

"Now is not the time to describe everything that happened to me, all the suffering that was my daily lot, all the travails I underwent while under lock and key, all the plots they devised day and night... I sat in jail with criminals, murderers, thieves, and other crooks. They had a leader who had sole power over them. His appearance was enough to instill fear. And this was the group I was sentenced to sit with, but thanks to Hashem I found favor in their eyes, for some reason, and they

draw his listeners into the story.

Great pain was apparent in his voice:

"I was persecuted endlessly for the terrible 'crime' of teaching Torah



R' Berke with his son R' Mottel receiving a dollar from the Rebbe

respected me and did me no harm.

“Erev Chanuka thoughts filled my mind of Jews lighting candles, singing Chanuka songs, and eating latkes and rejoicing, while I was in great darkness. I had no candles, no latkes, no Chanuka songs, and no joyous Chassidische farbrengen. I would have to celebrate Chanuka with these criminals.

“I sat there sadly and one of the prisoners noticed and asked, ‘Rabbin, why are you sad? How can I help you?’

“I gave him some excuse, but he wasn’t the type to be dismissed so readily. A minute later, he came back with the leader. ‘What’s up with you? Here in prison there are no secrets. We are all friends.’

“Woe, to have such friends, I thought, but I had no choice but to tell him that a holiday would begin that night called Chanuka, when we light candles, but I had no holiday and no candles and that is why I was sad.

“‘We will see what we can do for you,’ he said. ‘What do you need in order to celebrate the holiday?’ I told him that I needed to light candles but even if I had candles, it was forbidden to light them in jail.

“‘Let me take care of the rules in jail, don’t worry. We’ll arrange candles for you.’ He went off and I looked at him in amazement, wondering whether he was serious or was making a joke at my expense.

“A few minutes later he returned and said, ‘It’s all arranged, honored rabbi. I spoke with some friends and each one agreed to set aside some of the margarine that we are allotted. We will put the margarine in half of an onion and you will have candles.’

“I was stunned. ‘And what about fire?’ I stammered.

“‘In the evening you will see,’ he declared arrogantly. I still couldn’t

digest the fact that I would be lighting Chanuka candles that evening.

“It was evening and the leader brought me the margarine that the other prisoners had collected, and wicks from their coats. I put the margarine in the hollow of the onion, placed the wicks and waited for fire. When everything was ready, the leader told his friends to surround me like a buttressed wall in order to hide the light.

“He himself took a piece of material, put it on the wooden floor and began to rub it with his boot. I couldn’t see exactly how he did it

but suddenly the material was smoking and a minute later there was fire!

“With great emotion I recited the brachos of ‘Lhadlik ner Chanuka’ and ‘Sh’asa nissim,’ and as I said the ‘SheHechyanu’ bracha I cried. I lit the wick and an enormous wave of joy flooded my heart that cannot be described.

“As long as the candle burned the prisoners stood around and hid me with their bodies and coats. This is what they did every night of Chanuka. Fortunately, the jailers didn’t notice anything untoward and so I celebrated Chanuka in the

TO THE POINT OF MESIRUS NEFESH

Many years later, R’ Berke told a fascinating story about what happened to him when he lived in Ditsky-Silo:

In those days I had to go to the Chassid, Rabbi Yona Cohen (Poltaver, may Hashem avenge his blood), one of the directors of the network of underground Yeshivos Tomchei T’mimim, for a certain reason. I arrived at the shul in Moscow, where I davened Mincha and Maariv, and only after dark did I begin to head for R’ Yona’s house. I didn’t go straight to his house for I knew that eyes were upon me. It was only after a long time of walking this way and that that I arrived at his house.

I knocked at the door and went in and to my dismay I saw R’ Yona sitting at the head of the table and saying T’hillim and crying bitterly. He immediately closed the T’hillim and began to speak to me pleasantly as though nothing was wrong. I asked him why he had been crying but he didn’t want to answer me. I said that if something had happened, he should tell me and then I too would say T’hillim.

After asking him again and again he told me that in a city of Russia the secret police had pounced upon the boys and jailed the melamed who had been sent there by R’ Yona, and the boys were sent home. The parents were warned not to send their children to learn Torah again. They said that whoever sent their son to learn Torah would have their son placed in an orphanage.

Nevertheless, R’ Yona sent another melamed and some time later he received a letter which said that only four out of the twelve children had shown up. The rest were afraid to be caught and sent to an orphanage. The parents’ fears were justified and R’ Yona didn’t know what to answer the melamed. He decided to say T’hillim so that the right answer would fall into his head, whether he should tell the parents to go with mesirus nefesh until the end without considering the danger, or not.

