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Chassid / Mendel Tzfasman

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BEYOND THE DESERT

LIKKUTEI SICHOS VOL. 33, PG. 85-94
TRANSLATED BY BORUCH MERKUR



[Continued from last week]

That is, the definition of love of G-d is that one's soul (and mind) is **bound** to G-d. The (quintessential) experience of this concept is in the World to Come. As Rambam writes in Chapter 8 [Law 2], describing the World to Come [in the words of the Early Sages], "the righteous **sit** with their crowns on their heads and they derive benefit from the ray of the Divine Presence, (explaining) 'their crowns on their heads,' (as) referring to knowledge – that they will know that on account of it they merited the life of the World to Come – is found **with them**. This is the crown ... And what is the meaning of their saying, 'they derive benefit from the ray of the Divine Presence'? That they possess knowledge and comprehension of the truth of the Holy One Blessed Be He, which they knew not when they were in a dark and lowly body." Thus, Rambam writes [ibid Law 3, end] that "this is the reward of which there is no reward greater than it and the good fortune of which there is no goodness beyond it."

But at the same time, they have no rest (the opposite of "(the righteous) sit" and "they derive benefit" [see FN 45]).

That is, the life of the World to Come is not (only) "reward" for the involvement in Torah and Mitzvos but a continuation and **advancement**, a perpetual progression towards the ultimate cleaving to G-d that is accomplished through Torah and Mitzvos.

Accordingly the distinction will be understood between what Rambam writes in the beginning of Chapter 10 – "**One should not say**, 'I am doing the Mitzvos of the Torah and delving into its wisdom in order to receive all the blessings written in it or **in order**

that I may merit the life of the World to Come" – and what he writes in Chapter 9 – that "all the Jewish people – their Prophets and their Sages [included] – eagerly anticipated the Days of Moshiach...in order that they may rest from the kingdoms which do not permit them to occupy themselves with Torah and Mitzvos properly. They will [then] find themselves calm and will increase in wisdom **in order that they shall merit** the life of the World to Come":

In writing, "all the Jewish people – their Prophets and their Sages [included] – eagerly anticipated the Days of Moshiach...in order that they may rest from the kingdoms ... They will [then] find themselves calm and **will increase in wisdom in order that they shall merit** the life of the World to Come," Rambam's intent is not that the objective, "in order that they shall merit the life of the World to Come," is (for the sake of receiving a) reward, the **receipt of compensation** for their service. Rather, [Rambam's intent is that] in order to merit the ultimate expression and perfection of the love of G-d and cleaving to Him (which he discusses before this), to be **constantly** engrossed in it – this is accomplished through constantly being **plentiful** in and increasing in wisdom in the Days of Moshiach.

Whereas in Chapter 10, Rambam negates the notion of the performance of the Mitzvos of the Torah, etc., with the intent to merit life in the World to Come **as the receipt of reward** for one's service, for which reason Rambam includes it [i.e., this misguided intent] among the other matters of personal benefit and reward for one's service: "**in order to receive all the blessings** written in it...in order to be saved, etc." And since the person's intent is not to advance to the perfection of his

service of G-d but simply to receive a reward, therefore, the laws is that "One should not say, etc."

(However, in this matter itself there are two approaches:

(Regarding what Rambam writes in the beginning of Chapter 10, "One should not say, etc., in order to receive all the blessings, etc., or in order that I may merit the life of the World to Come, and I shall stay away from the transgressions, etc., in order to be saved from the curses, etc., or so I shall not be cut off from the life of the World to Come," he means to rule out serving G-d out of **fear**. That is to say that the intent of the one who serves G-d is because he is fearful for his own life [FN 53: or, in the wording of Law 5, "that punishments will not be meted out on him], and therefore, he serves G-d in order that he should have a life of rest in this world (and he will be saved from the curses, etc.) or (regarding one who is concerned about the life of his **soul**) in order that his soul merits the eternal life of the World to Come (and he will not be cut off from the life of the World to Come).

(Whereas later, in Law 4, Rambam writes: "The Early

In order to merit the ultimate expression and perfection of the love of G-d and cleaving to Him, to be constantly engrossed in it – this is accomplished through constantly being plentiful in and increasing in wisdom in the Days of Moshiach.

Sages said: Lest someone say, 'I hereby am learning Torah in order that I will be wealthy, etc., in order that I shall receive reward in the World to Come' [FN 54: That is, his intent is not to merit the life of the World to Come (which is the purpose for the fulfillment of Torah and Mitzvos, "the ultimate reward for Mitzvos") – as Rambam puts it in Law 1, "in order that I may merit the life of the World to Come – rather, he wants to receive a side benefit (in his understanding) along the lines of, "in order that I will be wealthy...that I will be called Rabbi." It is just that the 'location' of the receipt of this reward happens to be "in the World to Come.], Scripture states, "to love, etc." That is, his intent "to receive a reward" is (not because he is fearful for his own life, but) because he wants to receive **compensation and payment** for his service (material compensation, "that he will be wealthy," or spiritual compensation, "that I shall receive reward in the World to Come"). Indeed, this is a lesser level of one who serves G-d not for His sake.)

[To be continued be"H]

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SHABBOS MEVARCHIM: HOW TO BE TWO PLACES AT THE SAME TIME

BY YISROEL YEHUDA

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ZALMAN KLEINMAN

*This Shabbos is Shabbos Mevarchim, one of the 12 such Shabbasos each year. It's a busy day and often we are faced with a dilemma. Should we stay at the farbrengen and get some Chassidic inspiration or go home and have a proper Shabbos meal with our family? * Thoughts about Shabbos Mevarchim.*

Shabbos Mevarchim morning: It's peaceful and Shabbosdik in shul. The early-bird chavrusas, scattered here and there, can be heard learning. R' Yeruchem, the one in charge of T'hillim for the children, is arranging the peklach. The smell of coffee and mezonos is in the air.

More and more men are entering the shul, many of them looking sleepy. One by one they go over to the bookcase, take a T'hillim and sit down. Two men are walking in just now, their beards still wet from the mikva. Soon the chazan goes over to

the shtender and loudly begins the first chapter of T'hillim.

Those who are still in bed are invited to open the *Kovetz Michtavim* at the end of the T'hillim, where the Rebbe Rayatz writes about how great it is to recite the entire T'hillim early Shabbos morning:

This elevated and lofty mitzva, which brings a plethora of material and spiritual blessing and success, causes one to be among those who bring merit to the many, and the merit of the many depends on them. And they, their wives, their sons and

daughters merit that the blessings designated to those who bring merit to the many rest upon them.

In Lubavitch, there is a way of doing everything, so too, with regard to Shabbos in general and Shabbos Mevarchim in particular. The instructions of our Rebbeim lead us and guide us.

CHASSIDIC CONCESSION?

Every Chassidishe balabus tries to fulfill the Rebbe's horaos and to carry them out in the best way possible. However, the list of "tasks" a Chassid needs to do each Shabbos is quite long and daunting. Within 24 hours, he needs to: eat three meals, say Chitas, learn Rambam, Shnayim Mikra V'Echad Targum, learn Chassidus, *Likkutei Torah* ("der Chassidishe parsha"), daven slowly and even at length.

Then comes Shabbos Mevarchim and he also needs to say the entire T'hillim and participate in the farbrengen after davening, as the Rebbe Rayatz writes in his letters. How can all this be done on



Shabbos? – and the question is even greater on the short, winter Shabbosas!

So there are all sorts of ways to handle it all. While attending a Shalom Zachor you half listen while quickly mumbling through the Shnayim Mikra and Chitas and Rambam for Friday. The farbrengen is a wonderful time to listen to someone chazer a sicha of the Rebbe while simultaneously quickly learning through *Likkutei Torah* or the D'var Malchus.

Between aliyos you can finish another bit and the Shabbos meal takes place after the farbrengen in shul “to be yotzei” (to just fulfill one’s obligation) – tasting something, singing Asader, and going right back to shul for Mincha. Then you can take a short nap between Mincha and Maariv to fulfill “oneg Shabbos” fully.

In the middle of Shabbos one is faced with the choice of attending the farbrengen or going home for the meal. One is at the expense of the other. Sometimes the husband carries

at the farbrengen and the wife makes Kiddush for herself and eats alone! This doesn’t always work out so nicely. Nor is it easy for the mother to be left alone with small children and to run the Shabbos table herself. One feels that this is not proper chinuch.

So the question is: is attending the farbrengen in shul at the expense of having the Shabbos meal with the family a “Chassidic concession”? The “shpitz Chabad” maintain that obviously the Rebbe Rayatz’s horaa comes way before the wife’s complaints.

This dilemma is faced by most Lubavitchers. Many of them stay in shul for the farbrengen at the expense of the Shabbos meal and spending time with the family. This is not only on Shabbos Mevarchim but on other Shabbosas too when there are other occasions for farbrengens and Kiddushim.

We will discuss all angles of this situation, hearing from mashpiim and the “man (or Chassid) on the

street,” as they are based on the foundations and hashkafa of our Rebbeim.

TO KNOW WHAT TO CONCEDE ON

Before getting into the discussion, let us first examine the importance of both the Shabbos meal at home as well as the farbrengen in shul, so as to better examine the various approaches and to arrive at a proper solution.

In halacha, as well as in P’nimius HaTorah, it speaks a lot about the importance of the three Shabbos meals. “The Shabbos meal is important and removed from the weekday meal” (Rashi, P’sachim 105a). It says in s’farim, “the mitzva of oneg Shabbos is exceedingly great” (Meiri on Meseches Shabbos, daf 118), “like eating mahn and fruits from Gan Eden” (*Kuntres Krias Shma* of the Chida, 7), and they accomplish “lofty things in heaven. He who abolishes one of them, his punishment is so great as to make

the hairs of the head stand on end” (*Chesed LaAlafim*, siman 275, s’if 5).

In the Midrash it says that the Shabbos meals are more important than 1000 fasts! (Tanchuma, B’Reishis, chapter 3). And it says, “Whoever takes pleasure on Shabbos is like one who honors G-d” (Tanna D’vei Eliyahu, chapter 26).

These amazing statements help us understand the holy Zohar that says, “At the Shabbos meal, a Jew eats from the king’s meal and with the king himself, at the same table!”

In sifrei Chassidus it says that the food at the Shabbos meals are like korbanos in the Beis HaMikdash, and

just as the Kohanim ate korbanos as Hashem’s agents, so too, a Jew eats the Shabbos meals as Hashem’s agent. And since “a person’s shliach is like himself,” when a Jew eats on Shabbos it’s like Hashem is eating!

Aside from this, the Shabbos meal is the perfect opportunity for shaping the Chassidic character of the home and for providing a Chassidic chinuch for one’s children. During the rest of the week, a person is preoccupied with his work and household duties. His encounters with his family (usually in the evening) focus on action and things that have to be completed. Even those who can sit down with their

children and give them some special time during the week are still limited in time and the time together lacks the special serene quality that Shabbos has.

The Rebbe said (Yud Shevat 5734, sicha 8) that Shabbos elevates a Jew a hands-breath off the ground. Financial concerns take up less space than on a weekday. At the Shabbos meals, the father can sit with his children, relaxed, listening, complimenting, helping and advising. The children, who generally see their father coming home from work tired and busy with “adult” pursuits like parnasa, can enjoy their Chassidic father who sits with them, telling them Chassidic stories, asking what they learned that week, singing, and most importantly – happy and free to be with them. This contributes tremendously to their Chassidic upbringing as well as to the serenity and peace in the Chassidic home.

Furthermore, remember that “shalom bayis” is not only about preserving a pleasant atmosphere in the home and about proper interactions between husband and wife; it’s also about giving one another nachas ruach, and surely the Shabbos meals contribute towards this.

One need not speak at length about the enormous importance in eating the meal together (which the wife worked hard to prepare), for laying the proper foundations for a peaceful and warm Chassidic home. As for young couples who will soon enter more turbulent times – if the foundations are strong, they will strengthen the home for years to come.

Even those of you who are reading this article and don’t relate to the descriptions herein, because your experience is different, both on weekdays and Shabbos, can readily appreciate the differences and

FARBRENGEN OR LEARN CHASSIDUS?

Although the article discussed the importance of being with one’s family at the Shabbos meal, it’s important to emphasize the significance of the farbrengen, to make clear that other “good practices” don’t always have to be at the expense of a farbrengen.

In Lieplei lived a Chassid of the Tzemach Tzedek who was very wealthy and lacked nothing materially or spiritually. One day, this Chassid decided that he was wasting his time farbrenging with the Chassidim when he could be sitting and learning. The Chassid contributed towards the farbrengens but stopped attending.

Some time passed and the Chassid lost his financial standing. His shalom bayis as well as his health were compromised too. The Chassid went to the Rebbe who asked him to describe his daily schedule. The Chassid mentioned that he no longer “wasted” the time he used to spend at farbrengens and he learned Chassidus instead.

