



The international weekly heralding the coming of Mashiach  
**BEIS MOSHIACH**

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*Wishing all our readers a kosher and freilichn Pesach.  
The next issue is due be"H for Parshas Tazria-Metzora.*

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Beis Moshiach (USPS 012-542) ISSN 1082-0272 is published weekly, except Jewish holidays (only once in April and October) for \$130.00 in Crown Heights, \$140.00 in the USA & Canada, all others for \$150.00 per year (45 issues), by Beis Moshiach, 744 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, NY 11213-3409. Periodicals postage paid at Brooklyn, NY and additional offices. Postmaster: send address changes to Beis Moshiach 744 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, NY 11213-3409.

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# THE PLEASURE OF PREPARING FOR PESACH

LIKKUTEI SICHOS VOL. 16, PG. 122-128  
TRANSLATED BY BORUCH MERKUR



[Continued from last week]

6. These two manners of Divine service find expression, in a general sense, also in the two general manifestations of redemption: the redemption from Egypt and the future redemption.

Regarding the Exodus from Egypt it says [B'Shalach 14:5], "for the nation fled" (haste), reason being that "the evil in the souls of the Jewish people was still **in its strength**" [*Tanya* Ch. 31; see FN 31]. Thus, we had to run away from evil ("the defilement of Egypt" [ibid]) Indeed, this is the concept of "bread of affliction," the Divine service of suppression. Whereas, in the Future to Come it will be, "not in haste shall you go" [Yeshayahu 52:12], "the spirit of defilement I will remove from the land" [Zecharia 13:2], [symbolizing] a state of sublimation, "rich matza."

And this is the explanation of how "because you left Egypt in haste" is the reason why the matza of the night of Pesach cannot be rich matza (and not matza made of ingredients that do not ferment). Namely, since "you left Egypt **in haste**," being that the evil was still in its strength (as mentioned above), it demanded the service of obedience and suppression, specifically "bread of affliction."

7. The fact that we cannot fulfill our obligation on Pesach with rich matza is not only because what it represents does not **resemble** the redemption from Egypt, which was in a manner of, "the nation **fled**" (obedience and suppression, as mentioned above), but also on account of the fact that "bread of affliction" (and likewise, the redemption from Egypt) has an advantage over rich matza (and the redemption of the Future to Come):

Although in the case of sublimation (rich matza) the evil is entirely nullified, there is still an advantage in suppression. Namely, the fact that specifically **this** service is connected

with the **toil** of the person, battling with opposition and overpowering the evil.

In different terms: The concept of sublimation expresses how the person becomes **united** with G-dliness, through the fact that he is purified, to the extent that his being does not permit any room for evil. Suppression, on the other hand, expresses **nullification** and submission to G-dliness – that although with respect to the person's intellect and emotion there is room for evil, he forces himself to do the opposite of what **his** being demands and instead fulfills the Supernal Will.

This is one of the explanations of the fact that also in the future redemption there will be the remembrance of the Exodus from Egypt [FN 34: Mishna Brachos Ch. 1, end. And it is said, "As in the days of your departure from the land of Egypt, I will show him wonders" (Micha 7:15), "As there was for the Jewish people on the day of their ascent from the land of Egypt" (Yeshayahu 11:16).], for the ultimate intent is that there should be **both** advantages. Namely, even when a person has achieved sublimation – the complete purification of his being, to the extent that there is absolutely no place for evil – there should also be the advantage of suppression [see FN 35] (which is associated with the redemption from Egypt), the **nullification** of the person, which is expressed in work and toil.

8. The Alter Rebbe explains in *Torah Or* [Shmos, beg.] that the fact that it says regarding the **redemption from Egypt**, "I shall bring you up, also ascend" [FN 37: VaYigash 46:4. And in *Torah Or* mentioned above: So too in Shmos Ch. 3, verse 14, G-d told Moshe about the final redemption, etc.] – two elevations – comes to include a second ascent, which will occur with the future redemption.

It is, therefore, understood that (precisely as the concept of the redemption from Egypt will be "mentioned" – it will be

efficacious – in the future redemption, so too in the converse, also) with regard to the redemption from Egypt there must be perceived and felt (the promise and **speech** [FN 38: which is considered an action (B'Reishis Rabba 44:22, among others)] of the Holy One Blessed Be He pertaining to the) the future redemption.

The explanation of the matter: How can one effect in himself that also when the evil is in its strength (and even **after** breaking himself, the evil still remains in its strength (just like regarding the Exodus from Egypt, which had to be, “the nation fled”)) he should have the power to wage war with the evil (and to be victorious over it)? It helps to have the recognition and perception that ultimately, the service of suppression will lead to sublimation.

Thus, even before the onset of the redemption from Egypt, there was the mention and proclamation concerning **both** elevations: “I shall bring you up, also ascend,” [i.e., there was mention of] also the future redemption.

9. The fact that we mention the future redemption in the context of the redemption from Egypt means not only that we proclaim a concept that will be **in the future**, but also that it is a source of strength to be translated into a person's Divine **service** in present times – that immediately in the beginning of service (the exile of Egypt) there should be a semblance of the future redemption.

At first glance one can ask: Since we are still at the initial stages of the service of G-d and the evil is still in its **strength**, how can there be (even) a semblance of the future redemption, which is characterized by sublimation (that there is **no** evil)?

The response: Although in the beginning of the service of G-d there is not the concept of **nullification** of (the existence) of evil, for which reason the service is in a way of waging war and obedience (as mentioned above in Section 5), the nullification and obedience must not be (only) in a way of forcing. Rather, the nullification itself must be connected with the person's “**being**”; his intellect and emotions should also consent to the nullification and obedience. Then, one's service of obedience is with a *geshmak*.

That is, the future redemption as it is expressed in the redemption from Egypt is not the service of intellect and emotions unto themselves (which would eventually lead to sublimation, as mentioned in Section 5), but an aspect of the service of suppression (associated with the redemption from Egypt) – that the service of obedience is with pleasure.

(Similarly, the concept of the redemption from Egypt, which will be mentioned in the Future to Come, is an aspect of the future redemption: The primary ascent of the future is the purification of the person's being (sublimation), but the purification will not be measured and limited only to the amount of purification that **he** accomplishes (corresponding to his being), but surpassing the capacity of his being (the advantage of nullification).)

10. This also explains why the matza that the Jews ate in Egypt (as a preparation to the Exodus from Egypt) could have been rich matza [see FN 39], but on the other hand, it had to be “matza that requires guarding”:

In light of the integration of the future redemption with the redemption from Egypt, there is the possibility for rich matza also while **in** Egypt. However, the fact that in Egypt there can be a semblance of the future is only with regard to

the detail of “rich” – that the **obedience** itself should be with a *geshmak* – but not with regard to the concept of “it cannot ‘come to be fermented’” (sublimation); this cannot be when the evil is still in its strength.

11. This [point regarding rich matzos], however, is only applicable when we are still in Egypt, before the redemption. But departing from Egypt, after the redemption (so too with regard to the matza that we eat on the night of Pesach, a remembrance of the **Exodus** from Egypt), must be specifically “bread of affliction.” [See FN 40.]

The explanation of the matter: The Exodus from Egypt accomplished that the Jews no longer were “the servants of Pharaoh” and they became “the servants of G-d.” That is, they were then holding by **accepting His kingship**, may He be blessed, which precedes the obedience of fulfilling G-d's **commandants** (as the

Sages say, “One should first receive upon himself the yoke of the kingship of Heaven and thereafter he should receive upon himself the yoke of Mitzvos [Mishna Brachos 2:2. See Mechilta Yisro 20:3 among others]).

In **this**, a person mustn't mix in the concept of his being, as the Sages say: the punishment of one who gestures before the king is the opposite of life [Chagiga 5b. See *Likkutei Sichos* Vol. 4 pg. 1050 and FN 13 there]. And therefore, in this, there cannot be the “*taam*” and *geshmak* of rich matza, because receiving the kingship of the Holy One Blessed Be He (**becoming** servants of G-d) is only through “bread of **affliction**,” **absolute** nullification.

*(From the addresses of Acharon Shel Pesach and Shabbos Parshas Shmini 5726)*

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*The nullification itself must be connected with the person's “being”; his intellect and emotions should also consent to the nullification and obedience. Then, one's service of obedience is with a geshmak.*

---

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B"H 16th of Adar, 5766

## **MO'OS CHITIM**

To All Anash and Temimim שי

Sholom U'vrocho!

Throughout the years, during the Rebbe's Purim Farbrengen ("Thirty days before the Chag (Pesach)"), the Rebbe would customarily remind and urge everyone concerning the importance of contributing Tzedakah for "Mo'os Chitim."

It is well known that "Kupas Rabbeinu" endeavors to continue implementing all of the holy projects and activities which the Rebbe has established. Amongst these activities is the Rebbe's practice to extend financial aid to those families in need of their various Pesach necessities.

Accordingly, we are at this time urging and requesting each and every Anash member and Tomim שיחי to contribute generously to "Kupas Rabbeinu," in order to enable the administration to provide for these families and thus afford them with the opportunity to celebrate Pesach with contentment and joy.

Regarding this Mitzvah it is stated: "Whoever increases (in giving) is praiseworthy."

Unfortunately, the amount of families in need of this financial assistance is more than generally assumed. As such, the more generous your contribution to "Kupas Rabbeinu," the greater the number of families receiving assistance will be.

And since, with regard to all Mitzvahs we are instructed to act with Simcha and zest, it is all the more pertinent with regard to the aforementioned, as it is of paramount importance that the funds be received and distributed as soon as possible.

In the merit of Tzedakah which hastens the Geula, may we merit the true Geula Shlaimah, with the revelation of Melech HaMashiach - The Rebbe Nasi Doreinu, immediately, Mamash.

Chag HaPesach Kosher V'Sameach

*Vaad Kupas Rabbeinu*

P.S. 1) The traditional "Magvis Yud Shevat, Purim" can also be sent at this time, as well as all other Magvios.

2) All funds should be sent to the following address only; Donations are tax deductible

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# A GIFT FOR THE REBBE

REBBETZIN ROCHEL HENDEL

Yud-Alef Nissan, the Rebbe's birthday: We always knew that this birthday was very important, being the birthday of the Nasi HaDor. We always tried to give the Rebbe a birthday gift to please him and give him nachas. After all, the purpose of a gift is to please the recipient.

I will share with you one of the birthday gifts that I sent the Rebbe, 28 years ago in 5738 (1978). When we arrived in Tzfas 33 years ago, on the Rebbe's shlichus, I had a number of goals. One of these goals was to teach kallos and married women the laws of family purity. I was also committed to working with the youth to be mekarev them to Yiddishkait.

I went to different schools and made Shabbos parties with the children on Friday. The children always looked forward to it. When we saw that this was successful, we planned a pre-bar and bas mitzva program at Public School #3 in the south of the city. The principal liked the idea, as did the homeroom teacher of the sixth grade, Mrs. Esther Motai. They even agreed to separate the boys and girls once a week for these classes.

So every week I gave a shiur for girls as a preparation for their bas mitzva (on my day off and of course I wasn't paid). The teachers attended it too and found it very

interesting. Various pamphlets on Chassidus that talk about bar mitzva and bas mitzva were helpful.

We had a special notebook that we called "Jewish Thought." The girls decorated it and looked forward to the class. Mothers were also happy about the class. I was asked to speak at an evening program for mothers and all went well.

In honor of Yud-Alef Nissan that year, I decided to send the Rebbe the most beautiful notebooks. I told the girls about this and the competition was fierce. All the girls worked hard to make their

notebook the most attractive. Excitement ran high – they were sending a gift to the Rebbe!

We wrote a nice letter and the girls and teachers signed to heartfelt brachos in honor of the Rebbe's birthday and we sent the five nicest notebooks with the letter.

To our great surprise, during S'firas HaOmer I received a letter from the Rebbe, which contained three letters: one for the girls of Public School #3, one for the teachers of the public schools of Tzfas, and one for me. In my letter the Rebbe wrote, "Enclosed are two letters for the teachers and students



and certainly, if more of an explanation is required, you will find the proper way to do so," as well as brachos.

To the girls, the Rebbe wrote:

**I was pleased to receive, through Mrs. Chaya Rochel Hendel, your wishes and blessings for my birthday along with your notebooks. It has already been said in the words of our Sages, who say, "Whoever blesses is himself blessed," from Hashem, the Source of blessing, Whose addition is greater than the original.**

I enjoyed seeing the notebooks that are about Jewish-Thought and it is certainly superfluous to emphasize the p'sak din of our Torah, the Torah of life, that the main thing is action, the action of mitzvos and conducting oneself according to authentic Jewish thought. Especially according to the saying of our Sages that the mitzvos were given to refine the Jewish people, i.e., they refine and purify – effecting the realm of thought as well: "Hashem wanted to refine the Jewish people, therefore He gave them Torah and mitzvos." May each of you and all of you together go from strength to strength in all the aforementioned and may Hashem grant you success. With blessing.

The Rebbe wrote an interesting letter to the teachers, which we copied. We then explained to all of them the significance of the Rebbe's message. The success (and simcha) was enormous.

However, shortly thereafter, the Satan mixed in and one day a supervisor came and said that Chabad was no longer welcome at the public schools in Tzfas. Our wonderful work came to a stop and we were quite upset.

I was reminded of all this and it occurred to me that maybe we

should try to restart this program. May Hashem grant us success.

\* \* \*

As the years went on, Chabad schools were opened in Tzfas. I worked at Beis Chana and Machon Alte. Ten years down the road I sat down one day in Machon Alte and taught the girls in a large room, when suddenly, a girl walked in. She greeted me heartily, and said, "Finally we meet!" We hugged and kissed as though we had both waited for this moment and it was awkward for me since I didn't feel I could ask her who she was!

*In the end, the entire family traveled and on the way, one of the family members read the Megilla from a kosher Megilla. When he said Haman's name and they had nothing to bang with, the father honked!*

I began the shiur while wondering who the girl could be. Who was so happy to see me? I tried to remember but came up blank. I decided I couldn't ask her because she could feel insulted that she felt so close to me while I didn't even recognize her.

At the end of the shiur, she came over to me and hesitantly asked me, "Ah, where do we know each other from?"

We began to laugh. I tried to remember and finally placed her. She was Vicki, one of the girls in the sixth grade in the bas mitzva

program at Public School #3. She had been there when the Rebbe's answer had arrived. Now, ten years later, she came to learn about Judaism.

That's when we saw the fulfillment of the verse in Koheles, "cast your bread upon the waters for after many days you will find it." We became very close and she was our guest on many a Shabbos. We also invited her parents. Her father was the administrator of a clinic at the hospital in Tzfas and her mother was a lovely woman, a child of Romanian immigrants.

At first, there was some opposition from her parents but as we learned from experience, we take recalcitrant mothers to weddings of girls from the Machon so they see true joy (with a mechitza etc.).

We took Vicki's mother to one of the girl's weddings and the simcha was so great that she said to me, "I've never seen simcha like this. This is the kind of wedding I want for my daughter!" Baruch Hashem, her daughter also had a Chassidishe wedding.

Today, Vicki has seven children (or eight, I don't remember) and runs a beautiful Chassidishe home. We've kept in touch and she's truly a source of nachas to her parents.

