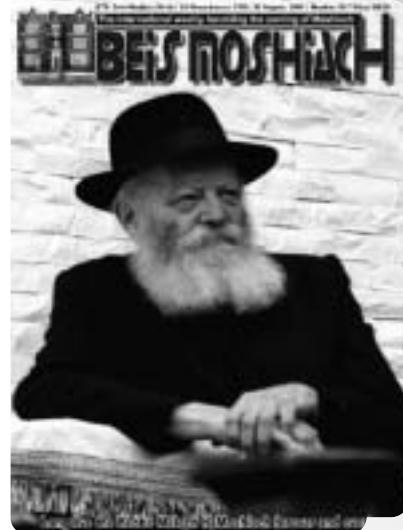


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THE DIFFERENCE IS THAT IN ELUL WE MUST PLOW AND SOW

LIKKUTEI SICHOS VOL. 4, HOSAFOS, PG. 1342-1345
TRANSLATED BY BORUCH MERKUR



Regarding the significance of the month of Elul, the Alter Rebbe writes as follows: “In Elul it is the time of the revelation of the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy. In order to understand this – for [the question is begged]: Why [then] are they regular weekdays and not holidays? ... This, however, can be understood in light of an allegory of a king, who, before he comes to the city, the city folk go out to greet him, holding a reception for him in the field. Anyone who wants to go out and receive him then may do so, and he welcomes all of them with a pleasant countenance and shows a smiling face to them all. As he makes his way to the city, they follow him. Afterwards, as he enters his royal palace, no one may enter without permission. Indeed, [entrance is granted only to] the elite of the nation and select individuals. So is the matter, in terms of the analogue, regarding the month of Elul: they go to receive the light of His blessed countenance in the field.”

A (possible) explanation of the answer (to the [puzzling] fact that the days of the month of Elul are regular weekdays) is as follows: The concept of holidays is that an increase of light and revelation is drawn into them, [a revelation] that is not encloded within them so much [but remains transcendent]. It is on account of this [revelation] that during these days labor is forbidden. Indeed the performance of labor, regular weekday activities, is in contradiction to receiving this light (symbolized in the parable by the king being in his royal palace, where “**no one** may enter **without [permission]**”). Whereas the concept of the month of Elul entails the revelation of the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy to each and every Jew, even to one who has sinned, etc., in the place where he happens to be found: a field [i.e., not the royal place, but a place of mundane weekday activity]. The

illumination of the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy is a preparation enabling them to repent. So it is regarding the service of love and fear [of G-d] in Elul (for then the love and fear are loftier): they must be aroused through an initiative that precipitates specifically from below, for the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy are merely a prerequisite for [Divine] service.

Nevertheless, the illumination of the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy is in the field, not in the desert. A desert is at the level of “a land that is not cultivated,” which are those deeds, words spoken, and thoughts which are not for G-d’s sake.” In order to receive the illumination of the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy requires at least the arousal of the acceptance of the yoke of the kingship of Heaven, [represented by] leaving (the desert), to go at least to the field, to greet the king (but this service is at the level of “field” (of holiness), involving plowing and sowing, unlike [the activities permitted] on holidays).

* * *

All matters discussed in Torah, including the allegories, are precise in all their details. But at first glance, the terminology of the Alter Rebbe is not understood there [in his allegory of the king in the field]: “the city folk go out to greet him...in the field.” This wording indicates that their place is in the city but they only now venture out to the field. But at first glance (in the analogue) it is the opposite: Their place is in the field, and the innovation of [the month of] Elul is that the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy shine even in the place where they are at present, in the field.

The explanation of this quandary is as follows: The means by which each and every Jew perceives this illumination of the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy [which

are spiritual in nature] is on account of the root of his soul. The Alter Rebbe alludes to this in saying, “the city folk go out to greet him...in the field.” For the reason the Jewish people perceive the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy is because they are “city folk” [an allusion to the Jewish soul as it exists in the Heavenly realm of Bria, which is referred to as “city.” See Footnote 11 in original text.] It is just that for the time being they happen to be in the field, [a metaphor for being] in the exile of the body and the Animal Soul. Notwithstanding the fact that they are in exile, “one cannot compare the virtue of a minister while in captivity to the virtue of a commoner” [*Likkutei Torah* Parshas R’ei 32c]. Being that they are “city folk,” even when they are in the field, they “receive the light of His blessed countenance,” the illumination of the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy.

* * *

Another matter that is not readily understood from the terminology of the Alter Rebbe in the allegory there: The wording implies that the original place of the king is in the field (for he does not write that “the king goes out to the field”), whereas in the analogue the place of the king is in his royal palace, but he makes a special trip to the field to enable everyone to receive him.

The explanation is as follows: In terms of revelations, when the king is in the field, it is a descent in comparison to how he is in his royal palace. For when he is in his royal palace he wears a royal crown and royal vestments, etc. Which is not the case when he is in the field.

Nevertheless, in truth, the very fact that the king forgoes the revelation of his royal crown and royal vestments, and he goes out to the field to enable everyone to receive him, proves that the repentance of those who are found in the field is more precious and pertinent to him than his royal crown and vestments (like the example of the service of penitents, which reaches higher than the service of the righteous). For His royal vestments and crown are merely [elements constituting his] appearance. Whereas His blessed essence is specifically in the field, as it is known that it is specifically the lower worlds that are a dwelling place for His blessed essence.