The Tzemach Tzedek answered: This is the reason for the negative events you have been experiencing. When Chassidim sit at a farbrengen and bless each other with l’chaim, and they respond, “*l’chaim tovim u’l’shalom*,” these words are a channel for blessings:

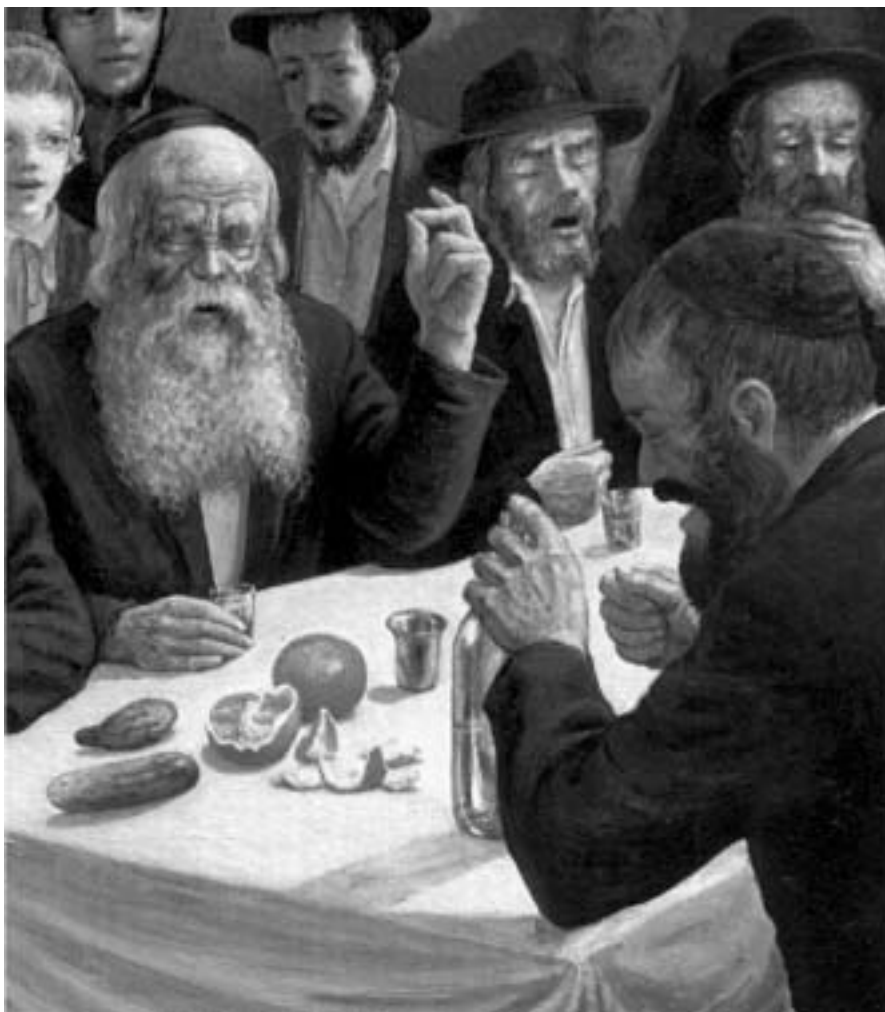
L’chaim: health

Tovim: success in parnasa

U’l’shalom: shalom bayis

When you don’t sit and farbreng, it’s possible, G-d forbid, to lose out on these brachos.





essential advantages of the Shabbos meals with one's family.

And then there's the Chassidishe farbrengen, with a mashpia and ziknei ha'Chassidim. For many men, the farbrengen is their lifeline! From when a man leaves the Chassidishe warmth of Tomchei T'mimim and goes out into the world to establish his home, he is constantly busy with parnasa, health, chinuch, and other things that preoccupy him, as everybody is well aware.

As time goes by, his "Chassidishe moisture" dries up and the Chassidishe young man turns into a balabus and all his spiritual matters are done by rote.

In order to remain a Chassidishe man with the special energy reserved

for T'mimim, which spurs them on constantly to be mehader, to learn more, to make spiritual progress, every so often you need to pause in life and sit down at a Chassidishe farbrengen in order to renew your spiritual batteries.

The farbrengen restores him to the point he was at when he left to start a home, and once again he is filled with Chassidic chayus.

Every man, especially in the early years, feels the need for a proper Chassidishe farbrengen. On Shabbos Mevarchim there is a special horaa, a takana of the Rebbe Rayatz, to farbreng.

So, on the one hand we know about the special qualities of the Shabbos meal and the importance of having it with one's family. On the other hand, a farbrengen on Shabbos Mevarchim is the "king's command" and it's especially necessary for everyone's Chassidishe wellbeing, which will also contribute towards the spiritual atmosphere of his home.

CAN A COMPROMISE BE MADE?

One might wonder about all that has been said until now when the solution is so simple. Why not stay for some amount of time at the farbrengen and then go home, make Kiddush, and have a proper meal with one's family?

This solution is okay, but it's a b'dieved solution. Why? Because when you sit down to a farbrengen for a limited amount of time, you have one foot out the door. It's very hard to get into the farbrengen that way.

Another reason is that it's hard to concentrate at the farbrengen because of the timing. The farbrengen usually takes place in the afternoon and lasts until Mincha. For someone who got up early for T'hilim, it's not always easy to sit

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the farbrengen that
way.***

there at the farbrengen after hours of T'hillim, learning, and davening. Even sitting there a short while can be a challenge.

Most importantly, how much can you get from a farbrengen when you sit there for a short time? Generally, the time when things get really good, is long after the start of the farbrengen.

Some go home right after davening, make Kiddush and start the meal, and as soon as the meal is over they go back to shul, instead of napping, where those farbrenging have gotten into things. Some do a variation on this, sitting a little while at the farbrengen, hearing something, and then going back home.

In any case, the purpose of this discussion is to show that a solution is needed so that everybody (including women and children) can benefit from the farbrengen without losing out on other things that are no less important.

WHAT DO THE REBBEIM SAY?

At this point, let us open the *Kovetz Michtavim* at the back of the T'hillim (p. 192) and see what the Rebbe Rayatz says:

On Shabbos Kodesh Mevarchim HaChodesh, Anash should gather early in the morning in shul and recite the entire T'hillim. After saying T'hillim, they should learn for an hour or so, a maamer Chassidus that is understood by all, followed by davening. The time for the farbrengen should be set according to the conditions of the place, where they reside, for material and spiritual success.

In this letter, the Rebbe Rayatz makes three takanos for Shabbos Mevarchim: 1) the recitation of the entire T'hillim, 2) learning a maamer Chassidus, 3) farbrengen.

If you read the Rebbe's words

carefully, you will notice that he designates a time for the saying of T'hillim and the learning of the maamer (T'hillim – early in the morning, followed by the maamer Chassidus). With the farbrengen though, the Rebbe says it should be made according to the conditions of the time and place where you are!

If you look at the paragraph before that, the Rebbe even says:

And in the winter months they should arrange the time for the farbrengen on Motzaei Shabbos.

So the Rebbe Rayatz states explicitly that the farbrengen of Shabbos Mevarchim does not have to take place within the 25 hours of Shabbos, but can also take place on Motzaei Shabbos. The main thing is that it should be convenient for the people in each location.

The Rebbe refers to this in a clear letter (volume 10, p. 3):

I have heard – though it isn't

fully clear – that a significant number of Anash and the T'mimim are not eating at home on Shabbos Mevarchim, and seemingly, this is not referring to the third meal, but about the second meal. That means that from the time they arrive in shul, they first return home in the evening or even after Maariv.

I don't know whether also in previous years the Sages were pleased with this behavior. On the one hand, they fought against the way the world does things and balabatishe behavior. However, on the other hand, neither did they want behavior to the other extreme as an ongoing way of behavior. This is even though sometimes it is necessary to "go out of the vessels," otherwise the light grows dimmer and dimmer, and from time to time one needs to revive oneself. But the behavior of "with all your might," actual mesirus nefesh, etc., needs to be occasional, and is not meant to be

PRACTICAL SUGGESTION

In a talk about chinuch given by Rabbi Yitzchok Isaac Landau, of the Chabad yeshiva in Tzfas and menahel ruchni in the Chabad yeshiva in Ohr Yehuda, he said:

I would like to conclude with a practical suggestion. We are used to there being a farbrengen and the husband sitting for a long time while his wife is in the women's section or at home waiting for her husband.

Everything is important, but these farbrengens are no comparison to the farbrengens one makes within the small family setting. The father, mother, and children sit together at the table and farbreng. The family is a framework within which you can instill Chassidische hergeshim, Chassidische behavior, and hiskashrus to the Rebbe. The price is very low – a bottle of soda and some nosh – and the children are happy to sit there.

One says a pasuk, another tells what he knows about the significance of that day, and they listen to what their father says about the day, what the Rebbe says, how one needs to be connected to the Rebbe. This is how a Chassidische atmosphere permeates the home.

You mustn't forego the family farbrengen. It affects the Chassidische chinuch in the home and then you will see how your child farbrengs with his and her friends.

(From a speech given during Yemei Iyun "Parents as Educators," presented by Aguch of Eretz Yisroel, Av 5765)

ongoing behavior, as it's explained in a number of places in Chassidus.

This pertains to this point – that if they listen to me, they will arrange farbrengens on Shabbos Mevarchim in such a way that the light of the farbrengen enters the house of each of the people farbrenging too, and the start of bringing that light should take place on Shabbos itself. Certainly, even on Shabbos in the winter the farbrengen should be divided or arranged in such a way that they can eat the Shabbos meal at home and be able to tell the family about the inyan of Shabbos Mevarchim in general, and about this Shabbos Mevarchim in particular.

So we see that the Rebbe places great importance on a Shabbos meal at home and bringing the light of the farbrengen into the home. The Rebbe puts the meal at home, as an inyan of #1 importance, which is why the farbrengen needs to be arranged in such a way that it works out with the Shabbos meal at home.

THE REBBE FARBRENGS AT 1:30

The Rebbe is very clear in this letter, and therefore, things ought to be arranged accordingly. Yet I'll mention a few points that come up every time this topic is raised.

One point that is often made is that the Rebbe farbrenged at 1:30, so why shouldn't we do as the Rebbe did? The answer is that there is a big difference between a regular farbrengen and a farbrengen with the Rebbe! Many women attended the Rebbe's farbrengens, and almost every woman wants her husband to attend the Rebbe's farbrengens. Certainly, the Rebbe's farbrengens contribute towards all inyanim being done in a better way.

Some say that "we are Chassidim" and a Chassid's life is not routine and regulated. This is the case with shlichus. This is the case on Yomim

Tovim when fathers and sons are not home much – in Tishrei they go to the Rebbe and those who don't go go out on mivtzaim. On Chanuka and Purim, they go around to hospitals, etc., on mivtzaim. Erev Pesach they give out shmura matza and organize public s'darim, and so too, the Shabbos table is not as usual. The very fact that the father is at the farbrengen, they say, is what makes a Chassidische impact on his children.

This approach has validity, but often we don't pay attention and we miss the main thing and the goal, as the Rebbe says, "They can eat the Shabbos meal at home and be able to

How much can you get from a farbrengen when you sit there for a short time? Generally, the time when things get really good, is long after the start of the farbrengen.

tell the family about the inyan of Shabbos Mevarchim in general and about this Shabbos Mevarchim in particular." In other words, one should conduct a comfortable Shabbos meal with Chassidische family conversation.

Another claim is that their wives give their consent. This is not something that can be responded to here in this article because such consent needs to be carefully examined, and this consent doesn't necessarily trump the obligation to educate the children within the setting of the Shabbos meal (as mentioned earlier). Anybody whose

wife says that she gives her consent must consult with his mashpia to clarify whether he can rely on this consent.

Many years ago, the noted mashpia R' Chaim Shaul Brook held a farbrengen on Shabbos. He was a big fighter against "balabatishkait," and yet, at that farbrengen when he noticed a young Chassidische man who was recently married and was sitting there at the farbrengen, he sharply ordered him to leave immediately and go home and eat with his wife and only then, return.

PRACTICALLY SPEAKING

The first point to internalize is that the Shabbos meal at home is important and vital for a Chassidische family, to preserve the family-educational-Chassidische quality of the home. By the same token, we need to know that a Chassidische man must participate in Shabbos Mevarchim farbrengens.

In order to fulfill both these needs, the best thing to do is – as our Rebbeim suggest – to push off the farbrengen until Motzaei Shabbos when necessary. This allows enough time for a proper farbrengen and it can be combined with Melaveh Malka. At this time, one can participate after resting up from the spiritual work of Shabbos, which is an advantage over an afternoon farbrengen.

There are communities that leave right after Musaf, have Mincha earlier, and then follow that with a farbrengen. This way too, people show up for the farbrengen refreshed and relaxed.

It's important to think about these solutions, because the main point is, as the Rebbe says, "that the light of the farbrengen enters the house of each of the people farbrenging."

May we soon merit to sit at the farbrengen with our king at our head.

RETURNING TO SPREAD THE LIGHT OF TORAH AND CHASSIDUS

BY BENZION SASSON

*The city of Belem in Northern Brazil is thousands of kilometers from the center of Brazil and is close to the jungle, and as such is relatively primitive. This is the home of a Jewish community whose members feared the dangerous dish of gefilte fish and thought that Shma Yisroel should be said only immediately before leaving this world. * When Reb Disraeli Zagury and his wife Sarah arrived here on shlichus, they turned everything around. If you want to send your children to their school, you had better bring proof that they're Jewish!*

A YOUNG MAN'S DREAM

"Teacher, I want Moshiach. When will Moshiach come?" M. a young boy, one of the students of the Chabad School, asked the above questions of Mrs. Sarah Zagury. The boy is all of six years old, his father is not Jewish, but he is already learning, for a number of years, in

the school because his mother wanted him to have a Jewish education.

This anecdote would have seemed like a wild dream until 22 years ago, which is when the shluchim R' Disraeli Zagury and his wife Sarah arrived in town. Through their mesirus nefesh and

tremendous determination, the couple transformed the city from a spiritual wilderness and revolutionized the local Jewish population.