How important it is to work with the youth, for so much can be accomplished with them. Israeli youth do not study Judaism, so every crumb given to them is so important and has long-range effects.

You would be surprised, but even the children who learn in our own mosdos need chizuk. Erev Purim I went around to the classes in Ohr Menachem and Beis Chana in Tzfas. More than half the girls, who are not from Lubavitcher homes but from religious homes,

do not hear the Megilla read on Purim day. This is because the men hear it early in the morning in shul and the women couldn't manage to come that early, and over the years, they left the work to the men.

However, the mitzvos of Purim are for women as well as for men! So we made a campaign in school that whoever heard the Megilla read twice and took other girls or her mother along with her, would be in a raffle for s'farim. The girls were terrific! For the first time, they heard the Megilla at night and by day.

There was a woman who wanted to hear the Megilla read by day thanks to our campaign, but they

had to travel somewhere. In the end, the entire family traveled and on the way, one of the family members read the Megilla from a kosher Megilla. When he said Haman's name and they had nothing to bang with, the father honked!

Now, for Pesach, the big mitvza is eating handmade shmura matza. One year, the girls in Ohr Menachem-B'nos worked on this. The principal and teachers convinced the girls, who convinced their families to eat only this kind of matza on Pesach. What a great z'chus it is, as the Arizal writes, "Whoever is careful about a drop of chametz is guaranteed he won't sin all year." What an impact eating

only handmade shmura matza has!

Surely every teacher, wherever she may be, has an enormous influence on her environment. We cannot take it easy; we must persuade everyone to buy only round, handmade shmura matza!

\* \* \*

As we approach the special day of Yud-Alef Nissan, let us each think of an appropriate gift for the Rebbe, one that will please him. The Rebbe is here for us, constantly listening to our problems and giving us his brachos. Let us repay him in some small way for all he does for us. Let us bring about the hisgalus of Melech HaMoshiach now!



  
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# THE DAY OF REJOICING OF MOSHIACH TZIDKEINU

COMPILED BY MENACHEM SHAKED

*A compilation of stories and short sayings about Pesach, from our Rebbeim and the great Chassidim.*

## PESACH PREPARATIONS

### SIMCHA SHEL MITZVA

The cutting and threshing was done with great joy, as well as with a seriousness that was apparent on everybody's face. All wore gartels and wore hats on their yarmulkes. It was hot, and the work was done quickly as though they were used to doing fieldwork. The elderly Chassid R' Zalman, with a wide and distinguished looking beard and a shining countenance, with the sickle in his hand, was lithe as a young man. It was clear that he was spurred on by simcha.

Some of the men cut while others sang. The singing was particularly sweet and echoed in the distance. On every face, one could see that something special was taking place that day.

Immediately after they finished the harvesting and threshing, some of the crowd left, R' Zalman among

them, to wash up. Upon his return from the bathhouse, R' Zalman wore Shabbos clothes and Mincha began. R' Zalman was the chazan and he used a Simchas Torah tune. They did not recite Tachnun.

R' Zalman sang Aleinu to a joyous tune and for the Oseh Shalom of the Kadishim R' Zalman waited for them to flip him over in a somersault as was customary. If they refused out of respect for him, he would say, "nu" and wait before taking the three steps of Oseh Shalom until they had to flip him and then R' Zalman danced with everybody.

*(Likutei Dibburim vol. 1)*

## CHINUCH FROM THE HOME

Erev Pesach in the 70's one of the men whose job it was to help Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka, was called to her home. When he arrived there, the Rebbetzin gave him a small sum of money that remained from what she owed him

for the work he had done.

He asked her why she bothered looking for him Erev Pesach when he didn't need the money and he could have spent Yom Tov without it.

The Rebbetzin's answer surprised him. She said, "I was taught not to enter Yom Tov in debt."

## CHINUCH EREV PESACH

The Rebbe Rayatz related:

Among the preparations for Yom Tov was the job of removing the seals from the wine bottles, especially those with letters, and to partially remove the cork. They were careful not to allow the metal of the retaining wire to touch the wine. I did this in my father's [the Rebbe Rashab] room and was careful not to soil my clothing, especially not to ruin the shine of my new shoes.

My father knew what I was thinking and said to me, "In the discourse beginning with the words 'we were slaves,' published in the Siddur, he [the Alter Rebbe] explains it with a parable of a minister sitting near a table set with all sorts of delicacies and under the table is a dog who chews on the bones. How is it possible that the



minister would get off his chair and go under the table to chew bones?”

This affected me and I was ashamed to look at my new clothes anymore. This is what you call chinuch.

*(Likkutei Dibburim vol. 3)*

## THE SCENT OF GEULA

The atmosphere Erev Pesach after learning the “Korban Pesach” was not merely by way of preparation for Yom Tov but was Yom Tov itself – simcha that comes from a good thought with the greatest expectations for the coming of Moshiach.

Behold Moshiach comes, the Beis HaMikdash is built and we sacrifice the Korban Pesach, and we carry it out with such pleasure. The pleasure of Erev Pesach was different than that of Simchas Torah or Yud-Tes Kislev. On Erev Pesach

there was a spiritual elevation of pleasure and satisfaction.

Leil Shimurim (the protected night) sparkled from every corner and the scent of Geula emanated from everything. The feeling that we were in a special state was palpable, behold, behold, another moment and another moment, something will happen that pertains to us Jews alone.

In another hour, another half an hour, the sound of Hashem will be heard, which spews forth a blaze of flame, “It is Leil Shimurim to Hashem, etc., watched for all the Jewish people for generations.” And all Jews throughout the world will unite in one thought, in one word, and in one deed, to joyously fulfill the mitzva to recount the story of our exodus from Egypt.

With such an elevated spirit, divorced of worries, we went to the

minyan for Maariv.

*(Likkutei Dibburim vol. 1)*

## FOOD OF FAITH EVERY JEW BELIEVES

R’ Avrohom of Zemin related that he was once by the Tzemach Tzedek, and the Chassidim said about a certain person that he was a heretic. The Tzemach Tzedek said, “He is not a heretic, rather, in emuna he has a *mashehu* [a tiny bit].”

As with chametz, whose prohibition on Pesach is so severe that even a “tiny bit” is forbidden, the same is true, in a spiritual sense, regarding self-awareness, which is the opposite of true unity.

*(T’shura; Wolf, Rosh Chodesh Nissan 5760)*

## IT ENABLES THE FAITH TO PENETRATE

R’ Shneur Zalman Taybel asked: Since Jews are believers, children of



“Mayim Sh’lanu” – artwork by Zalman Kleinman

believers, what is unique about matza that we call it “food of faith”?

The Rebbe answered: Emuna in general is something that is makif (encompassing, not internalized) as it is explained in many places in Chassidus, and the example is brought from the Gemara of the thief who cries out to Hashem for help.

The matza enables the faith to penetrate inwards.

*(HaMelech B'Mesibo)*

## HIDDURIM EXTRA VIGILANCE FOR PESACH

Rebbetzin Shterna Sarah, wife of the Rebbe Rashab, kept the Pesach utensils in a locked glass cupboard in the dining room. The key was in a drawer in the Rebbe's desk. One time, the Rebbe looked for something in the drawer and noticed that the key wasn't there.

Rebbetzin Shterna Sarah related:

He asked me immediately if I knew where the key was and began to inquire and search for the key. There was a commotion in the house until finally the key was found between the papers.

We see from here the great care that was taken. The Rebbe knew that nobody dared to touch his desk yet he was so nervous since it was something having to do with Pesach.

*(Shmuos V'Sippurim vol. 1)*

## YOU DON'T RELY ON THE GRANDMOTHER?!

One time, before Pesach, the cook in Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim asked the T'mimim to wash the eggs that would be used on Pesach. The T'mimim said that as far as they knew it was not customary to wash eggs but the woman insisted and maintained that they must be

washed.

The T'mimim asked Rebbetzin Rivka, who said, “We don't wash them.”

However, even after this answer there were bachurim who said that perhaps they should wash them anyway as a hiddur and chumra. When the Rebbe Rayatz heard about it he said, “They don't want to rely on my grandmother but on the cook?!”

*(Likkutei Sippurim – Perlov)*

## ON PESACH WE DON'T TAKE FROM OTHERS

A Chassid from Karap brought mashke to the Tzemach Tzedek for Pesach. The Tzemach Tzedek said to him, “We don't use mashke on Pesach!”

Even after the Chassid said, “Rebbe, I prepared it myself from potatoes and there is nothing to be concerned about,” the Tzemach Tzedek did not accept it from him.

*(ibid)*

## MASHKE ON PESACH AND ACHARON SHEL PESACH

Rashag (R' Shmaryahu Gurary, the Rebbe's brother-in-law) related:

The first night of Pesach 5663 (1903), there was a meal in the large zal. During the meal, the topic of mashke on Pesach came up. It was a *kabbala* (oral tradition) from the Tzemach Tzedek to be stringent in this and not to use mashke on Pesach.

The Rebbe Rashab said, “It happened that my father used mashke on Pesach – on the last day, after midday.”

*(ibid)*

## TODAY IT IS AN OBLIGATION

The mashpia R' Shmuel Grunem related in the name of R' Avrohom,

rav of Zemin:

“Shmura matza used to be a hiddur. Today it's an obligation!”

*(ibid)*

## SEDER NIGHT SPIRITUAL PLEASURE FROM THE MATERIAL

The first night of Pesach after Maariv, the Rebbe Rashab and his son (later to be the Rebbe Rayatz) went to the T'mimim's dining room in order to see how it was prepared for the seider.

The Rebbe Rashab had much pleasure from the cleanliness and orderliness and he said, “It is spiritual pleasure.”

*(ibid)*

## WITH THE STORY WE GO OUT OF GALUS

For Rebbetzin Rivka every story was alive and orderly. You felt that she relived the time that she heard the story and her experience was felt in the telling of the story. She was also careful to say when and from whom she heard the story, and she gave a general description of the one who told the story and the circumstances in the course of which the event took place.

She once repeated something she heard from her father-in-law, the Tzemach Tzedek, that made a great impact on her, which led her to tell stories with such great enthusiasm. This is what the Tzemach Tzedek said based on these lines in the Hagada:

**It is a mitzva to tell the story of the Exodus from Egypt:** by telling the story of the exodus from Egypt, we go out of Egypt.

**Even if we are all wise [chochma], all discerning [bina], all know the Torah [daas]:** a complete Chabadnik, nevertheless,

**It's a mitzva for us to relate it:** we

must relate Chassidic stories and in the relating itself, we go out of Egypt.

*(Seifer HaToldos Admur HaZakein vol. 4)*

## “TO BRING TO THE DAYS OF MOSHIACH”

There are two explanations to this: 1) “To bring to the Days of Moshiach” in the literal sense. Namely, with everything in the world we need to contemplate how it will be when Moshiach comes.

2) “To bring to the Days of Moshiach” – that during the Galus of the “6000 years of the world,” there must be the *kavana* (intention) in all the avodos that they lead to the Days of Moshiach. One can be in Galus and not know that the ultimate purpose of Galus is Geula, but one thinks that Galus itself is the purpose, one is satisfied with Galus and wants to be like all the nations but doesn’t want to leave

Galus ...

This is the opinion of the Sages – that “all your days, to bring to the Days of Moshiach.” A Jew must know the purpose of Galus and pray to Hashem to merit the coming of Moshiach.

*(Likkutei Dibburim vol. 3)*

## WHOEVER IS NEEDY COME AND MAKE PESACH

The Rebbe Rayatz related:

I heard from my father that whoever feels needy, should *yifsach* (from the root of the word “Pesach,” which means to jump), and he will be lifted over.

Though, this is not an advantage, for this constitutes the difference between Polish Chassidim and Chabad Chassidim. Polish Chassidim rely primarily on their Rebbeim. They crawl in the mud and then rely on their Rebbeim to

get them out.

Whereas, the way of Chabad is to do it yourself, to get out of the mud yourself. But you need help from the Rebbeim, general help and specific help. General help: to be shown the way at first, to know what to do. Specific help: this comes afterward – that he is helped in his avoda.

*(Likkutei Dibburim vol. 3)*

## TO BRING TO ONE IN NEED

The [one who would later be] Rebbe was accustomed, in addition to ground horseradish, to put a piece of un-ground horseradish on the ke’ara. Out of habit, Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka placed a piece of horseradish on her father’s [the Rebbe Rayatz] ke’ara.

Her father smiled and said, “I don’t need it.”

*(Ateres Malchus)*



“Baking Matzos” – artwork by Zalman Kleinman

## A “GADOL” WHO NEEDS TO BE MEASURED

Once, during the seider with the Tzemach Tzedek, during Yachatz (breaking the middle matza), one of the people present broke the middle matza and then checked to see which piece was bigger in order to put it aside for the afikoman.

Seeing this, the Tzemach Tzedek said, “A gadol which needs to be measured – a katan is bigger than he” (i.e., a great person whose greatness needs to be measured – a small person is greater than him).

*(Likkutei Sippurim – Perlov)*

## TO JUMP ON THE WAGON

It is known that the Baal Shem Tov would hide the afikoman of the other family members along with his own. The servant once asked that his afikoman be hidden too.

The Baal Shem Tov said, “Not everybody can jump on the wagon.”

*(HaMelech B’Mesibo)*

## SINCE I SAW THE REBBE

The Rebbe Rayatz related:

There were many paths in avodas Hashem that one could learn when watching my father when he drank the four cups and ate the k’zayis of matza and maror.

His holy countenance that expressed his great satisfaction, along with the tears that gushed forth when he ate the maror, would elevate the viewer above his ordinary human nature. Reflected in them were all the beauty and loftiness of “empowering the form over matter.”

*(Likkutei Dibburim vol. 1)*

## SHVII AND ACHARON SHEL PESACH

### ROSH HA’S HANA FOR MESIRUS NEFESH

The Rebbe Rayatz said:

At the night meal on Shvii shel Pesach 5603 (1843) my paternal grandfather, the Tzemach Tzedek said:

Shvii shel Pesach is Rosh HaShana for mesirus nefesh. When Moshe Rabbeinu conveyed what Hashem had told him, “speak to the Jewish people and they should travel,” Nachshon ben Aminadav immediately jumped into the sea with the power of mesirus nefesh ...

On this day, everybody can and must accept upon himself the power of mesirus nefesh, for Torah, mitzvos, and service of Hashem,

with mesirus nefesh for the entire year.

*(Likkutei Dibburim vol. 3)*

## THE DAY OF REJOICING OF MOSHIACH TZIDKEINU

During the meal on Acharon shel Pesach 5625 (1865), the Maharash said to his children that this day is, “Acharon shel Pesach,” the last day of Pesach.

The Rashab, who was four years old at the time, asked his father, “Why is this last day of Pesach a Yom Tov?”

The Maharash said to his son, R’

## “HOW CAN WE SAY SH’HECHIYANU AT THE END OF YOM TOV?”

In the year 5725 (1965), 100 years after 5625 (1865), the Rebbe taught a wondrous message regarding the Geula from the story:

There is a special inyan on Acharon shel Pesach – the joy over having been careful about chametz throughout Yom Tov [an allusion to the avoda in Galus]. This is because the next day (in Yemos HaMoshiach) there will be no work or labor and so this joy won’t be felt, and preceding that (during Galus) we are not certain we will withstand the test, with the various hardships that arise every day of the week.

