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BEIS MOSHIACH

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IN REFINING THE BODY, ALL JEWS ARE EQUAL

LIKKUTEI SICHOS VOL. 17, PG. 343-346
TRANSLATED BY BORUCH MERKUR



1. It is a Jewish custom to recite, before every chapter of Pirkei Avos, the Mishna [Sanhedrin Perek Cheilek, beg.], “Every Jew has a portion in the World to Come, as it is said [Yeshayahu 60:21], ‘Your people are all righteous, they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hand that I may be glorified.’” From this it is understood that the subject matter of the Mishna (the reward of every Jew in the Future to Come) is especially relevant as a preface to the study of Tractate Avos (Ethics of the Fathers).

We must understand: The World to Come is the reward for **all** the service of Torah and Mitzvos in every respect; not only for the fulfillment of “the words of the Avos (Fathers).” Why then is this Mishna recited specifically prior to the study of Tractate Avos? [Footnote 4 in the original: Simply speaking, we could say that since the teachings of Avos are matters of piety, there is room to be mistaken that it does not pertain to every single Jew, and therefore, this Mishna serves as a preface, since it speaks about the virtue inherent to “**Every** Jew” (that they all have a portion in the World to Come). From this it is understood that every single Jew has the ability (and indeed it is among his obligations) to fulfill matters of piety. See inside the text, Section 6.]

2. Concerning the teachings of Tractate Avos we find two opposite characterizations:

On the one hand, the content of the tractate is, in the language of Ovadia Bartenura [in the beginning of the tractate], “ethics and morals (*musarim u’midos*)” that are not “of the Mitzvos of the Torah,” to the extent that “gentile sages also authored books...which stemmed from their hearts, regarding the ways of ethics, how a person should conduct himself with his fellow.” The

necessity to be forewarned regarding such matters is on account of the coarseness and lowliness of man, which lends itself to evil character traits and etc. [FN 6: See at length the Maharil’s *Derech Chaim* in the beginning of the tractate, explaining this Mishna.]

On the other hand, the Sages say, “The one who wants to be **pious** should fulfill...the words of the Fathers” [Bava Kama 30a], for the teachings of Tractate Avos are connected to the level of “pious,” one who serves G-d beyond the letter of the law.

[Thus, the conflicting descriptions of Tractate Avos can be summarized as follows: 1) A code of ethics intended to raise the person out of his base, evil tendencies to simply be a mentch, a stage that is hierarchically lower than Mitzva fulfillment; 2) a service that surpasses Mitzva fulfillment, going beyond the letter of the law.]

We find the same two opposing characterizations concerning the **study** of Tractate Avos:

Among the reason why we study this tractate on the Shabbasos specifically [during the seasonally warm period] between Pesach and Atzeres is because that is a time when physical desires are aroused. Therefore, [in order to keep those desires in check] we study the tractate that is “full of moral rebuke and it arouses the person to pursue every positive character trait, etc.” [Preface to Midrash Shmuel].

On the other hand, the Jewish custom is that **every Jew** studies Tractate Avos in this period – from the most diminutive, who are holding at the very beginning of the service of G-d, to the greatest of the great, who stand entirely higher than physical desires.

The explanation of these two opposing characterizations and their resolution is derived from the prefatory verse, "Every Jew has a portion in the World to Come," as will be explained.

3. This can be understood in light of the well-known explanation of the Mishna [see FN 9]:

"World to Come" means the World of Resurrection [see FN 9*], bodies in souls [i.e., the stage of the Redemption characterized by the Resurrection of the Dead, when souls will return to their former bodies, resuming life in the physical world]. The innovation of the Mishna is that "Every Jew has a portion in the World to Come." Namely, the reward of the Garden of Eden, a world of souls [independent of bodies], is not equal for "all Jews" (to the extent that there are those who do not even merit the Garden of Eden). [FN 11: See Chagiga (15b), where it says that were it not for the prayers of Rebbi Meir, Acher would not have gained entry to the Garden of Eden. And see Chagiga (15a): "He took his portion in the Garden of Eden as well as the portion of his (wicked) associate."] Whereas, the World to Come – the World of Resurrection, when souls will be in bodies – is (for the most part) "equal for all Jews" [see FN 12]: "Every Jew has a **portion** in the World to Come."

The reason for this is as follows: The Garden of Eden, souls without bodies, is (for the most part) the reward for the study of Torah [FN 14: to note that there is the

This is a time when physical desires are aroused. Therefore, we study the tractate that is "full of moral rebuke and it arouses the person to pursue every positive character trait, etc."

legs]), to the extent of one extreme to the other, therefore, "Every Jew" is not equal with regard to the reward for this service. This characterizes the Garden of Eden.

The main fulfillment of Mitzvos, however, is within the realm of **action** – regarding which everyone can do and every Jew indeed **does** do – fulfilling Mitzvos, to the extent that (as the Sages said [Chagiga, end]) even Jewish sinners are "full with Mitzvos like a pomegranate [is full of seeds]." And being that the service of Mitzvos is present in all Jews, therefore, "Every Jew has a portion in the World to Come."

[To be continued be"H]

study of Torah in the Garden of Eden (*Tanya* Ch. 41 (58a, end), learned from Gemara and the Zohar; see references in FN 14*), but not the fulfillment of Mitzvos]. Indeed, Torah study is connected, primarily, with the **soul** (with its power of intellect). The Resurrection of the Dead, on the other hand, is the reward for the fulfillment of Mitzvos, which is specifically done with and through the **body** (for which reason the reward for this is meted out to the soul when it is together with the body [see FN 14*]).

And since with regard to the **grasp** of Torah there are distinctions between one Jew and another (and so it must be [FN 15: for a complete stature must have a head, etc., and

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B. H.
15 Iyar, 5738
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Sholom uBrocho:

I am in receipt of your letter of May 18, in which you write about your present state and feelings towards Jews, Yiddishkeit, the Torah, etc., which you blame on the attitude towards you on the part of the Yeshiva and its students.

Needless to say the connection is most surprising, for it is plain and obvious that a Jew, whoever he may be, who believes in the Torah and does his best to observe its Mitzvos, does it because of his personal commitment to G-d's Torah and Mitzvos, which were given to each and every Jew at Sinai, and as our Sages tell us that the souls of all Jews of all generations were present there and accepted the Torah and Mitzvos. Hence, if a Jew should declare, G-d forbid, that he does not accept the Ten Commandments because his friends or teacher do not conduct themselves as they should - I do not think that anyone will say that this is a proper or sensible approach.

To put in a different way: If a teacher whom you respect will say that two times two is five, it is incorrect; and if a teacher whom you do not respect will say that two times two is four, it is nevertheless correct, for Truth is independent. Judging by your writing, there is surely no need to elaborate to you on what is self-evident.

As for your complaint about your friends' attitude towards you - it is also clear that neither I nor anyone else can make a judgment on this without first hearing what both sides have to say.

Now, let us assume - from your point of view - that you have reason to complain -- surely you know, and must have seen it yourself from other situations where people have a disagreement, that in every dispute between two people it is impossible that one should be 100% right and the other 100% wrong. It would be rare indeed, if it ever happened, although one does not have to be 100% right to win his case, and 99% against 1% is also sufficient. But when one of the two parties, who is personally involved and consequently subjective, claims to be 100% right and all the others 100% wrong, this is most extraordinary. Don't you think that someone who examines the whole situation objectively may find you also wrong at least to the extent of 1%? If this be very likely, how is it that you do mention anything about it in your letter, not even by as much as a hint? *WV*

All that has been said above is by way of response to your writing, dealing with the "letter" as distinct from the "spirit."

The crucial point, however, is that suffice it to consider the fact that Yiddishkeit, Torah and Mitzvos, and the Jewish people have survived 3500 years of persecution, pogroms, the Holocaust, etc., and yet our people is alive and thriving to this day, while many powerful nations and "civilizations" have disappeared without a remnant - to be convinced (despite your assertions in the beginning of your letter) that the Torah is Toras Emes, and its Mitzvos are Emes, and that "they are or life and the length of our days," both for our Jewish people as a whole and for every Jew individually. It is also self-understood that G-d desires Jews to observe His Mitzvos not for His benefit, but for the benefit of the one who lives in accordance with G-d's Will.

In light of the above, I hope and trust that you will do all that is in your power to learn the Torah with devotion and diligence and to fulfil the Mitzvis with Hiddur -- not because I, or anyone else tells you to do this, but because it is the Truth itself, as has been amply verified by the uninterrupted history of our people from generation to generation. And although this is an obvious "must" for its own sake, this is also the channel to receive G-d's blessing for Hatzlocho in all your needs, as well as for your parents and all your dear ones.

With blessing,

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‘LISTEN TO HIM AS YOU LISTENED TO ME’

BY N. SOFER

*In his final years, the Tzemach Tzedek ordained his son, the Maharash, whose birthday is 2 Iyar, as the one who would succeed him. * The following is a collection of stories about this period, the end of the Tzemach Tzedek’s nesius.*

“MY WORLD HAS DARKENED”

In Kislev 5620 (1859), the Tzemach Tzedek became sick and very weak. On the eighth of Teives 5621 (1861), his wife, Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka, passed away. After her passing, the Tzemach Tzedek said, “My world has darkened.”

From then on, the Tzemach Tzedek was closed up in his room and did not want to receive people for yechidus, saying, “Now I am without counsel.”

He once said to his holy sons, “What do you have? Before, you had your mother here, and now you have a mother in Gan Eden, but for me she is missing!”

The Tzemach Tzedek’s health

worsened and he remained in this state for the next five years and then passed away on 13 Nissan 5626 (1866).

WHO COULD BELIEVE

R’ Nachum, the son of the Mittlerer Rebbe, said about the Tzemach Tzedek’s final years:

That strong individual who would fast daily for many weeks, and would eat only a piece of bread and sugar, and would sleep only three hours a day – who would believe that he could get so sick and suffer so, for the five last years of his life?

YECHIDUS

The Tzemach Tzedek hardly received any Chassidim for private

yechidus in those years. Rather, the Chassidim would stand in line with their *panim* and were answered immediately and briefly.

Most of the Chassidim would write their questions with the help of the Rebbe’s aide, R’ Chaim Ber, and the Rebbe would respond through him briefly, orally or in writing.

SAYING MAAMARIM

It was hard to hear and understand the maamarim that the Tzemach Tzedek said in these years, because of his weakness. Only those who spent some time in Lubavitch and had gotten used to it could understand the maamarim.

When guests came to Lubavitch, the Tzemach Tzedek would give them the maamer in written form on Erev Shabbos so they could learn it before he said it. The next day, Shabbos, he would say the maamer and it would be easy for the Chassidim to follow.

There were also times when the Tzemach Tzedek read the maamer from the paper. One time, when he finished the maamer and got up to leave, he realized there was another page in his pocket and he sat back

down and finished the maamer.

FIRE!

Then his illness overcame him and he found it hard to move and walk. Once, while in his room, his clothing and beard caught on fire. One of the Chassidim who was in *Gan Eden HaTachtan* (the antechamber to the Rebbe's room) heard the Rebbe's cries and immediately poured water on him and saved him.

HE GOT OUT OF BED WITH THE POWER OF A NIGGUN

At this time, when the Tzemach Tzedek lay in bed, he could not get up, due to his weakness, and when he needed a seifer he called his aide, R' Chaim Ber, who slept in the room next door. R' Chaim Ber would get it for him.

One night, R' Chaim Ber wanted to see how the Rebbe would manage without his help and he decided that when the Rebbe called for him to bring him a seifer, he would feign sleep.

Later on, the Tzemach Tzedek called him, but he did not respond. He heard the Rebbe begin to sing the "Dalet Bavos" of his grandfather, the Alter Rebbe, and then – with the power of the niggun – the Rebbe got out of bed, went over to the bookcase and took what he needed and returned to bed.

"I DON'T SEE THE BODY"

At the beginning of 5626 (autumn 1865), the Tzemach Tzedek's speech became even more difficult to understand, yet the Chassidim saw even greater giluyim (revelations) from him.

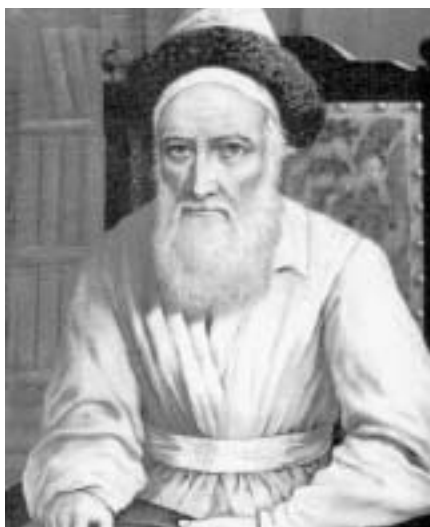
The Rebbe refused to accept Chassidim for yechidus for material matters, seeing only those who came to him for spiritual matters. He would say, "I don't see the body, just the light of the neshama. Therefore,

I cannot respond to a yechidus about material concerns."