R' Disraeli himself has a unique history. He was born in Belem to a traditional Sephardic family. His father served as the mohel, cantor, and Torah reader for the community, due to the education he received at the hands of his own father, who was a devout Jew.

However, young Disraeli did not receive any Jewish education, because there was no Jewish school in the city or any other educational system to provide Jewish studies. Occasionally he would have lessons in reading and writing Hebrew, but aside from that – nothing. The main problem was that the parents themselves lacked basic knowledge of Judaism.

Things began to change at home when Disraeli's older brothers left to study in the Chabad Yeshiva in Petropoulos. Disraeli, impressed with his brothers' experience,

The stunning new Chabad house
Inset: Rabbi Disraeli Zagury



decided to leave home to study in yeshiva for a year.

This turned out to be an excellent decision, one that influenced him greatly. After spending just one year in yeshiva, not yet age 14, he told his friends, "I'm going to learn and grow, and then I will return to Belem and teach Torah to the Jewish community." At the time, Disraeli had no inkling of a concept called "shlichus," yet he began formulating the idea of changing the city of his birth, and transforming it into a dynamic Jewish community.

In 1982, after six years in the yeshiva in Petropoulos and a year in Kfar Chabad, Disraeli married his wife Sarah. After the wedding, he returned to Petropoulos for another year of learning. He continued to learn until he realized that the time had come to put into action the plan which he had begun thinking about at age 14.

In 1984, after setting things up with the shliach Reb Shabsi Alperin, they received a bracha from the Rebbe, and so, they found themselves on the road to shlichus in Belem.

FIGHTING FOR BASIC JUDAISM

Belem, or its translation from Portuguese, Bethlehem, is the capital of the state of Para, in northern Brazil. The city has over two million residents, with only one thousand Jews. Due to its location, the city serves as a transit point to other South American countries, as well as for those interested in touring the jungle. As such, the Beis Chabad in the city is the northernmost Chabad presence in the country.

The beginning of their journey as shluchim in the city is something they are not likely to forget. Assimilation, which had spread to

almost every family in the community, as well as other problems, almost caused them to give up. At some point, the wife of the shliach felt that it was simply a waste of time and she began seriously considering leaving.

Even today, years later, she says it is difficult for her to deal with the extreme assimilation, despite the great change in the community since the opening of the Beis Chabad. One of the elders of the city, considered a rabbi, welcomed the shluchim to the city by citing

was in the area of Jewish education. The only school geared for Jewish children was itself a source of assimilation. Only twenty days after the shluchim arrived, they opened a small school, which only accepted Jewish children. At the beginning, they discovered that some of the students were of questionable lineage, but later they set clear registration guidelines. Any student must have a Jewish-born mother, or one with a kosher conversion certification.

During the second year of the



Graduation, the children singing the Alef-Beis song

the verse regarding the plague of the firstborn, "There was no home where there was no dead." He explained that there was no family in the city without at least one intermarriage, and warned them that if they told people that this means the children are gentiles, they would offend the entire family. The shluchim had to be firm but sensitive on this delicate topic in order to avoid alienating the local community.

The main problem they faced

school's existence, after a lengthy campaign aimed at the community, the non-Jews began taking their children out of the school of their own volition, insulted that their children were not accepted as Jews.

The shluchim also undertook an anti-assimilation campaign aimed at the community at large and its institutions. At the beginning, many people did not understand why they were not Jewish, despite the fact that they only ate kosher food and participated in the holiday prayer

services and the like. However, the shluchim's efforts, carried out with patience and sensitivity, were effective.

The classes in the home of the shluchim and in the synagogue attracted many young people who were not Jewish. They had difficulty reconciling themselves with their problematic status, but in time, the message started to penetrate. Those young people began to feel out of place, because in almost every class or lecture, the shliach addressed the topic, whether directly or otherwise.



A Lag B'Omer play performed by the children of the school

They ultimately understood that they didn't belong.

ADDRESSING THE COMMUNITY

The reaction to the arrival of Rabbi Zagury was mixed. The older people had a hard time seeing him as a rabbi because they remembered him as young boy playing with the other kids in the neighborhood. Conversely, there was a feeling of respect as the son of his father, who was a religious figure and a well-

respected member of the community. Additionally, many people simply thirsted for Yiddishkeit.

The local community, traditionally Sephardic, did not know how to respond to the young rabbi. His policies on the intermarriage and conversion issue angered many and the fact that the couple practiced Minhag Chabad, made them feel like they came to change their customs.

This fear of change went to such

extremes that when the shlucha served gefilte fish, a traditional Ashkenazic Shabbos dish, the older man who also served as "rabbi" began to protest. The shlucha, herself of Syrian Sephardic extraction, could not begin to understand what was so terrible. However, there wasn't much she could do except keep quiet.

Many of the community members who felt put out by the rules imposed by the shluchim regarding Jewish identity for the

schoolchildren and as a prerequisite to participate in other activities said cynically, "The rabbi came to Belem. Now, let him solve all the problems."

I asked Rabbi Zagury how they managed to succeed in the face of such opposition. "We were young and determined to succeed," he explained, "But the main thing is the power of the Rebbe, which we felt every step of the way."

"It was a great pity, the extreme ignorance of the local Jews," Sarah Zagury added. "This drove us to do everything possible to help them."

Here is one interesting development, which helped them immeasurably. One of the elders gave a speech in the synagogue every Shabbos for many years. This man liked the fact that the shluchim had come to their community, and he gave over his position to the shliach. This offered Rabbi Zagury a unique opportunity to address the community each Shabbos, and he used it to expand their knowledge of basic Jewish ideas and concepts.

A PRIVATE HOME FOR THE PUBLIC

The first step was setting up a system of shiurim for individuals and families, and starting a Jewish school. Three days a week, there were two, two-and-a-half hour study cycles, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. One group would go to public school in the morning and study Jewish subjects in the afternoon, and another group the reverse. Twice a week, there were evening classes for two groups of boys between the ages of 14-17, and the other evenings there were classes for older boys.

Slowly, the private home of the shluchim turned into a warm and loving home for the entire community, young and old. The

people sent their children to the day camps and other activities once they realized that the Chabad House existed only to help them.

On a number of occasions the shluchim discovered bizarre superstitions and incorrect beliefs held by the local Jews. One example is that of a young boy who studied in the Chabad school. Every time his mother heard him say “Shma Yisroel,” she would become terrified, because she thought this

prayer is said exclusively when a person dies. It took time to convince her that it actually is a prayer that leads to “increase your days.”

During their first month in Belem, the couple lived in the home of Rabbi Zagury’s parents, until Pesach when they moved into their own apartment. Despite the fact that it was a few days before the holiday and the apartment was not yet fully furnished, they very much wanted

to host guests of their own for the holiday. One problem was that the shlucha was still unfamiliar with the place, and wasn’t familiar with the local produce.

They received a phone call from the Federation, asking if they could host an Israeli couple looking for a seider arrangement, which included sleeping accommodations. The shluchim invited them gladly.

When the guests arrived, R’

THE STORY OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE CHABAD HOUSE IN BELEM

A SURPRISING ANSWER

During the first decade of the shluchim’s arrival, they rented a small building for the Chabad house. In 5752, the building was bought but despite the urgent need to expand it, they did not have the money for construction and not even for renovations, because of previous debts. The Chabad house had no wealthy patron to support it and there was a real problem in paying the water, telephone, and electric bills as well as the teachers’ salaries.

This is how things went on for a number of years until the shliach decided to speak to a certain well-known wealthy man in Brazil. But before doing so, as with everything he did, he wrote to the Rebbe. The answer he opened to in the *Igros Kodesh* was surprising. It said that it wasn’t a beautiful building that would attract people but their mesirus nefesh!

He understood from the answer that the wealthy person wouldn’t help them out and so, despite the crowding, he managed with a small donation.

Not even thirty days passed from when he opened to this answer and a famous, Jewish politician came to the city, a man by the name of Moshe Lipnik a”h, who was very close to Chabad. He was amazed by the work of the shluchim and by the incredible change in the city,

despite the mediocre material conditions.

The straw that broke the camel’s back was when Mr. Lipnik joined the Shabbos meal that took place in the yard of the Chabad house, in the blistering heat, because there was no room inside. On the spot, he decided to help the Chabad house.

ANGEL FROM HEAVEN

At first, the shliach and his wife didn’t believe anything would happen, but after Shabbos when things began to move, they felt that Mr. Lipnik was sent to them as an angel from heaven. That Sunday, Mr. Lipnik began to take action, even though it’s a day off throughout the country.

He called a Jewish engineer by the name of Moshe Nechamias, who gave of his time and expertise to help the Chabad house without taking a dime (or Brazilian *real*). Even when he showed up on Fridays in order to buy challos for Shabbos, he did not accept them gratis, and insisted on paying for them.

Mr. Lipnik said that he wouldn’t leave until he saw the construction beginning. He kept his word and even afterwards, when he left the city, he kept in touch from wherever in the world he was. He followed the progress of the construction and continued to take care of financing the project, transferring the necessary funding

Not even thirty days passed from when he opened to this answer and a famous, Jewish politician came to the city. He was amazed by the work of the shluchim and by the incredible change in the city, despite the mediocre material conditions.

Disraeli opened the door for them. The husband seemed confused by his youthful appearance and asked him if his father was home. When R' Disraeli explained that he was the rabbi, the Israeli tourist seemed stunned.

The couple spent a pleasant Pesach in the company of the rabbi and his wife, and the guest, who grew up in a kibbutz of HaShomer HaTzair, began to show great interest in Judaism. Although they

planned to stay only for Pesach, due to various problems, which arose, they ended up spending an entire month in the home of the shluchim. During that month, they absorbed a great deal and even joined the Bar Mitzva celebration for another guest, who put on t'fillin for the first time in his life.

Incidentally, at that time, the Rebbe instituted the daily study of Rambam. The man liked the idea and kept to the study schedule

throughout that period. The shlucha concluded the telling of this story by adding that the period in which they hosted the couple ended up strengthening the shluchim.

Over the years, they searched for a residence close to the shul, due to the high humidity in Belem, which makes walking long distances on a hot day intolerable. Many of the attendees of the shul began to avoid the home of the shluchim, because of the long walk. After many

each month to the Chabad house account. These large amounts came from his personal money or from donations collected from his wealthy friends. At a certain point the community also woke up and supported the project and construction moved along apace.

Mr. Lipnik spent his final Rosh HaShana at the Chabad house of Belem and he addressed the people about the importance of supporting the Chabad house.

During the meal, he told about his business colleague killed in the attack on the World Trade Center. Shortly before the attack, his friend had donated an enormous sum to a mosad in Eretz Yisroel.

In a voice choked with emotion, he said: What is our life worth if we don't help others?

In Tamuz 5763, Moshe Lipnik a"h passed away.

MIZMOR SHIR CHANUKAS HA'BAYIS

Four years ago, the shluchim's dream came true with the small house transformed into a spacious three-storey building. It contains everything a Jewish community needs: A large shul, a school, a large library, a store for kosher food, a hall for events whose two

kitchens (meat and milk) work to provide kosher readymade food, and a game room and gym for the children.

About a year ago, the Chabad house celebrated 20 years since its founding. The event was marked with a Chanukas HaBayis, attended by all the people in the Jewish community of Belem. Some of the leading figures of the community spoke about the importance

of the Chabad house, and some of them told their personal story about how they were mekurav through the shluchim and the transformation it made in their lives.

One of the touching moments of the event was when a video was shown on a huge screen that showed pictures of the work of the Chabad house

over the years. The changes over the years were readily apparent.

The main speaker was Rabbi Disraeli Zagury, of course, who said at the end of his speech, "The fact that we are dedicating this building today, which was a dream we all had for years, should not satisfy us. From now on we need to work even more in order to do even more!"



unsuccessful tries, the shlucha decided to write to the Rebbe. The Rebbe's answer was encouraging and filled with many blessings. A short while later, the couple visited family friends, as is their yearly custom, on Isru Chag of Pesach.

During the meal, the hostess mentioned a house for sale. The next day, they went to check it out. They found the living quarters and the location to their liking, and a short while later, they purchased the house. Today, this house serves as a second home for the members of the community. On Shabbasos, the living room is packed with people, who are used to dropping in without a special invitation.

KASHRUS GOES FORTH FROM BELEM

The approach of the shluchim is to let each person find his own way, and everything is done in a pleasant manner. "Our main goal," says the shlucha, "is to fight assimilation by seeing to it that people **want** to be connected to Judaism. Many of the graduates of our school go on to other institutions and yeshivos around the world. They receive full support from the Chabad House, even when their own parents are not supportive.

"We do everything possible to see to it that they succeed and grow where they are, even if it is not a Chabad institution. We know that we saved them from being lost to the Jewish people, and that is enough for us. Currently, we have fifteen boys studying in various yeshivos around the world, not necessarily Chabad, and for us, there is no greater good fortune."

The school changed the face of Jewish education in the local Jewish community. There are currently thirty students enrolled, with many more clamoring to join but can't be accommodated due to lack of space.

The shlucha explains, "People here are thirsty for Judaism. They always wanted a proper Jewish educational framework for their children, but there was no opportunity. Now that we have our school they appreciate the education and development of their children." Over the past twenty-two years, over two hundred students passed through the school. Everyone calls Mrs. Zagury "the Mora," because most of the kids in town studied under her tutelage.