However, one can ask: It says, “There is no tzaddik on earth who does good and does not sin,” and so what is the simcha that the seven days of the holiday have passed (referring to Galus) when we’ve failed in the interim?

So we say that the simcha is that we did not fail specifically with **chametz**. Chametz, which is the opposite of matza, “food of faith,” represents *avoda zara* (idol worship) and everybody is careful about that, even the most light-minded person, for emuna is a bequest to us from our ancestors, and every Jew is perfect in this.

Here the son asks: Since Acharon shel Pesach is unique, why don’t we say SheHechiyanu?

The Tzemach Tzedek explains that this holiday pertains to the future Geula and since Ben Dovid has still not come, we cannot say this bracha for the joy of the day is mixed with sadness.

Before Acharon shel Pesach, we are still in the middle of the avoda and we don’t feel the pain that much but when we reach the conclusion of the holiday and we make it a Yom Tov, the cry bursts forth: How can we say SheHechiyanu? Moshiach still hasn’t openly descended below ten handbreadths [i.e., he is still not openly manifest in this world]!

*(sicha of Acharon shel Pesach 5725)*

Zalman Aharon, “Maybe you can answer the question?” But R’ Zalman Aharon said that he did not know.

Little Devorah Leah who was sitting near her mother, Rebbetzin Rivka, got up and said that she knew.

Her father said to her, “If you know why, tell us!”

Devorah Leah said: When the Jewish people observe the seven days of Pesach according to law and they are careful about a drop of chametz, then the last day of Pesach is a Yom Tov. All the Jewish people rejoice that they made it through Pesach and were not entrapped in the great sin of chametz on Pesach.

The Maharash greatly enjoyed his daughter’s explanation and with shining countenance said to her, “Devorah Leah, you have a good head!”

Afterwards, when the Maharash went to his father’s home (the Tzemach Tzedek) in order to serve him the Yom Tov meal (he served his father on Shabbos and Yom Tov), he repeated what his daughter had said.

The Tzemach Tzedek said, “That’s a good, logical answer.”

He called over his three grandchildren and said, “Today, the last day of Pesach, is called Acharon shel Pesach, in other words, it is the conclusion to that which began on the first night of Pesach. The first night of Pesach is a Yom Tov because Hashem redeemed us from Egypt, and it’s the first geula through Moshe Rabbeinu, who is the first redeemer. That was the beginning.

“Acharon shel Pesach is our Yom Tov for the final geula. Hashem will redeem us from the final galus through Moshiach Tzidkeinu, the

final redeemer. So the first day of

Pesach is Moshe Rabbeinu’s simcha, and Acharon shel Pesach is Moshiach’s simcha.”

*(Seifer HaSichos 5700)*

## THE REBBETZIN’S DEBATE

About forty years after the previous story, on Acharon shel Pesach 5666 (1906), the Rebbe Rashab heard a debate between his young granddaughters, Chana and Chaya Mushka. Chana maintained that Acharon shel Pesach is a holiday like all holidays while Chaya Mushka said it was different than other holidays and the proof is, when lighting the candles you do not say the SheHechyanu blessing.

The Rebbe Rashab later said that this reminded him of what had happened on Acharon shel Pesach 5625.

*(Seifer HaSichos 5700)*



“Burning the Chametz” – artwork by Zalman Kleinman

# DANCING IN HONOR OF THE GEULA

BY MENACHEM ZIEGELBOIM

## PART I

The great talmidim of the holy Baal Shem Tov, the *chevraya kadisha*, were perplexed. Just a few hours earlier, they had drawn the water for the matzos together with their master, the tzaddik, with great joy. It was after Mincha on 13 Nissan 5516 (or 5517- 1756 or 1757) and the tzaddik's face was illuminated with a special light.

Only a few hours had elapsed since then and during the bedikas chametz, the Baal Shem Tov appeared to be upset. He grasped the candle and by its light, one could see his worried face and the occasional tear.

His disciples, who knew that their master's approach to the service of Hashem was always with simcha, especially while performing a mitzva, did not understand what had happened to disturb the tzaddik to such an extent.

The Baal Shem Tov finished the

bedikas chametz relatively quickly and closed himself off in his room for a few hours. Close to midnight, the tzaddik called for some of his select disciples and told them to recite the Tikkun Chatzos with certain mystical intentions that he imparted to them.

He instructed them to recite the Tikkun Chatzos near his room and said that if they sensed that he was suddenly quiet, they too should stop reciting the Tikkun. Instead, they were to say certain chapters of T'hillim with tremendous devotion until they saw that he had recovered.

The talmidim realized that the Jewish people faced a grave threat and they immediately sanctified themselves with great trembling. They immersed in the mikva and did everything the Baal Shem Tov instructed them to do. With feelings of dread, they sat down near the Baal Shem Tov's room and recited the Tikkun with tremendous kavana.

Suddenly, they



sensed that the Baal Shem Tov was silent and as he had told them, they immediately began reciting T'hillim with sighs and tears.

The Baal Shem Tov's scribe, the tzaddik R' Tzvi, entered the room and told them that the Baal Shem Tov was lying on the floor of his room with no signs of life. The holy disciples were terribly frightened and they began to cry bitterly while saying chapters of T'hillim.

This went on until dawn when the other disciples came and learned what had transpired that frightening night. Fear overcame them all. They rushed to immerse and busied themselves with *yichudim* and lofty kavanos until signs of life were once more apparent in the tzaddik's body.

The Baal Shem Tov had become extremely weak as a result of his holy work but despite this he instructed his talmidim to carry him to the mikva. He sat on a chair and was carried by his fearful disciples.

After immersing, the Baal Shem Tov's face was white as snow. His eyes bulged in trepidation and all could see that their Rebbe was somewhere else entirely.

The Baal Shem Tov himself was chazan at Shacharis. Before davening, he instructed his talmidim to have the kavanos that he had taught them before the Rosh HaShana davening. At the repetition of the Shmoneh Esrei, the Baal Shem Tov said the Aneinu prayer (recited on a fast day) with a broken heart, emitting a cry periodically.

The holy talmidim were beside themselves and were utterly confounded. They realized that something terrible was in the offing and judging by their Rebbe's pain and actions it seemed like something unspeakably bad.

At the conclusion of the davening, the Baal Shem Tov spoke to his talmidim about bitachon,

explaining that bitachon is when a person doesn't see any way out of his predicament and he trusts solely in Hashem and anticipates salvation. He explained the midda of bitachon as it's explained in the classic work *Chovos HaLevavos*, and said that strengthening bitachon is done specifically through simcha.

He told his talmidim to fast that day and shortly before midday, he went back to the mikva but this time he looked joyous. From the time that he spoke about bitachon, one could see that the Baal Shem Tov had recovered and was feeling

***Their discussion continued until they reached the second, third, and fourth cups. Being exhausted from the work of Erev Pesach and under the influence of the wine, they got up and began to dance joyously!***

more relaxed.

After immersing, the Baal Shem Tov and his talmidim went to bake the Erev Pesach matza.

At Mincha of Erev Pesach, he once again told the talmidim to meditate upon the Rosh HaShana kavanos and during the recitation of the Korban Pesach he looked bitter once again. The talmidim were dumbfounded. They failed to understand what was taking place before their eyes.

Many of the talmidim said, after

Maariv, that they did not remember a Maariv like the one that first night of Pesach. The Baal Shem Tov davened with great *d'veikus* and his voice expressed both bitterness and simcha. His voice sounded broken and conveyed great pain but then it sounded joyous and full of bitachon.

So too with the seider, which was with bitterness and great *d'veikus*. As for the talmidim, they were despondent and they said the Hagada quietly as though it was Tisha B'Av. All realized that the Baal Shem Tov was trying to bring about salvation on this momentous night but was not yet successful.

## PART II

Every year the Baal Shem Tov would pause while reciting the Hagada and explain different portions of it. That year, the tzaddik didn't stop at all. He read it straight through in a pleading voice mixed with simcha, which caused the talmidim to feel great anguish. Considering the circumstances, the talmidim were not surprised by the change in their Rebbe's accustomed way.

While each of them sat there lost in thought, they suddenly heard the Baal Shem Tov laugh! They gazed upon his holy face and saw that his eyes were closed as he laughed unrestrainedly.

Soon, the Baal Shem Tov opened his eyes and said merrily, "Mazal tov, mazal tov, blessed is He and blessed is His great name, who chooses the Torah and Moshe His servant and Yisroel His people, for also His nation (i.e., the simple folk) are on the level of Yisroel and they accomplish more than Yisroel Baal Shem Tov."

The talmidim failed to comprehend this and saw only that a great change had taken place. They did not need more than that to

feel intensely joyous. Nobody asked for an explanation of the bitterness which suddenly was exchanged for supreme happiness.

### PART III

“Yesterday, while preparing for the Festival of Freedom, I saw that a terrible decree was promulgated on one of the villages, where 400 Jewish families live. Because of this decree, gentiles were going to descend on the Jewish homes on the first day of Pesach and attack the Jewish people.

“When I saw this, I was terribly worried and did all I could to annul the decree, but no matter what I did, I was unsuccessful. Seeing that all our avoda to arouse mercy had failed, I tried to exert great effort through bitachon.”

At this point, the Baal Shem Tov told them about one of the Jews who lived in that area:

Lipa was a precious Jew of average abilities, wholehearted in his deeds and very charitable. He did much tz'daka and chesed with all in need. He and his wife had no children and they threw themselves into helping others.

Although Lipa was a simple Jew, he davened with great fervor, loved Torah and those who studied it. This was thanks to the Baal Shem Tov, or as they knew him, Yisrolik. They knew him from the period of time that the Baal Shem Tov went around to the villages and settlements in order to bolster the spirits of the Jews living in these places.

Wherever he went he encouraged the simple Jews, encouraging them to draw ever closer to their Father in heaven. One of the people who heard his message was Lipa.

That Erev Pesach, Lipa and his wife were busy preparing for Yom Tov. When Lipa returned from shul

that night the two of them sat alone for the seider. Lipa recited Kiddush and his wife drank her cup too. Then they recited the Hagada together.

Lipa read from the Hagada and every so often he would pause and tell his wife everything he had learned about the tribulations our ancestors endured in Egypt. When he got to the part that said the decree, “every boy that is born shall be thrown into the river,” his wife burst into bitter tears.

“Why are you crying?” worried Lipa. “It’s a happy holiday for us.

***He told his talmidim to grasp an edge of the handkerchief and to close their eyes. As they did so, they all saw Lipa and his wife dancing in honor of the Geula of the Jewish people.***

Hashem redeemed us from Egypt!”

His wife tearfully replied, “If Hashem had given us a child, I would not have treated him the way He treats His children! Here we are again, back in Galus among the wicked goyim who oppress us. Why does Hashem help them? Are the goyim who persecute us better in His eyes than His children, the Jewish people?”

The woman continued to speak well of the Jewish people in contrast to the wickedness of the goyim. She even added plaintively, “It says in

our holy Torah that Hashem will always remember the merit of Avrohom, Yitzchok, and Yaakov. So why are we in such a difficult Galus?”

Lipa and his wife continued to discuss it with Lipa maintaining that Hashem is just and his wife asking, “Where is His attribute of mercy?”

Their discussion continued until they reached the second, third, and fourth cups. Being exhausted from the work of Erev Pesach and under the influence of the wine, they got up and began to dance joyously!

This is what the Baal Shem Tov told his talmidim, saying, “When the woman spoke well of the Jewish people, there was a great tumult in heaven. The advocates of the Jewish people stood on one side in order to speak well of the Jewish people while the prosecuting angels stood opposite them and accused the Jewish people with all their might.

“When I saw the commotion up above, I felt great bitterness since I didn’t know who would be victorious.

“Suddenly, I saw that great simcha had broken out up above and all the accusations on that village had vanished. It was thanks to the dance of Lipa and his wife over the Geula of the Jewish people. When I saw this, I began to rejoice and to laugh.”

The Baal Shem Tov removed a handkerchief and placed it on the table. He told his talmidim to grasp an edge of the handkerchief and to close their eyes. As they did so, they all saw Lipa and his wife dancing in honor of the Geula of the Jewish people.

The Alter Rebbe related this story to his grandson, the Tzemach Tzedek, as he heard it from the Maggid of Mezritch.

*(Igras Kodesh Admur HaRayatz vol. 3)*



# HALACHA IS LEARNED FROM SHULCHAN ARUCH, NOT FROM MIDRASHIM

TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY

*The fifth installment of Between Light and Darkness, Rabbi Sholom Dovber HaLevi Wolpo's provocative new guide for the perplexed regarding the establishment regime in Eretz Yisroel today and the tragic events they have brought upon the Jewish People.*

## DIFFERING MIDRASHIM AND A CLEAR HALACHIC RULING

Although the Gemara brings proof regarding “*ischalta d'Geula*” that when the trees of Eretz Yisroel will bear fruit, “you have no end more revealed than this” (Sanhedrin 98a), as is written, “But you, mountains of Israel, you shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to My people, Israel” (Yechezkel 36:8), or as is stated in the Talmud Yerushalmi that “the Redemption of Israel is like the very first rays of the morning sun – little by little,” etc., nevertheless, it can be said **with absolute certainty** that

the Rambam was familiar with these sayings of our Sages, and was expert in them no less than the rabbis of our generation, and he still ruled that there can be no Redemption without Moshiach.

Furthermore, while it is known that there was much fierce dispute and opposition to the Rambam on many subjects, to the point that his s'farim were even burned (similar to what happened in a later period to Chassidic texts), nevertheless, we have found no one who disagrees with him on the issue of the order of the Redemption. On the contrary, everyone accepts his words.

If so, how can one possibly think

that actions such as that famous declaration out of London several decades ago or the establishment of a “democratic” state dependent upon a Christian and Muslim majority, and *l'havdil* non-observant Jews, or Jews who sell their religion for a bowl of lentil soup – nullify the Rambam's clear statement that the Redemption will begin specifically through Moshiach, who will turn the bitter Galus into Geula?

[NOTE: The author asks forgiveness for the use of the word “*l'havdil*,” as it is the opposite of “democracy.” However, even if all Knesset Members were Torah observant Jews, the very essence of “democracy” is against Torah. The principle of going according to the majority applies only in a Sanhedrin that decides by Torah law, and when a majority does not decide according to Torah, you have a case of “Don't say, 'A conspiracy,' for all that this people says is a conspiracy” (Yeshayahu 8:12). The Gemara explains (Sanhedrin 26a) that “a conspiracy of evil is not counted,” and Rashi comments, “Don't think...that your count...is considered a majority.” This applies also in Eretz Yisroel, a

dictatorial regime in the guise of democracy, where specifically on the most important issues, all party members must vote according to the command of their party leaders, even if it is against their own conscience. You will not find such a dictatorship dressed as a democracy in any other country in the world, not even the lowest ones, such as the regime in the former Soviet Union.