"THEIR G-D DID NOT DIE"

The Rebbe Maharash spoke about this period to the Chassid, R' Dovid Tzvi (RaDaTZ) Chein:

From the beginning of 5626, about half a year before my father's passing, my father would open the Midrash Rabba on Shmos every day to the verse, "And Yosef and all his brothers and that entire generation died." He would read the Midrash to me, "Although Yosef and his brothers and that generation died nevertheless, their G-d did not die."



At that time, I did not display any sadness. On the contrary, I made as though I was smiling. Afterwards, however, I would go home and sob, shedding countless tears.

THE MAHARASH'S MODEST WAYS

Of all the Tzemach Tzedek's holy sons, the Maharash was exceedingly modest to the point that people were completely unaware of his level of scholarship and his genius, which he successfully hid.

The Rebbe Maharash once said:

There are people who think they know me but they don't really know me at all. Even my wife thinks that she knows me but the truth is she doesn't know me, for there were times that I toiled for 23 hours in a day and my wife thought I was idle.

MERITS MANY THINGS

R' Don Tumarkin would say that each of the Tzemach Tzedek's holy sons were known for their strong points. For example, R' Yehuda Leib, the Maharil of Kopust, was known for his piety and holy avoda. His brother, R' Chaim Shneur Zalman of Liadi, was known for his holy avoda, and R' Yisroel Noach of Niezhen was known for his amazing genius, and so too the other brothers.

That is, except for the youngest brother, the Maharash, whom they knew nothing about. Only when you begin speaking to him do you see his awesome genius in all parts of Torah. Indeed, there is no part of Torah that he is not expert in.

R' Don concluded: So we see that he learns Torah modestly and for Hashem's sake, and therefore, he merits many things. (As the Mishna in Avos, chapter 6) says – "his garment is humility and awe...and he is given royalty and dominion, and the secrets of Torah are revealed to him. And he becomes like a fountain which flows with ever-increasing strength and like a never-ceasing stream. [The Torah] makes him great and exalts him above all things."

"HE HAS ALL GOOD QUALITIES"

The Tzemach Tzedek spoke about the Maharash's greatness in comparison to his brothers. The Tzemach Tzedek had descriptive titles by which he nicknamed each of his sons. He called one, "my balabus," another he called, "my

lamdan,” a third he called, “my Chassid,” etc. He said of the Maharash, “all of them are in him” (he has every good quality).

THE TZEMACH TZEDEK GIVES A PIDYON TO HIS SON THE MAHARASH

Despite the Maharash’s humility and modest ways, his father – who loved him dearly – wanted his youngest son to succeed him. During the last year of the Tzemach Tzedek’s life, he began to plead with his son to begin leading the Chassidim.

The Tzemach Tzedek once even gave a *pidyon nefesh* to his son, the Maharash.

“THE SPIRITUAL JUG OF OIL”

The Tzemach Tzedek once said to his son the Maharash:

“The spiritual jug of oil that the Baal Shem Tov gave his disciple, the Maggid of Mezritch, to anoint the Alter Rebbe to the nesius for all his future generations – with this my father-in-law (the Mittlerer Rebbe) was anointed and with this I anoint you.”

The Rebbe MH”M once said (sicha of the second day of Rosh HaShana 5752) about the special relationship between the Tzemach Tzedek and the Maharash, which went beyond the relationships he had with his other sons: “Since the Tzemach Tzedek designated the Rebbe Maharash to succeed him to the nesius, therefore he treated him differently, like the anointing of a king, son of a king, in order to dispel quarreling, for “you do not anoint a king, son of a king, except if there was dissent.”

FROM NOW ON IT’S REB SHMUEL

The Tzemach Tzedek’s

granddaughter (the daughter of his son-in-law, Rabbi Levi Yitzchok), who was involved in tz’daka b’saiser (hidden charity), said:

In the life of my grandfather, the Tzemach Tzedek, I would often borrow money from my uncle, the Rebbe Maharash, and since I was older, I would call him by his name, “Shmuel’ke.”

One time, I went to him to borrow money and they told me he was with his father, the Rebbe. I went there and stood waiting behind the door until the Maharash came out.

While I stood there, I heard how my grandfather was pleading with my uncle, “Sit on the chair and then everybody will know that I had you sit there!”

Through a crack in the door I could see how my grandfather got up from his chair and commanded my uncle to sit on it but the Maharash refused, saying, “I can’t be over my brothers,” for he feared they would be jealous.

His father said to him, “If so, you will have to endure suffering,” but the Maharash repeated that he could not, because of his brothers.

Obviously, after overhearing this I did not call him “Shmuel’ke” anymore as I used to, but I called him, “Reb Shmuel.”

When the Maharash asked me, “What happened all of a sudden?” I told him that I had overheard what my grandfather had told him. He grew pale and asked me to keep it a secret, that I shouldn’t tell anyone and that I shouldn’t change the way I interacted with him.

THE TZEMACH TZEDEK ORDAINS HIS SON, THE MAHARASH

The Tzemach Tzedek told his son, Maharash, to begin saying maamarei Chassidus in public. The

Tzemach Tzedek even sent a note to the Chassidim that he wrote about his son. It said, “Obey him as you obeyed me.”

At that time (apparently), the Tzemach Tzedek gave the Maharash a letter in which he wrote wondrous expressions about his being ordained and he mentioned there what he heard from the Alter Rebbe about this. This is what the letter said:

To my beloved son, R’ Shmuel,

I saw your Chassidus and it pleased me very much. May Hashem strengthen your heart and intellect to increase strength in His Torah and His service, be strong and be a man. Open your mouth and your words will shine forth. I promise you what I said orally, what I told you that I heard from my grandfather, the gaon z”l. Be strong to write and communicate and I hereby ordain you with full ordination. Do not fear any man. May Hashem grant you success, spiritually and materially, to learn, to teach, to guard and to do.

Your father, who seeks the welfare and good of Anash

Menachem Mendel ben Devorah Leah

And from then on, the Maharash began publicly saying maamarei Chassidus.

Another letter was written to him in which his father tells him to begin giving counsel to the Chassidim:

I want you to accept it upon yourself to listen, each day, to people and to consider the matter with them and give them counsel.

Also review with them the words of Chassidus that are said. This is truly my desire. Therefore, fulfill what I said above; do not deviate.

Your father,

Who seeks your welfare.

THE MAHARASH'S HUMILITY

Chassidim relate that these letters were discovered after the passing of the Rebbe Maharash, when they found his will in an earthen container buried in the earth. They found a number of handwritten notes of the Tzemach Tzedek to his son, Maharash, in which he ordained him to be Rebbe, and other wondrous expressions.

When the Chassidim of the Rebbe Maharash saw these notes, their hair stood on end. They saw in this their Rebbe's greatness – that he hid these notes. Had he shown them immediately after the passing of his father, the Tzemach Tzedek, nobody would have disputed his position as the Rebbe's successor.

However, in his great humility, he hid them from the Chassidim (and only showed them to the rabbanim who came to preside over the din Torah between the brothers).

I DECREE UPON YOU

Among the old manuscripts, there are handwritten copies of other notes (apparently) written by the Tzemach Tzedek to his son, Maharash:

To my beloved son Maharash,

I strongly trust in Hashem that Anash will believe in you as I believe in you. If there is someone who does not believe in you, Heaven forbid, do not worry, for certainly they will find in that person some ulterior motive after searching well.

Your father,
Menachem

Tuesday, 11 Nissan 5626

To my beloved son...R' Shmuel,

It is not time to be silent because I am very weak and my heart is filled with fluid. I ask you to fulfill

what I gave over to you in my letter to Anash, to reveal to them my wishes and to see to it that they fulfill my desire.

Response from Maharash:

Do not regard it negatively that although I already had to promise you, according to your request, that it is truly very hard for me. "Send please, through whomever you will send." And I also say to you in their name: May Hashem lengthen your days.

My beloved son, Reb Shmuel sh'yichyeh,

I decree upon you that it is you specifically who must do this, and I

Obviously, after overhearing this I did not call him "Shmuel'ke" anymore as I used to, but I called him, "Reb Shmuel."

believe in you that you will fulfill the entirety of my strong desire, and I have my reason. Tell them not to destroy by transgressing my word, lest, etc. I am very weak. The physical is dwindling. May Hashem give you success.

Your father,
Menachem

The grandson of Admur who sits and waits with trepidation to reunite with him, the chariot of Israel and its team, candle of G-d.

THE OTHER BROTHERS SAY CHASSIDUS

At a later point, the Tzemach Tzedek told the other brothers to

review maamarei Chassidus too. The eldest of the brothers, R' Boruch Sholom, did not review maamarei Chassidus. He would only talk with the men who came to him to talk about the maamarim of his father. The next brother, R' Yisroel Noach of Niezhin, did as his father asked and began reviewing maamarei Chassidus.

The brother R' Chaim Shneur Zalman refused to review Chassidus. In fact, there is a handwritten note from the Tzemach Tzedek about this.

As a result, Maharil of Kopust traveled to Kremenchug and Maharil was not in Lubavitch when the Tzemach Tzedek passed away. It was only first after Pesach that he returned from his trip.

THE FINAL MAAMER

On Shabbos, Parshas VaYikra, Parshas HaChodesh, Rosh Chodesh Nissan 5626, the Tzemach Tzedek said a maamer Chassidus on the verse, "This month is to you." This was the last maamer that the Chassidim heard from the Tzemach Tzedek before his passing.

In a number of manuscripts it says in the heading of the maamer: "Said by Admur Menachem Mendel before his passing," and in another manuscript: "The drush of 'HaChodesh HaZeh,' which was said Parshas VaYikra 5626, the final teaching before his passing."

In 5726 (1966), one hundred years after the passing of the Tzemach Tzedek, the Rebbe MH"M said that the maamer, "HaChodesh HaZeh Lachem" should be printed separately, with the addition of notes and footnotes of the Rebbe MH"M.

At the farbrengen of Parshas HaChodesh and 13 Nissan that year, the Rebbe explained in the maamarim that he said then, portions of the maamer of the Tzemach Tzedek.

THE TZEMACH TZEDEK AND THE BEIS YOSEF

In the days preceding his passing, the Tzemach Tzedek spoke about the greatness of the Beis Yosef (author of the *Shulchan Aruch*):

“It’s amazing. How did the Beis Yosef have time to write so many s’farim: *Beis Yosef on the Tur*, the *Shulchan Aruch*, *Kesef Mishna on the Rambam*, *Responsa* (as brought in the *Shaar HaG’dolim* of the Chida). And he also learned Kabbala with his angel, the Maggid, as he writes in his *Maggid Meisharim* on the Torah. In addition to this, he taught Torah in a number of yeshivos and was Nasi and Rav HaKollel in the Holy Land.”

The Tzemach Tzedek concluded:

“But in truth, I see that if you desire it, there is time for everything.”

Along these lines, the Chassidim said that the Tzemach Tzedek was amazing too, for how did he have the time to write so many s’farim in Nigleh and Nistar, and to be a faithful shepherd and leader to thousands and tens of thousands of Jews. And additionally, to say maamarei Chassidus publicly, and to receive Chassidim for yechidus and to answer their questions and accept their pidyonos. Aside from this, he was preoccupied every day for a long time with his holy avoda of t’filla and Torah study, like the Beis Yosef.

How amazing that both the Beis Yosef and Tzemach Tzedek passed away on 13 Nissan. The Chassidim found an allusion in a verse (Esther 3:12), “and the king’s scribes were called in the first month on the thirteenth day” – i.e., the King’s scribes were the Beis Yosef and the Tzemach Tzedek, and both were called to

the Heavenly Yeshiva on the same day, 13 Nissan.

Chassidim also relate that in the days preceding his passing, the Tzemach Tzedek spoke a lot about the topic of the devolvment of worlds.

ECHAD AND ECHAD ENCOUNTERED

At that time, the Tzemach Tzedek said to his son, Maharash, citing the verse (Iyov 41:8), “Echad and Echad touched,” i.e., Nissan with Tishrei.

And it was seen as wondrous for the Tzemach Tzedek passed away on “echad” (the word “echad” being numerically equivalent to 13) of Nissan and the Rebbe Maharash passed away on “echad” (the 13th) of Tishrei!