One of the local families sent three of their children to the school. The mother, who worked on a certain project, needed to spend a few months out of the country to complete her degree. She left the

children in the care of the loyal maid. Although the family did not yet fully observe kashrus, they were particular about not mixing milk and meat. One day, the maid served the children chicken and cheese. When the seven-year-old daughter realized, she began to scream and said, "No, no, the Mora doesn't let. It's forbidden!"

With the help of the excited kids, the family made great progress to the point that the maid of twenty years began observing Torah and mitzvos. The shlucha also points out that every activity in the school, Chabad House or seasonal classes, is permeated with Moshiach, recognizing him and anticipating his

THE FIFTH SON

Rabbi Disraeli and his wife Sarah's young son, who is the only boy in a family with four girls, was born as a result of an open miracle. After the first four daughters, the doctors told Sarah that because of medical complications, she would not be able to have additional children.

The family did all it could, both medically and through prayer. They nearly gave up until they consulted with one of the Rebbe's doctors, who calmed them and said she could have at least one more child.

Time passed and despite fears for the future, the shlucha decided to attempt a pregnancy despite the doctors' warnings. As soon as she made this decision, she wrote to the Rebbe about her concerns, while also writing about her problems in the shlichus, the pressure and the daily work versus the assimilation, which wrung the strength out of her. She simply wanted to escape. She felt that her work was a waste of time and energy because she saw no possibility of nurturing a Jewish community, as she had hoped of doing and wanted so badly.

The next night, she dreamed of the Rebbe. The dream was set in the school she runs. Around her, children played ball when she suddenly noticed the Rebbe looking and smiling at them. After watching them for a few seconds, the Rebbe said to her, "Your work is very important to me. You are not merely a kindergarten teacher who tells stories." The Rebbe went on to say, "Why are you sad? You have nothing to be stressed about. Everything will work out fine." And the dream was over.

From that point on, Sarah was relaxed and no longer felt fearful. She felt as though she had gotten a special potion that calmed her and transformed that entire period into one that was much more serene. Despite all the negative prognostications of the doctors, she gave birth to her fifth child.



Challos baked each week by the Chabad house, for the community

arrival.

The “special mitzva” of the shluchim in Belem, in addition to chinuch, is Mivtza Kashrus, the two areas most neglected before their arrival. For almost twenty years, the Chabad House prepares close to three hundred challos each Shabbos, which are purchased by the local residents. Rabbi Zagury provides kosher slaughtered meat and chicken with a superior hechsher for the community, as well as chalav Yisroel and other products.

In the early years, lacking a proper facility, the rabbi would shecht outside his home. After the slaughtering, they had to take all the chickens up to their private residence to wash and salt them. The whole building would be covered in salt, with bloodstains extending from the stairs to the street. One can only imagine the work involved to restore order.

However, thanks to those early chaotic days in Belem, all the Chassidim in Brazil get glatt kosher meat, as all the Lubavitchers throughout the country eat from the sh’chita of Rabbi Disraeli. He trained to become expert in the slaughtering of large animals, and since then, he is the official “shochet u’bodek” of Lubavitch in



Rabbi Zagury with talmidim of the smicha program

Brazil. The main demand is before the holidays, but as his wife points out, even when he is up all night shechting, he is ready on time for teaching in the school.

LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT

The work of the shluchim in Belem regarding authentic Jewish identity begs the telling of the following unique episode:

Rabbi Zagury often travels to outlying cities to reach out to Jews he has come to know over the years. One time, he arrived in a city which is an hour-drive from Belem. During

his stay, he encountered a Jew married to a gentile woman, living in dire poverty. The two developed a close connection, and from that day, the shliach saw to provide the man all his Jewish needs throughout the year, including a subscription to the *Chabad News* magazine. That Jew truly appreciated the devotion of the shliach and would regularly send letters of gratitude and appreciation.

A few days before he passed away, he called in his oldest son, a gentile, and told him, “My son, I am a Jew. It is vitally important to me to be buried as a Jew. I am asking you that when I die, you should contact Rabbi Zagury from Belem, and ask him to organize everything related to my funeral and burial.”

A few days later, he passed away on Shabbos. On Motzaei Shabbos, his son called Rabbi Zagury and told him about his father’s instructions. The rabbi asked the son to contact the local Chevra Kadisha and ask them to handle the arrangements. He promised to come as soon as possible to oversee the process.

The son called the Chevra Kadisha and was shocked by their response. They told him that they could not provide a burial for a gentile family. The family was greatly offended and angered and immediately decided to hold a regular funeral without any Jewish customs. They called a local funeral home and ordered a hearse to take their father’s body. When the rabbi heard what happened, he tried to dissuade them, but they refused to listen. They told him that the transport was already on the way, and as such, there was nothing to discuss.

He refused to give up, so he got in his car and arrived an hour later. He was glad to discover that through Divine Providence there

was a delay with the hearse, so he found the family at home with signs of a non-Jewish funeral being prepared.

Rabbi Zagury insisted that their father be buried as a Jew. The family, greatly offended by the treatment they received at the hands of the Chevra Kadisha, remained steadfast in their refusal, and Rabbi Zagury found himself at a loss.

However, he tried again and told the family, "If you let me bury your father according to his last will and testament, I promise to pray for his soul. I will say Kaddish for him for an entire year." He then proceeded to explain the importance of saying Kaddish for a departed soul.

For a moment, it seemed as though they calmed down, but then, the eldest son said, "We agree that you should take care of the burial, but how will we be able to visit the grave. You plan on burying him in Belem, and we don't have the money to travel every time we want to visit our father's grave. It is too far away, and therefore, impossible."

When Rabbi Zagury realized that this was the final obstacle, he responded, "Any time you want to visit your father's grave during the coming year, get in touch with me and I will pay for your travel expenses." The family conceded, and Rabbi Zagury loaded the corpse into his car, and headed out to the Jewish cemetery in Belem.

When he arrived, he remembered that it was a gentile holiday, and after some inquiries, he discovered that all the gravediggers were drunk. He didn't give up, but he called the workers at the Chabad House, who were already used to his "crazy" requests. Within a short time, the grave was ready, and the funeral took place. As promised, he said Kaddish for the deceased and continued throughout the first year.

GROWTH INDUSTRY

The Jewish community in Belem currently numbers 800 souls. After over twenty years of work, it can be said that the overwhelming majority of the community is connected with the Chabad House, and participate in the various activities throughout the year. The success of the Chabad House in Belem is well-known, as

tens of baalei t'shuva have left the city and moved to other communities. Quite a few Chabad families in S. Paolo are "products" of Chabad of Belem.

"The local community will never grow," explains the wife of the shliach. "The problem here is that those who become close to Judaism leave the city and move to Eretz

THE HIDDEN MEZUZA

Sarah Zagury relates:

18 years ago, one of the retirement-age women in the community became sick. Her condition worsened daily and the doctors advised a complicated operation. We asked the Rebbe and the answer was to ask a rav mora horaa. We consulted with Rabbi Yosef Feigelstock, rav of the Chabad community in Buenos Aires.

Rabbi Feigelstock said we should ask three doctors, and in the meantime, he wanted to consult with his rav in Canada.

Some time later, Rabbi Feigelstock called back and said that his rav had advised that they ask the doctors, "If your mother was the same age and in the same condition, would you do this dangerous operation on her?" To everyone's surprise, all of the doctors said No.

The shluchim, who relied on the Rebbe's bracha and horaa, waited for a miracle. A week after the diagnosis, a special medication came to Brazil from Germany that wasn't available in South America until then. The doctors said the medicine could be used instead of undergoing an operation. The woman took the medicine and lived another 10 years in good health.

That wasn't the end of the story. When she had been diagnosed with the illness, the woman's daughter was afraid for her mother's life and she asked her husband to write to the Rebbe. The Rebbe's answer was to check t'fillin and mezuzos.

The daughter and her husband had the t'fillin and all the mezuzos in her mother's large house checked, but to their surprise, there was no problem with any of them. A month later, the husband wrote again and this time too, the Rebbe's answer was: check t'fillin and mezuzos.

The husband didn't understand why the Rebbe was insisting on this and wrote to the Rebbe that everything had been checked. The Rebbe's answer was the same as the previous two times: check t'fillin and mezuzos.

The husband realized that the Rebbe was insisting for a reason and he decided to go around his mother-in-law's house again, checking it room by room. He came across a curtain and when he moved it, he discovered a door behind it. There was a pasul mezuza on this door.

The door was hardly ever used which is why it was covered with a curtain and had been overlooked.



The shliach at the bar mitzva celebration of a mekurav



Lubavitcher bachurim who became baalei t'shuva through the Chabad house in Belem

Yisroel or S. Paolo. In general, the younger generation prefers to move to more developed areas, so that very few who leave ever come back.

R' Disraeli, how do you see the changes after twenty-two years of work?

“The change is in the community itself. People have changed completely. If in the past, it was difficult for them to accept anything related to Judaism, now they want to hear. Those, who in the past would spend Shabbos on the beach, refuse to miss a minyan on Shabbos. Even the intermarriage problem is drastically reduced. The people for the most part understand the severity of the issue.”

Currently, a new couple arrived on shlichus to help in the Chabad House. The new shliach, R' Michoel Pezualo, is a former student of the “Mora,” who had undergone a personal tragedy as a young boy when his father passed away. Throughout the ordeal, the shluchim provided a support system for the boy. He continued his learning for twelve years, completing smicha and training in sh'chita and safrus. Now, he has returned, like Rabbi Zagury, to the city of his birth, to spread the light of Torah and Chassidus.

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THE SHEMTOV AND RIVKIN FILES

BY RABBI SHNEUR ZALMAN CHANIN

The two Chassidim were in great danger. Every police station throughout the vast Soviet Union had gotten their pictures along with instructions to introduce them to the muzzle of a pistol. It seemed as though this time, there was nowhere to run. Even R' Chaikel was afraid, but he consulted with R' Peretz Mochkin and the file was closed with the judicious use of some vodka.

PRAISE TO HASHEM FOR HE IS GOOD!

I heard the story about how my father managed to rescue R' Ben-Tzion Shemtov a"h and R' Mordechai Rivkin, with Hashem's help, in brief, a number of times. But I heard the other side of the story and additional details from R' Mordechai Rivkin himself on Shabbos, at the Sheva Brachos for his grandson, R' Menachem Mendel Gurewitz in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

At the Sheva Brachos meal, after he had had some mashke, R' Mordechai stood up and addressed the assemblage as follows:

"You ought to give praise and thanks to Hashem for saving me from the clutches of the secret police in the

Soviet Union, the infamous KGB, on my wedding day, for if not for that I would not be standing here before you, and consequently, there would have been no wedding nor Sheva Brachos for my grandson. Now is the time to publicize the great miracle that happened to me and to publicly thank my dear friend, Hashem's shliach, R' Chaikel Chanin. This is the story:

DANGEROUS PARTNERSHIP

During the war, I was a business partner with R' Ben-Tzion (Bentche) Shemtov. The business we were involved with could have cost us a minimum of ten years of exile with hard labor, but that was life in Russia back then.

The communists, who were

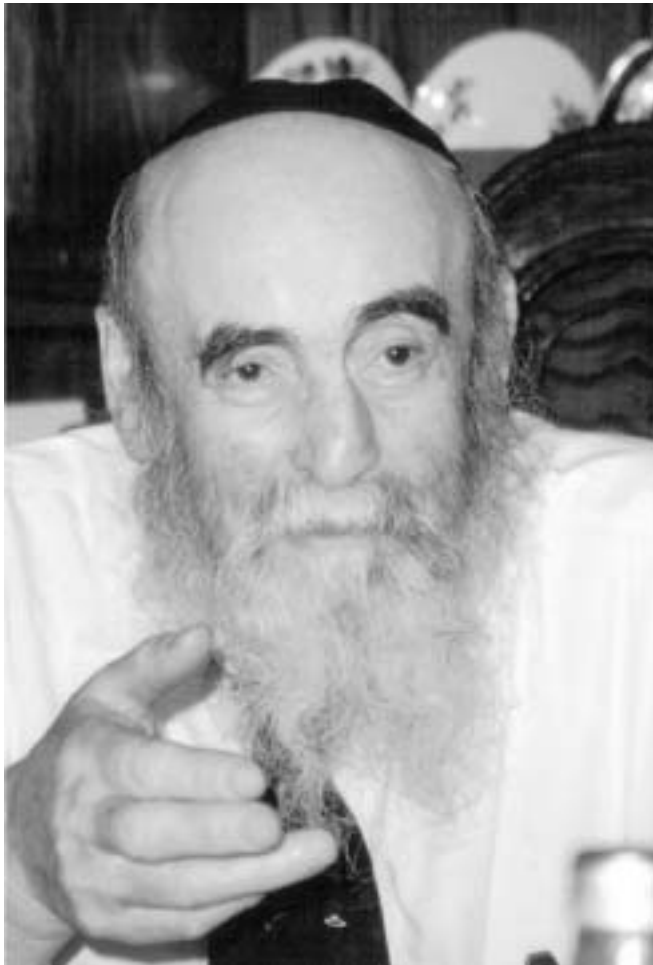
supposedly going to solve the problems of mankind, held that the state had absolute ownership over all property, and it preserved the economic and social equality of all its citizens. In other words, everything belonged to the state and everybody had to work for it.

According to the law, you could not buy and sell. There was no private selling or private ownership. Even citizen's titles belonged to the state. You could not call someone "sir" or "mister," but had to address everyone as "comrade," since everybody was a member of the communist party in equal standing and with the same rights.

Consequently, all these members had nothing to eat and so everyone worked in various illegal ways in order to survive. I also worked illegally because there was no other option.