In the allegory in discussion, the Alter Rebbe writes, “As he makes his way to the city, they follow him. Afterwards, as he enters his royal palace, etc.” At first glance, since His blessed essence is specifically in the field, etc., as has been noted, why is this necessary and

what advantage is accomplished in going to the city? The matter is as follows: Regarding a dwelling place there are two factors: 1) In a dwelling place one’s entire **essence** is present (as in a home, for **one’s essence** resides in the dwelling), and this is accomplished through the fulfillment of Mitzvos specifically in the realm of action. 2) The one who lives in the dwelling is **revealed** there. Thus, revelations are also necessary.

Notwithstanding the fact that this service takes place in the month of Tishrei, the Alter Rebbe writes about this matter in the allegory which elaborates on the service of the month of Elul. It could be said that he, thereby, suggests that even the beginning of the service of receiving the yoke [of Heaven], the venturing outwards to receive His blessed countenance in the field, must be on condition and in a manner [intended to] follow Him afterwards to the city and to His royal palace, for then

they come from the service of Elul to the service of Rosh HaShana and the Ten Days of Repentance and etc., until the revelation of Shmini Atzeres – “They will be to You alone, with no strangers among You.”

* * *

*In order to receive
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Attributes of Mercy
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of Heaven.*

In the address of the holiday of Pesach 5694 (*Likkutei Dibburim* 116a) my esteemed teacher and father-in-law, the Rebbe [Rayatz], describes the spiritual state in Lubavitch in the month of Elul. In the beginning of the passage there [he writes]: “After Shabbos Nachamu, we would already begin [the practice of] studying following Maariv, in fulfillment of that which is written, ‘Arise and sing at night.’ When the Shabbos that

blesses the month of Elul arrived, we would already begin to sense the Elul-atmosphere, etc.” It is not understood, however, why he arranges the two topics – the increase in the learning after Shabbos Nachamu and the conduct of the month of Elul – in one aphorism, for at first glance they appear to be two separate topics.

It is further not understood why in the preceding passage he describes the conduct of [the three-week period of mourning known as] Between the Straits, for the conduct of Shabbos Nachamu is apparently connected with the conduct of Between the Straits [and not Elul]. Indeed, the consolation (of Shabbos Nachamu) is for matters associated with Between the Straits. Thus, it would seemingly be appropriate to conclude the aphorism regarding Between the Straits with the matter of the conduct following Shabbos Nachamu (and thus conclude with something positive), and the subsequent

aphorism should begin with the conduct of the month of Elul.

The explanation hinges on a well known insight concerning repentance. Although repentance is loftier than Torah (for which reason atonement [is accomplished through repentance] even with regard to blemishes in and transgressions of [the commandment of] Torah study), nevertheless the “revelation” of the entire matter of repentance is specifically through Torah. Indeed, this is the central point of the month of Elul [i.e., repentance expressed through rededication to Torah study]. The same principle applies with regard to the service of man: Notwithstanding the fact that the primary service of the month of Elul is the service of repentance, nevertheless this itself is “revealed” through Torah study. That is, in order for one to come to terms with the great necessity of repentance

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royal palace.*

(*shoshanim*),” for “*shoshanim*” has two meanings: Thirteen Petals of Mercy (the place of repentance) and those who study (*shonim*) Torah.

and how to repent and etc., one must add and increase in Torah study, especially the study of the inner dimension of the Torah, which clearly elucidates concepts associated with repentance.

Thus, my esteemed teacher and father-in-law, the Rebbe, arranged in a single aphorism the matter of increasing one’s study along with the conduct in the month of Elul, thereby alluding to the fact that the service of the month of Elul – repentance – is connected with the increase in Torah study. The latter point is reflected in the conclusion of the verse, “I am to my beloved and my beloved is to me” – whose acronym [in the original Hebrew] spells out “Elul” – “who shepherds among the roses

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יחד אדונינו מודרנו ורבנו מלך המשיח לעולם ועד

THE RAMBAM AND RABBI LEVI YITZCHOK

BY PROF. SHIMON SILMAN, RYAL INSTITUTE AND TOURO COLLEGE

This year the completion of the annual cycle of learning Rambam's *Mishneh Torah* came a week before Rabbi Levi Yitzchok's yahrtzeit. Certainly there is a connection between these two events, as everything is *B'Hashgacha Pratis*. In this paper we draw on some of the *Hadranim* of the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach on Rambam that discuss the issue of faith and knowledge of G-d

(which appears at the beginning and at the end of *Mishneh Torah*) and show how a concept from *Likkutei Levi Yitzchok* enhances the discussion.



There are two searches for truth – one from above and one from below. The former is the search of the man of faith and the latter is the search of the man of intellect. By definition these two

approaches are opposites and historically, the tension between them was the source of great conflict. Yet, the ultimate goal – which is attained in the Era of Moshiach – is the convergence and unification of these two searches.

We will make some general observations about faith and intellect, the conflict between them and their ultimate unification.

The issue is in fact one of the oldest in Jewish philosophy. It was addressed by Rav Saadia Gaon in his *Emunot V'Deot*, Rabbi Yehuda HaLevi in the *Kuzari*, and especially by Rambam in *Moreh Nevuchim*, which was addressed to those who had been influenced by the philosophy of Aristotle. In recent times the issue has been dealt with extensively in Chabad Chassidus. The Tzemach Tzedek especially, in his *Seifer HaChakira*, addresses these issues, unifying the discussions of the earlier Jewish philosophers with the concepts of Kabbala and Chassidus.