THE FINAL YECHIDUS

The old Chassid, R’ Zalman Ber, the sofer of Beshenkowitz, who was the last Chassid to have a yechidus with the Tzemach Tzedek before his passing, would relate each year on 13 Nissan: On Tuesday evening, 11 Nissan 5626, I went to the Rebbe for a yechidus and asked him a number of questions. In response to my questions, the Rebbe wanted to look at *Igeres HaT’shuva* but on the Rebbe’s desk was a *Tanya* printed without *Igeres HaT’shuva* (probably referring to the first edition printed in Slavita).

The Rebbe asked his aide, R’ Chaim Ber: Chaim Ber, to give him a *Tanya*

with *Igeres HaT’shuva*.

R’ Chaim Ber was lazy about getting up and he said: Ah, Rebbe, you surely know it correctly by heart.

And the Rebbe answered me by heart what he wanted to say and I left the room.



The title page of the last maamer said by the Tzemach Tzedek

THE REBBE DOES NOT FEEL WELL

R' Zalman Ber continued to relate:

After I left, they immediately said that the Rebbe did not feel well and he had stopped speaking, responding only by motioning.

They rushed to bring the doctor to Lubavitch and after the doctor examined the Rebbe, he said that he saw no change in his medical condition.

The next day, Wednesday, 12 Nissan, the news spread. There were few Chassidim in Lubavitch at this time since it was Erev Pesach. The Chassidim who were shaken up said T'hillim all day and they decided to add the name "Meir" to the Rebbe because they found it written in one of his writings, "Meir Menachem Mendel." (However, on the tombstone the name "Meir" wasn't written since it did not become accepted in his lifetime)

In the afternoon they said that the Rebbe's condition improved somewhat and his face began to shine.

Chaim Ber said that he had put his ear to the Rebbe's lips and heard the words, "so that your days increase," but he did not know if these were words from Maariv or from the reading of the Shma.

THE HISTALKUS

The Rebbe's condition worsened in the evening and he was on the verge of dying. At eleven at night (the night of 13 Nissan), the doctors said that all hope was gone and there was nothing left to do but prepare for the end. The family and Chassidim stood there with lit candles in their hands, surrounding the Tzemach Tzedek's bed that was in the middle of his room.

The Rebbe lay there motionless, and just looked at the people. At twelve-thirty that night, the Rebbe passed away (the manuscripts say it was 12:37 at night).

FATHER DID NOT DIE

After the histalkus, they immediately said the bracha (*"baruch dayan ha'emes"*) and lay the body on the ground.

Maharash announced, "You should know that the Tatte did not die, and whoever wants to make a request can do so." Those present made requests.

Then they said T'hillim and after each section of T'hillim, one of the sons said Kaddish.

THE FUNERAL

The next day, Thursday, 13 Nissan, is when the funeral took place. Those who did the tahara said that until the tahara, the Rebbe's mouth was open and immediately

after the tahara it closed by itself.

None of the Chassidim cried at the funeral. It looked as though they were going to a wedding. When they got to the cemetery, R' Chaim Ber placed shards of pottery on the Rebbe's eyes.

R' Chaim Ber later said that he was prepared to swear that the Rebbe's eyes were open and that when he began putting on the pieces of pottery the Rebbe's eyes closed on their own.

When the Chassidim returned from the cemetery, they sat on the ground and began to cry heartrending tears so that those standing on the side couldn't bear it and the Rebbe's sons came out of their room and asked them to stop crying.

A NOTE FROM THE MAHARASH

In the ledger of the Chevra Kadisha of Lubavitch is a handwritten entry by the Rebbe Maharash about his father's passing:

"Hashem desired the souls of the righteous, Admur z"l – Thursday 13 Nissan 5626 the holy ark was taken captive, the luminary of Israel. Arise and sing those who dwell in the earth and he among them will let us hear wonders of Hashem's perfect Torah for the dew of Torah resurrects the body, amen may it be."



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INSIGHTS INTO S'FIRAS HA'OMER

BY RABBI YOSEF KARASIK, DISTRICT RAV BAT CHEFER – EMEK CHEFER

*The omer sacrifice accomplished tremendous things: it made the cutting and eating of the new grain permissible, it established the date for the holiday of Shavuos, it refined the middos and prepared one to receive the Torah with joy and inwardness, brought shalom bayis and protected one from harsh decrees. In addition, the omer is what defeated Haman in his debate with Mordechai's talmidim. Thanks to the omer, the Jewish people merited Eretz Yisroel and will merit the complete Geula. * A look at the mitzva of omer, based on Halacha, Midrash, Kabbala, and Chabad Chassidus.*

THE MITZVA OF THE KORBAN OMER

The omer sacrifice was done in a special and festive manner. At the beginning of autumn, the nation plowed the fields and planted grain for the following year. When the winter passed, the grain grew and then came harvest time. However, the people waited for Pesach, because until then, it was forbidden to cut and eat the new grain.

On Erev Pesach, representatives from beis din went to the grain fields

in the south to find choice barley and to mark it with a thread. This was by way of preparation for the "korban ha'omer."

The next day, Motzaei the first day of Pesach, after night fell, the harvesters went to the field accompanied by a large retinue of "all the nearby townships," so that "it should be cut with great fanfare," with song and great joy. Three *saa* measures of barley were cut.

The following day, the morning of the second day of Pesach, the prophets

and Chachmei ha'Sanhedrin lifted the bundles that had been cut, in order to announce and publicize the mitzva that was being done. Then the Kohanim took the barley, roasted it, ground it into flour, sifted it with thirteen sifters, kneaded it with oil, and brought it as a sacrifice on the altar.

Immediately after bringing the korban omer, the signal was given: "Harvesting and eating the new grain is permitted in Eretz Yisroel and the Diaspora."

Permission was granted to ordinary people but it was still prohibited to use the grain in the Beis HaMikdash for menachos until Shavuos:

From the day the korban omer was brought, they counted 49 days, and on the 50th day, which is Shavuos, they brought "two breads" on the altar. This made use of the new grain permissible in the Mikdash.

THE KORBAN HA'OMER FROM GRAIN, TRUMOS AND MAASROS FROM FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Just as it was prohibited to eat the new grain before bringing the korban ha'omer, it was prohibited to eat fruits and vegetables before separating trumos and maasros. But there was a tremendous difference between them, and not only because the omer was brought on the altar and the trumos and maasros were given to the

Kohanim and Leviim.

The separation of trumos and maasros was not limited in time. As soon as fruits and vegetables grew, it was permissible to cut some off and set them aside as trumos and maasros. This enabled the owner to eat whatever he pleased with no limitations on time. He didn't even have to give it to the Kohen and Levi right away, for as soon as he set aside the trumos and maasros, even though they were still in his possession, he was able to eat from his tithed fruit.

The omer, on the other hand, limited a Jew in time. The new grain (planted after Pesach of the previous year) that was ready to be cut before Pesach could not be harvested until after the omer sacrifice was brought on the second day of Pesach.

A person invested much money in

purchasing a field. He plowed, planted, fertilized, and irrigated, etc., and new produce grew in his field. He looked forward to eating it, but the Torah says to him: Just a minute. Wait. Wait until the second day of Pesach, wait until "the first of your harvest" is brought in the Beis HaMikdash, and only then can you enjoy the produce of your fields.

THE KORBAN OMER DETERMINES THE DATE OF SHAVUOS

Something else is accomplished by the korban ha'omer: the "counting of the omer" and the determination of the holiday of Shavuos.

Shavuos has no set date in the Torah like the other holidays (Pesach on the 15th of Nissan, Rosh HaShana on the first of Tishrei, etc.). Its date is determined by the korban ha'omer

sacrifice, for Shavuos is celebrated fifty days after it is sacrificed.

The Torah says, "Count for you the day after the Shabbos, from the day you bring the uplifted omer, seven complete weeks shall there be. Until the day following the seventh Shabbos shall you count fifty days, etc., and call this very day a holy day, etc., you may not perform any work." Shavuos is fifty days after the omer is brought.

Nowadays, when we have a set calendar, and each year Nissan is 30 days and Iyar is 29 days, Shavuos always falls on 6 Sivan. But in the past, when the number of days in a month was determined by the sighting of the new moon, Nissan could be 29 days or Iyar 30 days. Thus, Shavuos was able to fall out on 5 or 7 Sivan.

(And even today, if a person crosses the International Dateline and he adds or loses a day, he must celebrate Shavuos after 49 days of his own counting, for it says, "count for you," even if he ends up celebrating Shavuos on 5 or 7 Sivan.)

ATTRIBUTES AND SEGULOS

In *Seifer HaChinuch* it says "the korban ha'omer is an honorable korban, with amazing attributes and segulos. The Midrash Rabba (on the parsha) says: Don't let the mitzva of omer be 'light in your eyes' for in its merit Avrohom Avinu inherited Eretz Yisroel and it is this which stood by the Jewish people and saved them in times of tribulation (during Gideon, Chizkiyahu and Yechezkel). And because of it, Hashem made peace between man and his wife."

The holy Zohar on the parsha says that in the merit of omer, peace was made between the Sh'china and Israel, and the Jewish people become meritorious in this world and the World to Come. In the *Shaar HaKavanos* of the Arizal, it says that through the korban ha'omer Hashem's kindness descends and spreads out over mankind.



The days of counting the omer are days of spiritual opportunity. In ancient texts it says that during these days there is a spiritual aura like that of Chol HaMoed (though work is not forbidden like on Chol HaMoed)! The Zohar says that s'fira is the preparation to receive the Torah and the Arizal explains that during s'fira we correct blemishes in the seven middos in man's heart and in the middos and kochos upon which the world is built.

HAMAN IN MORDECHAI'S BEIS HA'MIDRASH

Haman's downfall came through the study of the mitzva of the korban ha'omer, as the Midrash relates:

When King Achashverosh ordered Haman to lead Mordechai HaTzaddik on his royal horse in the streets of the city, Haman went to find Mordechai. He was told that Mordechai was in the beis midrash learning Torah with his talmidim. Haman went to the beis midrash and when he got there and the talmidim saw him, they feared that he had come to hang Mordechai. They surrounded Mordechai to protect him and declared, "We will not part from Mordechai in life as in death."

When Haman asked the talmidim, "What did you learn today?"

They answered, "Mordechai is teaching the mitzva of the korban omer."

Haman asked, "What's this omer? Is it of silver? Of gold?"

They answered, "It's of barley and worth ten maos."

Haman said, "Your ten maos will vanquish my 10,000 kikarim of silver!"

When Haman went to Achashverosh to ask him to hang Mordechai on the gallows, the Jewish people were learning the laws of the korban ha'omer. Thanks to that, the terrible decree was annulled and Haman himself said: Mordechai and the Jewish people vanquished me in the merit of the korban ha'omer!

EXTRAORDINARY MITZVA

Although the omer – two kilograms of barley flour – was cheap and relatively worthless, this mitzva has special qualities and segulos that are apparent throughout all stages of its fulfillment.

1. The harvest – a) in a special and impressive ceremony, b) it supersedes Shabbos. If Pesach falls on Friday (which was possible in the past), they harvested the omer Friday night and didn't do so before Shabbos and the holiday.

2. The preparations for the sacrifice – the prophets and Sanhedrin lifted it, something we don't find with other korbanos.

3. After sacrificing it – it's a mitzva to count 49 days.

4. The mitzva determines the holiday – the date of the holiday of Shavuos depends on when the omer was brought and takes place 50 days later

5. In p'nimius ha'Torah it explains that the omer **enables us to prepare to receive the Torah** "b'simcha and with p'nimius."

What is the secret of the power of the korban ha'omer?

The question is even stronger since the omer was of barley, "animal fodder," and Chazal say that everything brought in the Mikdash has to be of the best quality, so why was barley brought and not wheat, which is "food for people"? The korban ha'omer made all the new grain of all the five types of grain planted after the previous year's Pesach permissible to eat. Wouldn't it

THE LAWS OF THE PROHIBITION OF CHADASH IN OUR TIME

After the Beis HaMikdash was destroyed and they stopped bringing the korban ha'omer, the Poskim are divided as to whether there is still a prohibition to eat *chadash*.

Some say that even in the Diaspora it is prohibited to eat from the new grain until (the end) of the 16th of Nissan, and some say that there is no prohibition (Biblical or Rabbinic). Some say the prohibition is only for Eretz Yisroel and some say it applies outside of Eretz Yisroel too. Some say the prohibition applies only to grain owned by a Jew while others say that it also applies to a gentile's grain.