Ben-Tzion and I obtained merchandise that belonged to the state and the army on the black market in Tashkent and we sent it by truck to Samarkand, where we sold it. R' Chaikel was usually the one who gave us the money so we could buy the merchandise, and we had to give an equal sum to R' Nissan Nemenov for Tomchei T'mimim in Samarkand.

One of my jobs and my part of the partnership was to get the merchandise from Tashkent to Samarkand. This was



Rabbi Mordechai Rivkin



Rabbi Ben-Tzion Shemtov

the most dangerous part of the job. The Russian government knew that its citizens could not survive without breaking the law and was aware that

everybody did so.

Therefore, in order to catch people with illegal merchandise and punish them, they set up roadblocks on the

main roads, especially the intercity roads, and they would check to see what all the cars and trucks contained. Aside from needing Heaven's mercy not to be caught, you also needed a certain measure of expertise to know how to arrange the paperwork so that the

merchandise appeared legal and so that the truck could pass the roadblocks in peace.

DANGER ON THE WEDDING DAY

I was responsible for the delivery for a number of years and all went well. A few days before my wedding, my partner suggested that he would take over the delivery to make things easier for me, so that he would arrange everything. Unfortunately, this time, the police confiscated the truck and contents.

The miracle was that R' Ben-Tzion had not traveled on that truck, because if he had, he would have been shot on the spot. I heard the ominous news about the truck being confiscated on



the morning of my wedding day and knew that it wouldn't be long before they were after me. What should I do? Run? Hide? Where could I run? When should I run? Today was my wedding day and you couldn't have a wedding without a chassan!

I decided to look for someone who knew the police, who could inquire as to whether the police were after me and how much time I had to play with. I needed to know what they knew about me, and what they would accuse me of. When I found out that R' Chaikel had connections in high places, this relieved me of some worry.

I sent one of my friends to R' Chaikel to tell him what was going on and to ask him to try to get information for me. Two hours later my friend was back with a message from R' Chaikel that I should relax because everything would be fine and he wished me that the wedding should take place in a good and auspicious time.

Aside from me, R' Chaikel, and two other people, nobody knew what had happened. I didn't say a word to my kalla or her parents. The wedding took place amidst great joy and my joy was double since I knew that things were all right. After the wedding, R' Chaikel told me all about how he knew what he knew and what he had done.

Baruch Hashem, I was saved and I left Russia and I am here now and recounting the miracle. At this opportunity, I would like to give thanks and praise to Hashem, for in addition to fear of death, I also feared the huge monetary loss were the truck and its contents confiscated, amounting to the loss of all I owned. Hashem helped and I was able to give Tomchei T'mimim the money I had to give them for R' Chaikel.

I would also like to testify today, in public, that the sums of money that went from R' Chaikel to R' Nissan to support Tomchei T'mimim, were enormous. This merit will stand by

him and his descendents.

* * *

When I returned home from Argentina, I told my father the details I had heard from R' Mordechai and my father told me the whole story with additional details:

MEETING AT DAWN

I learned every morning with Rav Yisroel Levin (Neveler). That day, while learning, I saw the head of the KGB of all of Uzbekistan through the window, whose residence was in Tashkent the capitol of Uzbekistan, walking near the house. I knew him well and we had secretly become good friends.

I occasionally gave him nice gifts so that in case, G-d forbid, something happened to one of Anash, he would come and tell me before giving orders to his men, the police, and the NKVD, who were the secret police. All the files from on high came to the chief of police and he was the one who passed on the orders to be carried out. He wielded the power of life and death, as it were.

We met often, in quiet places, far from the crowds, so that no one, neither our people nor the gentiles, would know of our friendship. The head of the secret police immediately reported to me when one of the Chassidim was caught dealing on the black market or when a Chassid was caught not sending his children to school, when someone did not show up at work on Shabbos or when someone was caught because of some other "crime." Baruch Hashem, over the years that we spent in Tashkent, I managed to save many of Anash with this connection.

That morning, when I saw the head of the NKVD walking around a poor neighborhood, on a street where R' Yisroel Neveler lived, my heart skipped a beat. I realized that my friend the goy was looking for me at that early hour because I had given him the address where he could find me early in the

morning in case of emergency.

THEIR PICTURES WERE CIRCULATED THROUGHOUT RUSSIA

The fact that I was friends with the head of the NKVD was a well-kept secret that very few knew about. I didn't even want to tell this information to my close friend, R' Yisroel Neveler, and I tried leaving the house quickly without arousing suspicion. I told R' Yisroel that I didn't feel well and I closed the Gemara and left.

As soon as I left the house, the head of the NKVD came over to me and said, "Comrade Chanin, I must speak to you about an urgent matter."

I didn't want to talk to him in public in that area so I asked him to follow me. I walked and he followed me until we reached a small park, where we sat on a bench to talk. He told me that he had been awakened in the middle of the night so he could go to the NKVD offices immediately. There, they had given him a file circulated throughout Russia, which had come by special courier, and contained documents about two Jews, along with their pictures. The file said that the police headquarters ordered all police to search for these two Jews and bring them in, dead or alive.

As he spoke, the goy took out the two pictures and asked me whether I recognized these men. Of course, I recognized them! The pictures were sharp and I found myself looking at my friends Ben-Tzion Shemtov and Mordechai Rivkin.

"First of all, you have to be cool," I heard myself saying to my friend, referring to myself as well. "Go back to your office and go over the file carefully and see what they are being accused of so we can come up with a plan about what to do next."

After agreeing that we would meet in the afternoon, we said goodbye.

A PLAN OF ACTION

I don't know what I looked like at the time but I imagine that the blood had rushed from my face. My teeth were chattering and I didn't know what to do. Two things in particular had me really worried.

Generally, when someone was in danger they ran away to a place where nobody knew them, thus saving themselves. However, since the order had gone out throughout the Soviet Union, running away wouldn't help them because they were being sought everywhere.

The second thing that worried me was that the police wanted them dead or alive, which meant they would kill them without a trial.

This was extremely serious and I knew that I had to act quickly, but I wanted to consult with someone about what to do, as it says in Mishlei 24, "and salvation with much counsel." I didn't want to talk to R' Yisroel Neveler, who was somewhat above matters of this world, so I decided to consult with R' Peretz Mochkin. He was a Chassid with a lot of life experience and I had already consulted with him on a number of occasions. R' Peretz had a "*breite un a glaiche kup un breite pleitzus*" (a broad mind and was straight-thinking and he had broad shoulders) and wasn't afraid to make decisions even when it was a matter of life and death.

Worried and absorbed in thought, I walked to R' Peretz's house and who did I see heading towards me? None other than R' Peretz himself. I saw this as hashgacha pratis, namely, that he had been sent to me on the street early in the morning in order to meet me. I told him what I had heard and after some discussion, we came up with a plan that relieved me somewhat and gave me the strength and confidence that I would be able, with Hashem's help, to straighten things out and save these two men from certain death.

Midday, I met with the head of the NKVD in a quiet place, in a park in a suburb of the city. He took out the file and I saw the two pictures again. He analyzed the situation, which sounded as bad as could be. The two Chassidim were accused of being rebels against the government, having stolen vital goods from the army during wartime, and in addition, they had dealt illegally.

Their pictures were publicized around the country and all members of the police were looking for them,

When I saw him putting the bundle away, a stone rolled off my heart. There was a rule back then in Russia, "If they take money, then you're out of danger," so I knew that the danger to their lives had passed.

which meant that fleeing Tashkent was of no use. If someone identified them on the street, he wouldn't hesitate to shoot.

"Now Comrade Chanin, even if I want to save them, what can I do?"

BIUR CHAMETZ

It's good that I was sitting at the time, otherwise I would have collapsed. The wind that blew the leaves seemed to me like "the voice of Hashem traveling in the Garden with the wind of the day," and helped me

overcome my fear. I took out an envelope from my pocket with half a million rubles in it, a fortune nowadays, all the more so back then, and gave it to the head of the KGB. I said it was a gift for his wife and children. I knew he was a servant of the state, but between us, I also knew that he needed the money and I asked him not to decline my gift.

When I saw him putting the bundle away, a stone rolled off my heart. There was a rule back then in Russia, "If they take money, then you're out of danger," so I knew that the danger to their lives had passed.

I suggested that he walk with me in the park and maybe, as we walked, we would come up with an idea about how to handle the situation.

We strolled and as we passed a bar, I asked him whether he'd like some vodka and he said sure, a drop of vodka would help sharpen his mind. When we entered, I noticed a fireplace and I said I wanted to sit near it. I ordered a cup for my friend and asked him permission to examine the file.

When I saw that he was busy with his drink, I took the file and threw it into the fireplace. Before he realized what had happened, the document had turned to ashes.

"That's my plan," I said. "You have no file, no documents, no pictures, and you don't know these people. Nobody but you knows that you received this order and therefore, if someone asks you about it, you can say that you didn't receive anything and you don't know what they are talking about. See? Nothing remains of it."

THE CHIEF SOBERED AND AGREED!

It took the KGB chief a long time to recover. He scratched his forehead, sighed and said, "Comrade Chanin, I am grateful for the expensive gift you gave me and my family. G-d will repay you. I admire your courage and I

especially admire the brotherly love between you Jews. I see how you endangered yourself for your fellow Jews and surely, just in the merit of this act, G-d will protect you and your friends, and in your merit will protect me too.

"I don't know what tomorrow will bring since they can chop off my head tomorrow too, but tell your friends that as long as my head is still on my shoulders and I am alive and fulfilling the post of NKVD chief in this district, nothing will happen to them. They can live here in Tashkent in peace, but for their own good they should not leave Tashkent even for one day."

When I saw that the danger had

The miracle was that R' Ben-Tzion had not traveled on that truck, because if he had, he would have been shot on the spot...

passed, I decided to tell Ben-Tzion and Mordechai to watch out and try to stay hidden at least for a while, but I suddenly remembered that Mordechai's wedding was going to take place that night. I decided that in order not to disturb the simcha of the chassan and

kalla, I would wait until after the wedding to tell them the news, as I thought they were unaware of the danger.

However, Mordechai Rivkin sent a messenger to me and I told him not to worry because everything was taken care of and he should go to the chuppa with simcha.

When I look back at the chain of events, I don't stop thanking Hashem for the open miracles that I saw. I give praise and thanks to Hashem for the great merit that I had to save two Jews from the sword of Eisav the wicked. Both men raised families, generations of Chassidim. Fortunate is my lot.




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Long Live the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach Forever and Ever!

‘THEY WILL SEE... AND THEY WILL FEAR YOU’

TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY

“And he will compel all Israel” is said in reference to Melech HaMoshiach, and if you ask: That’s fine for those who are exposed to the influence of the shluchim and mitvzaim, but what are people who require that “he will compel” in its simplest sense? Yes, Melech HaMoshiach will work on them directly – not through an angel, not through a shliach, but him in all his glory.

This amazing story happened to R. Yosef Levy, vice principal of the professional training college in Haifa’s Neve Dovid section. R. Yosef Levy was among the founding participants of the *Tanya* shiur in the city’s Ain HaYam neighborhood more than a quarter of a century ago, given by HaRav **Shmuel Fromer**.

Today, R. Yosef Levy continues to participate in the central Thursday night farbrengen in Haifa’s Neve Yosef section, after Rabbi Fromer’s *Tanya* class.

At one such *Tanya* shiur just before Yud-Alef Nissan, Rabbi Fromer

distributed a festive edition of the weekly Chabad brochure *Sichas HaGeula*, with an attractive full-color picture of the Rebbe MH”M waving his holy hand in blessing. At the first farbrengen after Pesach, R. Yosef Levy told about the open miracle that happened to him in the merit of that picture, bringing shivers to all those in attendance.

Beis Moshiach approached R. Yosef Levy with a request to publicize this story, and he obliged by writing the story in its entirety, down to the very last detail, as follows:

* * *

As you know, I am a teacher at this well-known college in Haifa, where many students enter my office each day with a variety of requests for assistance in their studies, permission to take an urgent leave of absence, or to discuss certain personal crises in their lives.

When I arrive at my office each day, I customarily place my briefcase, which contains my wallet and various documents such as my driver’s license, identity card, etc., on my desk, where it remains until I leave work to go home. Among my documents, I always have the famous picture of the Rebbe shlita, waving his holy hand in blessing.

At the end of a typical workday shortly before Pesach this year, I came in the office to take my briefcase – and discovered that it had disappeared. The surrounding area was searched thoroughly, but despite all the inquiries, it turned out that no one had seen a thing. I came to the inescapable conclusion that someone had entered my office undisturbed and had simply snatched my briefcase in broad daylight. I contacted the police that very same day and lodged a complaint on this apparent act of thievery.

During the evening hours of that

difficult and annoying day, as I had many troubling thoughts about the thieves and what they done with my very important documents, I traveled to a farbrengen conducted by HaRav Dov Ginsburg, Chabad House Director in Haifa. As the farbrengen progressed, I closed my eyes and asked the Rebbe shlita for a bracha for success, directing my thoughts to the sad and troubling matter that had occurred that day.

After the conclusion of the farbrengen during the late hours of the evening, I headed home together with my son, who had accompanied me. A short distance from the house, we saw two figures sitting at the edge of the sidewalk who appeared to be waiting for someone to come. As we approached them, the two stood up, tall and intimidating. They advanced towards us.

The taller one turned to me with some hesitancy and asked, "Are you Yosef Levy?"