R’ Yona told me that the thought that occurred to him was that they ought to go with mesirus nefesh.

Soviet jail with the help of gentiles.”

As Pesach approached, R' Berke worried about how he would observe the mitzvos of the holiday. To his surprise, a few days before Pesach he received a small parcel of matzos that his wife had sent him. Then a new worry beset him, for in the cell there were some ruffians who, late at night, would rifle through the prisoners' belongings and take what they pleased. He knew that if he hid the matzos where he slept, this wouldn't help.

After much thought, he came up with an idea. When it was dark in the cell, he hung the package of matzos on a projection that stuck out of the wall, hoping that the ruffians wouldn't think that a package hanging in plain sight would have food that could still their hunger.

Despite his plan, R' Berke couldn't sleep because he was nervous about his matzos. Indeed, at some point he noticed through half-opened eyes, that the ruffians were beginning to search through the prisoners' belongings. His apprehensions grew as they approached him, but they didn't look at the wall where the matzos hung. After a long period of apprehension, the ruffians finished their thievery for the night and went to sleep.

That night was the first of many fearful nights until the eight days of Pesach were over and he could breathe a sigh of relief. Each day, he ate a bit of the matzos, thus managing to celebrate the holiday of our freedom – in a Soviet jail.

ESCAPED PRISONER

R' Berke's wife Faiga, who had remained in the Soviet Union even though she had the opportunity to leave, was determined to get her husband out of jail. She managed to bribe people in the right positions

and after three years of suffering, R' Berke left jail. A number of people in jail collaborated to enable him to be released and his release was unofficial. This is why he did not have any documents and was considered an escaped prisoner.

R' Berke once spoke about his leaving jail:

“Praise to the Creator of the world Who helped me in my difficulty; I went through all seven levels of hell and left jail for freedom in a country which is one big jail.”

After leaving jail, R' Berke continued to live in Lvov, where there were hardly any Chassidim anymore aside from his two brothers and a few others. He had to find work in order to support himself, but for an escaped prisoner to find a job, and one which would not force him to desecrate the Shabbos, was an almost impossible challenge.

One of the jobs that shomrei Shabbos people took was photography, because a photographer could do his work whenever he pleased. R' Berke, a man completely involved in learning and davening, learned how to be a photographer. He bought a professional camera with the black sleeve, and the development equipment and chemicals needed to soak the negatives.

He placed his new equipment in the center of the city, not far from the government offices, and there he photographed those who needed to submit forms to the government, which needed a photo attached. Naturally, he wasn't the only photographer, for many tried this profession, which enabled one to support himself honorably.

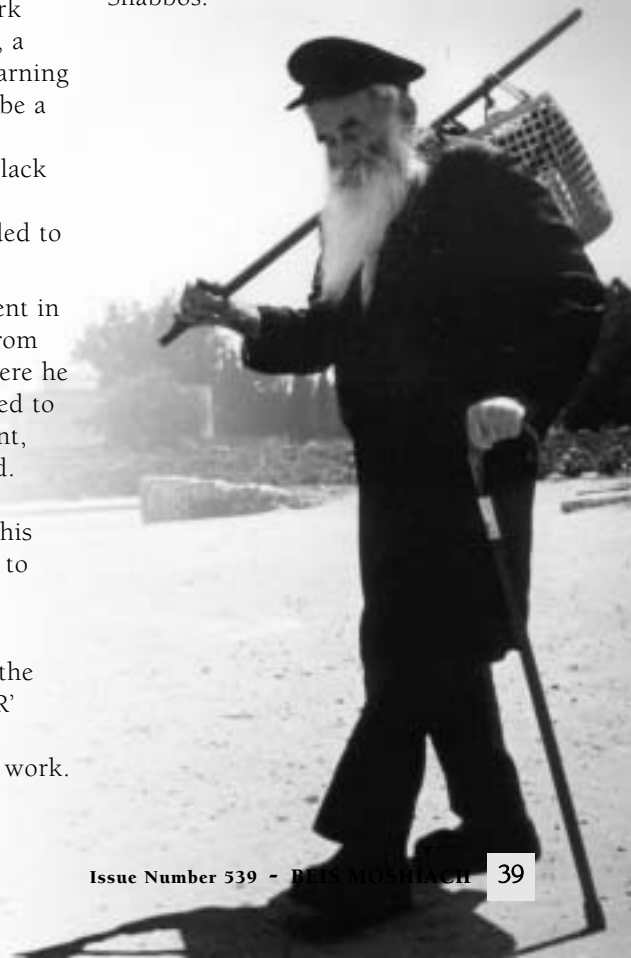
But while all R' Berke's competitors appeared early in the morning to grab a good spot, R' Berke was davening until after midday and only then went to work.