The Alter Rebbe writes in *Shulchan Aruch* (489, 29-30) that the prohibition exists nowadays as well. He adds that practically speaking, people are not particular about this (outside of Eretz Yisroel), but "a baal nefesh will not rely on those who permit this, and will be stringent in every way possible. As most of the Rishonim and Acharonim agree, that Biblical chadash also applies outside Eretz Yisroel, and everywhere, even to grain of gentiles – because this ruling is primary."

The Tzemach Tzedek writes in his responsa that the custom in our countries is to forbid the chadash of a Jew but to permit the chadash of a gentile. In his responsa, the Alter Rebbe rules that for the Matzos-Mitzva seider night, we can be lenient nowadays and eat shmura matza from the new flour, even of a Jew.

In a sicha of Acharon shel Pesach 5740, the Rebbe said that we are not particular nowadays about the prohibition on the new grain, but it's not clear whether the Rebbe meant this only for outside of Eretz Yisroel or also for Eretz Yisroel.

have been preferable to bring wheat?

Additional points that must be understood:

1. What is the reason for the prohibition of cutting the grain in the fields before bringing the korban ha'omer on the altar, something that has no parallel in the other korbanos?

2. The mitzva of the korban ha'omer is that the Kohen raises the korban before it is sacrificed on the altar – what is the significance of the raising?

3. Davening by day is more important than davening at night (“the t’filla of Arvis/Maariv is optional”) and so why do we count the omer at night? This is even more of a question since the korban ha'omer was brought by day and only the cutting was done at night. And one who forgot to count at night can make up for it the next day without a bracha (and this too is not because the omer was brought by day but because the cutting could be done by day if it wasn't done at night).

4. The omer is a segula for many things – why? The segulos of the Torah are not haphazard; there must be a connection between the deed and the resulting reward and segula one receives. The reward is a direct result of the mitzva and so we must see the connection between the omer and all the segulos.

BARLEY AND WHEAT – BODY AND NESHAMA

With the two korbanos of grain – the “barley omer” that is brought on Pesach and the “two breads of wheat” which are brought on Shavuos – we are offering two dimensions of the Jew: the body and the neshama, the animal soul and the G-dly soul.

The omer of barley, “animal fodder,” elevates the animal soul, which enlivens the body and physical things, and the bread made of wheat, which is “food for people,” elevates the G-dly soul and one's spiritual

endeavors to Hashem.

Therefore, the barley is brought on Pesach, following the Exodus from Egypt, which was full of impurity and idols. This is step one in avodas Hashem: the need to purify and sanctify the physical body. On Shavuos, “the time of the giving of our Torah,” they brought a wheat sacrifice because Shavuos is a time for the higher level of service of Hashem: the spiritual pursuit of Torah study.

A PATH IN AVODA

The tremendous emphasis and many activities surrounding the mitzva of the korban omer of barley teaches us the enormous importance of the avoda of sacrificing a Jew's physicality and body, and the best way of working with them:

1. You may not cut the grain for mundane use before the cutting and sacrifice in the Mikdash – In order to harness the body in the ways of Hashem, what is needed is “the first of your harvest.” In other words, the first act that is done with the body (every morning and even in the first years of life) is something of holiness, like Torah study and t’filla. Only then can we use the body for mundane pursuits so that they too are sanctified. If you reverse the order, beginning with the mundane and postponing spiritual pursuits until later, then coming close to Hashem is much harder.

2. The Kohen raises the omer before sacrificing it: Before a Jew's avoda in approaching the altar of Hashem, one needs to turn to the Kohen – the “Rebbe,” the “Rosh B'nei Yisroel” of the generation – for one to be raised up by being in his presence, learning his teachings and following his ways. This is what brings success in ascending constantly in one's avodas Hashem.

3. Counting the omer at night and not by day – Day and night represent the neshama and the body. Day represents the light of the neshama and

night represents the body and the darkness of the physicality of the world. The mitzva is to count at night in order to illuminate the darkness of the world and of materiality.

4. S'firas ha'omer at the time of the harvest (at night) and not at the time that it is sacrificed (by day) – Harvesting and sacrificing are compared to the body and the neshama. That is, the cutting in the fields is done with the body and the sacrifice on the altar of Hashem is with the power of the neshama. The main emphasis in the spiritual avoda of the omer is the rectification of the body, which is expressed in the avoda of cutting the omer for the Mikdash. That is why we count the omer at night, the time when the barley was cut. The Alter Rebbe says, lofty, powerful, and infinite lights are accessible during the days of the omer and counting the omer causes a mighty spiritual effect. “So that the holiness of the ten s'firas rest within all our soul powers,” and therefore, these days are called the days of “s'fira,” not only because we count the days but also because “s'fira” is from the same root as “sapphire,” a shining precious stone. Refining man's body removes the covering over k'dusha and allows the illumination of the G-dly k'dusha.

5. S'firas ha'omer determines the date of Shavuos - Receiving the Torah with p'nimius requires preparation, to subdue and eradicate bad middos. Therefore, the holiday of the Giving of our Torah depends on the counting of the omer, the days when we prepare the body and animal soul to receive the Torah. Counting the omer for 49 days brings k'dusha to all the entanglements of the nefesh, comprised of 49 middos. An *oved Hashem*, who counts the omer with proper meditation throughout s'fira, fills all corners of his soul and personality with true d'veikus to the Creator, and he can receive the Torah with simcha and p'nimius.

HOW MANY MIRACLES WERE MADE ON THE DRY LAND?

BY NATAN AVRAHAM
TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY

We hadn't seen him for several months, when suddenly on Zayin Kislev, we met him on the street. He recognized us first, and rushed up to greet us. "You won't believe it," he called out excitedly, "the Lubavitcher Rebbe is a giant among giants! Everything worked out so quickly, I'm still in shock and sometimes I have to pinch myself to make sure that it's for real!"

"As we customarily do every Friday, we went out this particular Friday together with all the other students of Yeshivas Chabad in Ohr Yehuda on Tefillin Campaign activities. The bachurim 'covered' wide sections of the city, and gave hundreds of passers-by the privilege of putting on t'fillin, plus an overflowing portion of real anticipation for the hisgalus of the Rebbe MH"™.

"The following story took place on a Friday at the beginning of the year," recalls HaTamim **Refoel Avraham Dobkin** of Tzfas, one of the yeshiva's students. "I went out on my regular weekly route with my friend, HaTamim Yisroel Noach Friedman, to 'Merkaz

Giora,' the city's main shopping and business center. After about an hour of meriting to put t'fillin on numerous fellow Jews, young and old, a middle-aged man passed by our stand. When we asked him if he would like to put on t'fillin, he declined with a rejecting wave of his hand. Since I noticed that his refusal was somewhat hesitant, I tried to share a few words with him and explain the great value in putting on t'fillin.

"As he listened to my pitch, he softened up a bit, introducing himself as Moshe E., whose life had turned into one big annoyance and he couldn't decide what to do at this point. According to his story, he had

undergone five complicated heart operations during the last year alone, and his doctors saw no hope for his medical condition. He spoke out of a sense of deep heartfelt pain, and I sympathized totally with him and his plight. I thought of the proper words to choose in order to soothe his storming emotions and to comfort him, but in the meantime, he had rolled up his sleeve and asked to put on t'fillin.

"When he finished putting them on, I handed him a 'Sh'ma Yisroel' brochure with the blessings of the Torah. As he noticed the Rebbe's picture printed on the brochure, he trembled a little. It stands to reason that he recited the short prayer with true feeling.

"As he was removing the t'fillin, he continued to relate his story with a heavy heart. It turned out that he was not only troubled about the five heart operations that he had recently undergone, but his doctors had informed him that he would have to go through more surgery, even more complicated than the others. If that wasn't enough, his wife had decided that she wanted a divorce, and he had just heard from the courts that she was suing him for half of all his possessions, including a steadfast

demand that sole ownership of the house where they were living be transferred to her.

“Due to the difficult situation that had entangled him, he also found himself out of a job. He had just been fired from work, and therefore, he was forced to accept help from friends and acquaintances, something he never believed he would ever do. As a result of all these events, his troubled soul found no rest.

“We then suggested writing to the Rebbe MH”M via *Igros Kodesh* for advice and a bracha.

“At first, our friend had doubts about the seriousness in writing to the Rebbe, but after a little explanation about its great importance, including thrilling stories of miracles that had occurred from answers received in this fashion, he accepted the idea.

“He sat on the side and with the utmost solemnity, he wrote about all that he had gone through over the past few years, and asked for a bracha to come out stronger.

“The answer he received appears in Vol. 14, p. 426:

“I happily received his letter from Zayin Adar Rishon, in which he writes about the improvement of his health and that they have already settled in an apartment. May it be

G-d’s will that the general state of order, in connection with matters of parnassa, will also be realized very soon, as he desires.

“...and if there were frightful difficulties in our previous country, yet He Who provides nourishment and sustenance for all brought parnassa for him and his household, then surely there is no room whatsoever for concern in this matter, and as we have seen clearly, as much as the level of his trust [in G-d] grows, so the energy grows, and thus the state of order also progresses.

“Awaiting good news in all the

forementioned, and may it be G-d’s will that just as he and his wife have seen the kindnesses of G-d Alm-ghty up until now, so they will find only goodness and kindness in their current place in proper order with health and broadening knowledge.

“There was no need to explain the answer to him, as the words were absolutely clear and magnificent. The Rebbe related in the clearest possible manner to all of the subjects for which he had requested a bracha – health, the apartment his wife wanted to take, etc. And if that wasn’t enough, the Rebbe also indicated that the matter of parnassa will be solved as he wants. The Rebbe concluded the letter by also relating to the situation in connection with his wife, blessing him that everything will work out between them.

“The Rebbe’s words were fulfilled, one by one,” he concluded.

“The Rebbe left no issue without an appropriate answer.

“This fellow Jew of ours was absolutely stunned. ‘How can it be that I write a letter to a seifer, and my answer is right there?’ he cried with much emotion.

“The truth is that after several minutes, his difficult emotional state together with the advice of his yetzer cooled off his enthusiasm. ‘Well, there hasn’t been any improvement yet,’ he said. It was our job to enlighten him regarding the other part of the answer: The Rebbe explained that as the level of his trust in G-d grows, by the same token, his situation on all fronts will continue to improve...

“A week later, on the following Friday, our friend returned to our t’fillin stand, and asked to write to the

Rebbe again. This time, he also received a clear answer concerning his health condition and a bracha for parnassa. The man thanked us, put on t’fillin, and went on his way.

“We hadn’t seen him for several months, when suddenly on Zayin Kislev, we met him on the street. He recognized us first, and rushed up to greet us. ‘You won’t believe it,’ he called out excitedly, ‘the Lubavitcher Rebbe is a giant among giants! Everything worked out so quickly, I’m still in shock and sometimes I have to pinch myself to make sure that it’s for real!’

“My wife suddenly decided to drop the court case against me, and has returned home to live with me as she did before. Two weeks ago, still puzzled over what had brought her to change her mind, I arrived at the hospital for my sixth operation. A few days earlier, I had already made all the mental and physical preparations for the medical procedure. Yet, to my amazement, after undergoing a series of pre-surgery x-rays, the doctors joyfully informed me that based on the findings revealed by the x-rays, they saw no need for an operation...”

“The Rebbe’s words were fulfilled, one by one,’ he concluded, as he gasped for breath with excitement. ‘Even the issue of parnassa was totally solved. A few days ago, I was accepted to a position at one of the precincts of the police department.’

“With great emotion, he proceeded to praise the greatness of the Rebbe, saying that his story had turned into the main subject of conversation among his friends and acquaintances. He initiated regular contact with the local Chabad House director, Rabbi Yehuda Friedman, and even started participating in various activities taking place throughout the city.”

Fortunate are we to have such a Rebbe!

THE FALSE BELIEFS THAT BRING THE AFFLICTIONS OF THE EXILE

TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY

The sixth 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.

THOSE WHO CALL OUR TIMES "ISCHALTA D'GEULA" – DELAY THE REDEMPTION

The error of calling this horrible darkness "the first blossoming of our Redemption" is the trial and "sin of the generation" of our times. Every generation has its own unique test, as with the era of the Beis HaMikdash, when the trial was idol worship. This was because in the Beis HaMikdash, there was the revelation of G-dliness, "its light went out from there to the entire world" (Talmud Yerushalmi, Brachos, 4:5), "ten trials were done," etc. (Avos 5:5), and "testimony to all the world's inhabitants that the Sh'china

dwells in Israel" (Shabbos 22b, Menachos 86b). Yet, specifically in this place, there were those coming in search of matters of G-dliness who did not go along the correct path, exchanging the True G-d for other deities, when their desire for

G-dliness took expression in a manner of "one thing opposing the other," i.e., the direct opposite, idol worship (Sanhedrin 102b).