"Yes," I replied, as I wondered what this man wanted from me at such a late hour of the evening.

He proceeded to provide an answer directly. "We are the people who took your briefcase today. We have come to return it to you!"

I was rendered utterly speechless and stood there frozen in total shock.

"If you will follow us in your car," the man said plainly, "we'll show where we threw all of your documents."

My son regained his senses first and replied, "Wait, I'll go to the house and bring a large flashlight so we'll be able to find the documents in the dark."

Imagine to yourself this peculiar

situation: The two thieves traveling in the vehicle ahead of us, and we're following them with a great fear in our hearts: What more were these two plotting to do on such a dark night...

After driving for about fifteen minutes, we came to a very dark location, where the two stopped their car. We also got out of our car, holding a shining flashlight in our hands. We went after the thieves into the thick shrubs.



We began to search for the documents that the thieves had hastily tossed in every direction, and slowly but surely, we gathered up document after document, piece by piece, until baruch Hashem, we had managed to retrieve all the papers – except for one item. The Rebbe shlita's picture was still missing.

I turned to the man and said, "I'm missing one thing of great value to me – the Rebbe's picture."

"Yes, I know," the strongman replied, "and with your permission, I'll come to your office tomorrow morning, because it's very late right now, and I'll tell you the whole story."

Naturally, I couldn't sleep a wink that night, "a night of watching" that had come before the Pesach holiday... I waited for the morning light as if I was waiting for the light of Moshiach, in anticipation of the conclusion of the case. I sought to implement the Rebbe's eternal instruction of "*tracht gut, vet zein gut*" (think good, it will be good).

Morning came, and after davening, I went to my office. At the exact moment that had been promised, there was a hesitant knock at the door. These two men entered, closed the door behind them, and sat by my desk.

"Of course, you want to know the whole story," one of them said. I did indeed.

"We were in desperate need of money just in order to buy basic necessities. We saw how you place your briefcase each day on your desk in the exact same place. When we passed by your office that day, we saw that the door was open and no one was around. Unable to restrain ourselves, we dashed in, grabbed the briefcase, and ran.

"We took the money from the briefcase, threw the documents into the bushes, and left the scene fast.

"Towards the evening, we sat down to count the money, and found together with the cash one single dollar bill with this picture of the Rebbe placed inside."

The man then pulled the Rebbe shlita's picture out of his shirtpocket, the picture that I always carry in my

briefcase. The man continued his story, trembling.

“The look of the Rebbe in this picture penetrated deeply within me, and I wasn’t able to take my eyes off of him. Then, the strangest and most amazing thing that had ever happened to me in my life took place. I felt as if the Rebbe was talking to me from the picture:

“STOP! RETURN THE BRIEFCASE!”

“I was stunned, and I thought that I was imagining things. But again, I felt as if the Rebbe was speaking to me: **‘STOP! RETURN THE BRIEFCASE!’**

“What I felt during those moments is something that I will never forget – ever...

“We decided to return the briefcase to you immediately, in spite of the great danger in exposing our crime, which might result in our sitting for a long time behind bars. That’s it – we’re now in your hands, for better or for worse,” the man sighed.

I immediately promised the two that I would go straight to the police and drop the charges against them, and so I did before the day was out. (Since I realized the state of their economic distress, I agreed that they could keep the money as “*Kimcha D’Pischa*”.)

The policeman at the local precinct said that in his long career, he had never met someone who filed theft charges and then dropped them the very next day. “We have apparently come to the days of Moshiach,” he declared.

As for me, I say: Days of Moshiach? Absolutely, and one of the signs of the Redemption, as the Prophet says, “and the glory of G-d shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of G-d has spoken.”

* * *

The Rebbe says that we can learn a lesson and an instruction in life from

THE CROWN AND THE PICTURE

In connection with this story about the tremendous strength and holiness associated with the Rebbe’s picture, it should be noted that at a recent farbrengen held in the Krayot, the mara d’asra of Kfar Chabad, HaRav HaGaon R. **Mordechai Shmuel Ashkenazi**, requested the publicity of a relatively unknown Torah source on this subject.

The Gemara (Bava Basra 16b) states that it is written regarding the sorrows that befell Iyov (2:11), “And when Iyov’s three friends heard of all this evil that had come upon him, they came every one from his own place...to bemoan and comfort him.” The question is asked: How did they know about Iyov’s troubles, as two of them lived a distance of three hundred miles from one another?

The Gemara answers that “they had crowns,” and Rashi comments: **“Crowns, and there were three faces on each crown, with the name of each person engraved on his face. And when afflictions came upon one of them, his face changed.”** In other words, each one had a crown with the faces [pictures] of the other three friends engraved upon it with each person’s name. And when afflictions came upon one of them – this took expression through a change in the image of his face engraved upon the crown, hundreds of miles from there!

The famous gaon, HaRav Yehoshua Menachem Aharonberg of Tel Aviv, of blessed memory, writes the following in his responsa *Dvar Yehoshua* (Vol. 1, sec. 35):

“See the responsa *Imrei Yosher* (Vol. 2, sec. 30:2), which proves from the Gemara Bava Basra 16b and the Rashi on ‘they had crowns’ that there is a spiritual connection between the person and pictures, i.e., even if a person’s appearance changes, his photograph (picture) also changes, and although he brings the Maharsha there in Bava Basra that this was through witchcraft, in truth, the Maharsha there did not reach that decision, rather it appears that he was in doubt on the matter, see there. Furthermore, in my humble opinion, Rashi’s words there prove the engraving of the name on the face creates a connection between the face and that person, and this is not a matter of witchcraft *ch”v*, rather it is from the side of holiness, and as the mekubalim explain on what is written, ‘*nefesh-chaya* is his name’, i.e., the name is the *nefesh-chaya* in every respect... similarly here, calling the faces by their names connects their *nefesh-chaya* with the faces... and in any event, we have found those who say that the picture has a connection with the person in the spiritual realm, and as he writes in the aforementioned *Imrei Yosher*, a photograph is surely preferable to a drawing.”

everything that happens to us. The first thing that I learned from this event is that we must do everything to close off all breaches to potential thieves, as is written, “Not the mouse is the thief, but the hole is the thief.”

Secondly, there is room for everyone to do t’shuva and make improvements in his actions, and we

must do everything to help others in taking the correct path.

In conclusion, the Rebbe is accustomed to say, “And he brought back the many from sin,” and I say that we should add, “And he **brings** back the many from sin.”

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

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Sivan 28 - Gimmel Tammuz Magbis

B.H. Sivan 15, 5766

To all Anash, Men and Women, G-d bless you.

We are soon approaching the very auspicious day, Gimmel Tammuz. This day comes in close proximity with Sivan 28, the auspicious day that the Rebbe MH"M and the Rebbetzin arrived in the United States.

Obviously, these are very opportune days, especially when it is connected to the number ten, when one should again evaluate his or her "Hiskashrus" (connection) with the Rebbe, and more important, to utilize these special days to 'strengthen' the Hiskashrus to the Rebbe.

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With this in mind, we therefore urge each and everyone of anash, men and women to support Kupas Rabbeinu in every possible way.

In this merit may we be "zoiche" that much before Gimmel Tammuz, the Rebbe will be revealed as Melech Hamoshiach and redeem us from this deep and bitter Golus and lead us all to the true and final Geulo, NOW MAMAOSH.

VAAD KUPAS RABBEINU

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SPIES AMONG US

SHAI GEFEN

THE SPIES OF OUR TIMES

It's hard to miss the parallel between the sin of the spies of the desert and what is happening today in Eretz Yisroel. Their sin was "and they despised the desirable land," along with frightening the Jewish people about the giants and "we also saw the giants," as the spies of that time threatened to the point that "we were in our eyes as grasshoppers, and so were we in their eyes."

All the complaints against Hashem and the Nasi HaDor, "Moshe the faithful shepherd," are repeating themselves with astonishing precision. For decades now, the media propaganda of the Left has been working on making Eretz Yisroel abhorrent to Am Yisroel. They have succeeded in giving away parts of our holy land while despising those parts of Eretz Yisroel given to us for an everlasting inheritance.

Furthermore, we see how the situation is getting worse by the day, but the sin of the spies continues to reverberate. It's unbelievable how the leaders here keep running and bowing to the goy and pleading with him to take more land but the goy refuses to do so.

Moshe Rabbeinu of our generation stands and screams that there is nothing to fear and that we are commanded to inherit the land and settle it, but the spies of our generation that appear in the guise of "celebrated politicians," say, "but the nation is strong, stronger than us." The demographic problem disturbs them.

The epitome of our degradation was the expulsion from Gush Katif and northern Shomron, when our leaders did all they could to make us despise the land of our fathers and then broke all the rules of righteousness and justice. "The majority of the nation," as they put it, stood with the spies who spoke derogatorily about the land, and rejoiced to give our land away to our murderers.

In order to correct that sin of the spies we, the generation of Geula and the reincarnation of the generation that left Egypt, must increase our love for the land. We must fight the war of G-d, preserve the integrity of our holy land, and do all in our power so that the "D'var Hashem, Zu Halacha" will be known to every Jew.

This is our job, as it was back then the job of Kalev ben Yifuneh and Yehoshua bin Nun. They stood there fearlessly and declared that Moshe Rabbeinu said to go up and conquer it, and therefore, there was nothing to fear! This must be our cry now and this will definitely lead us to the land of milk and honey, Eretz Yisroel that includes the seven nations, with the hisgalus of the Rebbe MH"M.

THE CLAIM OF THE SPIES

In a sicha that the Rebbe said on Parshas Shlach 5740, the Rebbe explains at length how all the reasons that justify giving away land are a repeat of what the spies said:

They maintain that we must give all the territories that the Arabs want, since "the nation that dwells in the land is strong" and "they are stronger

than us!" In addition, "all the people we saw in it are giants ... and we saw the giants" – one is a big murderer, another is a big robber, another is a big thief, a fourth is a big diplomat, and one knows many languages, etc.

Furthermore, they also yell that giving all the territories to the Arabs is a matter of justice, and therefore, we should give all the territories of Eretz Yisroel to the Arabs. This [they say] will preserve us from danger, as it is "a land which consumes its inhabitants." If they "start up" with the Arabs and don't give in to what they want, they will "consume" the Jews who live in Eretz Yisroel.

If they concede to them and give them the land they want, [they claim] there will be peace and "Peace Now."

Those who maintain this position are Jews, the holy flock of Israel, like the spies in their time. Even the communists join them. They are Jews, since "a Jew, even if he sins, is a Jew."

And with this power that they are the "holy flock" of the Jewish people, they come and claim that the Arabs are too strong for us to conquer, "the nation that dwells in the land is strong," along with the other claims of Peace Now and the claims of the communists and (l'havdil) the Arabs.

These claims are exactly what the spies said in their time! And just as they saw then, what the spies brought upon the Jewish people – that it was they who endangered the lives of the people – this is similar to what Peace Now is bringing upon the Jewish people and Eretz Yisroel. They are the "your destroyers and wreckers" of the



Jewish nation and of Eretz Yisroel, r"l.

Although they cry "Peace Now," and there is nothing greater than peace, still "there is no peace, says Hashem, for the wicked." They know the PLO's intentions as they affirmed it again lately at their meeting; their intention is to get the Jewish people to leave all of Eretz Yisroel!

It's no secret, they say it openly. It has been printed everywhere, and everybody knows it. It's nothing new; it's 32 years now (starting in 1948) that they have been announcing this! Therefore, it is obvious that any agreement they make with them won't lead to peace!

And even when they concede to them on condition that they sign a piece of paper that they are making peace for now, not only doesn't this help but it leads to danger for the Jewish people!

Peace Now is bringing actual danger upon the Jewish people and Eretz Yisroel, r"l, and despite this they continue to demand and give more land to the Arabs in exchange for a piece of paper that says they are making peace.

They don't suffice with the many areas given to them already in which there is oil that they need and this has also weakened their security and other matters, r"l. They do all this and claim that in exchange they are receiving Peace Now. Since Jews are a "wise and discerning nation," they can certainly manage without oil and without secure borders.

This is the biggest illusion – that in exchange for concessions they will get peace. They see what the intentions of the Arabs are!

3 FAILURES IN 13 YEARS!

The following excerpt wasn't written by Elyakim HaEtzni and not even by Professor Aryeh Eldad. The following excerpt is from an article printed in the *Wall Street Journal* on May 29, written by R. James Woolsey,

former CIA director. It is entitled, "West Bank Terrorist State – The folly of Israeli disengagement."

The approach Israel is preparing to take in the West Bank was tried in Gaza and has failed utterly. The Israeli withdrawal of last year has produced the worst set of results imaginable ... almost certainly contributed substantially to Hamas' victory in the Palestinian elections ...

Creating a West Bank that looks like today's Gaza would be many times the nightmare ... Three major Israeli efforts at accommodation in the last 13 years have not worked. Oslo and the 1993 handshake in the Rose Garden between Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat produced only Arafat's rejection in 2000 of Ehud Barak's extremely generous settlement offer and the beginning of the second intifada. The Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon in 2000 has enhanced Hezbollah's prestige and control there; and the withdrawal from Gaza has unleashed madness. These three accommodations have been based on the premise that only Israeli concessions can displace Palestinian despair. But it seems increasingly clear that the Palestinian cause is fueled by hatred and contempt.

Israeli concessions indeed enhance Palestinian hope ... a hope that they will actually be able to destroy Israel... three failures in 13 years should permit us to evaluate the wisdom of further concessions.