The difference between the approach of the man of intellect and the man of faith can be seen most clearly from an analogy drawn by the Rebbe

Rashab, contrasting Rambam with Aristotle. Both Rambam and Aristotle were philosophers, but there was a fundamental difference between them. Rambam first fixed a central point and then drew a circle around it. Aristotle first drew the circle and then groped to find the center. What does this mean? Rambam set the belief in G-d as the foundation – the central point – of his



philosophical investigations. Thus he was able to successfully draw the circle of intellect around it. But Aristotle did the reverse. He started with the circle – human intellect. His subsequent attempt to identify the central fundamental point did not succeed.

Corresponding to this fundamental difference between the *philosophy* of Rambam and Aristotle, we find that there is a fundamental difference between the *philosophers* themselves. The Tzemach Tzedek says that both Rambam and Aristotle worked on finding proofs of the existence of G-d. The difference between them was that whenever Aristotle would find a proof for the existence of G-d he would become more arrogant because his newfound proof made him a greater philosopher. With Rambam it was the opposite. Every time he found a new proof for the existence of G-d he would become more humble. His new knowledge of G-d would inspire within him a deeper awe of G-d.

There is a sequel to the Aristotle story. The *Seder HaDoros*, a book on the chronology of world history, relates that Aristotle himself came in contact with Shimon HaTzaddik and was greatly influenced by him. The influence of “the Shimoni” (as Aristotle called him) on Aristotle was so great that he said he was ready to revise his entire philosophical system to be based on what he learned from Shimon HaTzaddik. However, Aristotle felt that he was too old to start over.

LEVELS OF INTERACTION

Chassidus is the wisdom that brings unity to all knowledge and leads it to the Messianic knowledge of G-d. Thus, in Chassidus we find faith and intellect discussed not as opposing forces, but rather, as two complementary methods of attaining an awareness of G-d. In fact, the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach says that

the barrier between faith and intellect was actually broken with the redemption of the Previous Rebbe on 12 Tamuz, 5687 (1927). The miracles of that redemption were of the type where the opposing forces of the supernatural and the natural worked together. So from then on there was no real barrier between faith and intellect.

Some of Melech HaMoshiach's discussions of this focus on Rambam's statements concerning faith and knowledge. Most prominently, Rambam begins his major work, *Mishneh Torah*, by saying that “The foundation of all foundations and the pillar of all wisdom is to *know* that there is a First Being” rather than by saying “...to *believe* that there is a First Being.” Similarly, Rambam ends *Mishneh Torah* by discussing how the world will be filled with the *knowledge* of G-d in the Era of Moshiach, without mentioning faith. To explain this, the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach identifies various levels in the relationship between faith and intellect.

Firstly, there is the basic faith which is a prerequisite to the observance of the mitzvos. To do a mitzva one must first believe that there is a Commander Who commanded the mitzva. (This is not just a matter of faith, however. The existence of G-d is a fact which is within the realm of knowledge.)

This faith, which precedes knowledge, is analogous to the commitment to observe the mitzvos which must precede the actual observance of the mitzvos – the famous declaration of “*Na'aseh V'Nishma*” (“We commit ourselves to do it, then we will understand it”) that the Jews made before receiving the Torah.

Following this there is actually a commandment to know G-d. It is one of the 613 mitzvos. This is not just a general awareness as in the

Whenever Aristotle would find a proof for the existence of G-d he would become more arrogant because his newfound proof made him a greater philosopher.

first level but involves detailed knowledge about G-d – all the information about G-d that the human intellect can comprehend. It is this knowledge that Rambam is describing at the beginning of *Mishneh Torah* when he says “The foundation of all foundations and the pillar of all wisdom is to know that there is a First Being and He brings all beings into existence. Everything that exists in the heavens and the earth and whatever is included in them, exists only from the truth of His existence....” He continues to elaborate on this throughout the first four chapters of the book.

Attaining knowledge of G-d, however, is a continuous process and each individual can understand only so much according to his capacity at any given point in time. Faith and knowledge now interact on a second level: What I have been able to learn and comprehend about G-d until now I *know*. That which is beyond my grasp now, I *believe* in. Later, as I learn more, things for which I had to rely on faith, will be understood intellectually and will become part of my knowledge. This is an ongoing process – an upward spiral – with an elegant interplay

between faith and knowledge. Today's faith becomes tomorrow's knowledge. A new horizon is then opened up and I begin to grasp higher things with my *faith*. Later, this too will become knowledge.... Faith and intellect are both faculties of the soul that are used in conjunction to attain truth.

This interaction between faith and intellect is described clearly in one of the letters of the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach written in response to the question of whether to follow faith or intellect:

"Regarding the questions in your letter...whether to believe with a simple faith or to research and investigate – they are both necessary. Not only is there no contradiction between them, but on the contrary, they complement each other. The beginning and the foundation of one's service of G-d is simple faith. Immediately following this, however, there applies the mitzva which is 'the foundation of all foundations and the pillar of all wisdom – to know that there is a First Being....' (as Rambam says). This is expressed in the Zohar as follows: 'This mitzva is the first of all the mitzvos...to know G-d.'"