[I grew up in Russia, and I know the regime there quite well. When they had to do a certain thing in Russia, they would claim that the rules of justice and honesty obligated it. However, to declare openly and officially that someone has to vote against his conscience is something that not even the leaders in the Kremlin would do, and only in Eretz Yisroel do they openly proclaim that they have to vote the party line against their will. Furthermore, when a Jewish Knesset Member, who is also a rabbi or the son of a rabbi, wants to vote as his beliefs and conscience compels him to do, they tell him, "Just know that you are not your own man. Your body and soul are subservient to the party, and therefore, you are obligated to come and vote against your conscience – and if you don't, you'll be thrown out of the party, your position, your job, and you, your wife, and your family will suffer and be pursued for generations to come." Then, after the vote, they go before the media and explain how the motion passed democratically via a majority vote by the representatives of the people.]

It is incredible to consider the possibility of finding someone who would say that more than anyone else, he understands the aforementioned sayings of our Sages, and that he possesses the strength to call into question the clear p'sak din of the Rambam, the Raavad, and all other halachic authorities who stand in agreement with the Rambam. We also must remember that the Rambam's ruling on this issue is

brought at the conclusion of *Yad HaChazaka*, which begins with "The most fundamental of foundations and pillar of wisdoms is to know that there is a First Being." It is, therefore, impossible to pick and choose by saying that we accept the beginning of the seifer in its simplest terms, but *ch"v* not the end. [Even the halacha on the order of the Redemption is a "p'sak din," especially since "believing in Moshiach" and "awaiting his arrival" are among the fundamentals of Judaism. It is important to note that the name given by the Rambam to his seifer – *Yad HaChazaka* – is connected to the



concept of "by a strong hand I will reign over them" and "that which enters your mind...shall not be"! (Yechezkel 20:32-33)] On the contrary, "their beginning is wedged in their end," and if someone does not accept the end of *Yad HaChazaka* in its simplest terms, this raises a doubt regarding his faith in "the most fundamental of foundations and pillar of wisdoms."

### HALACHICALLY, THE REDEMPTION IS NOT "LITTLE BY LITTLE"

Although there are midrashim

that seem to speak in a different style than the above, and "these and these are the words of the living G-d," all this was **before the halacha was established**. Thus, after the p'sak din, "Beis Shammai does not represent the Mishna in place of Beis Hillel" (Berachos 36b), and when Rabbi Tarfon conducted himself according to Beis Shammai (and inclined in order to read the nighttime Krias Sh'ma in a manner of "as you lie down"), he was told, "It would be appropriate if you would penalize yourself for transgressing against the words of Beis Hillel" (Mishna Brachos 1:3). Similarly in our discussion, we find that prior to the establishment of the halacha, there were differing schools of thought, and "these and these are the words of the living G-d." However, after the Rambam's halachic ruling, it is clear that the ingathering of the exiles would come specifically through Moshiach, after the building of the Beis HaMikdash, and the Redemption would not be "little by little." [NOTE: *The Future Redemption and Beis HaMikdash are on the level of Yaakov* (see *Shabbos 118b, Pesachim 88a*: "as Yaakov, etc."), and Yaakov represents swiftness – "How did you find it so quickly?" (Bereishis 27:20).] This is because only after a king from the House of Dovid will do all those things that the Rambam indicates, and when he will build the Beis HaMikdash, and gather in the Jewish People from the remotest corners of the earth – only then will we know that he is definitely the Moshiach, as this will mark the True and Complete Redemption.

Thus, before the building of the Beis HaMikdash and the ingathering of the exiles through the Moshiach, we are still **in Exile**, and after the Beis HaMikdash will be rebuilt and the ingathering of the exiles – this will be the Redemption. Therefore,

there is no natural “little by little” start to the Redemption, because immediately when the time has come, there will be Redemption, i.e., the ingathering of the exiles and the revelation of “Moshiach Vadai” **in the blink of an eye** (Sanhedrin 97b), “as you went from the land of Egypt” (Micha 7:15), and “suddenly he will come to the palace of the Master” (Malachi 3:1).

### **“ISCHALTA D’GEULA,” FIGURATIVELY SPEAKING**

Furthermore, it can be said from the very outset that the aforementioned sayings of our Sages do not actually contradict the Rambam’s halachic ruling. The explanation is that the “*ischalta d’Geula*” seemingly derived from them refers to the “beginning” that took place at **the first moment after the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash** in the year 3828. [NOTE: *The Gemara states (Megilla 13b) that G-d brings the cure before the illness, proving that the Redemption already includes the time when the Beis HaMikdash existed. Thus, since the Redeemer of Israel was born at the moment the Beis HaMikdash was destroyed, he must have been conceived before the churban, and even his hair was completed, etc.*] The Midrash tells (Eicha Rabba 1:51) about a Jew who was standing in the field with his cow. The cow mooed once, and a clever Arab passing by who understood animal talk told the Jew that the Beis HaMikdash had just been destroyed. The cow mooed a second time, and the Arab then said that the Redeemer of the Jewish People had just been born, indicating his name, his city, etc. [NOTE: *This Aggada also comes in connection with practical halacha regarding the reasons for reciting of “Nacheim” on Tisha B’Av at Mincha, Kiddush Levana on Motzaei Tisha B’Av, and holding a chuppa on Motzaei Tisha B’Av for someone without children,*

*when there is a concern that the shidduch might be called off. See also the Tashbatz (3:8) regarding the custom of naming a boy Menachem who was born or circumcised on Tisha B’Av.*] However, after this “beginning,” the Moshiach went into hiding (as the Midrash continues), **thus marking the start of the bitter exile** *r”l*.

To pursue this point further, we see (to the contrary) that the majority of the Beis HaMikdash burned the day after Tisha B’Av (Taanis 29a), i.e., after the cow mooed the second time. Thus, we

*The Rambam’s Yad HaChazaka begins with “The most fundamental of foundations...” It is impossible to pick and choose by saying that we accept the beginning of the seifer in its simplest terms, but ch”v not the end.*

understand from this that even the birth of the Redeemer of the Jewish People, a matter of great importance, is still very far away from the True Redemption or the start of the Redemption. Therefore, we also don’t say “*Shehecheyanu*” on the birth of the Redeemer of Israel, nor even “Hallel” – and certainly not with a bracha. This is because it is impossible to compare this type of “*ischalta d’Geula*” to the “*ischalta d’Geula*” from the Galus, a Redemption that will put an end to all exiles (unlike the Redemption

from Egypt), the True and Complete Redemption that will come through Moshiach Tzidkeinu.

### **EXPLANATIONS ON THE YERUSHALMI THAT THE GEULA WILL BE “LITTLE BY LITTLE”**

This is also the meaning behind the saying in Talmud Yerushalmi that the Redemption will be “little by little,” i.e., a “redemption” of the same character as the birth of the Redeemer of Israel or a redemption from the afflictions of the time of the Exile itself, “redemptions” that come with ups and downs. The proof that the intention is a redemption in the figurative sense comes from the Talmud Yerushalmi’s reference to the redemption of Mordechai and Ester. This redemption was not a complete one, as “we are still Achashverosh’s servants,” proving that we’re talking about a redemption from the afflictions of the time, unrelated to the True Redemption that we pray for three times a day during the years of Exile. (All this is besides the fact that there isn’t even an “*is’chalta d’Geula*” in the figurative sense, and on the contrary, there has been an increase in the darkness of the Exile, as mentioned above.)

Furthermore, it can be said that according to the Talmud Yerushalmi’s interpretation, the Redemption through Moshiach can also possibly be little by little, i.e., stages in the Redemption through Moshiach coming in close proximity to one another, yet in stages one after the other, during the True and Complete Redemption itself. (All this could only be if the Redemption was in “its time” [Sanhedrin 98a]. However, now that all the appointed times have passed, G-d will not delay them even for a moment, and the start of the Redemption will take place immediately.)

# CELEBRATING GEULA IN GALUS

BY MENACHEM ZIEGELBOIM

*“When we recalled where my husband had been the previous Pesach, behind bars in jail, we felt better and we felt the joy of the holiday. From this perspective we had what to rejoice about.” \* A description of Pesach in Exile. \* Presented in honor of the birthday of Rabbi Levi Yitzchok Schneersohn on 18 Nissan.*

Rabbi Levi Yitzchok held the holiday of Pesach very dearly. He was strict about the halachos that pertain to Pesach, and even when he needed to face down the communists, he insisted on punctilious care with regard to the baking of the matzos for the Jews of Russia. The communists, in turn, deferred to Rabbi Levi Yitzchok.

However, later, the tzaddik was imprisoned days before Pesach 5699 (1939) and was placed in the cellar of the N.K.V.D. He suffered interrogations, torture, and humiliation. Ultimately, he was exiled to an exile within an exile, the latter worse than the former. Days passed before he arrived in forsaken Chili, where he lived out his sentence of exile.

His wife, Rebbetzin Chana, mother of royalty, described their daily lives there:

“Our room was in the home of one

of the Tatars: a husband, wife, and young child. In order to enter the room we had to pass through a corridor, wet with mud, and the many mosquitoes that swarmed there dimmed the light. From the hallway, we had to pass through the landlord’s kitchen and bedroom in order to get to our little room.

“To drink a bit of water you had to wait a while until the sand settled and only then could you drink. It was difficult for us to obtain water.

“At night we lit our room with a small lamp that we had.

“The heat in the summer was unbearable.

“Towards evening, when we fell asleep, the mosquitoes fell upon us with a vengeance. Their buzzing and stinging bothered us very much and we couldn’t get rid of them. There was one defense against them and that was completely closing up every single

opening, every hole and crack, so they couldn’t get in.

“Another possibility was to light a fire with material that made a lot of smoke, which temporarily banished them. However, this method was especially difficult because the choking smoke was hard to take.

“When you put on a garment at night you could not recognize it the next morning. The garment was full of black dots where these creatures had dirtied it.

“This was life and we had to get used to it and live with it.”

And then came the month of Nissan, the month of spring.

The daily travails already seemed to be part of their routine. Now, their problems were far more difficult and complicated: everything was chametz, the house was chametz, the utensils were chametz, and where would they get food kosher for Pesach?

The host family was very devout in their beliefs, yet Rabbi Levi Yitzchok and Rebbetzin Chana got up the nerve to speak to them about the approaching holiday of Pesach, which necessitated new arrangements in their shared dwelling. They innocently thought that as religious people, the Tatars would understand and would be willing to help them.

But the Tatars were annoyed that the Jewish couple used their precious

water for other needs and without thinking much about it they ordered them out of the house.

Now the situation was truly terrible because where would they get a place to live two weeks before Pesach? Instead of an atmosphere of geula, their galus was getting worse!

A ray of hope was seen in a local woman who agreed, for the monthly fee of fifty rubles, to give them a private room with a separate entrance. Not only that but they had wooden floor – what a treasure this was!

The offer came along with a problem. The village woman had wild children whom everyone feared. The local people warned Rabbi Levi Yitzchok and his wife not to take the room because they wouldn't be able to tolerate her children.

Like the Jewish people at the sea, they had no choice but to go forward, into the mighty waters. They agreed to the woman's offer. A week before Pesach, they moved their belongings to the new dwelling.

Then they had to obtain new dishes and food and they had still not found a way to do so. The main problem was in obtaining dishes for Pesach. The Rebbetzin made a special trip, about an hour from Chili, until she arrived somewhere where a group of Jews from Kiev, religious people who had been forced to exile there, lived together. They also had a rav and shochet.

The Rebbetzin stayed there for two days until she managed, with great effort, to get a large pot made out of a completely new piece of metal. Since there was a G-d-fearing shochet, she ordered meat and even fish and asked that they be brought on Erev Pesach.

Erev Pesach. All the work done previously to fix a closet

or kitchen implements, was taken apart, thrown outside because of fear of chametz and they had no new utensils.

When it came time to burn the chametz, the morning of Erev Pesach, Rabbi Levi Yitzchok went out to burn the chametz – a few crumbs that remained for the purpose of this mitzva.

“What I saw, rent my heart,” wrote the Rebbetzin about this scene.

The rav went out and lit a small fire and he threw in the bit of chametz.

Immediately, his face was aflame and he began reciting the “*yehi ratzon*” that is said at this time. He said it with copious tears.

“Just as I remove the chametz from my house and my possession, so shall You remove all the extraneous forces, purge the spirit of impurity from the earth...” Tears choked him and the words were garbled.

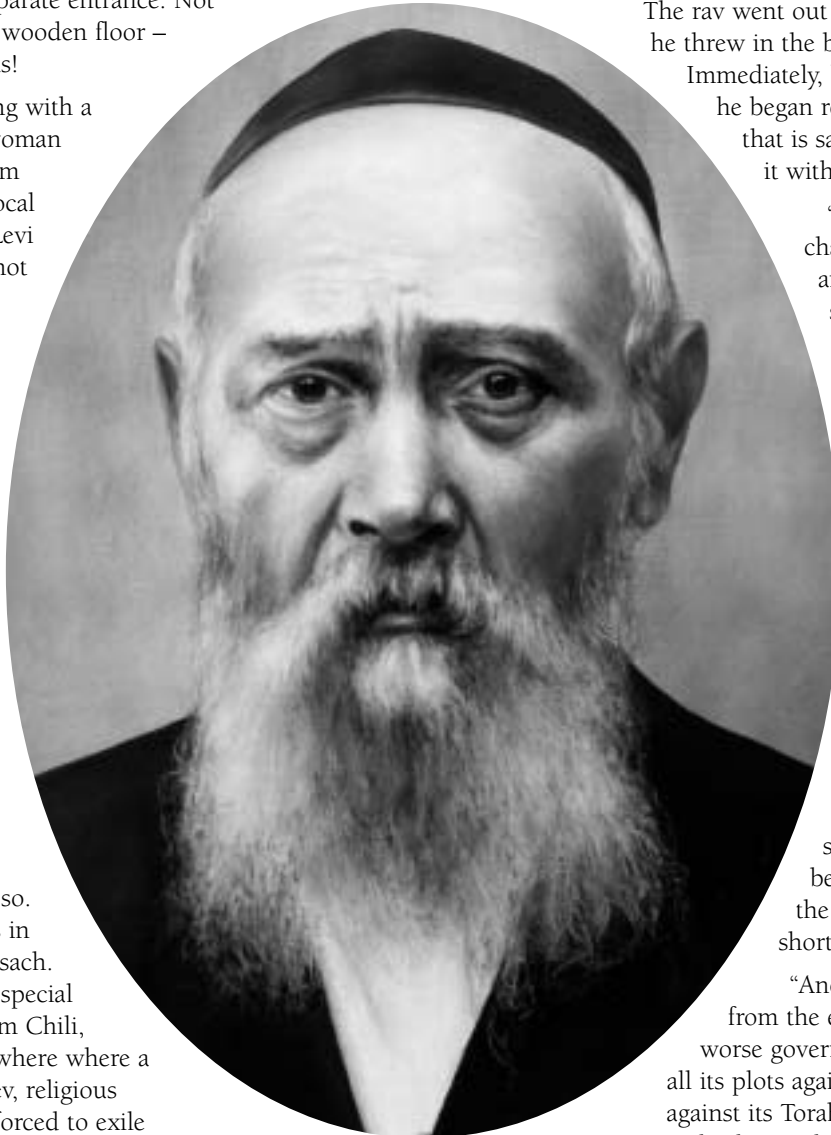
This brief prayer was so real to him and it so well expressed his situation:

“And all the sitra achra and all the klipos and all the wickedness destroy in smoke” – there are no better words to express the situation than this short prayer.