The newspapers in Israel didn't quote this article, of course. Who would dare to interfere with Olmert's plan of convergence? Except for some papers on the Right, this article was censored. They are trying to continue selling the convergence as though nothing has happened. The ostrich approach works marvelously. The media, which in the past still had some shame and tried to appear objective, has lost all shame. The end justifies the means.

Soviet-style propaganda right here in Israel in the 21st century.

The epitome of our degradation was the expulsion from Gush Katif and northern Shomron. "The majority of the nation" stood with the spies who spoke derogatorily about the land, and rejoiced to give our land away to our murderers. In order to correct that sin of the spies we must fight the war of G-d, preserve the integrity of our holy land, and do all in our power so that the "D'var Hashem, Zu Halacha" will be known to every Jew.

RABBI FACES UNPRECEDENTED DISCIPLINARY HEARING

On June 7th, Rabbi Dovid Druckman, rav of Kiryat Mochkin and

one of the rabbanim who head the Pikuach Nefesh organization, had to appear before a disciplinary hearing of the chief rabbinate because of his remarks opposing Sharon's expulsion plan. The Rabbis who conducted the hearing were Rabbi Simcha HaKohen Kook, rav of Rechovot, Rabbi Ratzon Erusi, rav of Kiryat Ono, and Rabbi Shaar Yashuv HaKohen, rav in Chaifa.

The hearing took place at the recommendation of Attorney General Meni Mazuz because of a complaint lodged against him in court by the Reform movement's Religious Action Center. So for the first time in our short history, a rav must defend what he said which was based on halacha.

The prosecution was represented by Attorney Danny Vitman, who wears a knitted kippa, who argued that a rav who received a government salary can't express political views that oppose a plan approved by the Cabinet and Knesset. The members of the chief rabbinate committee took this opportunity to ask him whether here in Israel we also have "*rabbanim mitaam*" (government appointed rabbis) who are forbidden to say anything that offends the government.

We are sure that with Hashem's help, Rabbi Druckman will emerge vindicated. Unfortunately, he is the only official rav who fearlessly denounced the government. The question is: Why was he the only rav to dare to speak up out of all the hundreds of rabbanim who receive a government salary? Where were the Lubavitcher rabbanim? They too remained silent.

That Rabbi Druckman had to explain himself ought to serve as a warning to all rabbanim. In the future, rabbis will be unable to express their views, daas Torah. Those who think this is only about Rabbi Druckman and the Disengagement is mistaken. Those who remain silent now and allow the Attorney General to continue turning Israel into a Bolshevik state shouldn't come with

complaints later on.

THE TORAH AND THE MEDINA

Following the Disengagement there have been numerous discussions and debates within the Religious-Zionist camp about where to go from here. The colossal failure in maintaining the settlements in Gush Katif and northern Shomron exposed the serious problems inherent in the "is'chalta d'Geula" view.

It began a few weeks ago when Eli Sadan, the one who set up the religious pre-army high school system

They do all this and claim that in exchange they are receiving Peace Now. Since Jews are a "wise and discerning nation," they can certainly manage without oil and without secure borders.

wrote a letter in which he explained the great importance of the State and exposed some of their ideological conflicts.

"It is clear as day to me that a small minority within Am Yisroel cannot and may not go with force against the majority. Only if we behave like the compassionate mother in 'Shlomo's judgment,' who restrained herself even when the most precious thing of all was taken from her [her baby], will we be deserving of inheriting the land."

When it comes to clear-cut halacha, majority or minority are

irrelevant. If the majority would decide we should desecrate the Shabbos, would the minority have to do so? With this approach you can destroy Torah and mitzvos in an instant.

It's no secret that Eli Sadan and his friends opposed Rabbi Shapiro and the other poskim who said soldiers should refuse orders to expel just as they must refuse orders to desecrate the Shabbos. In other words, they think the State comes before Torah, and so when there's a collision between religion and the Medina, the Medina takes precedence.

A number of rabbanim distributed a booklet with the title *Darkeinu B'Et HaZot*, which consists of heresy. It says, "The individual or minority group cannot force its view and desire upon the majority," and it explains the importance of the Medina and democracy.

The Rebbe quoted the resolution of the Council of Torah Sages made at the large convention in 1933 a number of times. It stated, "The borders of our holy land are delineated by the One Who delineated lands in our holy Torah, which are established for generations after. It is impossible, therefore, for the Jewish nation to concede in any fashion on these borders; any such concession is meaningless."

The incredible thing is that those very rabbanim who champion Zionism are ready to concede and rip out parts of Eretz Yisroel! What we see is that if the Medina and Zionism are of supreme value, they are ready to concede on Eretz Yisroel, as the Rebbe wrote to Geula Cohen – that the concept of "Medinat Yisroel" contradicts the concept of "Eretz Yisroel."

Today we see how true this is, to the point that large segments of the Religious-Zionist community are waking up and confronting the ideological chasm between light and darkness.

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DOESN'T THE RAMBAN EXPLAIN THAT THE INGATHERING OF THE EXILES WILL BE WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE GOYIM?

TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY

In response to requests by our readers, we now present the fifth in a series of questions and answers from the seifer 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.

QUESTION:

In his commentary on Shir HaShirim (8:13), the Ramban writes: "The Future Redemption will first be with the permission of the [gentile] kingdoms, and there will be a slight ingathering of exiles. Afterwards, G-d will increase this again by His hand, as is written, 'And Hashem your G-d will

return your captivity and have compassion upon you and will return and gather you from all the nations,' He also brings the aforementioned pasuk (Yeshaya 56:8): "He Who gathers the dispersed of Israel [says], 'I will gather still **others**...beside those that are gathered,' showing us that there are two processes of ingathering

exiles, and even the first process, achieved with the permission of the nations, is part of the Redemption.

ANSWER:

1. The Rebbe states that even if there is some proof here, the Ramban surely knew the Torah sources that the Ramban drew upon for his commentary, and nevertheless, the Ramban issued his halachic ruling that the Redemption comes specifically through Moshiach. Furthermore, there is the general principle that Rashi's commentary on the Talmud is not *Shulchan Aruch*, and similarly, we surely can not derive halachic rulings from the Ramban's commentary on Talmud or Tanach, particularly when there is a clear p'sak din in Rambam on the subject.

In addition, the quote from the Ramban that you bring (which is also brought by many philosophers of the

concept of *is'chalta d'Geula* is **absolutely incorrect**. The Ramban writes that there will be two ingatherings: The first will be the ingathering on the Ten Tribes, as the pasuk states (Yeshaya 11:12), "And He will assemble **the dispersed of Israel**," and the second will be the ingathering of the exile of Yehuda, as the pasuk continues (ibid.), "and He will gather the scattered of **Yehuda**." The Ramban writes regarding this **second** ingathering: "And afterwards, those scattered and dispersed among the nations will come and appoint one leader, Moshiach ben Dovid, who was with them in exile, and with the permission and assistance of the kings of the nations, they will come to Eretz Yisroel... and so spoke G-d, Who gathers the dispersed of Israel – these are the Ten Tribes. I will gather still **others**...beside those that are gathered. I will add to those gathered from the first ingathering – these are the scattered of Yehuda."

2. We have here a **misrepresentation** of the words of the Ramban in a number of aspects: a) He says that the first ingathering is for the **Ten Tribes**, writing that this ingathering will be through Moshiach ben Yosef, who will wage war against the nations of the world and emerge victorious. If so, what does this have to do with the ingathering carried out by the Medina? Have the Ten Tribes emigrated so far? b) Regarding the matter of the permission granted by the kings of the nations, the Ramban specifically writes that the second ingathering will be a very long time after the ingathering of the Ten Tribes.

If that be the case, this does not fit the situation that prevails today. c) In connection with the fact that this ingathering will be with the permission of the gentile kings, the Ramban states that this will be **together with Moshiach ben Dovid**. Thus, everything that you wrote from the Ramban is absolutely untrue and is irrelevant to our discussion.

3. Even the distorted Ramban that you quoted does not speak whatsoever



about Jewish rule in Eretz Yisroel before Moshiach, as if this has a connection to the Redemption. The only thing here is the fact that the start of the ingathering of the exiles will be before the main ingathering achieved through Moshiach.

4. If you're really looking for what the Ramban wrote, why do you ignore what he states explicitly in his commentary on Parshas Balak (24:17)?

– **"For the Moshiach will gather in the dispersed of Israel."**

5. The simple interpretation of the pasuk, "I will gather still others...beside those that are gathered," is not that there will be a "Zionist" ingathering and afterwards an ingathering through Moshiach, rather according to Rashi (and other commentators) that after the ingathering of the Jewish People, there will be another ingathering of **gentiles who converted**, and they will accompany them. This is a continuation of what is said in the preceding verses (56:6-7): "**And the sons of the stranger** who join themselves to G-d... for My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations," and see in the commentaries that there is also a proof for this interpretation in the pasuk that follows.

6. The Rebbe writes in another interpretation of "I will gather still others...beside those that are gathered" (*Seifer HaSichos* 5751, Vol. 1, p. 18) that in addition to the ingathering of the Jewish People ("He Who gathers the dispersed of Israel"), there will also be an ingathering of each Jew **individually**, as is written (Yeshaya 27:12): "And you will be gathered, one by one, children of Israel." To put it simply, after G-d gathers the dispersed of Israel from those places where there is a "tzibbur" (a community of ten, and surely where there are many tens) of Jews, He goes back and also gathers the individuals that remained in exile even after the gathering of the many." See the explanation there.

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‘TODAY IS THE REVELATION OF MOSHIACH’

BY MENDEL TZFASMAN

A number of months ago, R' Yosef Sugarman, a modest Chassid, died in Yerushalayim. "All your days to bring Yemos HaMoshiach," was his motto in life. The following is a brief profile of a true Chassid, a modest man, mekushar heart and soul to the Rebbe, and a fervent Meshichist.

Five months ago, I got a phone call from the editor of *Beis Moshiach*, asking me to go to Yerushalayim so that I could write an article about Rabbi Yosef Sugarman, who had passed away a few months earlier.

"He was a Chassid with Geula burning in his bones, a Jew to whom the longing for the hisgalus was an inseparable part of his day," said the editor.

For various reasons the interview was postponed until Chaf-Ches Nissan, the day that so suits R' Yosef Sugarman, the day of "do all that you can!"

When my wife and I left

Yocheved Sugarman's home at the end of the interview, it occurred to me that it wasn't as much an interview as it was a farbrengen, and I had never experienced such a farbrengen before in my life. Although there was no mashke and no mashpia, no group of men and not even any niggunim, there were R' Sugarman's writings, s'farim, his siddurim, and the story of a Chassid for whom the Geula was his utmost concern.

"I did t'shuva twice," R' Yosef Sugarman would say. The first time was over twenty years ago when he was fifty and financially established as a successful accountant. He became frum through a Litvishe

organization and began delving into Jewish books.

At the same time Yocheved, who later became his wife, went on a tour of America. Her good friend suggested that she go for one of the Lubavitcher Rebbe's famous dollars, saying, "You just can't miss that."

When Yocheved saw the Rebbe, she decided on the spot, "the truth is in Torah and mitzvos," and she too began her t'shuva process.

Yocheved attended Arachim's seminar but remained connected heart and soul to the Rebbe. She informed the Rebbe of every major step she took in her life and did so when she was ready to marry R' Yosef, who was also a fresh baal t'shuva.

Yocheved sent the Rebbe an invitation to the wedding. The Rebbe's answer was worded in terms of the usual bracha, "An everlasting edifice on the foundation of Torah and mitzvos as they are illuminated with the light within Torah which is Toras HaChassidus." She considered this as the Rebbe's approval of her match.

When R' Yosef discovered the

world of Chassidus he did not stop learning Chassidus. Along with his other studies of Gemara, Mishnayos, Nach, and halacha, he delved into *Tanya* as well as the deepest maamarim in Chassidus, such as Hemshech 5672, and he threw himself into the study of the Rebbe's teachings.

When they were first married, R' Yosef did his accounting work in the afternoon and devoted the mornings to preparing for davening, davening, and to learning. When his wife saw his great love for learning, she suggested that he try to learn all day and that she would take care of household matters and parnasa.

R' Yosef agreed and this became their lifestyle. R' Yosef's day was exhausting and he utilized every minute. He got up at three in the morning, "jumping out of bed, always before the alarm," says his wife. Following preparation for davening, he prayed with the sunrise minyan. Then he returned home, ate something and lay down to rest for half an hour. He then immediately returned to his beloved s'farim.

"All my life I made accountings for others, the time has come for me to make an accounting for myself," he would say with a smile.

He was very organized and disciplined and he arranged shiurim and regular study sessions for himself in which he covered a wide array of s'farim. He was glued to his s'farim until Mincha and in the evening he would go learn with his chavrusa, Rabbi Aharon Mordechai Zilberstrohm, but not before preparing the material for about three hours beforehand.

The corner of the house where he did his learning has a picture of the Rebbe smiling, which he saw a number of times in his dreams. This picture was right there as he

learned.

When I asked Mrs. Sugarman whether it was hard for her to manage alone with parnasa and the accompanying headaches, she said, "Not at all! I feel it was an investment. I was so thrilled and proud of the z'chus that was my lot that every material 'burden' was a pleasure for me when I thought of my husband, his yiras Shamayim, his love for Torah study, and his hiskashrus to the Rebbe MH"m.

"It's important to mention that my husband wasn't removed from what was going on in the home. We never had to call for a professional,



R' Yosef Sugarman a"h

because my husband, with his golden hands, could build and fix anything in the house, from electrical things to carpentry and construction."