With Rambam it was the opposite. Every time he found a new proof for the existence of G-d he would become more humble. His new knowledge of G-d would inspire within him a deeper awe of G-d.

(Elsewhere the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach explains that this statement in the Kabbalistic work Zohar was the source of this halacha in Rambam, as Rambam himself was a Kabbalist. Rambam himself hid the fact that he had mastered the hidden wisdom of Kabbala, but this fact was later revealed by the Baal Shem Tov. Thus we find some laws in Rambam's *Mishneh Torah* whose only source is the Zohar. In fact, his philosophical work *Moreh Nevuchim* (*Guide for the Perplexed*) is actually a book of Kabbala written in a philosophical language.)

Melech HaMoshiach's letter continues: "One is obligated to exert his mind to know and understand as much as he is able to about G-d. Since one's ability is always limited, what is beyond his ability he will believe in with fundamental simple faith and this will give him life."

The mitzva of eating matza on Pesach has the effect of strengthening and increasing one's faith. In a letter written before Pesach one year, the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach expressed the prayer that the matza that we eat this Pesach should bring us to a new level of faith and during the course of the year we should attain an *understanding* of this new level of faith. Then the matza that we eat next Pesach should bring us to an even higher level of faith.

The analogy between the faith-knowledge relationship and the commitment-observance relationship that we mentioned earlier, can be extended to this second level: After our initial commitment to the Mitzvos, we apply the full capacity of our intellect to understand the Mitzvos as much as possible. This is the in depth study of the Torah, especially as it is developed in the Talmud and Chassidus.

There is a third, more intimate connection between faith and knowledge in which faith applies to

knowledge itself. Since human intellect is finite and G-d is beyond the finite (He is even beyond the infinite), when one uses human intellect to try to understand G-d, he is applying a finite tool to something that is infinite (and beyond). Only faith has the capacity to grasp the infinite. This contrast is expressed in the following famous entry in the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach's first book, *HaYom Yom*, which is a compilation of Chassidic sayings:

"When Moshiach comes, we will see the advantage of faith and sincerity – that everyone believes in G-d, His Torah and mitzvos with pure faith. Regarding learning – understanding – the greatest understanding has a limit. But faith is a feeling with no limit. Melech HaMoshiach will give us the ability to understand the advantage of sincerity – heartfelt earnest service of G-d."

Thus when one attains an understanding of something pertaining to G-d, he must not deceive himself and think that he has seen the entire picture. This is expressed by a beautiful analogy in a *maamer* that Melech HaMoshiach wrote for his father's birthday, the 18th of Nissan. In the *maamer* he discusses the concept of a "yard" as it applies to the laws of Shabbos. There are two kinds of yards designed to contain animals. One is a yard that has a fence around it but no roof; the other is a yard that has both a fence around it and a roof on top. The difference between them is a very practical one. The yard with the fence around it alone is good enough to keep an animal in it, say a cow or a bull, but it is not good enough to contain a bird. The bird will fly away. To contain a bird the yard must have not only a fence but also a roof.

It may seem paradoxical that a bird which is such a delicate and weak animal needs such a strong protection while the bull, such a

powerful animal, needs only four walls without a roof. In the maamer the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach explains that the animal, the bird and the roof have parallels in the spiritual realm – in the soul of a Jew. The animal corresponds to the “animal soul,” which is interested only in physical pleasure, in what is down below. Therefore it needs to be watched and confined, but a regular confinement – a fence – is adequate. The bird, however, corresponds to the “intellectual soul.” The intellectual soul is the intermediary between the “G-dly soul” and the animal soul. Its function is to communicate and explain to the animal soul the concepts of G-dliness known to the G-dly soul. The intellectual soul by its nature is not interested in the lower, animalistic things, but rather, in high level intellect, in what is above. This is simply the nature of human intellect. It always wants to know something higher and when it attains that, it wants to go higher again – like a bird which is always attempting to fly higher and higher.

Thus the Rambam, whose towering intellect was universally recognized as transcending that of the scholars of his generation as well as generations before him, was known as “The Great Eagle.” It was said of him, “From Moshe (Rabbeinu) to Moshe (the Rambam) there arose none like Moshe (the Rambam).”

Because of this tendency of the intellectual soul to soar higher and higher, it needs to be watched very carefully because when it starts to understand matters of G-dliness it will run into the error of thinking that what it understands is the whole story. It doesn't realize that it only understands a finite subset of the infinite knowledge of G-d. Therefore the intellectual soul needs a special confinement – a roof over it – to tell it, “You are only finite, and

what you see is only a finite view of something that is infinite, so your knowledge is not a true and complete knowledge.” As an example of this, recall the arrogance of Aristotle in his intellectual achievement as contrasted with the humility of Rambam, as we mentioned above.

Thus, Melech HaMoshiach explains in the maamer that even in those matters where we have a very clear *understanding*, it's not sufficient to rely on our intellect alone but we must have faith in those areas also. The point of this third level is that

We need faith not only to pick up where intellect leaves off, but even in those areas where we already have knowledge and understanding, we still need to have faith.

we need faith not only to pick up where intellect leaves off (since we do not yet have an understanding of the higher concepts, as at the second level), but even in those areas where we already have knowledge and understanding, we still need to have faith.