“And abolish the rule of evil from the earth” – Was there a worse government than this, after all its plots against the Jewish people, against its Torah and its purity, against its leaders and customs, against its rabbanim and children?

From the depths of his heart burst forth the silent conclusion of that fearsome prayer, “And all those who distress the Divine Presence remove with a spirit of destruction and of judgment just as You annihilated Egypt and its idols in those days and at this time, amen, sela.”

Chili probably never saw an Erev Pesach like this and its



**Rabbi Levi Yitzchok Schneersohn**

earth never before absorbed the tears of a pure Jew that came from a heart so pure...

\* \* \*

Pesach night. Even in such a place, Hashem enabled Jews to perform the mitzva of Hachnasas Orchim, fulfilling what we say in the Hagada, "whoever is hungry should come and eat." The rav and rebbetzin met a Jew and invited him to their home and together the three of them sat and made a seider.

To illustrate how deep was the galus, outside the window stood local youth who continuously mocked the Jews and mimicked every move they made.

"Of course their mockery didn't affect us," said the Rebbetzin, "and the seider went on. The Hagada was recited out loud and we performed the simanim of the seider. When we recalled where my husband had been the previous Pesach, behind bars in jail, we felt better and we felt the joy of the holiday. From this perspective we had what to rejoice about."

The seider lasted late into the night. One would be hard put to describe what the three ate as a "seuda." The meat and fish that the goy brought Erev Yom Tov had completely spoiled during the trip to their house, but this did not stop the rav from reciting the Hagada with his usual enthusiasm. They sat there until two in the morning with the "bread of affliction" and made the seider with all

***"We tried with all our might to banish the spirit of oppression and depression from among us and to be happy at least during these days. It was difficult but we overcame it all and tried with all our strength to maintain a pleasant atmosphere of joy on the holiday," concluded Rebbetzin Chana.***

the hiddurim.

The next evening they celebrated the second seider with their guest who remained with them throughout the holiday.

"We tried with all our might to banish the spirit of oppression and depression from among us and to be happy at least during these days. It was difficult but we overcame it all and

tried with all our strength to maintain a pleasant atmosphere of joy on the holiday," concluded Rebbetzin Chana.

The next year the preparations for Yom Tov were easier, thanks to amazing Divine Providence. It was a week before Pesach. When Rabbi Levi Yitzchok went to get his daily ration, he passed the large store designated only for special people and those with government connections.

As he walked by, the manager of the store suddenly stopped him and asked him in a whisper whether he was from the Schneersohn family and whether he came from Yekaterinaslav. When Rabbi Levi Yitzchok said he was, the man told him, to his great surprise, that his brother-in-law once had a din Torah with the rav. Both sides came from a great distance in order to have the din Torah with him, for they wanted him to declare the p'sak din and no one else.

The man continued saying in a whisper that if Rabbi Levi Yitzchok needed new utensils for Pesach he could give it to him on condition that nobody would know about it. After using clever, roundabout methods so that nobody would notice, the man removed new glasses from his bag, which thrilled Rabbi Levi Yitzchok.

His joy did not last long though, for on his way home, the glasses fell and all but one of them broke. This one glass served him well throughout Pesach.

*(based on Yemei Melech and Eim B'Yisroel)*

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# ITCHKE: TO CROSS THE SEA ON A HANDKERCHIEF

BY AVROHOM REINITZ

*R' Yitzchok Gansburg a"h, who was known simply as Itchke, was one of the great Chabad askanim in Eretz Yisroel, and later in New York. \* R' Itchke was picked in 5711 to the first Vaad of Tzach and even decades later, close to his passing, was an example of a Chassid who always remains young in spirit. \* We have published many articles from his diary in the past and it is a challenge to condense it all into one article. \* Portrait of a genuine Chassid who, with utter hiskashrus to the Rebbe MH"M, fulfilled all the Rebbe's directives with incredible devotion. \* Part 2 of 2*

[Continued from last week]

## MOVE TO TAANACHIM

At the end of 5718 (1958), the administration of the Reshet decided to open a new branch in the settlements of the Taanach Strip. The difficult task of founding the school and running it fell on R'

Itchke's shoulders. He went to Taanach and at a meeting with the local residents he told them that he been one of the soldiers who had conquered the area in the War of Independence, but this time he had come for a spiritual conquest, on the shlichus of the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

At the end of that meeting, it was decided that they would give the Reshet one of the three shacks of the local school and the next day Oholei Yosef Yitzchok of Taanach opened.

Throughout that year R' Itchke's family remained in Tel Aviv and he returned home only for Shabbos. Towards the end of the year, his wife received a letter from the Rebbe with the suggestion that they move to Taanach so that the family could be together all week.

Their house was completed only after the Yomim Tovim and then the Gansburg family began their new lives in Taanach.

In accordance with the Rebbe's directive to dedicate time to spreading the wellsprings, in addition to the tremendous work involved in running a school, R' Itchke began organizing a Chassidus class for the male and female teachers. The shiurim took place in his home and the Gansburg home turned into a center for hafatzas ha'Yahadus in the yishuv.

## MOVE TO CHOLON AND MIVTZA MATZA

In accordance with the Rebbe's instructions that R' Itchke's job was to open a new school and run it for a year or two, after the school in Taanach was off to a good start, R' Itchke asked the Rebbe permission to move to Kfar Chabad. He wanted to work at one of the Reshet schools in that area. The Rebbe agreed in principle, but said: **don't suffice with the position of teacher or seek the easiest place, rather be an administrator in a place where you can make use of your talents.**

The Reshet was asked to open a new school in Cholon. R' Itchke agreed to run the new school. There were 35 children in two classes in a transit camp near Cholon. They were taught in a two-room Sefardi shul in the camp.

Moving to the center of the country after living out in the sticks for two years with no easy access to anywhere, enabled R'

*“Every single Jewish man and woman can cross the sea on a handkerchief if he or she only believed with simple faith.”*

Itchke to implement the “Matza Experience.” Tens of thousands of children visited the matza bakery in Kfar Chabad and learned about Pesach.

Each child received a matza. Most of them, however, ate the matza before they boarded the buses back home. R' Itchke wanted the children to go home with a souvenir that would last at least until the seider, and he came up with the idea of tiny bottles of wine. When a student received a small sealed bottle, he took care of it and then proudly displayed the

gift he had received from Tzach to everyone and poured himself a cup.

Young R' Itchke's creative initiatives weren't always appreciated by the old-time askanim. One of them decided to tell R' Itchke off, saying that everything R' Itchke did was not done in the spirit of Lubavitch and that there had never been a Lubavitcher who wasted his time so that a child could see how matzos are baked.

R' Itchke was hurt by these harsh words and he wrote to the Rebbe. In the Rebbe's three-page answer he analyzed R' Itchke's personality and said he was gifted with talents and energy, but two things interfered with his ability to use them fully. These two things, said the Rebbe, were his deficiency in working with others and his being disorganized. The Rebbe strongly encouraged him to continue working for the Reshet, Tzach, and especially the summer camps, and said that when elder Chassidim expressed these sentiments they should be ignored.

The Rebbe said that he had heard from his father-in-law, the Rebbe Rayatz, that “action is the main thing” (which is also an explicit Mishna). As for those who followed the elder Chassidim's approach – what were the results and how would Lubavitch look, asked the Rebbe, if people listened to them on this point?

The Rebbe said that R' Itchke had permission to show the letter to those who advocated sitting and doing nothing. The Rebbe urged R' Itchke not to despair and repeated that R' Itchke was granted superlative abilities and energy and he had to use them to the fullest for anyanei Chabad.





## **“A DAY AT THE YISHUV” AND HIS CONNECTION WITH ARIEL SHARON**

In the period prior to the Six Day War, R' Itchke organized a radio program broadcast from Kfar Chabad. He called the program “Yom B'Yishuv – A Day In The Village.” Government radio journalists went to Kfar Chabad and for an entire day they broadcast live their meetings with the Chassidim-farmers. At the end of the fascinating day, a Chassidische farbrengen was organized at the old shul.

Since R' Itchke knew the radio broadcaster, Dan Raviv, who was then recently appointed to the cultural office in the I.D.F., R' Itchke was invited to speak to the soldiers before the war. He went from camp to camp and encouraged the soldiers. The night before the war began he spoke to the paratroopers who conquered the Kosel. They were so moved by R' Itchke's faith that after regaining the Kosel they sent a jeep to his home to take him to the Kosel, the M'aras HaMachpella, and Kever Rochel.

Ariel Sharon's young son was killed when a gun went off. A few weeks earlier, Sharon had put on t'fillin at the Chabad stand at the Kosel. When the Rebbe heard about Sharon putting on t'fillin he asked whether they had kept in touch with him afterwards.

When R' Itchke heard that the Rebbe wanted them to keep in touch with Sharon, he went to be menachem avel. Sharon asked him his opinion, as a religious person, about the tragedy. R' Itchke said that the Rebbe is the leader of all Jewry and he feels the pain of every Jew, and Sharon should write to him.

*One of them decided  
to tell R' Itchke off,  
saying that everything  
R' Itchke did was not  
done in the spirit of  
Lubavitch and that  
there had never been  
a Lubavitcher who  
wasted his time so  
that a child could see  
how matzos are  
baked...*

Sharon agreed and the next day R' Itchke came with other Chabad askanim to Sharon's home and took

the letter from him to send to the Rebbe.

The Rebbe wrote Sharon a letter of consolation. This was the first letter and the first personal connection between the Rebbe and Sharon. The letter was not sent directly to Sharon but to R' Itchke with a cover letter from the secretariat that said that R' Itchke was to use his judgment as to whether and how the Rebbe's letter should be given to Sharon.

R' Itchke went back to Sharon's home with other Chassidim, gave him the Rebbe's letter, and explained it at length.

**“ITCHKE? THAT'S  
UNBEPFITTING OF HIM!”**

On Yud-Alef Nissan 5732, the Rebbe's 70<sup>th</sup> birthday, the Rebbe asked for 71 new Chabad mosdos. Since the school in Cholon had already been established and R'

### **SPREADING THE WELLSPRINGS INWARD**

R' Itchke was also involved in spreading the wellsprings inward, as it were. It was before Yud Shvat 5730 when the Rebbe announced the completion of Moshiaich's Seifer Torah. Chabad Chassidim yearned to hear the farbrengen that would take place on Motzaei Shabbos. R' Itchke asked the Rebbe and when he got the green light, he arranged a hook-up.

They put a long cord with a microphone that reached from the broadcasting room to the shul. The other end of the cord was connected to a tape with a speaker with two phone lines next to it, one to Eretz Yisroel and one to Montreal. And that's how the farbrengen was broadcast live.

About 1000 people came to the first broadcast at Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim in Kfar Chabad. When the Rebbe's voice boomed out of the loudspeaker, tears came to R' Itchke's eyes as they did to many Chassidim. It was tremendously moving to hear the Rebbe farbrenging live.

The next day, the Rebbe gave a bottle of mashke to Rabbi Tzvi Hirsh Gansburg and told him to give it to his brother, the one who organized the broadcast, along with a “yasher ko'ach.” For about two years, R' Itchke was in charge of broadcasts until he moved to Natzeret Ilit at the end of 5732 and R' Efraim Wolf took over.

Itchke knew that the Rebbe wanted him to open new schools and to run them until they stabilized, he had R' Mordechai Alpert take over the running of the school in Cholon and he moved to Natzeret Ilit, where he opened a new school.

The organization Pe'ilim, together with Rabbi Dovid Nachshon and Rabbi Dovid Teichtel, arranged the registration for the nucleus of the new school. The Reshet school of Natzeret Ilit opened for the new school year of 5733. Since they didn't have a school building, classes were held in bomb shelters, but within a short time they forged good connections with the municipality, which gave them apartments for the school.

R' Itchke brought his idea of educational exhibits to Natzeret and when representatives of the pedagogical center saw his work, they loved his unique educational approach and asked him to work with them as an "Advisor for Jewish Awareness." They wanted him to give lectures for teachers and guide them in religious matters.

R' Itchke reported to the Rebbe and asked for his bracha. The Rebbe said: **it is worthwhile because of hafatza and other [reasons] and you should continue, as long as it does not diminish from your main work.**

Rosh HaShana 5734, R' Itchke had a serious heart attack. He was taken to the hospital immediately, where the doctors stabilized his condition. Motzaei Rosh HaShana, his son-in-law, R' Zalman Chanin, reported to the Rebbe and the Rebbe's reaction was: Itchke? That's not befitting of him!

When R' Itchke heard what the Rebbe had said, he disconnected the machines that were attached to

him and with simple faith in the Rebbe's words he left the hospital.

In the months that followed, he had to take it easy, but R' Itchke wasn't capable of sitting idly, so he decided to visit the Rebbe. He asked his doctor whether he could go on vacation to see the Rebbe in New York. The doctor, thinking that R' Itchke would be relaxing there, approved the trip.

At this time, R' Itchke's son-in-law and daughter had a yechidus and at the end of the yechidus, when they were about to leave, the Rebbe said to R' Itchke's daughter:



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Tell your mother that they should explain to the doctor that 770 is not a convalescent home! If they tell him exactly what goes on here, including the shoving and crowding, and he approves the trip anyway, then your father can travel.

Of course, once the doctor realized where his patient was heading, he canceled his permission and R' Itchke had to wait another few months until he got the doctor's permission for the trip.

## **THE CANCELLED SHLICHUS AND WORKING AT MACHON CHANA**

When R' Itchke recovered from his heart attack and wanted to get back to work, he got an interesting proposal from R' Berel Baumgarten, shliach in Argentina, to become an emissary of the Jewish Agency to Argentina to work with the Jewish community there and to spread the wellsprings.

R' Itchke liked the idea and after gaining the Agency's approval, he took courses for six months to prepare him for the job. He studied safrus, sh'chita, mila, and more. Then he shipped his belongings by sea to Argentina and he and his wife flew there with a stopover in New York.

Upon their arrival in New York, they found out that due to a sudden crisis in Israeli-Argentinean relations, they could not go to Argentina. Their plans had fizzled and they were stuck in New York.

In the meantime, they were offered a job at Machon Chana. They asked the Rebbe about it and the Rebbe said that since, by Divine Providence, they were in New York, they should accept the offer, and remain and live in Crown Heights.

R' Itchke, for whom activism for the Rebbe's work was in his blood, couldn't refrain from communal work and he constantly sought original ways of disseminating the Rebbe's message. He got the Machon Chana women involved too and made an exhibit, which was seen by thousands of Jewish children from all over New York.

At the beginning of the 80's he edited the indices for the work of the Rebbe Maharash. The Rebbe's sicha is printed in the introduction to the book: "Those whom Hashem has endowed with the gift of making

indexes must know that this is a wondrous merit which leads (through the making of indexes) to an increase in Torah study by many Jews. And since **he** caused this, he receives part of what was learned through the indexes (as in the famous teaching of the Baal Shem Tov on the Mishna, 'two holding a tallis')."