It was amazing to see how as soon as he set up his camera, a long line formed, for many people preferred to use him.

In those difficult times, while his two sons were in Eretz Yisroel and he and his wife were in the Soviet Union, they had a daughter whom they named after R' Berke's mother, Chana Freyda Devorah (today Friedman of Tzfas). Her big brothers knew that they had a little sister but heard nothing about her for many years.

Even after R' Berke left jail he didn't stop worrying about the chinuch of Jewish children. His nephew Ben-Tzion Chein relates:

“I remember that I didn't want to endanger my parents, and so I went to school, having no other choice. However, my uncle R' Berke would try to convince me not to go to school at all. Indeed, on Shabbos, I did not go to school and my mother gave gifts to the teachers so they would ignore my absences on Shabbos.



NEXT!

BY SHAI GEFEN

CHEVRON ON THE CHOPPING BLOCK

Dozens of Yassam police and soldiers arrived in the Jewish Quarter in Chevron, but failed in their mission of distributing expulsion orders to 11 Jewish families. The plan is to turn their land over to the Arabs who are the descendents of those who perpetrated the massacre of 1929.

A decade ago, when Arab violence in Chevron was at a peak, the army decided to clear out the Arab storeowners in the marketplace in order to provide security for the Jews of Chevron. Several years later, after 10-month-old Shalhevet Pass was shot to death by terrorists with a bullet to her head, Jews decided to renew their title to the land. They began renovating the stores, turning them into inhabitable apartments, and moving families in. Eleven families currently live there. In order to appease the bloodlust of Arabs and those on the Left, and after the successful expulsion from Gush Katif and northern Shomron, the government is trying the same thing in Chevron.

A Jewish heart can only cry out, "Did you murder and then inherit?" Five months after the expulsion, the same government wants to carry out further expulsions, including the holy city of Chevron.

Let's get this straight: if we don't get our acts together, Yerushalayim will also be turned over to our enemies. We saw what happened in Gush Katif when most people waited until the last minute. The Arabs and

the Left are certainly anticipating the expulsion of Jews, the sooner the better.

The dear Jews of Chevron have withstood difficult and bitter tests. We all still remember how P.M. Yitzchok Rabin wanted to expel the Jews of Chevron and how, with Hashem's help, the evil decree was annulled thanks to the determined stand of Am Yisroel. The Jews of Chevron, whose lives are ones of mesirus nefesh, will G-d willing win this battle, but we all need to stand by their side and help them so the expulsion does not take place.

Many ask: How will we be successful now if we failed to prevent the expulsion from Gush Katif? It's a good question but we can't despair even when a sword is upon us. If only because of the mesirus nefesh and the blood that has been spilled in Chevron thus far, may Hashem not allow the place to be destroyed.

There is also an enormous difference between what took place in Gush Katif and Chevron because when the storm troopers went in to Chevron there had not been a government resolution. The attempt was only made by the personal order of the Defense Minister. It's close to certain that great public pressure could prevent a tragedy and the Defense Minister would have to remove his signature.

The Rebbe warned Moshe Katzav that he would fight (mentioning his holy name) against all who give away land and the government would fall. We saw what happened to the

government that destroyed Gush Katif and northern Shomron, yet their wickedness is so great that they don't even postpone the expulsion from Chevron until after the elections, even for political considerations. And yet, we are certain that Hashem is the guardian of Israel and will not abandon His nation.

Each of us has the obligation to come to the aid of the heroes in the Jewish settlement of Chevron. We saw what happened with Gush Katif and who knows whether we could have put off the expulsion if we had exhibited more mesirus nefesh in the early stages.

The Rebbe told Rabbi Moshe Levinger in yechidus that took place in Nissan 5741 that he supported the settlements especially in Chevron. The Rebbeim own property in Chevron and we, as Chabad Chassidim, ought to be pioneers in the battle to preserve Chevron. Go visit Chevron and arouse the merit of our Forefathers as Kalev and Yehoshua did.

WHAT WILL THE WORLD SAY?