Similarly, in our times, as we come closer to the True and Complete Redemption and we find ourselves in the Heels of Moshiach, the final days of Exile, from the great sense of longing for "May our eyes behold Your return to Tzion in

mercy," the trial is aroused, engendering a most frightful mistake, when Jews are prepared to exchange *r"l* the True and Complete Redemption for our present-day situation. In other words, replacing *Geula* – with an Alef, for *Gola* – without an Alef.

THE MISTAKE OF PLACING THE JEWISH PEOPLE IN DANGER AND WORSENING THE PANGS OF MOSHIACH

All those who relate to the darkness of Exile as light must know that these false views in the past have caused terrible tragedies to the Jewish People. For in every time period, there have been false messiahs who have claimed **that the Redemption has begun**, bringing much distress and sacrifice of innocent life, such as the eras of Shabbtai Zvi and the like (see Rambam's *Igeres Teiman*).

Even now, the matter brings about even more pain and difficulties in the Exile and the pangs of Moshiach *r"l*, as we receive on-the-spot punishment through the

afflictions caused by the non-Jews, particularly in Eretz Yisroel, to the point that this approach has led to numerous casualties and continues to do so to this very day. **This is the only explanation for the present sacrifices and loss of life in Eretz HaKodesh**, including those who survived the Holocaust with such open miracles yet lost their lives in the Holy Land in a most unnatural fashion (may G-d avenge their blood). The apparent reason for this is that G-d wants to prove also to those who have erred and led others astray that this is Exile not Redemption, and therefore, so long as we say that this terrible descent, this manifold and incomparable darkness, is actually light, this brings more harsh and bitter punishment with more sacrifices and more suffering in Eretz HaKodesh r"l.

EVEN THE STUDENTS OF TORAH DARKEN THE LIGHT, AND DON'T WANT TO ADMIT TO THEIR MISTAKE

There are even those who are Torah scholars, fulfilling Torah and mitzvos in every detail, yet they naturally make mistakes according to these positions of falsehood, and then don't want to feel any regret nor are they prepared to admit they have any regret, as they continue to confuse darkness for light, calling **this bitter and dark Exile, filled with Jewish victims** (may G-d avenge their blood), by the name "is'chalta d'Geula." As long as Am Yisroel continues to anticipate and long for the Redemption, and the aforementioned mistaken people are also descendants of Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov with a yearning for the Redemption, they continue to delude themselves into believing that a Jewish regime in Eretz Yisroel is the start of the Redemption, regarding which we say,

"I believe in the coming of the Moshiach and I will wait for him every day that he should come."

The truth is that this is not the Redemption that we have been waiting for r"l, and we have not suffered thousands of years in exile for this.

There is a well-known parable about people who once sat for a long period of time in a dark underground pit. When years later, someone came by and asked them in bewilderment why they are sitting in the dark, they replied that it's not dark, it's light. Similarly, when we



are in the darkness of Exile for such a long period of time, this terrible darkness appears to us as the light of Redemption.

GIVING JEWS "A GOOD FEELING" AND DESTROYING THEIR RELIGION

There are also those who have rabbinical ordination, and they know all too well what the Rambam writes in Hilchos Melachim. Nevertheless, this doesn't stop them from writing a seifer of several hundred pages, where they explain that we are now in the time of "the

great era." This seifer has already come before many rabbanim, and not one of them has uttered a word of protest. I asked one of these rabbanim if he shared the opinions presented in this seifer, and he remained silent. When I asked him why he keeps quiet and doesn't protest, he replied, "Why should I be bothered if such things give Jews a good feeling?" I responded that while it's true that making Jews happy is a great mitzva, especially according to chassidus, it is impossible to make Jews happy through **actions that cause a destruction of our religion!** The greatest misfortune is when through the blurriness of "the first blossoming of our Redemption," this causes much confusion in matters of faith among many of our Jewish brethren, particularly the young, thus creating a literal spiritual descent in matters of Torah and mitzvos. Therefore, if the Rambam's p'sak din is considered of no value, as is written explicitly in the aforementioned seifer – that while the Rambam clearly states that the beginning of the Redemption will be through Moshiach Tzidkeinu, **the author has proofs not according to the Rambam!** – then how can we possibly demand that a Jew give consideration to Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah, Hilchos T'fillin, and Hilchos Pesach?!

EVEN TORAH GIANTS WHO ARE RELIABLE ON THIS MATTER ADMIT TODAY TO THEIR MISTAKE

It's true that there were prominent Torah scholars who once thought that the time when hundreds of Jews started to emigrate to Eretz Yisroel and establish settlements was the sign of the beginning of the Redemption, and among them were rabbanim whom the Rebbe Rayatz wrote about in

most admirable terms. Furthermore, there were even scholarly G-d-fearing rabbanim who were mistaken in their understanding of the events of 5708 and afterwards, signing on well-publicized proclamations (in connection with the aforementioned seifer “The Great Era”), giving various pet names for the “medina” and the “ingathering of the exiles” (thus proving that there is no contradiction to the true greatness of these rabbanim, as we see from the story in Gemara [Sanhedrin 101b] about Achiya HaShiloni, as specifically his merits intensified the churban when he signed on Yeraboam’s actions that led to idol worship).

However, the truth of the matter is that if those Torah giants, who once thought as they did, had imagined how the situation in the “State” has developed, they would have admitted to their fundamental error from the every outset (even though the facts are that even if the medina would have been run according to Torah in every aspect, this would still not constitute *is’chalta d’Geula*).

Therefore, **even from their point of view**, the painful and frightening mistake of “the first blossoming of our Redemption” has long since been proven null and void from the moment of its conception. Furthermore, anyone who continues to make this erroneous claim today and doesn’t want to admit to his mistake does so only out of a sense of misplaced stubbornness.

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TAKE THE RAMBAM OFF THE SHELF

If we would have been privileged that those who are “fearful of the word of G-d” would find the courage in their souls to come out openly against the messianic concept of the secular state, **immediately upon its founding**, this would have prevented many of the hardships that have happened to the Jewish People since then, or at least reduced them. If those who spread these false positions would understand why these harsh afflictions have come upon us, and would repair the cause by returning to “I believe in the coming of the Moshiach,” G-d would surely say ‘enough’ to our sorrows. However, due to our many sins, they just don’t “*chup*” that this is the reason for the terrible suffering of the Jewish People – and may G-d save us from them and their crowd by arousing a spirit from Above to bring them towards complete

repentance and atonement for their error through His abundant Mercy.

In truth, we must realize that “all the appointed times have passed” (Sanhedrin 97b), “the matter depends only upon *t’shuva*,” and one of the things that is holding up the Redemption and demands that we do *t’shuva* is when we say *ch”v* that we are already in a state of Redemption.

As a result, the time of Exile grows longer, the Exile itself becomes darker and darker, creating even more darkness – and there is no greater darkness than when darkness is called light.

Furthermore, this false Redemption does not allow the True Redemption to be revealed. To put it simply, those who claim that we are already in a state of Redemption are not taking the necessary actions in order to go out of the Exile and reveal the True Redemption, thus causing a lengthening of the Exile – for the individual, for his community, for all Jews, and for the Sh’china itself.

Therefore, these rabbinical authorities who wrote such things in the past must now take the Rambam off their shelves, learn the aforementioned halachic ruling, and publicly teach that they were wrong to connect the current situation in Eretz Yisroel to *is’chalta d’Geula* (and who is there greater than Rabba, who said several times in Gemara [see Eruvin 104a], “The things that I said before you were a mistake on my part.”)

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JEWISH REVIVAL ON THE FESTIVAL OF FREEDOM

BY NOSSON AVROHOM

A group of about one hundred T'mimim ran s'darim in about fifty cities and towns in western Ukraine, an area in which Jewish life flourished 65 years ago. The following is the story of a pair of shluchim who went to Chust in the Carpathian Mountains on the borders of Poland, Romania, and Hungary.

It was only when the wheels of the plane touched the asphalt at the airport in Ukraine that it registered for us (a group of about 100 T'mimim) that the first difficult stage of the shlichus was finished (preparing for Pesach). Now we were going to begin the second stage, traveling to different places and running s'darim there.

The airport was old and gray. To complete the stereotypical scene the customs officials were humorless and cold.

As we left the terminal we danced together to "Shluchei Adoneinu" ... Some local Jews were taken aback by the sight but quickly joined the circle.

Welcome to Ukraine. Mivtza

Pesach was underway. Our destination was Zhitomir, a central city of western Ukraine from where we would disperse to cities, towns, and villages. We arrived in the middle of the night and sat down to a Chassidische farbrengen with the shliach, Rabbi Shlomo Wilhelm who welcomed us heartily.

With nearly no rest we went to see the kivrei avos and the graves of famous Chassidic greats. It seemed like a bonus for those who left their homelands for the Holiday of our Freedom and undertook the rigors of the Rebbe's shlichus.

Throughout our trip we couldn't help but be amazed by the primitiveness that we saw, just as it is described in books. We saw picturesque villages, haystacks,

horses and wooden wagons, farmers and chickens.

When we arrived in Anipoli early in the morning, the villagers were already up and about and they greeted us with pails of water that they had drawn from the river for hand-washing.

After pouring out our hearts at the holy gravesite, which houses the Maggid of Mezritch, Reb Zushe of Anipoli and Reb Leib Cohen (authors of the two approbations on Tanya), we continued on our way to Mezhibozh to the gravesite of the founder of Chassidus, the Baal Shem Tov. We immersed in the warm mikva and davened Shacharis. After pouring out our hearts at the holy gravesite, we continued to Berditchev where we would spend Shabbos at Rabbi Bleier's guesthouse.

It's hard to describe that Shabbos that was so spiritually elevating. Shabbos Kodesh, Shabbos in Berditchev...

On Sunday, we returned to Zhitomir and stopped on the way at the gravesite of the tzaddik, Rabbi Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev, which is outside the city.

We arrived in Zhitomir Sunday afternoon. After waiting for a few



Leaving the gravesite of the Maggid

hours, Rabbi Wilhelm gave us our final briefing and divided the T'mimim into groups. Daniel Dagan and I were assigned to Chust in the Carpathian Mountains. It's about 25 hours away, an exhausting trip.

We left in the evening on a route that passed through villages and thick forests on the way to the train station. At the station, we met another pair of T'mimim who would be running a seider a few hours away from us in Munkatch.

During the train trip, the gentile peasants stared at us, rubbing their eyes in astonishment. One of them, a very old man, nostalgically recounted his memories of what transpired before World War II to the large Jewish community that was in his area of the Ukraine.

After more than 20 hours of traveling, we arrived in Munkatch. The head of the community was waiting for us, a charming fellow who described the large Jewish

community that existed there on the eve of the war.

As we went through the streets, he pointed at many houses that used to belong to Jews that are occupied by gentiles now. He concluded sadly, "What they did here was, 'did you murder and also inherit?'"

In the evening, we said goodbye to the pair of T'mimim who remained in Munkatch and continued on to Chust. We arrived late at night and the city was shrouded in darkness. Here too, the head of the community met us. His name was Shimon. He invited us graciously into the home rented for us. It seemed that he had waited a long time for us to come.

We unpacked all the boxes of matzos, wine, and dishes while Shimon gave us the rundown about the Jewish community: 95% of the young people were assimilated. People were completely ignorant about Judaism. There were t'fillos only on Jewish holidays and the situation continued to deteriorate.

We were exhausted and went to sleep and the next day we went to the shul that was a remnant of the Jewish community. How sad it was for we saw, with our own eyes, the



terrible spiritual state of the community. We discovered that some of them, especially the older ones were still hanging in there and trying to observe as much as they could but without someone to guide them they were lost. They knew so little and consequently the next generation had lost its identity.

The head of the community put on his dusty t'fillin in our honor. We quickly suggested that he use our t'fillin.

In the meantime, some of the local Jews who had heard of our coming had come to shul and welcomed us with a hearty "shalom aleichem." We were happy to put t'fillin on them and were shocked to learn that for some of them this was the first time they were putting on t'fillin.

After davening, Shimon introduced us to a woman in her fifties, one of the few who spoke Yiddish. With her help, we went shopping in the local market. Thanks to her, the stall owners didn't jack up the prices for us foreigners.

While shopping we were surprised to hear someone with an Israeli accent greeting us. We turned around and met an older woman. When we responded to her greeting, she began to sob. When she had calmed down, she told us that she

Many tears were shed in the course of their colorful descriptions. It was amazing to see how although sixty years had passed these Jews who lived amongst goyim did not forget their roots.

lived in Kiryat Gat and had come back to Chust a few months earlier to be with her ill mother.