On 2 Iyar 5749 the Rebbe gave R' Itchke the job of publishing the Seifer HaT'mimim. The Rebbe said: I know that when I request something of you, it gets done.

R' Itchke began working on the project, but since the job required the cooperation of other people and many mosdos, it took some months. On 15 Elul 5749, when he passed by the Rebbe for "dollars," the Rebbe urged him to print it at the earliest opportunity. R' Itchke did the incredible and within a month, he published the first edition.

## A SPECIAL CHAYUS FOR INYANEI MOSHIACH AND GEULA

When the Rebbe began to emphasize inyanei Moshiach and Geula, R' Itchke threw himself into the subject and began spreading the Besuras HaGeula in various unique ways. In the summer of 5751, he came up with the idea of dropping thousands of leaflets with the Rebbe's message over the Catskills Mountains, where thousands of Jews vacation.

R' Itchke wrote to the Rebbe about it and included ten leaflets. Within half an hour, the secretary returned nine of them to him and said: The Rebbe took one leaflet for himself and asked me to return the rest so you'll have more leaflets to drop.

R' Itchke hired a small plane and began dropping leaflets. Thousands of people were exposed to the Besuras HaGeula until the police ordered the

## EXAMINING KIDNEYS AND HEART

In Shvat 5724, after R' Itchke devoted himself to making sure the huge rally of students of the Reshet was a success, he felt terrible stomach pains with stabbing sensations. After taking an X-ray, the doctor said he saw kidney stones.

The doctor said that R' Itchke must have an operation to remove the stones. Since this sort of operation wasn't done on Shabbos at that time, they had no choice but to wait until Sunday. In the meantime, he took painkillers to kill the pain.

Sunday morning R' Itchke went to the hospital where the surgeon was waiting for him. He said that before the operation he would take another X-ray to verify the stone's location.

When he got the results, the doctor looked perplexed. He said another X-ray had to be taken since for some reason he couldn't see the stone. When another X-ray didn't show the stones either, the doctor concluded that the X-ray machine wasn't working properly and he asked R' Itchke to go to the top floor where there was a newer model. It was only after the new X-ray machine failed to show any stone that the doctor conceded that the stone had disappeared.

He couldn't explain it and certainly R' Itchke had no idea what had happened. It was only a few days later when his father-in-law and mother-in-law, Reb Folle and Rivka Kahn, returned from the Rebbe, that R' Itchke realized what had happened.

On Sunday, 12 Shvat, the Rebbe received the guests who had come for Yud Shvat, among them R' Itchke's in-laws. During the yechidus, in response to one of his father-in-law's questions that had been written on the note he submitted, the Rebbe said: He should continue in his holy work with simcha and goodness of heart and give much nachas, and he will certainly continue and ascend in holiness and may Hashem grant him success.

When the Rebbe finished saying this, the Rebbe indicated that these words were also meant for R' Itchke.

As the yechidus continued, the Rebbe said: Your son-in-law is, baruch Hashem, healthy. He is immersed in his work and probably exerted himself tremendously in the last few days in preparation for Yud Shvat, because when he does something he does it with all 248 limbs and 365 sinews, but now, baruch Hashem, it's not so bad...

R' Folle and his wife, who knew nothing about what had happened on Shabbos and about the kidney stones and the operation that was postponed for Sunday, asked the Rebbe which son-in-law he was referring to.

The Rebbe said he was referring to the young son-in-law. They then realized that R' Itchke must have experienced some problem with his health but they did not imagine what had actually occurred.

When they returned to Eretz Yisroel R' Itchke heard what the Rebbe had said in yechidus and he knew who had made sure to remove the stones from his kidneys.



R' Itchke Gansburg in the doorway of his mobile exhibit near 770

pilot to end the flight since they had gotten complaints. It turned out that thanks to those who complained, the leaflets got more publicity, because the radio and television stations reported about the old rabbi who was being interrogated for throwing leaflets. Naturally, they reported the contents of the leaflets too.

In 5753, after the miracle of Hurricane Andrew, when the Rebbe motioned that they should stay in Miami although the National Guard was ordering people to evacuate, R' Itchke produced a professional video of the Rebbe's prophecies including the main prophecy of Moshiach's coming.

*The Rebbe strongly encouraged him to continue working for the Reshet, Tzach, and especially the summer camps, and said that when elder Chassidim expressed these sentiments they should be ignored.*

That same year he made the "Yemos HaMoshiach" exhibit. It was exhibited for the first time at the Rambam School in Flatbush, where thousands of children visited it. From there, it set out on a huge truck and toured the U.S. At a later point, he had it flown to Eretz Yisroel and exhibited at numerous Chabad houses.

The yearning for Geula, understanding its importance as well as the need to ask and hope for Moshiach's imminent coming, was conveyed to all the thousands of visitors. They began to see and feel how the Geula is becoming a reality before their very eyes.

Even in his senior years, R' Itchke didn't rest on his laurels but lectured on inyanei Moshiach around the world. He also produced a professional video about the Besuras HaGeula with a message for all of humanity.

In recent years, R' Itchke was not well but he accepted his suffering with love. He did not allow those around him to sense his suffering and he greeted everybody graciously.

He is survived by his extraordinary wife Gitta, his son Yosef Simcha Gansburg, shliach in Toronto; his daughter Nechama Chanin wife of Shneur Zalman Chanin; his daughter Fraidy Brod wife of Yisroel Brod of Kfar Chabad.

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# CHABAD GADYA

BY RABBI YEHOASHUA DUBRAWSKY

*Various explanations have been presented for “Chad Gadya,” yet this Aramaic song, the finale of the Hagada for countless Jews, remains a mystery. \* One can find commentators that explain it as referring to periods of Jewish history while others explain it mystically. \* Chabad ears always hear a different tune, a tune that demands inner work without the concessions of self-love. \* A Chassidische Chad Gadya!*

The famous song “Chad Gadya” has holy origins and many kabbalistic allusions have been found in it. Who composed it? When was it composed? We don’t know, but the author was certainly a tzaddik who concealed secret matters with great brevity within the words. Over the years, various commentators wrote explanations for this song, approaching it with various paths of the Pardes of Torah (i.e., the simple meaning, allusion, homiletics, kabbala).

[In *Hisvaaduyos* 5747, vol. 2, p. 689, the Rebbe says, “As it says in the song, “Chad Gadya,” at the end of the seider night. Although it is not the Chabad custom to say it, the whole matter exists in its entirety, etc. In fact, it is at a level beyond the limitations of speech.”]

Pesach night is when **all** are invited to come and take part in the joy of the Geula, and the questions of **all** Jewish children are entertained, from the wise one to the simple. So, perhaps there is room for a simple Jew to try and seek out its meaning.

The Exodus from Egypt is the foundation for a Jew’s avoda, for “each and every day” one must “see himself” going out of all limitations. Therefore, we can posit that during the lofty moments of Pesach, when the mind has been expanded by four cups of wine, this song comes to remind a Jew who he is so he can grasp only the joy of holiness and not mix in other things.

The imagery of the song – the goat, cat, dog, etc. – contains references to periods and changes in

a person’s physical life. It draws our attention to the “animal soul,” whose every move draws a person downward, and reminds us how a Jew must, using the powers of his G-dly soul, constantly stand on guard.

**“ONE GOAT THAT FATHER BOUGHT FOR TWO COINS – ONE GOAT, ONE GOAT”**

The first period in a Jew’s life is “one goat that father bought,” childhood, the period of “breath that has no sin,” for the young body just received the pure neshama. However, “father bought” – our Father in heaven “sold” the neshama, i.e., He brought it down to this world. “For two coins (zuzei)” – to a place where there is a constant battle of choice between **two** paths. “Zuzei” is related to the word in Hebrew meaning “movement.”

Each of the two paths can be accessed with no more than a “zuz,” a slight movement. A little turn to the right can save the soul; a slight turn to the left can lead to destruction. These are the basic facts of life with which we start out.

However, the market where the goat is sold has its own rules, its own dynamics. Hashem created man in such a way that he quickly – just like the pure white goat – experiences a change along the lines of, “the inclination of man’s heart is evil from his youth,” and so we continue...

## **“AND A CAT CAME AND ATE THE GOAT”**

The child grows a little bit older and already begins to show his “claws.” He develops the trait of cruelty and the desire to be cruel to those who are weaker. A kitty cat sometimes seems cute but it actually has a wild streak, sometimes expressed in a nasty, painful scratch.

The angel of a baby that we once knew, before our very eyes turns into a destructive toddler who “swallows” the goat. And we yearn for the: one goat, one goat! How nice it was with the pure infant.

But the animal soul doesn't rest quietly. It grows, and the lack of a proper educational environment only hastens the process in which the child is drawn after the obstinacy of his heart and temperament, and then...

## **“AND A DOG CAME AND BIT THE CAT”**

The child's development is reminiscent of a dog that mauls the cat: the cat is a nice house pet, after all. It is easy to assert oneself as its master and it's not that brazen or wild. But over the years a child becomes more bold. He becomes soiled by all the filth from the street and reveals not only his claws but

*During the lofty moments of Pesach, when the mind has been expanded by four cups of wine, this song comes to remind a Jew who he is so he can grasp only the joy of holiness and not mix in other things.*

also his sharp teeth. These are the wild maturation years, when you can hear a chutzpa'dike retort that rings in your ears like barking and makes you just as anxious.

The “doggie” doesn't stand still either and if he isn't tied down with an “educational leash,” which means a yoke of Torah and daily t'filla, then the dog – which still symbolizes “man's best friend” – deteriorates and...

## **“AND THE STICK COMES AND HITS THE DOG”**

The boy becomes a youth and begins to land blows even on the

dog's loyalty, that somehow still connected him with his spiritual roots. The stick is uprooted from its source and is an independent entity, separate from the tree that is planted in the earth and connected with the “power of growth.”

The youth acquires a strange stubbornness and the opposition of a stick. He looks down on his “old fashioned” parents and wants to escape and assert his independence. His natural middos are riled up and his yetzer is tougher than ever. All this together opens the door for the thought that the world is “something.”

However, even this stick, despite its hardness, is connected with his former self, as Chazal say, “Toss a stick into the air and it will land on its root side.” Just draw him a bit close to the spiritual world and he will revert back to his spiritual roots.

This is the time to grasp the “stick-youth” and stand him on his feet. If you don't, then the next step is...

## **“AND A FIRE CAME AND BURNED THE STICK”**

The fire of lust, especially the fantasies about the happiness to be found within the pleasures of this world, burns up even the inner nature of the stick to be drawn to its



root. Man throws himself into the fiery furnace of the vanities of this world with passion. He is so blinded by the enticements of this world that he doesn't feel his neshama cry out: "One goat, one goat..." Ah, how distant I have become from the refinement of once-upon-a-time! This is a period which can end catastrophically, Heaven forbid.

However, the author of "Chad Gadya" continues with other stages in life. A person can sometimes muse: Nu, the ardor of youth will pass and the blood will quiet down, and a person will acquire some brains. Yes, this can happen...

**"AND WATER CAME AND EXTINGUISHED THE FIRE"**

Water, the opposite of fire, is cold, calculated intellect that extinguishes the fire of the middos. A person gets older and experiences several serious disappointments in life. Even from the perspective of human intellect, one can discern the emptiness and vanity of this world.

However, if it all comes solely from human intellect, without the warmth of Torah and mitzvos, this can lead to undesirable results that come from feelings of angst and despair (so that the fire and the will to live might be completely extinguished, ch"v). Additionally, even under better circumstances, salvation will not come from the intellect.

It's a fact: Sometimes we meet old people and it seems that we can rely on their judgment, but suddenly...

**"AND THE OX CAME AND DRANK THE WATER"**

Given a meager opportunity, the "goring ox" comes with its horns aimed forward, yes, even for the rational old man, and in an instant, the last drops of the waters of intellect dry up. It might be because honor was withheld from him or

even a remnant of jealousy and desire that lingers despite the limitations of age. Meanwhile, the powers of the intellect were scattered in all directions and in their place appeared "an ox with a shtraimel."

As usual, Chazal express it succinctly, "The elderly of the *am ha'aretz* (those ignorant of Torah), the older they get, the more their minds become confused.

[Chassidus tells us that even within those who learn Torah dwells the "king who is old and wise"

*The "father," our merciful Father in heaven, Who "sold" the hapless goat in the market-the world, Himself fulfills "and I will descend to save him," and He extricates the "scattered sheep, which is Israel," from the mire of Galus.*

(referring to the yetzer ha'ra), who rears up to "gore" occasionally.]

The author of "Chad Gadya" doesn't stop here but puts out a warning sign against another danger...

**"AND THE SLAUGHTERER COMES AND SLAUGHTERS THE OX"**

Even when "man" and his soul powers rise up above the animal and he even takes a knife and slaughters the "ox" in the proper fashion (e.g.,

the repentance of those who "play with dice," i.e., those who gamble, they break the pieces of their game), he can imagine that he vanquished the yetzer ha'ra, all the wild animals within him, that he went through it all and no ox will overtake him anymore – so what's the problem?

We tell him: "Do not believe in yourself," etc. The yetzer ha'ra never gives up! Even when the "ox" is lying there dead he uses even sharper weapons (which is why his name "angel of death" suits him) – and he can "slaughter the slaughterer." The yetzer ha'ra can trap a person the very moment he thinks he "caught the bull by its horns" ...

**"AND THE ANGEL OF DEATH CAME AND SLAUGHTERED THE SLAUGHTERER"**

For the truth is that a person can never rely on himself: "If not for Hashem helping him, he would not be able to withstand him" (i.e., the yetzer ha'ra). A person needs great help from Heaven; he must arouse much Heavenly mercy, and then...

**"HASHEM CAME AND SLAUGHTERED THE ANGEL OF DEATH"**

This is the goal and purpose of all Jewish life, and here the conclusion of the song connects with the beginning: the "father," our merciful Father in heaven, Who "sold" the hapless goat in the market-the world, Himself fulfills "and I will descend to save him," and He extricates the "scattered sheep, which is Israel," from the mire of Galus.

This is what Hashem showed us with the Geula from Egypt. And He will show it to us again in a complete and eternal fashion soon, with the true and complete Redemption, in our times.

שִׁירָו לֹו זְמַרְוּ לֹו, שִׁיחֹו בְּכֹל נִפְלְאֹתָיו תְּהַלִּים קִיָּה.ב

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# MY PERSONAL REDEMPTION

BY IDIT AHARON

*A first-person account of a young lady in Amsterdam who turned her life around and was redeemed from what she describes as “the forty-ninth gate of impurity.” \* It all began the time she poured out her heart in a letter to the Rebbe that she wrote on a napkin in a restaurant. \* As her story continues, she merited, by Divine Providence, to experience a surprise happy-ending along the way.*

Amsterdam is a pretty city with brown, white, and red-roofed homes and numerous narrow and elongated windows. There are canals that wind through the streets with pleasure boats, yachts, and houseboats. The weather is nearly always cloudy like the sky. It’s all one big cloud.

A legendary city. Every neighborhood that you pass is another page of a book of fairy tales.