Here the parallel to the observance of the mitzvos is that even those mitzvos which we can understand intellectually – such as not to kill, not to steal, etc. – must be observed primarily with an attitude of commitment to fulfill G-d's super-rational will rather than merely with

the intention of doing what is rational. The mitzvos, which are the expressions of G-d's will, are infinite in scope. What we understand of them is only a finite view of something infinite. Even when the mitzva makes perfect sense to us, it's not the whole story.

OUR KNOWLEDGE IS ALSO LIFE

Having developed this multilevel relationship between faith and intellect, we are now in a position to answer our original question: Why does Rambam open his major work on halacha with a discussion of the knowledge of G-d with no mention of faith?

One may argue that it is reasonable to omit mention of the faith that is a prerequisite for the observance of the mitzvos (level 1) in a book devoted strictly to the laws and details of the observance of the mitzvos. But we have seen that faith goes hand in hand with knowledge at all levels. Shouldn't this faith be mentioned along with the knowledge of G-d?

The Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach explains this. Faith transcends the definitions and limitations of the world. It is infinite, as we mentioned above. But this very advantage is also its disadvantage. The goal of the mitzvos is to affect the world as it exists in its natural state, and the Jew as he exists in this world. Intellect and knowledge are part of the structure of the finite natural world so they are the objects of the mitzva of the awareness of G-d.

The correct path to follow lies in combining faith and intellect – but faith must be the foundation. The great Kabbalist Rabbi Levi Yitzchok Schneerson, the father of Melech HaMoshiach, discusses this issue in a letter he wrote to the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach and Rebbitzin Chaya Mushka. He says that the *Eitz HaChaim* (Tree of Life) and *Eitz*

HaDaas (Tree of Knowledge) refer to faith and intellect. Faith is life, as the Prophet Habakuk says, "The tzaddik lives through his faith." "If the faith precedes the knowledge," Rabbi Levi Yitzchok writes, "then the knowledge is also life.... These two trees must be joined together.... This is what it says [in the prophecy of Isaiah] about Moshiach – that 'faith will be the belt of his body.' Only at the end of the prophecy does it mention knowledge, 'The earth will be filled with the knowledge of G-d.'"

In the Era of Moshiach faith and intellect become one. In general, the Era of Moshiach is characterized by the paradoxical unification of opposites, made possible by the revelation of Atzmus, the essence of G-d, which is above and beyond all definition and description. Relative to Atzmus all opposites are equal. (Just as one would say that relative to a point in distant space, the top and the bottom of a tall building here on earth are equal.) In particular, faith and intellect are unified. All those concepts which are higher than intellect and for which

we now have to rely on faith will be understood within the definitions and structures of human intellect.

The major issue in faith in our time is the faith in Moshiach – faith in the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach himself and in his statements concerning presence of the Geula. The correct path to follow is the same as in all matters of faith and intellect: We must start with the foundation of faith in the declarations and prophetic statements of Melech HaMoshiach in which he stated that we are in the Era of Moshiach and that the Geula is already here (level 1). Based on this foundation we must develop a new intellectual outlook – a Geula mentality – to look at and analyze the world differently.

The Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach has said, "All we have to do is open our eyes and then we see that the true and complete Redemption is already here, literally." Indeed, there are several major obvious Geula events that the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach himself discusses in his *sichos*, such as the revelation of Melech HaMoshiach, the Jews

leaving Russia peacefully to go to Israel (a semblance of "the Ingathering of the Exiles"), the "Swords Into Ploughshares" transformation, etc.

If there are aspects of the Geula that we are not yet able to identify – our eyes are not open to them – we have faith in the words of Melech HaMoshiach that we will see them too, immediately (level 2). And even in those aspects that we do see, there is more to them than meets the eye (level 3).

Based on the faith that everything that is happening in the world and in our personal lives is part of the unfolding of the Geula, we come to understand the world and ourselves differently.

In this way we truly live a Geula life and our "knowledge is also life."

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A GIFT FOR MOSHIACH

BY MENACHEM ZIEGELBOIM

The following is a story which teaches how special every Jew is, and how to look positively at every Jew in the spirit of Ahavas Yisroel.

In a Jewish town lived a wicked man who was an informer on his fellow Jews to the government. He especially loved to tattle on tzaddikim. There was usually no basis for his statements yet on many occasions he nearly brought tragedy upon the Jewish people.

Torah scholars decided that according to Torah, this man was deserving of the death penalty. They prayed for the man's death, but their prayers were not accepted. The man continued his wicked informing. These scholars felt that the tzaddik, Rabbi Zev Wolf of Zbarizh, was spiritually protecting the informer and was praying on his behalf.

So these scholars went to R' Zev in order to ask him to remove his protection from this evil man. It was a Friday when they arrived at the tzaddik's home. Out of respect for their stature, the Rebbe received them that day. They told him about the moser and how much trouble he made.

"We searched and found that no tzaddikim will come forth from his

descendents, and therefore, there is no reason not to pray for his demise, but all our prayers are useless because of the 'thread of kindness' the Rebbe has drawn upon him."

R' Zev heard them out and thought about it. Then he got up and said with a smile, "Cursing a Jew— Why the rush? Is that the proper preparation for Erev Shabbos? If you would listen to me you would stop this for now and stay with me for Shabbos. Afterwards, we'll see what to do."