"You are like angels from heaven for coming here," she said emotionally.

We cheered her up and fortified her with thoughts of emuna and bitachon. When we realized that we wouldn't be able to visit her mother we brought the daughter matzos and wine and promised to mention her mother's name at the reading of the Torah.

When we finished shopping, we

went back to the shul, where dozens of Jews were waiting to meet the young rabbis who had come from Israel.

Later on, as we were walking down the street, a dilapidated Soviet era car stopped near us, one of the few we saw on the street that was full of horses and wagons. The driver addressed us in fluent Ivrit and told us that his father was Jewish but his mother was not, and he knew Ivrit from the time he had lived in Israel. He said he had been looking for us for a few hours. Apparently, our arrival had become the talk of the day among both the Jews and (l'havdil) the gentiles.

That night was Erev Pesach and we conducted the bedikas chametz in our apartment.

* * *

Erev Pesach. We rushed to shul where some Jews and Shimon were waiting for us. We burned the chametz while explaining the reason for the custom and rushed back to our apartment where some older women had begun preparing the food for the first two days of Yom Tov. We supervised to ensure that all was done properly according to the laws of kashrus and our stringencies as well.

While working, the women told us about the glorious Jewish past of Chust that was no more. According to their stories the Jewish quarter had a special *chein* and Jewish life flourished in the many shuls. Nearly everybody knew Yiddish; however, old Chust was destroyed by the Nazis.

Many tears were shed in the course of their colorful descriptions. It was amazing to see how although sixty years had passed these Jews who lived amongst goyim did not forget their roots.

Towards evening, when we went to shul, we saw that it was full. We

CHUST

The town of Chust is in the Carpathian Mountains and borders on Poland, Romania, and Hungary, on the banks of the Tissa River. From 1940-1944 about 6000 Jews out of a population of 22,000 lived in Chust. The center of the Chuster Chassidus was located here.

When the Nazis came to power, the Jewish community of Chust suffered persecution by the pro-Nazi Hungarians. Shortly after the outbreak of World War II, they began persecutions, expulsions, and revoking of citizenship. The Hungarians, who ruled Chust before the Germans came in, oppressed the Jews mercilessly. Anti-Jewish laws were passed, Jewish property was stolen and finally, the Jews were shipped off to concentration and extermination camps.

asked the Jewish women to light candles before the sun set. We were happy to meet a Jew who spoke fluent Hebrew who had emigrated to Eretz Yisroel and then to Germany, and had come back to visit his hometown.

The t'fillos were especially festive and you should have seen the faces of the people! After the davening,

with the help of our Hebrew-speaking friend I explained about Pesach, the laws and customs. I also told them about the Rebbe on whose shlichus we had come. When we mentioned the Rebbe, they all pointed at the wall where I suddenly noticed a large picture of the Rebbe. I was surprised that I hadn't noticed it earlier.

After Maariv, the shul's hall was rearranged and the women set the tables. Excitement ran high. Some of the old-timers reminisced about their youth. At the end of the seider, we danced and there wasn't a dry eye in the place.

The translator said that after a seider like that he had to make a good resolution and on the spot he consulted with his wife and decided to keep kosher. He told us that this entailed traveling for two hours from where he lived in Germany to the kosher store but he was determined to do so.

When we came the next day for Shacharis we found only five people. We asked the head of the community to round up other Jews and saw him head for the telephone to call them. Of course, we stopped him and waited instead.

To our amazement, at the designated time one of the men approached the Aron Kodesh and asked me to come over and stand there. When I explained how we still had no minyan he innocently said that this was how they did things for years, that when there were seven men then the Aron Kodesh plus the two Sifrei Torah made ten for the minyan. Oy, what would Rabbi Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev have made of this?

In the meantime, one of the men went out to the market and came back with three Jews.

At the second seider the same moving scene repeated itself.

At the meal on the second day of Pesach, the atmosphere was very comfortable and open and we spoke about the uniqueness of the Jewish neshama. One of the women said that she had an only daughter and she was afraid that her daughter would marry a goy. We told her to speak to the shliach in Zhitomir and to keep in touch with him in the



With the head of the community in Chust in the big shul



With the elders of Berditchev in the shul



At the gravesite of the Baal Shem Tov in Mezhibozh

hopes that he could help her.

Before we left Chust we were given a tour of the large shul (which is not used today). It is a magnificent shul and it still had many old sifrei kodesh and pictures of rabbanim and distinguished members of the community who were killed. It serves as a memorial of the splendid Jewish community that once existed here.

We left at night, parting with

hugs and kisses from some of the community. Some of them tried to convince us to stay on longer but they realized this was impossible.

Sunday morning, we returned to Zhitomir via Munkatch. The two T'mimim who had been sent to Ozhgorod where Rabbi M.M. Teichman is shliach, joined us for the long trip.

Upon our arrival in Zhitomir, we farbrenge with Rabbi Wilhelm and

the T'mimim reported to him about the various cities and related what they had experienced.

One of the T'mimim expressed it well when he said that we had come to strengthen Yidden after what the Nazis and Communists had done to destroy the Jewish communities but more than we had strengthened others, the Jews of the Ukraine had strengthened us!

SPARKS IGNITED

When we stayed in Zhitomir before leaving for Chust, we were walking around the city when a taxi stopped near us and a man in his forties got out and said, "I am Jewish!"

We suggested that he put on t'fillin and he agreed to do so. He was emotionally overwrought and he cried. We told him that he was invited to come on Erev Pesach to the Jewish community to celebrate the seider.

It is always moving to see a Jew whose Jewish spark is ignited.

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BLESSING OF THE CHASSIDIM

BY RABBI CHAIM LEVI YITZCHOK GINSBURG
MASHPIA IN TOMCHEI T'MIMIM – KFAR CHABAD

The mashpia R' Mendel Futerfas related:

In a town many miles away from Lubavitch, lived a group of Chassidim. Being Lubavitcher Chassidim, they tried to have a Chassidishe community with t'fillos b'tzibbur, shiurim in Nigleh and Chassidus, farbrengens, etc. They had a Chassidishe rav, a Chassidishe mashpia, and a Chassidishe shochet and bodek (the Rebbeim were very particular about the latter). They tried their best to deserve the title "Chassid."

The distance from Lubavitch was great and the trip to the Rebbe took weeks, as did the trip home. Nobody dreamed of flying in those days, yet the Chassidim made the trek from time to time.

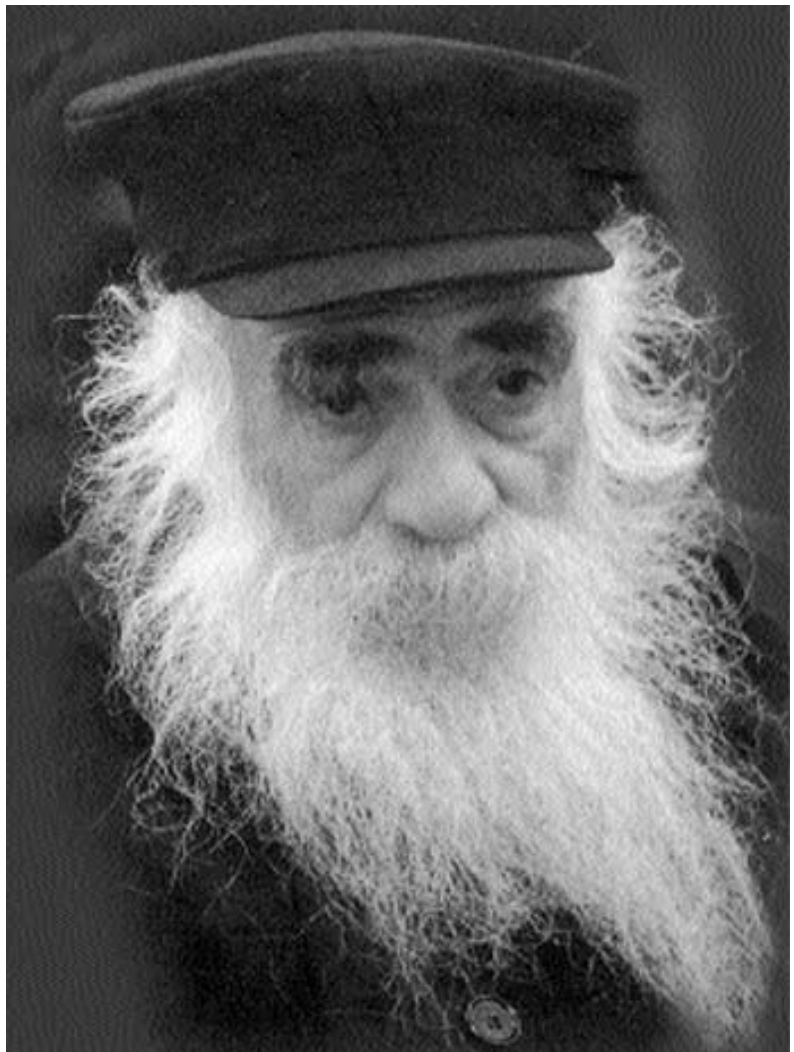
(When R' Mendel got up to this point in his tale he would say: How could a Chassid not go to the Rebbe periodically? "It is the nature of light to be connected with its source," and the nature of a Chassid to be connected to the Rebbe, and therefore, he does whatever he can to be close, literally close, and he travels to the Rebbe as often as possible. As the Chassidim would say in a play on words of the Gemara, "*Rebbi lo shana, Chiya minayin?*" – if a person hasn't been to the Rebbe in a year, how will he have the chayus to serve Hashem?)

Since a trip like this could not be made frequently, and it required setting aside a great deal of time for it,

therefore each trip to the Rebbe was accompanied by a celebration that included nearly the entire town.

Those traveling to the Rebbe would

organize themselves in groups and even those who didn't travel prepared letters and panim and asked to be mentioned to the Rebbe. Each time,



before a group set out, all the residents participated in a series of farbrengens that took place each evening, each time in a different home of one of the travelers.

At these farbrengens, they spoke about hiskashrus to the Rebbe in general and about traveling to the Rebbe in particular. They spoke about how the travelers represented all the residents and how they had to bring the chayus and excitement from the Rebbe back to the town not only for themselves, but also for everyone else.

They spoke about the need for spiritually preparing before the trip and how when they would be at the Rebbe they had to use every minute and internalize what they experienced so that the trip would not be merely a physical trip but would bring about the desired spiritual results.

(Again, R' Mendel would stop and say: A trip to the Rebbe is always beneficial, even if the preparations weren't done properly. Whoever has the opportunity to go may not postpone it merely because he wants to make suitable preparations. He can make the preparations when he is already there, at the Rebbe, while receiving even loftier kocho. But he should not postpone the trip if he has the opportunity to go, though it is vital to prepare properly so that the results will be even more apparent.)

When the group returned from the Rebbe, they would hold another series of farbrengens, each evening in someone else's home. They recounted what they saw and heard and "took" from the Rebbe. As Chassidim would say: Look at the eyes of those who merited to see the Rebbe!

Thus, each time one of these trips occurred, it was an event, which affected nearly the entire town.

One of the Chassidim who lived in this town was married for many years and had no children. He had told the Rebbe Maharash of his problem and had pleaded for a bracha for children

but the Rebbe had never responded to his requests.

One time, one of the farbrengens was held in this Chassid's house. It was very late at night and the Chassidim's enthusiasm was at a peak when suddenly, the mashke was depleted. How could they farbreng without mashke? They began searching for mashke and wondering how they could procure mashke at that hour of the night.

The lady of the house, hearing of the problem, got up her nerve and told

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the Chassidim that she was prepared to make a supreme effort to obtain mashke on condition that they give her a bracha for children.

The Chassidim had drunk quite a bit of mashke already and they didn't think much about it but rose and blessed her with all their hearts. She ran around and managed to get some mashke and other delicacies for them.

The Chassid, seeing that the Rebbe Maharash had not responded to his request for a bracha for children, felt that something was afoot. Some time

passed and he saw that the Chassidim's bracha was beginning to be fulfilled, and he was afraid that something was amiss. He went to Lubavitch and had a yechidus with the Rebbe Maharash in which he told him what happened and asked for a bracha.

The Rebbe leaned his head on his hands and then said:

We know from the Baal Shem Tov that sometimes, the abundance designated from Above for someone is not enough for all three: for children, for life, and for a livelihood, and he is lacking in one of them. When a person wants to receive what he is lacking, it is possible that although his request is granted, he will lose out in another area because the amount of abundance allotted for him did not change and it was only the "pipes that were exchanged."

This is what I saw with you. The abundance designated for you was limited, and therefore, you did not have children. When you pleaded, I didn't want to bless you with children because then the "pipes would have been exchanged" and a child would be born but life would have been severely shortened, so I kept quiet.