This is what I heard about Amsterdam from friends, who had come back from there enthused about it. I was only fifteen, and their description of Amsterdam, the big city, appealed to me and one day I picked up and went there.

I was nineteen and I walked the

streets and feasted my eyes on the sights, seeking the ancient legends.

I didn’t rest for a moment. I walked for hours and even returned twice to the same place. I nearly asked, “Excuse me but do you know where the legend is?” Everything was there: the windmills, the red-roofed houses with narrow, elongated windows, a stream meandering in the middle of the avenue, restaurants, and entertainment.

However, the shining pages of the legends in my mind were nowhere to be found. I went to sleep very late and hoped that the next day I would discover what I hadn’t found on the first day.

The morning came along with

the feeling of disappointment. I figured that in another day or two I would leave. It was a pity to waste time there.

Divine providence caused me to remain there and I got a job with good pay in a dark pub, dark in more ways than one...

Days passed and my senses were dulled. Part of me slept while another part of me wanted so badly to wake up.

Before I left on my trip, my brother, who had become a baal t’shuva, gave me three books and said, “Take them. Always keep them with you. They are protective and aside from that, they contain much wisdom. Read them. Promise me.”

So the books went with me every day to work. A promise is a promise. Sometimes they sat there near the glasses, really like some kind of segula.

One time when I called home and asked what was new and whether any holiday was coming up, they told me, “Tonight is the first night of Chanuka.”

I thought of Chanuka, Eretz Yisroel, and the menoros in the windows, the pouring rain and the candles, their flames dancing in victory. My feeling that I was missing out engendered an idea. I would also light the first light. And that’s what I did. While at work, I put a candle

on the counter where drinks are served to pathetic souls in the city of legends...

One candle seemed too few to me and I decided that I would light no fewer than eight candles. Eight candles lit in a dark, gentile bar in a city of unfortunates. In a free moment, I opened one of the s'farim, *Tzivas HaRibash* or *Tanya* and I read, a little bit each time. My soul powers did not tolerate too much light...

The next day too I lit the candles of the menorah. It was late afternoon when a man walked in. He paused in the gloom to look around. I looked at him and something seemed odd. He had a beard! And he was wearing a cap. He glanced at the candles and froze. He looked at them and around the room and then back at the candles and at me standing behind them.

He was thunderstruck and I knew it. He was Jewish! With faltering steps he came in and sat down at one of the high bar stools.

I asked him in English, "What would you like to drink?" and he

**"The chiddush of the future Redemption as compared to the exodus from Egypt is that in the exodus from Egypt there was a revelation from Above that was not the result of avoda. (And even though they counted 49 days, in such a short period of time it wasn't possible by virtue of their own avoda for them to leave the 49 gates of impurity and be so refined). Whereas, with the future Redemption, it will come as a result of the avoda of the Jewish people that began with the exodus from Egypt, to refine not only oneself but also each one [refining] his portion of the world."**

*(Sicha Shmini 5720)*

said, "Beer."

While I poured him a beer and without looking at him, I added in Ivrit, "You're Jewish, right?"

"Right," said the young man with a noticeable tremor in his voice.

"You're religious or from a religious home?" I asked confidently.

"Right," replied the man as though even if he wanted to answer otherwise he would be unable to do so.

"So why are you here? Why are you in this awful place? What are you looking for here?" I asked him challengingly.

"I, I just came to drink a beer," said the man defensively.

"Beer? Does a Jew need to drink beer here? Is there no beer at a quarter of the price in the grocery store around the corner?" I asked quietly but firmly and I added, "I see before me a Jewish man who grasps the truth on the one hand, while trying to flee from it on the other hand. How can you do this to yourself?"

"And what about you? What are you doing here? Doesn't the truth pertain to you too?" he said defiantly, turning the tables on me.

"You're right, but there's no comparison between us. I didn't grow up in a religious home, not even in a traditional home. But I still know it's the truth. I have proof! Do you see these s'farim? I read them when I can and maybe one day Hashem will help me do t'shuva. I've tried a few times without success."

In the meantime, the man had finished his drink and he left the pub. I was so overwrought that I turned my face to the wall and wept. I whispered, "Master of the universe, if you do not forgive me or I am not deserving to live in Your Shadow, at least return him, this lost son, to You. Save him. He doesn't belong

with lies!"

While I wiped my tears, the man came back, this time with sure steps. He put a large bill on the counter and said, "This is for you, thank you," and he left.

I took the bill and whispered, "If you help me Hashem, to do t'shuva, when I return to Eretz Yisroel I will donate this money to tz'daka."

And from that day on, something stirred in my soul. It seemed like business as usual but inside it was as though something drew me to a faraway childhood and memories from a land even further away; from my life and the life of my mother and even my grandmother a" h.

I was engulfed in sadness. I didn't like my job nor did I like Amsterdam. The people seemed so foreign to me and a strong feeling of loneliness took the place of the sensation of lightness that regularly accompanied me on all my travels.

One evening I was sitting in a café and I knew there was nowhere to go. Then I remembered the Rebbe. The Rebbe I had dreamed of, the one I had seen in the newspaper and didn't know what he wanted of me; the Rebbe my brother didn't stop talking about.

I took a white paper napkin and wrote to the Rebbe about what I felt, about my lack of gratitude for everything and about the memories that took me so far away, even to the Atlas Mountains of Africa, while I never set foot there. At the bottom of the napkin I noted that just as I had seen the Rebbe in a dream and as many had been helped by him, so too, little me asked him to help me so that all feelings of fear and distress that choked me would dissipate.

I knew that you don't get something for nothing, so I promised that I would return to Eretz Yisroel and begin doing

t'shuva.

I folded my letter and put it into my pocket. And then, something happened immediately that I will never forget. I felt as though my entire being was emptying out. My thoughts disappeared along with the feelings. I was like a hollow pipe with a strong, pleasant breeze blowing through it. I felt suddenly emptied...

I was sitting on the same chair, holding a cup of coffee with my eyes fixed upon some spot. One minute, two. No more. I searched inward, deep within the maze of thoughts and feelings. What was happening? What remained? Nothing.

I was shocked to discover that I was left as an empty vessel. It's not that I forgot who I was, Heaven forbid. It's that all the unpleasant feelings had disappeared. The distressing thoughts and sadness had vanished. The feeling of great frustration had gone.

I immediately realized the enormity of the miracle. Not only did the Rebbe answer me instantly, but he even fulfilled my request in the most immediate way. Now it was as if he was telling me, "You are emptied; all is clean. There is no past. From hereon forth it depends only on you. What you choose will enter the present. You are beginning on a clean, new page and you are responsible for what will be written there."

Those distressing feelings never returned. A week after that incredible evening that was still fresh in my mind, I found a letter from my brother in my mailbox. It was six pages long and began with the good news that he was engaged, a "chattan." What a strange word. The rest of the letter contained kabbalistic ideas and pairs of words and gematriyos about the couple.

At the end of his long letter

appeared one lone line, which began with, "Where are you? Where are you? Where are you?"

I didn't need more than this. I burst into tears that reverberated back at me from all the walls of the house. Where was I? Indeed, where was I? And the thought made me cry some more.

I looked again at my brother's letter and his great concern for me radiated out from that one sentence.

***"I didn't grow up in a religious home, not even in a traditional home. But I still know it's the truth. I have proof! Do you see these s'farim? I read them when I can and maybe one day Hashem will help me do t'shuva. I've tried a few times without success."***

Where was I? Where was I and where was he? He was a wise young man and I was simply a lazy good-for-nothing who remained here instead of doing the right thing.

A week later, I landed at Ben Gurion airport and my brother was there, waiting for me.

"So that you don't run away...I brought handcuffs with me, please give me your hands..." We laughed. What bliss. It was so safe here, so

protected. And my brother looked like someone who had returned from a trip around the sun. What a shining face!

And that's how my t'shuva began, not that easily, a trip with a beginning but no end.

I married, baruch Hashem, and as a Lubavitcher Chassid went to 770. I was in my eighth month and though it wasn't easy, I was happy to do it, to be there.

One day, as I walked my usual route to 770, I met a friend from Eretz Yisroel who is not a Lubavitcher. She suggested that I join her for a day of learning in Boro Park. It will be great, she promised.

The lecture hall was packed with people. All types were there, chareidi women, religious and nonobservant women, old and young. The lecturer, a well-known rabbi, entertained and taught us with his parables, stories, and broad knowledge. I sat there and thought; How did I come here? What do I have to do with this lecturer? I am past the message being conveyed here because I took the big step long ago!

The time passed, and my ears remained alert. "If you're here, there's a reason," I said to myself. "Maybe, by listening to the speaker, you will be inspired to further t'shuva."

The rabbi continued speaking, "We have no idea what effect actions have on our lives, even words. Sometimes, even something we see can leave a tremendous impression on a person's soul. I have a story like this to tell you. And for you, ladies of Boro Park, this story will speak especially to you..."

"A little while ago I visited a friend, a Rosh Kollel in Yerushalayim. He brought me to the large room where the men learn in pairs. While I stood there, enjoying

the sight of the men learning and hearing their voices fill the spacious room, my friend whispered to me, 'You should know that every man here is an ongoing story of heroism.'

"He looked around the room, seeking a particular person and finally found the person he was looking for. He pointed at him and said, 'You see him with the gray suit? Five years ago, he left his parents' home in Boro Park, left yeshiva and began working in order to earn some money so he could travel abroad. He barely looked different than a gentile. He made some money and went to Europe with the feeling that there was something there that he was missing out on.

"He went to Holland and it was Chanuka when he entered a bar and there, to his surprise, was a menorah on the counter, shining bright! It was the third night of Chanuka but for some reason all eight lights were

*"I didn't need more than this. I burst into tears that reverberated back at me from all the walls of the house. Where was I? Indeed, where was I? And the thought made me cry some more."*

burning.

"He met the girl who had lit the menorah, an Israeli, who gave it to him over the head for abandoning his traditions. This had a

tremendous effect on him, especially when the girl herself wasn't religious yet she chose to speak up even in that impure place.

"And he, who had come from an excellent home where love for Torah and mitzvos were a mainstay, had dropped it all for what? For nothing! He returned home and from there he came to us. Baruch Hashem he is married and they are expecting their first child.' And this is the story that the Rosh Kollel told me."

I sat there, in shock, feeling goose bumps. Joy filled my heart and I was full of thanks to Hashem for allowing me, the girl in the story, to return to Him with love.

This is a true story about my personal redemption. It was as though Hashem Himself descended to my forty-ninth gate of impurity and redeemed me from there.

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# TRIAL AND ITS REWARD

BY NATAN AVRAHAM  
TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY

*This woman, a resident of Tirat HaCarmel, was quite far from a life of Torah observance, however, it appeared that my words had made a powerful impression upon her. She agreed to consider the matter seriously. Her husband, who also joined the conversation at a certain point, appeared to be even further away from Torah and mitzvos than her. As expected, he was not all that enthusiastic about placing his trust in the Rebbe's bracha, and he urged her not to consider the option of writing to the Rebbe. Apparently, her desire for a child was much stronger, and she gave her consent that I should write to the Rebbe in her name, and she would do whatever the Rebbe said.*

It was three o'clock in the morning. It was a chilly night outside the Chabad House in Eilat, but inside, there was an embracing and warm chassidic atmosphere. The farbrengen continued with full force. Story after story, feeling after feeling, and an expression of true, open, and intense love for the Rebbe.

The participants were seated around the mashpia, HaRav Avraham

Shmuel Bukiet. Some were yeshiva bochurim, others were new "mekuravim" who came to the yeshiva, together with students with the Lithuanian-brand yeshivos, and young people from the United States and Argentina who were touring in the vacation city.

"L'Chaim!" Rabbi Bukiet's voice again broke the silence.

"L'Chaim v'livracha!"

"The following story occurred twenty-two years ago, in Adar 5744. In those days, I was living with my family in Kiryat Ata, where we were serving as shluchim of the Rebbe MH" M. At one point, my wife and I were blessed with the birth of a son, and as a result, I found myself coming regularly for about a week to the Rambam Hospital in Haifa.

"During one of my visits to the ward where my wife was staying, I noticed that another hospitalized woman had been brought into my wife's room. At a certain point, my wife and her new roommate began a friendly chat. At first, the conversation was pleasant and cordial, but soon afterwards, the woman began to tell sadly why she was in the hospital. She said that she was not a healthy person, and in addition to her varied medical complications, she had only one kidney after the other had to be surgically removed.

"Despite the fact that she was not Torah observant, you could tell that she felt a sense of appreciation for Jewish tradition and for Torah observant Jews. The conversation continued, as I listened in from the side.

"She proceeded to tell how that due to her weakened physical state, she was not allowed to become pregnant. Now, in light of the fact

that she was in the early stages of pregnancy, her doctors ordered her to have an abortion *r"l*. They warned her that continuing the pregnancy would place her life and the life of her unborn child at grave risk. She wanted very much to have the baby, but the doctors would not leave her in peace. They added that in all medical history, a woman in her condition had never given birth – and even worse.

“She appeared broken and crushed. Her emotional state was extremely difficult, and now she waited to hear what we had to say. The realization flashed through my mind that if this woman had been brought specifically into a room with my wife, a *shlucha* of the Rebbe, this was an obvious case of Divine Providence.

“At this point, I joined the conversation and told her that I am a *chassid* of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, and that I was prepared to write a letter to the Rebbe for her, laying out the whole story and requesting the Rebbe’s advice and *bracha*. I then proceeded to tell her about the numerous miracle stories that have occurred due to the Rebbe’s *brachos*, however, there was one condition to writing the letter – she had to make a commitment to do whatever the Rebbe said.

“As I said earlier, this woman, a resident of Tirat HaCarmel, was quite far from a life of Torah observance, however, it appeared that my words had made a powerful impression upon her. She agreed to consider the matter seriously. Her husband, who also joined the conversation at a certain point, appeared to be even further away from Torah and *mitzvos* than her. As expected, he was not all that enthusiastic about placing his trust in the Rebbe’s *bracha*, and he urged her not to consider the option of writing to the Rebbe.

“Apparently, her desire for a child was much stronger, and she gave her consent that I should write to the Rebbe in her name, and she would do whatever the Rebbe said.

“When I returned home that evening, I made the preparations for composing a letter to the Rebbe, and laid out in writing the entire sad story. A few days passed, and an answer was received from the Rebbe: **‘Continue her pregnancy. I will mention it at the *Tzion*.’**

“I was gripped by a feeling of tremendous excitement, and I immediately rushed to show her the



letter, as I urged to fulfill the promise made between us, despite all the difficulties confronting her. Indeed, I was not mistaken, as the medical staff was of the opinion that the pregnancy must be terminated, believing that its continuation was a contradiction to all the rules of medicine.

“From the moment that the woman told the doctors that she wanted to continue the pregnancy based on the *bracha* that she had received from the Rebbe, a stubborn and uncompromising pressure campaign was waged against her and

me. The director of Rambam Hospital himself called me personally into his office and repeatedly emphasized the gravity of the matter in very clear terms: ‘A woman with such a health condition cannot possibly give birth. I don’t know who the Lubavitcher Rebbe is, but I’m the one who’s in charge here and it’s my responsibility. Furthermore, even the Rebbe understands a little about medicine, you didn’t send him any medical documents on the case. How can you possibly take such an immense responsibility upon yourself?’ he growled.