Having no choice, the scholars remained at the tzaddik's house for Shabbos. Friday night at the meal they brought up the subject again but the Rebbe did not respond. This was repeated the next day at the lunch meal, but again the Rebbe was quiet. They brought it up once again at the third meal, but the Rebbe said nothing.

Sunday morning the scholars entered the Rebbe's room again and said, "Now we are asking that you accede to our request. This will make a Kiddush Hashem, as it says,

'Hashem protects all who love Him' by [the conclusion of the verse], 'he destroys all the wicked.'"

R' Zev's face lit up and with a smile on his lips he said, "Listen, my holy colleagues. Regarding the day that Moshiach will appear and redeem the Jewish people, says Dovid HaMelech in T'hillim that all the kings will 'bring a gift to the awesome leader.' All the kings of the world will bring a gift to Moshiach. Ah, what gift can they give him?"

The scholars were silent, waiting to hear what R' Zev would answer.

"If you do not know, Zev will tell you."

* * *

Before Moshiach comes, our brethren will be busy over their heads with their livelihoods. The fabric merchant will stand in his store and measure yards of fabric. The innkeeper will stand behind the counter and pour drinks.

In the midst of their work they will suddenly hear a commotion out in the street. The merchant will wonder and ask the customer, "Do you know what that noise is about?" The customer will shrug his shoulders. "I don't know. I just came in from outside and nothing was going on."

Meanwhile, the noise will grow

louder and the customer will go out of the inn and find a crowd of Jews, men, women, children, Torah scholars, simple Jews, all running. He will ask, "Wait! What happened?"

"What? Don't you know?" they will answer as they run by. "Moshiach arrived!"

"And where are you running?"

"We are running to shul and to the beis midrash to grab another t'hillim, to say another chapter of Gemara, because we feel bare of mitzvos and this is the only way to attain holiness. Moshiach doesn't care about silver and gold but about holiness and purity!"

So the customer will join them and run to the beis midrash. In the meantime, the innkeeper will still be waiting for the customer to come back and take what he ordered.

Suddenly a shofar will blow and the innkeeper will jump from his place and run outside to see what is happening. When he finds out that Moshiach has arrived, he will run to join the throngs of Jews who are running to shul.

The Jewish people will fill the shuls and pour out their hearts in prayer and t'shuva. Suddenly, a cloud will come and will select certain special individuals and take them, and a Heavenly Voice will announce that those Jews who did t'shuva are selected to approach Moshiach.

Those who will remain outside will raise their voices and cry, "Master of the universe, what about us? Will we remain in Galus forever?"

Their hearts will tear asunder with regret and t'shuva until the cloud comes back and takes more Jews, those who truly repented. Once again, the remaining Jews will cry and plead until a third cloud comes and take those who truly

repented. The cloud will return again and again until it gathers all the Jewish people after they do a complete t'shuva.

When the nations of the world will hear the sound of the shofar of Moshiach, they will be terrified. They will all be afraid that Moshiach will take revenge on them for all the suffering they afflicted on the Jews throughout the period of Exile.

All the kings will convene in order to come up with a plan to save themselves from Moshiach's wrath. Their wise men will come up with ideas. One will say to bribe him with a fortune and another will

"All the gifts in the world are nothing to the king Moshiach! My advice is to send him what he considers most precious of all..."

say to give him precious jewels. Another one will suggest giving him land, while still another one will say they should bow before him.

At a certain point the wisest one will get up and say, "Everything you are suggesting is worthless, for Moshiach does not need your gifts because he can wage war against us and annihilate us in an instant and take all our treasures and our plowed land with no one to stop him.

"All the gifts in the world are nothing to him! My advice is to send him what he considers most precious of all. Let us send him a Jew as a gift! We will put him in a beautiful carriage, put a crown on

his head, and all the kings will hang their crowns around him. This way we will show Moshiach that we have submitted to him. Who knows, this may appease him."

The wise man's words will be accepted by the kings and they will immediately send for a Jew to send him as a gift to Moshiach. But they won't be able to find a single Jew because they will all have done t'shuva already and the cloud will have taken them to Moshiach. What fool will remain among the nations?

After much searching, the kings will find one wicked Jew with a heart of stone and neck of iron, one who has no connection with the Jewish people or Moshiach. They will find the informer that you are asking me to curse and will place him upon a beautiful carriage, put a royal crown on his head and place their crowns around him and send him with great honor to Moshiach, as the verse says.

Since all the kings will come to Moshiach's palace, they will send messengers to announce that all the kings of the east and the west came to pay their respects and to bow to Moshiach. They even brought him a gift.

All the tzaddikim will laugh. "What kind of gift can the kings of the nations of the world bring to appease Moshiach?"

However, Moshiach will ask, "What is the gift?"

The kings will declare in unison, "A Jew!"

Then Moshiach will get up and say, "A Jew? That is the greatest gift you could bring me, for even the most undeserving Jew is of great lineage and more precious than all!"

* * *

R' Zev finished his story and said, "And you want me to curse this great gift?"

*Divrei Sholom p. 154-6,
Rabbeinu HaKadosh of Shinivch*

AN ELIYAHU HA'NAVI IN OUR MIDST

RABBI YOSEF YITZCHOK JACOBSON

Part 4 of a speech in honor of the 1st yahrzeit of the young shliach and melamed, Rabbi Levi Bialo a"h, on 7 Iyar of this year, who was taken before his time in a tragic accident. Presented during the Seven Weeks of Consolation.