It's incredible to see, time after time, how the Rebbe saw everything ahead of time, at a time when what he said sounded, frankly, absurd. In a letter he wrote to Sharon (who took part in giving away Chevron) nearly forty years ago, on 12 Elul 5728, the Rebbe wrote about the settlers in Chevron:

**Within the inner circles of settlers
(contrary to the view of those in**



charge), there are many Chabadniks (some who are open about it, and others who are unknown). I am sure you are also aware of the situation of the settlers there – who are not far from being prisoners. The reason given is also similar to the one stated, being based upon “justice and honesty,” and the common denominator of all these phenomena is: What will the “greater world” say, etc., as we discussed when you were here.

And for example, if there should be some quarrel between an Israeli youth and an Arab youth in Chevron – since the Arab youths would outnumber the Jews there – it is possible that the Jewish youth will be beaten up, etc. On whose side, in your opinion, would the Israeli military police stand in that situation, especially if the mayor (who, it would appear, had a part in the riots and pogroms of 1929 against Jews in Chevron) were to come and make a commotion about the “provocation” by the Jews...

Yet this is precisely the policy that continues until this day.

OLMERT AND OLIVE TREES

What a world of falsehood we live in, when Jews use their natural compassion for our murderers and are cruel to those for whom they should have compassion. Acting P.M. Ehud Olmert issued a statement in which he sharply condemned those who cut down Arab-owned olive trees in the Shomron. Defense Minister Mofaz and Chief of Staff Dan Chalutz reported to the government that settlers cut down 2400 Arab trees recently.

Olmert said, “I condemn the phenomenon of cutting down olive trees, and I call upon the Attorney General to take action against the wild people responsible for this.”

Mind you, this is his first order of

business. This same Olmert who supported the Disengagement plan which left thousands of Jews homeless and without a job, traumatized, with some people in psychiatric wards, is concerned about Arab murderers!

There have been numerous reports that Jewish settlers have cut down olive trees but many suspect them of being merely a “left-wing provocation” against the Jews of Yehuda and Shomron. The Yesha Council found that similar reports six weeks ago were apparently a provocation staged by extreme left-wing activists who “wish to sully their Jewish brothers, while at the same time extending their hand to terrorists.”

The residents of Elon Moreh, who were specifically named in connection with those accusations, said in a statement, “We wish to emphasize that we have no connection with this incident, which is based on the testimony of a single Arab.”

Rabbi Yigal Kirshnzaft, former shliach of Neve Dekalim told me that he went to Hadassah Ein Kerem hospital to visit a good friend, someone expelled from Gush Katif who had a serious heart attack as a result. And to think that the Knesset members and ministers who were the ones to destroy Eretz Yisroel are worried about Arab trees!

We have witnessed the media frenzy surrounding the P.M. because of his health and I think about how the same media supported the Disengagement. Where have they been the last five months? They’ve been quiet about the hardships and traumas experienced by the expellees and about the security ramifications the expulsion has wrought.

Watch the hypocritical posturing and flattery on the part of rabbis

In that Knesset session they did not discuss the hundreds who are still in tents, the thousands who have no source of parnasa, nor about the ongoing shooting at Israeli cities and the south of the country turning into Lebanon. The problem on Olmert’s mind is Arab olive trees.

(including Chabad) who go to visit Sharon and then tell the media about Sharon’s greatness, and express concern for his well-being. We didn’t see those leaders when children lost their world; we didn’t see them visit the expellees. It goes to show how our condition is far from healthy.

In that Knesset session they did not discuss the hundreds who are still in tents, the thousands who have no source of parnasa, nor about the ongoing shooting at Israeli cities and the south of the country turning into Lebanon. The problem on Olmert’s mind is Arab olive trees.

These are the leaders, who want to be reelected and to lead us down the slippery slope. We need healthy

leaders. May Hashem send a refua shleima, health in body and spirit, to leaders who walk in blindness and lead the nation to the brink of the abyss.

**FINAL BIRURIM
BEFORE GEULA**

Every moment of these final moments of Galus presents us with previously unimagined situations. There is no question that we are undergoing the enormous birur required before the Geula. All belief in natural redemptions and the belief in a state as a first step in the Geula process, have been shown to be false. The emuna and bowing to politicians and the Israeli military is not what it once was.

The foundation of the establishment of the State of Israel was composed of lies and bribes. That's the way it began and that's the way it has continued till this day.

Rabbis go to visit Sharon and then tell the media about Sharon's greatness, and express concern for his well-being. We didn't see those leaders when children lost their world; we didn't see them visit the expellees. It goes to show how our condition is far from healthy.

Before Sharon's health dominated the news, we heard about Martin Schlaff and the three million dollar bribe affair. We know that the government was bought with money and bribes. We know that our politicians aren't exactly interested in our security and are more concerned about themselves.