R' Yosef, who was unusually methodical and organized, marked up the s'farim he learned with learning aides. He used colored markers to emphasize certain lines and added his own notes in the margins. If you glance into his s'farim, his best friends, you see that his "house full of s'farim" wasn't inanimate or static but

something alive and animated.

In nearly every book, you see his notations and comments that demonstrate that he didn't just glance through these books but learned them, delved into them, and was even mechadesh in them.

On the bookmark in his Chumash, he wrote, "B'ezras Hashem Yisborech. Thank you, my Creator. I have had the privilege of learning up until here today in Your holy Torah, Mikra and Targum. Grant me please the privilege of learning it from the mouth of Moshiach Tzidkeinu."

On another bookmark, he wrote to himself, "The Alter Rebbe: You must live with the times (with the weekly sidra), R' Yosef, Are you living with the weekly sidra?"

When his wife was surprised that he could learn for so long and such deep material, most of the time without a chavrusa, he said, "Yocheved, I do not learn alone. I learn with the Rebbe! Whenever I sit down to learn, I plead with the Rebbe: **Rebbe, teach me**, and then it's all clear."

Aside from *Likkutei Torah*, *Hemshech 5672*, *Tanya*, and foundational works of Chassidus, R' Yosef's Nach, Mishnayos, Gemara, and Midrashim are also marked up with colored markers and pens, illustrating how much material he covered and the depth and sharpness of his learning. Furthermore, the common theme in all of his learning is in accordance with a "little horaa" that hides within footnote 120 of the D'var Malchus on Parshas Acharei-K'doshim, to connect every topic with Geula. In the footnote, the Rebbe is addressing the quote from the Rambam that all the holy works are "m'leim" (filled) with the topic of Geula.

One can say that the diyuk "filled

with” (for “full” according to Torah and its commentaries is that it is completely full), is that even those verses in “all the s’farim” that do not (openly) talk of inyanei Geula, or that even their content is (seemingly) the opposite of Geula – in truth, its real content is “this topic,” Geula. By examining and delving into the meaning of these verses (in the commentaries, etc.), it becomes openly apparent that all the s’farim are indeed **filled with** it.

During the Shiva, neighbors and acquaintances came to be menachem avel, including Litvishe roshei yeshiva and rabbanim, who expressed their amazement at the extent of R’ Yosef’s studies and his devotion to Torah study. Mrs. Sugarman told them what her husband always said, “Whatever you learn has to be connected to Geula. If you don’t see it the first or second time or third time, it’s an indication that you still haven’t learned it properly and you need to learn it again and again.”

No wonder then that the weekly D’var Malchus was most precious to R’ Yosef. He bound each one separately and within each booklet added photocopies from *Beis Moshiach* with insights from rabbanim, shluchim, and mashpiim or miracle stories, which connected to that sicha. On the binding, as he wrote on the rest of his s’farim, it said: “L’Hashem HaAretz U’M’lo’o – temporarily in the possession of Sugarman.”

At the beginning of each *ois*, he noted what the Rebbe was mechadesh, and aside from his usual markings to emphasize various points the Rebbe made, he “farbrenge” with himself, and demanded of himself that he live according to the Rebbe’s horaos. He analyzed what the Rebbe said, with each thing that he learned immediately pictured in the most

tangible way.

As a genuine Chassid, R’ Yosef’s learning wasn’t a goal onto itself but was a means for “avoda of the heart, which is t’filla.” He would try to put into practice everything he learned in his davening.

Mrs. Sugarman showed us his special siddurim and we were amazed by this anonymous oved. R’ Yosef had many siddurim that looked on the outside like file folders. On each page, he had photocopied one page of the davening on the left and on the right were charts with kavanos,



R’ Yosef’s desk

personal prayers, and conversations with G-d. His t’filla, from what we read that R’ Yosef wrote, was love for Hashem along with tremendous gratitude for being a frum Jew and one who is mekushar to the Rebbe. His t’fillos expressed a cry, a demand, and pleading for the Geula. Even “ordinary” t’fillos – like Ashrei, Yehi Chivod and the like – were expressed with feelings of Geula.

Near the mizmor “Yehi Chivod” he made a chart which he divided

into: “**Today – the end of Galus**” within which he wrote things like: There is no yetzer ha’ra in the world, there is no concealment and falsehood in the world ... there are no mitzvos done by rote, no routine in avodas Hashem, no death in the world.

On the chart for “**Today – the day of Geula,**” it says: Today – and your eyes will see your teacher, today – eating kodshim in purity, today – love and fear of Hashem with genuine emotion.

Under, “**Today is the final day of Galus and the first day of Geula**” he

wrote: Today – the spirit of impurity left the world, today – the hisgalus of our Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach, today – the entire world declares in a mighty voice: *Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu V’Rabbeinu Melech HaMoshiach!*

At the Krias Shma at night R’ Yosef wrote to himself: Another night passed and Moshiach did not come. Another 900,000 nights passed since the destruction of our house and we are still in Galus / another 2,100,000 nights passed



R' Yosef's notes on the D'var Malchus

since our expulsion from the home in Gan Eden and we are still in darkness / the Creator of all – call for our Geula – Today / call for the hisgalus of our Moshiach – Today / build Your dira ba'tachtonim – Today.

“Every morning, my husband would go to daven with two heavy briefcases that a young bachur would have a hard time lifting, in which his kept ‘his treasure,’ says Yocheved. “He was always afraid of falling into serving Hashem by rote, which is apparently why he wrote countless memos and notes to himself.

“In shul he davened with silent devotion, nobody imagining what sort of thoughts this man had.”

How appropriate it was that this extraordinary personality who excelled in the two pillars of Torah and T'filla, also ran a Gemach. His wife tells us the story of this Gemach:

“One day, seven years ago, my

husband came home with a local flyer that had a small ad about someone looking for volunteers to learn Torah l'ilui nishmas a righteous woman who had died childless. My husband called the number in the ad and volunteered. When he asked for the date of her passing and the woman's name and parents' names in order to be able to say Kaddish, the person he spoke to didn't have the information and she promised to call him back.

“Typical of my husband, he didn't wait for her to call but called her again and again until he got the information he wanted.

“I see that you are serious,” said the woman on the line when she gave him the date of death and the names of the parents. “I thought of doing a bigger project in which we could publicize your telephone number and people could call you in order to take names of deceased and do mitzvos l'ilui their neshamos.”

“I was very hesitant,” says Mrs. Sugarman. “It didn't seem right to me that of all the houses in the world, davka in our home where we lived ‘Yemos HaMoshiach,’ we would be running an operation that was completely Galus'dike. But my husband said, ‘They taught me that when a mitzva comes knocking on your door, you don't refuse it. If this suggestion came our way, it's an indication that we should accept it.’

“Naturally, I happily acquiesced and since then we ran a Gemach that has been lauded in the religious media in Eretz Yisroel and the world.”

The Sugarman couple added a voicemail option to their telephone line and every evening they would listen to dozens of messages which informed them of hundreds of Jews who had died without leaving behind someone to say Kaddish for them. There were also dozens of calls from children in Talmud Torahs, men in Kollel, women, seminary girls, etc., who wanted to

do a mitzva l'ilui nishmas the deceased.

The Sugarman returned all calls, checked out the Jewish identity of the deceased, took the names of the parents [there are those groups who daven l'ilui nishmas the niftar by citing the mother's name, others use the father's name, and some use both], the day of death, and the name and number of the person calling. These were typed into files that grew thicker and thicker.

The number of mitzvos done by the volunteers for the merit of

As the years went by, the Gemach became a Chesed shel Emes in the fullest sense of the term, not for the sake of a reward. Thousands of names of deceased were collected in five thick folders, along with thousands of mitzvos, pages of Gemara, Mishnayos, T'hillim, tz'daka, l'ilui nishmasam.

The Sugarman didn't have advanced computer programs, nor did they have a team of secretaries. The huge operation consisted of a notebook, a pen, a telephone and two Jews who wanted to increase mitzvos in the world in order to

Vizhnitzer Chassidim in the Meor Chaim Shtibel.

Friday night he davened in the Chabad shul and Shabbos day he sent the list of niftarim to the Sephardic shul in the neighborhood so they could do "hashkava" the Sephardic custom, on the Shabbos before the yahrtzait. Aside from the kaddishim, R' Yosef would give tz'daka, say T'hillim daily for each niftar, and light a candle for them.

* * *

If you are picturing R' Yosef as a robust individual, able to pack so much into a short day, you are mistaken. R' Yosef was an invalid who suffered tremendously, especially in the five final years of his life. His immune system was compromised and he had to be hospitalized for the slightest infection. He refrained from going out of the house much, but he insisted on going out to say the Kaddishim, even on wintry days when the streets were covered with snow and ice and he had fever. "What will be with the Kaddishim?" he would ask.

He never complained about his pains and illness, on the contrary. Before each hospitalization he would raise up his hands and announce, "Ribbono shel olam, I accept these yisurim with love, to minimize the yisurim of Moshiach. HaKadosh Boruch Hu, give me the strength to withstand it."

At the hospital, he would use the time for learning and mitzvaim with doctors, the staff, and patients. He insisted on putting t'fillin on the doctors who came to examine him and he spoke to them about the Rebbe's prophecies that have come true, one by one, and about his main prophecy, "hinei hinei Moshiach ba."

His impact on the hospital staff was apparent after his passing,



Wall of R' Yosef's home

"their niftarim," grew into the thousands. Next to each niftar's name was the name of the volunteer, the mitzva he had decided to do in the merit of "his" niftar, and his phone number.

"We didn't advertise," says Mrs. Sugarman, "but word got out. People wrote letters to the editor of newspapers in Eretz Yisroel and other countries, and people around the world began to contact us. Am Yisroel did the mitzvos," she adds modestly, "while we kept the list."

prepare it for Moshiach, so that he comes one moment sooner.

At every t'filla, R' Yosef would take out the list of niftarim that he took for himself, look at it and say Kaddish out loud. Nearly all the residents of Sanhedria HaMurchevet remember this. R' Yosef prayed each t'filla in a different shul in the neighborhood. In the morning, he prayed vasikin in the Litvishe Ezras Torah Shul. In the afternoon, he prayed in the yeshiva for Americans, Chafetz Chaim, and in the evening he davened with the

when one of the senior doctors who had treated him came to be menachem avel and asked to see Rabbi Sugarman's study area. He said in amazement to Mrs. Sugarman, "I must tell you that I have treated many patients but I have never encountered someone as amazing as your husband. After each treatment I would take a break in order to recover from what he said, before I dealt with my next patient."

One of the nurses of the department who can't possibly be menachem every family she encounters, wrote a letter of consolation which she intended on mailing to Mrs. Sugarman. She stopped in the middle of writing it, took her bag and went to be menachem personally.

"I often hovered around you, supposedly to check on the IV or other technicalities, when I was really interested in hearing your conversations that always revolved around Moshiach and his imminent

***"Every material
'burden' was a
pleasure for me when
I thought of my
husband, his yiras
Shamayim, his love
for Torah study, and
his hiskashrus to the
Rebbe MH" M."***

arrival."

Last Tishrei, by Divine providence, the Sugarmans connected with R' Refael Ansoth, who runs the Chayei Netzach gemach, which he started after getting names from the Meis Mitzva gemach. R' Refael asked whether he was encroaching on their gemach, but the Sugarmans said they were happy to have him do what he was

doing and they gave him their list of niftarim. At the time, they didn't know that R' Yosef was actually bequeathing him with his gemach, Meis Mitzva.

Nine days later, on 16 Tishrei, R' Yosef tripped at the entrance to his building and broke a vertebrae in his back. He was rushed to the hospital and the doctors decided to operate. In the recovery room, while he was still unconscious, he got an infection, which was life threatening, since his immune system was so poor.

For five weeks, his friends prayed for his recovery and on 25 Cheshvan, he passed away. The day that marked his Shloshim was his 70th birthday.

Surely, R' Yosef will not rest up above but will insist on the immediate hisgalus of the Rebbe MH" M.

"The last words my husband said were "Yechi Adoneinu, etc." A minute before he entered the operating room, he asked the surgeon to promise him that if he didn't make it, he should say the words that express the kabbalas ha'malchus of Melech HaMoshiach instead of him: *Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu V'Rabbeinu Melech HaMoshiach L'olam Va'ed!*"

THE REBBE'S BRACHA FOR OUR GEMACH

On the binding of one of the Gemach Meis Mitzva booklets is a note, which says: Birkas Melech HaMoshiach for our Gemach – *Igros Kodesh* volume 11, p. 300. When you read the letter on that page, you can't help but be amazed. This is what the Rebbe writes in a letter dated 29 Tamuz 5715:

What you write at the end of your letter that "I work very hard, etc., for the gemach in memory of our martyrs, which I run," obviously there is a contradiction from the beginning to the end, because the work of a gemach cannot be difficult, since thereby one gains great satisfaction. We see that hard work is that which is dispiriting even when it's very easy, and avoda that is done with pleasure and inner drive adds health to the soul and health to the body.

If you examine even briefly what it says about *chonen dal* (that lending money to a poor person is considered a personal loan to Hashem), and the Chazal which says that chesed is greater than tz'daka, you will rejoice in your good lot every day that Hashem chose you to help Jewish people in their plight. Yehi ratzon that for length of days and good years you will be successful in the pillar of chesed, in serving the public, in addition to your certainly being involved in the three pillars of Torah, avoda, and chesed in your personal life.