[Continued from last week]

So there's a book called the Book of Iyov, the Book of Job, about a man who suffered terribly. He has three friends who come and explain his pain for 36 chapters! And finally in chapter 37, G-d reveals Himself to Job. G-d speaks, and we tell ourselves, okay, now finally we'll hear from the Creator Himself Why? Why? Tell us!

But G-d doesn't give Job an explanation. Instead, like a good Jew, He responds to Job's question with another question, and his question to Job is: *Eifo hayisa b'yasdi aretz?* Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Job, He continues, were you there with Me when I developed the first snowflake? Were you there with Me when the first thunder and lightning emerged? Were you there with Me when I created the oceans, the seas, the rivers, and the streams? Are you there with Me

when a female gazelle gives birth? Have you been there with Me when the first mist rose and the droplets of rain descended upon the earth?

What G-d's telling Job is this: We ask: Why did this person pass away? Why did this person die? G-d never answers that.

But he tells Job something: Do you ever wonder why this person is born? When a child is born does anybody ask: Why was he born? Does anybody ask: Why did the world come into existence? You don't know the beginning, G-d says. How do you expect to understand the end? Do you know the mystery of birth that you can comprehend the mystery of death? Do you know the mystery of life that you think you can comprehend the mystery of the antithesis of life?

He doesn't answer Job; He just tells Job: There is a mystery to life,

a mystery to the beginning, a mystery to the end that some people take for granted, but you can't take for granted, because you have observed the end.

* * *

When I grew up and I read this, I thought, come on, give me an answer! X-tianity has an answer: see ya in the next world! Buddhism has an answer: Nirvana; all in one, one in all; death is great; no ego – you anyway don't exist; Maya, deception. Hinduism has an answer: karma – look at that worm...

Kabbala talks about all of these



Rabbi Levi Bialo a"h

answers: Reincarnation, the death of the ego, a soul doesn't die with death, the future worlds... But I'll tell you the truth, I lost my father... Each of us – or many of us – has had our losses in life. Although there are losses and there are losses – quite obvious.

And I have come to really respect the answer in Judaism. The answer in Judaism consists of three words: We...don't...know.

We really don't. And Judaism says it's not even a surprise that we don't know.

If I come into a play and I see a few scenes in the middle and they seem senseless, and somebody says this play has been going for 5,000 years and it's going to go on for another 5,000 years. You have seen a few scenes. Do you really think you're going to become the expert that will capture the whole story from the few scenes that you have seen?

G-d tells Job: Do you know what it means when a child is born – that you can understand what it means when someone is taken away?

* * *

How does one have faith after such tragedies? How? I for one cannot come to any person and prove to them in the laboratory and say: I'll prove to you scientifically that there's a G-d Who wanted this to happen and it's good and move on with faith.

But I think this can and should be said: At the end of the day, G-d designed the world in a way that – until Moshiach comes – there will always be room for enormous doubts, questions and despair. G-d always makes sure that scientifically you can always ask: Maybe not. Maybe I don't exist. And yet, at the same time, you can also walk around the world and deny that there's such a thing called



Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok Jacobson

G-d doesn't answer Job; He just tells Job: There is a mystery to life, a mystery to the beginning, a mystery to the end that some people take for granted, but you can't take for granted, because you have observed the end.

humor. I cannot prove to anybody in a laboratory that there is something called humor. And you can also deny that there is something called music.

I have a very, very factual friend who says there's no such a thing as music; he calls it a manipulation of notes. I can't argue. I also have a friend – I have very interesting friends – who denies that there is such a thing called love. I cannot prove it to him.

I cannot prove that there's love, I cannot prove there's humor, I cannot prove there's music. But what I could say is this: You can live your whole life without love, you can live your whole life without humor, you can live your whole life without music, and you can choose to live a life without G-d – it's just a life that's so much more shallow, so much more impoverished, so much more narrow.

And hence the great men and women of faith throughout the generations chose to look at tragedy and say: I don't know. And yet they maintain a very powerful relationship with what they saw as the source, G-d.

I was at my parents' home once— I'll never forget this. A man who had 11 children was marrying off one of his sons and a few days after the wedding, they were having one of Sheva Brachos. It was at my parents home because we are related. This man had 11 children [and he was a widower]. A few months after his wife had given birth to twins – numbers 10 and 11 – she suddenly died from a heart attack, in California, and left 11 children. The husband was now marrying off his fifth or sixth son. It happened to be that that Shabbos was the day before the yahrtzeit of their mother.

Most of them didn't really know their mother.

We really shouldn't have been there. We were in the kitchen so we overheard what was a very intimate moment with the family. But we heard it. He spoke to his children and what he said to his children left such an impression on me. I can't say it. I'm not in a position to say it. I'm repeating what I heard from him. He's a blunt person, so he said it bluntly. He told his children this. He said:

You grow up as a child, and if your parents are people of faith, they tell you: G-d is good, G-d runs the world, G-d is a wonderful friend... Then when there's a problem at the age of six— Maybe you get stitches, so it's a little painful... But you know what, it's alright, G-d is still a very good guy. And then at the age of 8 maybe, something else happens, you fall off your bike, but OK, relatively speaking G-d is still a good guy. You know friends can sometimes be a pain in the neck. So He gives you a flue or virus, gives you a headache... Anyway it's good to be out of school for a few days. And you grow up with this conception. G-d is good, G-d is great, G-d is beautiful, G-d is my best friend.