“When he saw that I was steadfast in my opinion that the Rebbe is not someone who is limited to the laws of nature, and that there was no chance of altering his words, he changed to a much harsher tone. ‘Look, if something happens to her, they won’t put you on trial nor even the Lubavitcher Rebbe – but me! I am not prepared to take such responsibility. If she continues to refuse to have an abortion, I will order her to be released from the hospital.’

“The pressure from all directions was tremendous. As a born and raised *chassid*, I was not particularly fazed by it. But, go and explain to a family that has no connection to Yiddishkeit, and surely not to the pure faith in *tzaddikim*, that she has to listen to what the Rebbe said against all the learned opinions of the doctors.

“The husband even went so far as to frighten his wife by saying that she is willingly taking her own life. However, the shepherd never abandons his flock, and through my discussions with her, I had awakened her *emuna*, and there came tremendous help from Heaven. She held firm against all the pressure.

“A few days later, I received an

urgent phone call from her. It turned out that the trial that she had been enduring was not quite finished. The doctors at Rambam Hospital had decided to discharge her in order not to take responsibility for her condition. She was transferred to the Carmel Hospital across town.

“In light of these developments, she was very worried. Upon her request, I sent another letter to the Rebbe, explaining everything that she was going through and the new developments over the last several days. The Rebbe’s reply was not long in coming: **‘I already answered to continue her pregnancy. I will mention it at the Tzion.’** Once again, I came to the woman with a clear answer, and I strengthened her with assurances that she has nothing to worry about, after being privileged to receive such guidance.

“Around this time, I concluded my shlichus in Kiryat Ata and moved with my family to Kfar Chabad. We continued to remain in contact during the first few weeks after my departure, however, as time passed and my schedule become particularly busy, we were no longer in touch with one another.

“A few months later, I received a

*One speaker after another came up to the rostrum to laud and praise the Rebbe, whose bracha caused something above and beyond the natural limitations of medical science.*

telephone call at my home. The person on the line identified himself as the director of Carmel Hospital in Haifa. At once, my whole body tensed. I asked if something terrible had happened, but the esteemed professor’s calm tone of voice immediately assuaged my fears. He invited me to participate in a medical conference to be held the following day at the hospital, which he connected to the story of this woman.

“I arrived at the hospital the next day. I quickly understood that this

was not just your standard ‘let’s drink a toast,’ but a major public event. A large assembly of doctors and nurses gathered in one of the hospital’s main halls, and among the participants was the director of Rambam Hospital! One speaker after another came up to the rostrum to laud and praise the Rebbe, whose bracha caused something above and beyond the natural limitations of medical science.

“The woman and her family were also in attendance, and the emotion on the woman’s face was evident for all to see.

“The cause for all the great excitement was the fact that the birth had been easy and normal.

“To my great surprise, I was asked to say a few words, and I took the opportunity to speak about the greatness of the Rebbe, as I sharpened the distinction between the varying levels of faith, emphasizing the kind of faith that is demanded from us by the leader of the generation.”

“*LChaim!*”

“*LChaim v’livracha!*”

“May we merit to be true *‘mekusharim.’*”

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# SHABBOS IN HEVRON

BY ALIZA KARP

I got back to Hevron an hour before Shabbos. Although I had been a guest in the Hachnasas Orchim building during the week, for Shabbos I vacated to make room for the seminary girls from the Chabad seminary in Ramat Shlomo, Yerushalaim, who were spending Shabbos in Hevron. I moved into the office-turned-guest-room, in the home of the Chabad Shluchim, Danny and Batsheva and their adorable, rambunctious children.

It was Erev Shabbos Mevarchim, the Shabbos when we bless the new month which will start in the coming week. Four o'clock Hevron time made it nine in the morning in New York. Danny has a phone that works over the internet. It has a 718 area code and operates as if it is in New York. With an hour to go, I quickly made calls from this phone to remind my T'hillim group members back home that it was Shabbos Mevarchim. It was fun to hear the reactions when I told my friends I was calling from Hevron.

I lit candles with Batsheva and sunk onto the sofa to rest after an exciting afternoon. But then I remembered... the reason I always like to spend Shabbos in Hevron, above visiting other interesting

people and places, is because of the Friday night service in M'aras HaMachpela.

By the time I got there, the woman's section was almost full. The seats that is. The isles were still empty. I knew that in time even the isles would fill up with girls, some draped in white, others draped in colors, but all the girls would have the distinct hilltop look that characterizes the residents of Yesha.



Kever Yishai and Rus

Even the out of town guests blended into the dress code. There were virtually no high heels, tight clothes, and heavy make up.

I went straight up to the Mechitza. I like to move aside the curtain and watch the dancing. The Mechitza is solid wood almost five feet high, above which is an open weave design of thin metal strips, so

you can only see the other side if you are up close, and of course if you lift the curtain that covers the metal design.

If I tell you the singing and dancing of Kabbalas Shabbos at the Maara are a manifestation of the magic of Hevron, where material and spiritual combine... Don't believe me; go see for yourself.

There was an interesting mix of men: the Hevron residents,

Chassidim, and clean shaven Yeshiva students. Add to the mix some soldiers, yes, even after the tragedy of Gush Katif, they are welcomed to join the Davening. Now subtract from the mix all the externalities, because Friday night at the Maara there is only brotherhood, unity and Simcha.

Which reminds me, I should mention that the Davening is led by Simcha Hochbaum. He is very sincere, soft spoken, and at the same time powerful. Although at this point the Friday night Davening at the Maara is able to surge, flow and elevate without him... when he is there, he is the maestro.

A girl in the front row offered me her seat. (I guess I don't look so young after all.) But I declined. There is no chance to peek through



the Mechitza when seated.

Following the Davening I went to the dining room of the Hachnasas Orchim building. The Cohens and I would be eating with the seminary and taking part in their program. I opted to sit with the girls instead of at the head table. I enjoyed them.

The feature speaker for the evening was Mrs. Miriam Levinger, one of the leaders of the Nashim Tzidaknios, whom the Rebbe referred to as righteous women, who established the modern Jewish community in Hevron through Mesiras Nefesh MAMOSH, complete self-sacrifice, by breaking into and living in the Beit Hadassah building. Miriam's story is one I have heard many times and have written about, but I had never heard her tell the entire story start to finish. It was fascinating. Of course, her Mesiras Nefesh for Hevron did not end at Beit Hadassah; it continued for many years before the community became what it is today.

Then Batsheva spoke to the girls and answered their many questions until it was getting late and we decided to head home to get some sleep before Shabbos Mevarchim T'hillim in the morning.

As I mentioned in the original story of Givot Olam, there had been a new Seifer Torah brought to Hevron the week before. This Seifer Torah had been used in Gush Katif and is now housed in the Mitteler Rebbe's until it can return to Gush Katif. (It has an interesting story which I will tell at the end of this Shabbos report.) This was the first Shabbos that the Mittler Rebbe's Shul had a Seifer Torah of its own (in recent times) so I joined the Minyan there on Shabbos morning.

The Mittler Rebbe's Shul is modest in size, with no designated place for women. Miriam Rhodes from the nearby village of Bat Ayin was visiting Hevron for Shabbos.

Together we transformed the small area that serves as an entrance way, into a woman's section.

Following the davening, Miriam and I climbed up the hill to Tel Rumeida, where we were having Kiddush with Ephraim and Anya Rosenstein and family in their caravan home. The Rosenstein's had a full table of a variety of guests. There were four young men from Boro Park. I think they were Bobov Chassidim. They sat near Ephraim and did not interact with the women, and we sat near Anya and did not interact with them. Everyone was happy. Ephraim brought us all

***We gain their respect  
by showing self-  
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mean death.***

into the conversation when he spoke about the Parsha interactively with his children.

It was a delightful lunch. Just before Anya served desert a neighbor came in and asked the men to come to Mincha at nearby Kever Ruth and Yishai. What happened next was interesting. Now that the men were gone the women sang a few songs and chatted a little, but before long the atmosphere became tranquil. One by one each of us picked up a seifer to continue our Shabbos Mevarchim T'hillim. I looked up for a moment and took a mental picture of the girls and women from

teenager to grandmother (that's me) all saying T'hillim. The younger women were comfortably positioned on the living room furniture and we oldies were by the table a bit more formal... but we were all saying T'hillim.

Later I was planning to join the Seminary girls for their tour of the neighborhood. I rushed back to the Cohen's to take a short nap. I found their dining room full of Chabad bachurim. These were the boys who made up the Minyan in the Mittler Rebbe's Shul in the morning. I realized that one of the boys was Elchonon Hellinger, the one who was largely responsible for the Seifer Torah in the Mittler Rebbe's Shul. I made a mental note to speak to him later to get the story from the source.

Simcha gave the tour to the seminary girls. He mixes in many interesting stories and Biblical references so that even places familiar to me, took on more depth. Our tour finished at Beit Hadassah. As we were walking back to Avraham Avinu neighborhood, where the girls were staying and which is closer to the Maara where the girls were going for Mincha, I noticed Miriam Levinger was walking the opposite direction. I walked over to say Good Shabbos and to thank her for the stories she had told us the night before. She mentioned she was walking up to Kever Ruth and Yishai to say T'hillim. I decided to join her.

As we were walking up the hill an Arab boy was walking down. He was probably about 10 or 12 years old. As he was about to pass us, he said something. Immediately Miriam responded in Arabic, a harsh tone in her voice. I asked her what she said. She told me that she had told him he should go to sleep and never wake up!

I asked her if she spoke Arabic. "No," she answered calmly, "I only

curse in Arabic.”

The Arab boy had said something to us, but neither of us knew what he said. I questioned whether or not her tough response would reinforce feelings of hostility in the youth. Miriam pointed out that had it been the other way around, a Jewish boy saying something to an Arab woman, that the Jewish boy might not live to tell the tale. She explained to me that this is their culture, this is what they understand and therefore, this is how we need to speak to them. We gain their respect by showing self-confidence and intolerance of social infractions such as we encountered. Gaining their disrespect can mean death.

Miriam then told me how it was when her children grew up in Hevron. Now we walk through streets that few Arabs pass through, but when she first settled in Hevron these same streets were teeming with Arabs. And her family has survived to tell the tale.

I understood that Miriam and her husband have dedicated their lives – totally – to preserve the physical connection of Am Yisroel to M'aras HaMachpella and Hevron. Because of them, and others like them, tens of thousands of Jews visit Hevron and the Maara every year. The Rebbe was very supportive of the Levingers, in person and by mail. After all, Hashem promised us a physical connection, not just a spiritual one. The Levingers, together with a small group of families, have preserved

our connection to the heritage that Hashem promised us. Their influence is not restricted to Hevron. Far and near they have served as an example to others, giving encouragement through example that it can be done. Because of their perseverance, many have been inspired to live in and protect other parts of our Holy Land.

We reached the Kever of Ruth and Yishai, the father and grandmother of Dovid HaMelech, the author of the T'hillim. A perfect place to say more Shabbos Mevarchim T'hillim.

On our way down, we stopped to visit Rebbetzin Raanan, a close friend of Miriam's whose husband was murdered by a terrorist seven years ago in their home in Tel Rumeida, which at the time was a flimsy caravan. Rabbi Raanan was a well respected and loved leader. His Rebbetzin is now living in Beit Menachem, the new apartment building in Tel Rumeida. I was thrilled to meet Rebbetzin Raanan, another incredible woman of Hevron.

When Shabbos was over, I quickly checked my email on Danny's computer and then headed for Yerushalayim for a Melaveh Malka with Shaena, who is originally from Winnipeg, Canada, as I am, but has been living for more than thirty years as part of the Toldos Aron Chassidim in Meia Sh'arim. If you remember from the Givot Olam story, I was buying the present for

her when I saw the pictures of the Rebbe. I was now on my way to give her the present, which, it turned out, she liked very much.

Every week some of her children and grandchildren join her for Melaveh Malka. She is the queen as her daughters come to help clean up from Shabbos and serve the food. Everyone is dressed traditionally, Meia Sh'arim style, and is refreshed after a restful Shabbos. There were plenty of infants to go on the laps of the adults. Everyone there was clearly experienced at dealing with children of all ages.

What a difference. A few hours ago I was with Miriam Levinger who continues to dedicate her life for her nation. And now I am sitting in a community that cares for themselves exclusively. This is not my lifestyle, but I can see it also has its strengths, mainly, it has strength! These communities were here before the state, and I don't know how to say this, but as the state is in a phase of self-destruction, these communities are not fazed.

I love and respect the different lifestyles that make up the mosaic of Am Yisroel, but I must admit, the more I learn about the lives and philosophies of the various ways Toras Yisroel is observed by Am Yisroel, I thank G-d for the Rebbe's guidance and Chabad Chassidus with its unique blend of perceiving the material and physical and its clear path for Ahavas Yisroel.



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# READERS *writing*



## AFTER GIMMEL TAMUZ: 'TAKE THE TIME TO TEACH ME'

Dear Editor,

Please help me to understand how after [Gimmel Tamuz] the Rebbe will come back and bring the redemption.

I have attempted to speak to countless Chabad Lubavitchers about this, but all brush off the question.

If you can show me this, for what its worth, you will greatly help and improve my live and clearly, my entire Jewish outlook.

I understand the concept of Moshiach already, this is not what I am asking to be taught. I am asking how after [Gimmel Tamuz] the Rebbe will come back and bring the Redemption.

If this really means everything to you, I hope that you shall take the time to teach me.

mezzanine\_76@etc.

\* \* \*

First and foremost, the majority of our readers likely would disagree with the premise of this question, namely, the notion of a passing.

Although I doubt anyone would deny the events of "the eulogizers eulogized and the embalmers embalmed and the gravediggers buried," as witnessed on 3 Tamuz 5754, nevertheless, if that premise is accepted it is impossible to resolve the logical conclusion: who is our current leader?

Everyone in Lubavitch is unified in the fact that the Rebbe still leads us; that is not at all disputed. Our readers are generally of the opinion that the Rebbe is alive and well; it is merely we who are faulty in our vision. This concept of continued life, despite appearances, is something that has its precedent set in Torah (re. Yaakov Avinu, as mentioned, and Moshe Rabbeinu, and Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi). Torah is the only power to determine reality; not our perceptions.

Those who hold that there was a passing (such as one of the secretaries of the Rebbe, who told me: "How can I believe anything different? I tied the gartel on the Rebbe['s body].") are left with difficulties understanding the time we live in, but when it comes to the notion that the Rebbe is still Moshiach, they largely agree. (To quote Rabbi Herson, dean of Morristown, who said at a farbrengen in Tiferes Bachurim after Gimmel Tamuz 5754: "Every Lubavitcher Chassid believes the Rebbe is Moshiach!") The question, 'How exactly such a resurrection will take place?' probably cannot be answered (even by the greatest and most open-minded scientist), since it will be miraculous.

But according to either approach, the Rebbe will simply appear (as the Rebbe said regarding the Rebbe Rayatz, "from the roof, through the window or the door, etc.") and continue with the long-awaited true and complete Redemption. May it happen now!



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