However, the Chassidim do not see and the Chassidim have the power, and they blessed you, and their bracha will certainly be fulfilled. You will have a son, but the abundance allotted to you is not enough and who knows what the results will be?

Once again, the Rebbe Maharash lowered his head and leaned it on his hands, and then he said: Just because the Chassidim do not see this, should their brachos bring about undesirable consequences? No! May you have a long and healthy life and raise your son to Torah, chuppa, and good deeds, in an expansive way in all details!

Of course, the Rebbe's bracha was fulfilled and they lived long, raised their son to Torah, chuppa, and good deeds, and were materially and spiritually wealthy.

PSYCHIATRY & GEULA: THE DOCTOR PRESCRIBES 7-UP*

(*SEVEN UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLES, A TERM USED BY MICHOEL DAVIDSON, A" H)

AS TOLD TO CHANA KATZ

With increasing speed and revelation, the areas of science, medicine, education, and military, to name a few, are falling into line with the wisdom of Torah. It's about time, but not unexpected as we rapidly approach Yemos HaMoshiach. Dr. Chaim Jacobson shared some very interesting insights into how the field of psychiatry is also coming to terms with Kabbala and Chassidus. In the first part of this unique interview, R. Chaim takes us Down Under in Perth, Australia, into the psyches of the staff that man the Psychiatric wards...

We were first introduced to Dr. Chaim Jacobson last year, when, in the middle of his smicha studies, he ran to attend to a Jew feigning a heart attack, who really turned out to be a troubled soul in need of spiritual healing. Shortly after publishing that story, "The Truth and the Psychotic Animal Soul," R. Chaim and his wife Leah had to

leave Tzfas for four-months in order to attend to some personal matters in their hometowns in Australia and Johannesburg, S. Africa. There, the couple had many fascinating 'encounters of the Chassidishe kind' which showed that no matter where one is, the opportunity is always present for Besuras HaGeula. In this installment, R. Chaim shares the

experience he had in recent months when he went to work in a Perth hospital psychiatric ward.

R. Chaim: This was a completion of a very big circle in my personal life. The very stirrings of t'shuva began when I was initially exposed in my clinical years to psychiatry and patients with their general life issues. This began an avalanche of questions and thinking in my own mind about human nature, the purpose of life, what made people tick and where people were heading.

It ultimately led me to discover Chassidus in Eretz Yisroel. To cut a long story short, you could say psychiatry was a very strong point in forcing a Jewish mind to delve into questions of human nature. If that was the beginning of the journey, in this particular trip we were back in Western Australia and hashgacha pratis had it that I landed up working in a Psychiatric Department! This completed a long trip sparked off by psychiatry.

But now, after years and years of in-depth Torah study, especially Chassidus, my viewpoint of the psychiatric system is really from a

Chassidic perspective. The issues faced daily in the psychiatric department, as *Tanya* states it, were really deep-seated problems of the soul, as opposed to the psychiatric description and classification of human problems with no real deep-seated solutions or wisdom.

I really had a chance to reappraise what psychiatry has to say. In truth, it's really as Chassidus explains it. Basically, it was an opportunity to see through the *sheker* (falsity)!

ARE YOU JEWISH?!

R. Chaim: While working in the department one day, a social worker asked me if I was Jewish, and my usual sarcastic answer was: 'What gives you that impression?!' – with my tzitzis hanging out and my beard...

She told me that she had an interesting study of Kabbala after being exposed to it through the mass media, through the likes of celebrities such as Madonna. After explaining that I lived in the mystical city of Tzfas, and opened a Chassidic, Kabbalistic yeshiva for English-speaking baalei T'shuvos in Tzfas (Me'or Torah), she asked if I would like to talk to the psychiatric staff (which happened to consist completely of non-Jews). So I agreed. As it turned out, without knowing, by hashgacha pratis, the talk turned out to be arranged for the 20 of Kislev – (the continuation of) the Rosh HaShana of Chassidus!

The day came and the actual psychiatric doctors on that day had another meeting and couldn't make it. So I talked to about 30 paramedical staff, which included psychological nurses and occupational therapists.

On the day when I came into the hall, I was still feeling the Rosh HaShana of Chassidus and being the only Jew, I felt the natural

desire to farbreng... All of the goyim were sitting very stiffly, *alma d'pruda* (the world of separation)... I told them: 'why are you sitting so far away? Come closer,' and that little bit of warmth seemed to break some of the ice and they came and inched closer and I insisted they come even closer. They came forward, still in rows, so I told them to sit around me in circles, to make it more heimish...

The very stirrings of t'shuva began when I was initially exposed in my clinical years to psychiatry and patients with their general life issues. This began an avalanche of questions and thinking in my own mind about human nature, the purpose of life, what made people tick and where people were heading.

I don't know if they appreciated the idea, but at least for my part, for chitzonius, I felt that I was in a farbreng. So I started to farbreng. In a very wondrous way, 30 non-Jewish professionals were sitting there listening intently to the revelations of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai, The Baal Shem Tov, and the Alter Rebbe.

Before the actual talk, much thought went into what would be pertinent and relevant to such an audience. Most was directed toward the Seven Noachide Laws, which is, as the Rebbe emphasized many times, the obligation of this generation to explain to the goyim.

Since the title of the class was Kabbala and Psychiatry, the approach to explaining this was from a Kabbalistic/Chassidic point of view. The talk began by explaining to them the nature of the workings of the soul, the emphasis being the basic animal soul that all mankind shares and explained to them that each soul has 10 powers of the soul – three intellectual and seven emotional powers. I kept in the back of my mind that for the nations of the world, the dynamic of the soul is that rather than the '*mo'ach shalit al ha'lev*,' it's rather a case of '*lev shalit al ha'moach*.'

The basic drive a person has (for the goyim) is their emotional experience and since we all have seven emotional powers this is why there is a need to fulfill the Seven Laws of Noach. Each particular law comes to refine and rectify a particular emotional attribute and together all the seven laws have the effect of achieving stability, justice, and humanity within the soul. A lot of this talk (which I derived from talks given by Rabbi Yitzchak Ginsburgh) explained that these laws are really essential to the basic psychological and psychiatric stability of a person and are the true tools and techniques of psychiatric therapy. By extension, they bring stability, and justice and humanity to the individual person, to the community and to the world at large – preparing the world for the times of Moshiach.

The talk went on for an hour a half, with many, many details explained. The crowd of non-Jewish

professionals sat listening intently throughout the talk, taking in all that was said to the extent that some of them were taking notes and asking questions as the talk proceeded.

The nachas that came from such a talk is that a few days later one of the psychiatrist's who was sitting at the talk, after seeing a patient who had come in with a so-called psychiatric condition, asked me if I would consider this a case of misdirected netzach or hod! This really showed that the goyim had internalized the message of the talk and that the Rebbe's mitvza of Sheva B'nei Mitzvos Noach was achieved.

A SECOND TALK

A few days later one of the consulting psychiatrists asked R. Chaim to give a repeat talk on Kabbala and psychiatry to the doctors. A second talk was done for some 20 psychiatrists!

R. Chaim: The main realization of this experience is that even the general non-Jewish world is ready to receive and accept the wisdom and counsel and directives of the Torah and Chassidus in a way that it says in the times of Moshiach all the nations will come to know the knowledge of Hashem and keep the Sheva Mitzvos B'nei Noach.

The whole experience was reminiscent of the fact that leading up to Yud-Tes-Chaf Kislev, the Alter Rebbe was in prison amongst the Russian goyim and was forced to explain very deep concepts of Chassidus to the point that even the non-Jewish minds could appreciate what was being said.

TOUGH QUESTIONS

R. Chaim: I don't know if you know what certain doctors are like. There's a certain arrogance and that their perspective is the authoritative

perspective, and here, all these (non-Jewish) doctors were like putty in one's hands, taking in the teaching of Chassidus. They all listened.

One of the doctors asked me a question after I explained everything: 'How would you explain human personality types?' I

The head psychiatrist asked me if I thought that these psychiatrists had studied Kabbala. I explained to them that not necessarily did they need to study Kabbala, but the more they come in line with truth and reality, then they'll match-up and parallel with what Chassidus and Kabbala have already contained for over 3,000 years!

explained to him that from the perspective of Chassidus, even though all people have ten powers of the soul, nevertheless in certain people, certain attributes dominate over others. Some people are more intellectual, some people are more introverted, some are more extroverted, and there're also different levels and roots of souls...

The remarkable thing is that (this doctor) said that what I had just explained from the perspective of Chassidus happened to parallel the latest and up-to-date theories on personality types. And this is really incredible! In front of 20-some goyim I went into Freud and Victor Frankel and how many of their theories parallel and have roots in Torah thought. The head psychiatrist asked me if I thought that these psychiatrists had studied Kabbala. I explained to them that not necessarily did they need to study Kabbala, but the more they come in line with truth and reality, then they'll match-up and parallel with what Chassidus and Kabbala have already contained for over 3,000 years!

Did any of the doctor's question the differences between the different souls?

R. Chaim: I talked about the Seven Universal Laws that apply to all mankind, irrespective of race or religion. One of the doctors did ask me if I ever heard of the movie *The Ten Commandments* with Charlton Heston and he asked whatever happened to the Ten Commandments. I responded to him that the Ten Commandments were given to Moses particularly for the Jewish people and what was applicable to the general world were these Seven Universal Laws.

The following week at the next official doctors meeting, while they were talking about another subject, they raised the talk of psychiatry and Kabbala and asked if they could continue, so I knew the interest was sparked of even these non-Jewish authoritative officials.

(R. Chaim and his wife Leah, a clinical Psychologist, are working to develop a systematic and authoritative counseling service based on the deep-seated and rich wisdom of Chabad Chassidus.)

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BEFORE THE INK HAS DRIED

BY SHAI GEFEN

ONLY MOSHIACH

The recent elections signified a turning point in the thinking of the Israeli electorate regarding the elections and the government in Israel. For the first time in history, there wasn't knee-jerk voting for various parties except for the religious parties. This fact proves how disgusted people are with the politicians. For the first time, the ruling party has been thrown into the dustbin of history after thirty years of parliamentary activity and leadership in the center of the Israeli legislature.

Another indication of how revolted people are is the fact that the percentage of voters in the elections for the Knesset was the smallest in the history of the elections. And even those who voted did so as though forced to do so, and not because they were really motivated to. This might be the first elections in which you didn't see stickers on cars. All the excitement of previous elections was missing.

Many of those who voted did so for different parties or for fledgling parties by way of protest or revenge. The public has begun realizing that the Knesset members are not their saviors and even if a party loudly declares that it will protect the land, they're not taken seriously.

The statement by Chazal, "Ben

Dovid [i.e., Moshiach] will not come until the lowly kingdom in Israel ends," was fulfilled in spades in these elections. This is especially so with the candidates for prime minister, whose ratings are very low, for people's faith in them is down to zero.

We are in doubled and redoubled darkness. Not only are we experiencing a terrible security situation, but our elected officials continue to announce more tragedies to come. They are blinded from seeing the truth. No wonder the public is depressed and feels impotent.

As Jews who are "believers, children of believers," we know that this situation must inevitably lead us to cry out: Master of the Universe, ease up with these birth pangs of Moshiach! Everybody understands that only a genuine leader can rescue us.

We must bring the message of Geula as the Rebbe told us to do. We have to tell people that these events are part of the Geula process and we must prepare to greet Moshiach by strengthening in Torah and mitzvos, refining ourselves and cleaning house.

Even if we have tried escaping this shlichus and have avoided confronting the fact that we have painted ourselves into a corner, now

we all know that it's Geula that we need and Geula that we must cry out for.

Israeli elections are not the job of Lubavitchers. Even when we go vote, we're not excited to do so but do it anyway out of necessity. Our real job is to bring the Rebbe's message to every single Jew that we are in the era of Geula and we must prepare the world for it. As Chabad Chassidim, we need to make the topic of Geula more immediate than ever.

Fifteen years have passed since that frightening sicha in which the Rebbe said that the job of bringing Geula is that of every Jew. We cannot avoid it. All the debates and differences of opinion are irrelevant. The Jewish people are in a crisis. On the one hand, danger abounds wherever we turn. On the other hand, we are sure that salvation is nigh and we must forge ahead, not retreat, ch"v. We don't give in to the demands of the world ("world" from the Hebrew word meaning concealment).

It is the month of Nissan, the month of the Rebbe's birthday, the month of our holiday of freedom. We are sure that in this month of Geula we will merit, in the merit of the first redeemer, Moshe the Faithful Shepherd, to see the final redeemer.