And yet, despite it all, we see how Am Yisroel forges ahead, miraculously. Darkness is fading away and we all see the difference between light and darkness which itself hastens the Geula.

Our job today is to further hasten the Geula so that G-d forbid, not one more Jew is hurt. We must demand the Geula and pray that all that we are going through now, birur after birur, ends with great mercy and that we immediately merit the prophecy of Geula, "an end is put to darkness." May we see the Malchus beis Dovid return along with truth and justice.

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TO SAVE CHEVRON AND ERETZ YISROEL

BY SHAI GEFEN

The fight for Chevron is on. The defense minister issued an order to destroy the Shalhevet neighborhood of Chevron. The order was given to fifteen families and it said that the minister intends on expelling the Jews within two weeks.

In Chevron, they don't intend on compromising. Thousands are ready to descend upon Chevron in the coming weeks. The shluchim in Chevron, Rabbi Victor Ettia, Rabbi Yossi Nachshon, and Rabbi Danny Cohen have formed a committee to save Chevron. They hope, with Hashem's help, to have a great victory when the government realizes that it doesn't pay to expel Jews, something which will exacerbate tensions in Chevron, especially considering the recent events.

Tell us about your fight.

The battle seems small, just over a street and small market in Chevron, but those who know what's what know that this is a critical battle. It's a battle for all of Eretz Yisroel and the holiness of Chevron.

The government sees Chevron as a touchstone. If they are successful in Chevron and award another prize to terrorists, this will enable all future expulsions to take place. In addition to the Torah prohibition of abandoning any part of Eretz Yisroel, Chevron is more significant since it was actually purchased with Jewish money.

Where is this neighborhood?

It's the Avrohom Avinu neighborhood built one hundred years ago, which is known as the Jewish ghetto of Chevron. The market that the government wants to evacuate is right next to the Avrohom Avinu neighborhood. It was purchased by the Sephardic community over 200 years ago, and recently, the heirs of the Sephardic settlement gave us the documents and asked those who are

revitalizing the Jewish settlement in Chevron to renew the place. The absurdity is that the government agrees that this is a Jewish-owned area but they claim that those living there entered without permission.

After the Chevron massacre of 1929, the Arabs stole all Jewish property and put up a wholesale market where the Jewish homes used to be. Now they claim that Jews are there without permission. After the Six Day War, there were attempts to settle every Jewish section of Chevron and it cost us much blood.

Over the years, the Rebbe spoke about the perversion of "did you murder and then inherit," and this is precisely what is happening before our very eyes. This area is clearly Jewish-owned, yet the government never got rid of the Arab inhabitants. After the beginning of the Intifada and the shooting at Jews in Chevron, the Arabs left on their own and the market was closed.

After the murder of ten-month-old Shalhevet Pass, a new neighborhood was established there. Hundreds of thousands of dollars were invested to renovate the apartments and to make them habitable.

And now they want to destroy it all?

The Rebbe spoke about the Avrohom Avinu Shul, how they sent soldiers drafted for mesirus nefesh to expel Jews, in order to complete the work of the murderers of 1929! I will also point out that the area the government wants to evacuate is where the large Beis Menachem Shul, named after the Tzemach Tzedek, is located.

After the expulsion from Gush Katif, which easily and quickly threw out thousands of Jews, how will a small group of people do any better?!

It's not the way of Chassidim to

despair! Hundreds of Chassidim in Russia did not give up even when dozens and hundreds of them were murdered in dark cellars or were sent to Siberia. All the more so on the eve of Geula and the hisgalus of the Rebbe, we cannot give up! The Jews of Chevron are made out of different stuff. I can tell you that there will be no pictures of people hugging expulsion soldiers in Chevron.

Another point to remember about Chevron as compared to Gush Katif is that no government decision or court order made this legal. This is simply a signature of the defense minister, and we believe that with massive pressure we will get the message across that they'd better lay off, especially on the eve of the elections. We believe there is a good chance of winning here.

It pains me to think about innocent soldiers sent to do expulsions. Those who make the decisions don't care about using soldiers, kids to destroy our land.

What are you asking Chabad Chassidim to do?

As the rabbanim have said, everyone must do all he can, especially by going to Chevron! It's very important to come to Chevron at this time. There are places to learn in the Mittlerer Rebbe's Shul and in the Menucha Rochel Kollel.

Those who have connections at the Misrad HaBitachon, who can exert some pressure, should do so. The most important thing is to be here in order to prevent an expulsion. There's no question that when the government sees thousands of people coming to defend Chevron, they will realize it does not pay to continue with expulsions and the destruction of Eretz Yisroel.