MISLEADING THE PUBLIC

Something happened on Election Day that was hidden from the public until shortly before the polls closed, so as not to harm Kadima's chances. For the first time since the expulsion and the handing over of our border settlements to murderers, a katyusha landed in Eretz Yisroel. This improved katyusha can reach Ashdod, not to mention all of Ashkelon.

It's no secret that the Kassam rockets that the media are constantly reporting about, are not falling in empty lots. The residents of Ashkelon can tell you about missiles flying by their homes and near the children's playing fields. These facts are obfuscated by the government and media who don't want people to panic.

The same corrupt gang who opened the country up to murderers, who opened up all crossings to them, plans on continuing with Yehuda and Shomron. Then our enemies will reach Gush Dan and the rest of the cities in the center of the country. Remember, former Chief of Staff Yaalon said that Kassams and missiles will reach Tel Aviv.

Most Israelis are ignorant of this, thanks to the media that covers over the truth. Unfortunately, Jews from our own crowd prefer to remain silent, or worse, cooperate. The settlers screamed but there was nobody to talk to. In the week before the expulsion there were some efforts made "to be yotzei" (to fulfill one's obligation – implying that it wasn't heartfelt).

The day will come when people will ask: Why didn't we speak up? We could have stopped the dictator! Grandchildren will ask us about this and what will answer? That it was easier to sit quietly at home?

If we remain quiet now, we can expect further catastrophes. This is not merely the problem of the settlers but a question about the continued existence of a Jewish presence in Eretz Yisroel and world peace. This affects those who live in Russia, the U.S., and Europe and we cannot be quiet.

A LETTER TO THE HEADS OF THE CHAREIDI PARTIES

It's no secret that I voted for Marzel in the recent elections, since he promised to act in accordance with *Shulchan Aruch* and would not join a government that would give away land. You, however, refused to make this commitment.

The elections were barely over and you were running to join Olmert's government, which declared repeatedly on Election Day that it would give away even more land in its "convergence plan." You claimed to Chabad Chassidim that you wouldn't take part in another crime but most people didn't believe you. They relied on previous experience and figured you wouldn't pass up money even if it was at the expense of Jewish blood, for this is what you did in the previous coalition. You have announced your support for the man who plans on immediately uprooting and expelling tens of thousands more Jews from their homes.

Obviously, all who voted for you are full accomplices to what you will perpetrate. This Pesach marked 16 years since the Rebbe frustrated the despicable plan that was supposed to crown Peres. Gerrer Chassidim joined in this plan, along with Chabad askanim. They did as they saw fit and when the Rebbe screamed, they told the Rebbe that Peres had promised not to carry out any political processes and supporting him was only a

It's no secret that I voted for Marzel in the recent elections, since he promised to act in accordance with Shulchan Aruch and would not join a government that would give away land. You, however, refused to make this commitment. The elections were barely over and you were running to join Olmert's government, which declared repeatedly on Election Day that it would give away even more land in its "convergence plan."

temporary measure with his guarantee that he wouldn't go forward with negotiations. However, the Rebbe thought otherwise and told those askanim that by joining with a party that spoke about the possibility of giving away land, they were cooperating and responsible for bloodshed. The Rebbe added

that a government like this could not be allowed to rule for even a minute.

Sad to say, there are still askanim whose self-interest supersedes the Rebbe's position. Once again, we hear their empty explanations, which are meant to whitewash their political maneuverings.

Whoever tries to support the chareidim's joining the coalition and the voting for parties that announce that they will join this government is openly fighting the Rebbe. Let us pray that Hashem allows us to see the bittul and eradication of all evil and the great light of Geula.

FINAL BORDER STATUS PART 1

There are two ways of negotiations with a gentile [to determine the borders of the Land of Israel]. The first is to state: I am a Jew. I represent the Jewish People and the Jewish faith. Therefore I ask of you to grant me all that I request.

Since we live in exile, G-d desires that we work through natural means by approaching the minister of that country (who is connected to the heavenly ministering angel of that country) and speak to him diplomatically in his own language. Yet, hand in hand, the Jew must speak with clarity and determination, stating his demand.

This method of negotiations was determined by Abraham our Patriarch, who stated: "I am both a citizen and a non resident amidst you." Meaning, if you will concede and grant the Jew what is owing to him, I will accept the status of a non-resident in exile, and to pay 400 silver shekels for the merchandise.

Even given this diminished status, G-d has commanded Jewish entitlement. (As is known the maxim of the Rebbes of Lubavitch, that only the physical bodies of the Jewish People have been given over into exile; not our souls. Therefore a gentile is not empowered to argue that since a Jew is in exile he cannot receive his demand.) However, if the gentile is not in agreement, then the Jew will state his demand as an entitlement, a citizen, and take it without offering payment.

The second line of negotiations with a gentile to determine the borders of Israel is that the Jew says that our entitlement stems from a certain gentile from London who said that the Jewish People need a homeland.

When the gentile hears this he comes to the conclusion that this Jew has no proof of entitlement from Jewish

sources, that is why he reverts to claiming his rights from a gentile. In response he says: True, a gentile did state the need to prepare a Jewish homeland, however, now one hundred and forty gentiles disagree. Who is to say that one solitary gentile [Balfour] holds the determining view? (Actually, this argument of the gentile is correct. He is no master to decide that the Land of Israel belongs to the Jewish People. Rather, this is the will of G-d, Who initially granted this land to them (the Canaanites), and his consequent wish was to take it from them and grant it to us.)

We are in exile (we operate via all natural means even to of praying for the peace of the city... because through this will have peace). Yet, the essence of our words must be utterly truthful with no hint of falsity (which is contrary to Torah) because falsity will lead to results contrary to those we anticipated.

All the tribulations, which we are living through now, are because Jewish people built their case on that declaration written by a gentile in London! Jewish people regard that gentile as the master who deciding who should receive "the Land ... upon which the eyes of G-d gaze from the beginning of the year to the end of the year."

The matter does not end there. They attempt to find favor in his eyes and subjugate themselves to him – asking an additional gentile, "where are the borders [of Israel]? Where do the territories of the Land belonging to Jewish People end? What were the intentions, both apparent and undisclosed, of the Jew who signed a piece of paper in London?"

When the gentile hears this he comes to the conclusion that this Jew has no proof of entitlement from Jewish sources, that is why he reverts to claiming his rights from a gentile.

*(From a public address 11 Nissan 1976)
savethelandofisrael.blogspot.com
Email:shleimushaaretz@btconnect.com*

EMERGENCY MEETING OF RABBIS: NO NEGOTIATIONS WITH PARTIES IN FAVOR OF EXPELLING JEWS

A gathering of rabbanim took place in Binyanei HaUma, organized by the “Congress of Rabbanim For Peace – Pikuach Nefesh.” The Bostoner Rebbe, member of the Moetzes G’dolei Ha’Torah of the Agudas Yisroel party addressed the gathering. He spoke sharply about Olmert’s “convergence plan” and called it “literal danger to life.”

“Before any coalition negotiations are conducted by the religious and chareidi Knesset members, they must obey the Moetzes G’dolei Ha’Torah and the rabbanim, and demand that there be no additional withdrawal plans as a condition before even beginning negotiations,” said the Bostoner Rebbe.

The Admur sadly spoke about the fact that the areas from which terrorists are sending Kassam missiles are the areas which the government handed over to these terrorists.

The emcee of the gathering, Rabbi Moshe Havlin, rav in Kiryat Gat, said, “Imagine if a certain party had as part of its platform the eradication of Shabbos, would we consider opening negotiations with them? Giving land to gentiles is pikuach nefesh which is more serious than Shabbos and which sets Shabbos aside!”

Chief Sephardic rabbi, Mordechai Eliyahu, said, “Nobody has the right to decide who the land belongs to since Eretz Yisroel belongs to Hashem and He only entrusted it to

us for safekeeping.” Rabbi Eliyahu called upon the rabbanim not to underestimate the power of protesting.

“Just as Hashem is eternal, and His Torah is eternal, so too is the p’sak din of rabbanim eternal, and ultimately it will determine the reality in Eretz Yisroel.”

Other speakers were Rabbi Dovid Drukman, rav of Kiryat Mochkin, Rabbi Yosef Gerlitzky, director of the Congress of Rabbanim, Rabbi Tuvia Blau, rav of the Chabad shul in Neve Yaakov, and Rabbi Zalman Nechemia Goldberg, av beis din ha’gadol in Yerushalayim.

The guest speaker was Nobel Prize winner, Yisroel Aumann who explained the logic in the Torah’s position, which says, “If someone rises up to kill you, rise earlier and kill him.”

“History has proven,” said Aumann, “that the only way to prevent war and to maintain stability in the world, is with the position of strongly protecting one’s borders without conceding an inch and with a clear threat towards anyone who tries to start up with us. Any talk about withdrawal or capitulation in Eretz Yisroel or anywhere in the world, always led to terrible destruction and death. In addition to which, evacuation or withdrawal is synonymous with capitulation to terror and strengthens the enemy.”

Professor Aumann analyzed the election results and said it was not a victory for the Left. “The Left and Olmert have no chance of establishing a government that will implement its plans if the religious and chareidi parties strongly oppose withdrawals.

“You rabbanim are the ones who



Rabbanim on the dais at the Kinus Rabbanim (photo by Meir Dahan)

will decide the future of the state.”

Rabbi Meir Mazuz, who could not attend the gathering, sent a letter of support to the rabbanim in which he wrote:

“In the past 14 years, many prime ministers fell before they had served out their term, and most recently, Ariel Sharon who carried

out the Disengagement Plan while saying he “was providing for the Jewish nation for the next 3000 years” – didn’t last six months. And the Likud, which defrauded the nation and received forty seats last time through lies and conniving, was broken in half, thirds, quarters. From this we see that Eretz Yisroel is opposed to Disengagement!

“Therefore, we call upon any government that may form to beware of giving away yishuvim in Yehuda and Shomron and any part of Eretz Yisroel, and not to give in to international pressure, and thus will be fulfilled the verse, ‘Yaakov will dwell quietly and peacefully without fear.’”

CHIDON HA’MITZVOS IN LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

After months of studying, the finals for the Chidon HaMitzvos took place in Los Angeles, California. There were moments of tension and seriousness, as the quiz questions were read, and moments of excitement as the winners’ names were announced. There were also moments of fun and laughter when Chassidic singer and entertainer, Lipa Schmeltzer, appeared in Chabad Chassidic garb.

“We never had so many contestants,” said Rabbi Sholom Dovber Baumgarten of Tzivos Hashem and one of the judges.

Some background information: The Chidon HaMitzvos was started when the Rebbe announced the unification of the Jewish people through the study of the 613 mitzvos.

“The Rebbe stressed on countless occasions that this learning will hasten the coming of Moshiach,” noted members of Tzivos Hashem, which is run by Rabbi Yerachmiel Benjaminson.

Over 4000 children from 96 schools from 30 states and countries participated in the Chidon. 160 children attended the finals in Los Angeles.



The Chasanei HaMitzvos



The hosting school in Los Angeles

SHLUCHIM PREVENT AUTOPSY

Shluchim in Peru were told of the death of an Israeli girl who drowned while rafting the rapids near the city of Cuzco. The girl was touring, like many of her Israeli peers.

The shluchim in Peru quickly got involved in order to save her body from an autopsy and to send it as soon as possible back to Eretz Yisroel.

In a conversation with "Beis Moshiach," Rabbi Ofer Karifur, director of the new Chabad house in Cuzco, reported what happened:

"Friday morning we were told about the rafting accident on the river near Avenquai, six hours away from Cuzco in which 21 year old Moran Kalifa, was killed. Then we heard that a few days earlier, she had visited the Chabad house. We were told that her body was at the local hospital and that the police planned on performing an autopsy which is Peruvian law.

"After consulting with Rabbi Shneur Zalman Blumenfeld, shliach in Peru, I went with another Israeli to Avenquai. We arrived at the hospital about twenty minutes before Shabbos and after much cajoling, we managed to prevent the autopsy with the involvement of the president of Peru.

"We remained with the body until it was taken by



ambulance to Cuzco. Only then could we allow ourselves to begin Kabbalas Shabbos and to make kiddush, apparently for the first time since creation in the hospital in Avenquai. Five pitot, two cans of tuna and a bar of chocolate were our Shabbos meals."

Back at the Chabad house a special Shabbos program was taking place, organized by shliach, Rabbi Nir Azai. "This Shabbos was a Shabbos of spiritual inspiration. Many Israelis told of how they were miraculously saved from similar accidents. The youth at the Chabad house recited T'hilim and Mishnayos and one of them said Kaddish."

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