And then there's that moment in life – the father is telling his children – when G-d destroys a life. It's not stitches, it's not a broken leg, it's not even surgery; it's an interruption of a life that will

never resume.

He told his children: This happened to you and you have two choices and both choices will be justified and I will not judge you. Choice number one: Develop a heart of stone and turn to G-d and say: You played with me, I'll play with You; you fixed my wagon, I'll fix yours. Bye-bye, G-d. In my eyes, you're gone forever. Close up your heart and become as cynical as possible. And you know what? Nobody could complain [that it's your fault]; it's G-d's fault. He was supposed to be your best friend and he's given you a difficult challenge.

But, my dear children, there's another choice and the choice is: All my life until this point, G-d was my best friend. What He did had always confirmed that faith, and what He did had always conformed to my imagination of what a relationship with G-d means. And now it's changed forever...

The second choice, kinderlach, is: At this point, dig deeper and discover a new type of relationship. Discover a different type of relationship that you never knew of before, one based on a different understanding of what life is and what death is, what meaning is, and what love is. G-d challenges you to a whole different understanding and level and appreciation of what a relationship of life is. You continue the relationship on a different level.

He said: Children, that's what I try to do. I hope you make this choice, but I can't tell you to.

This is what G-d told Moshe: Take off your shoes, because when you're in the presence of such a person you're in the presence of holiness, of someone who has a different relationship with life that you will never understand, and you should never understand, hopefully.

[To be continued be"H]

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IS LUBAVITCH MORE ANTI-ZIONIST THAN SATMAR?

TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY

In response to requests by our readers, we now present the thirteenth 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:

The things you have said in the past few sections are truly shocking, and I never would have believed that Lubavitchers could speak that way. Until now, I was under the impression that Chabad reached out to everyone and had feelings of love towards the Land of Israel and the Jewish state. Now, however, I see that there is no difference between Lubavitch and Satmar. On the contrary, you express yourselves in such a hostile manner that Satmar can learn a lot from you.

ANSWER:

1. The truth of the matter is that

Lubavitch is opposed to Zionism to a far greater extent than Satmar. The reason for this is that since Chabad speaks so much about the coming of Moshiach, and the whole concept of Chassidus and its dissemination has the objective of bringing Moshiach in actual deed, therefore, when Zionism hinders Moshiach's coming and distorts the very idea of Redemption, the pain is much more intense.

2. Furthermore, the most agonizing part is when we see Torah scholars investing their minds and hearts in vain and we see subversive efforts on how to distort the Torah and to reveal a side not in accordance with halacha – all in

order to justify the crimes of Zionism and to show how the exile is actually redemption. Similarly, we find that the Rebbe Rashab wrote in a letter, partially quoted earlier from his *Igros Kodesh* (Vol. 1, p. 312): "I was deeply distressed to see how people still listen to those evil preachers who destroy and cause harm *r"l* to the vineyard of Israel, chopping down plant growths and planting a root sprouting poison weed and wormwood – the Zionist idea **that possesses poison and venom to kill and burn the soul *r"l***, after their shame has already been publicly revealed, and their heresy and evil already appears and is revealed for all to see... Anyone who reveals a side of Torah not in accordance with halacha and **shows Zionism within the Torah...** it's as if he has placed **an idol in the Holy Temple** or left a

stench in the Kodesh HaKadashim, and **G-d will not forgive him**. May G-d in His abundant Mercy remove from our brethren in the House of Israel this cursed idea, and place in their hearts to return to Him in truth and walk in

His ways, and may we merit the coming of our Righteous Moshiach speedily in our days.”

3. Be that as it may, it is understood that there is a considerable difference between Satmar and Lubavitch on this issue. The Rebbe only negates “Zionism” as a movement, while at the same time, he reaches out to each person as a private individual. On the other hand, Satmar drives away Zionists as private individuals.

This is the reason why the Rebbe accepted such non-Torah observant Jews into yechidus, at Sunday dollars distribution, or during Hakafof on Simchas Torah and reached out to them with encouragement over those good deeds that they were doing. For even though the Rebbe is against the **approach**, nevertheless, every Jew as an individual is filled with mitzvos as a pomegranate is filled with seeds, and he must be brought closer, as doing so might bring him back to Yiddishkait and subsequently detest the approach he currently embraces.

Similarly, Chabad chassidim are also accustomed to reach out to every Jew, even those who represent a flawed way of thinking. We can see this through the tens of thousands of baalei t’shuva who have returned to their Jewish roots through Lubavitch.

4. However, the Rebbe has already noted that we must be particularly careful that it should not appear that we are not encouraging such people to continue with **their faulty approach**. Therefore, when someone fights **publicly** against the Torah, the People, and the Land of Israel, such as the Zionist leaders of our generation, anyone who actually demonstrates closeness to them **during the time they are engaged in their criminal deeds**, even in the guise of distributing matzos or mishloach manos, reading the Megilla, etc., this simply encourages them to continue their current mode of conduct, as they see that even

chareidim and chassidim reach out to them despite their terrible actions. In the words of the Rebbe in a sicha from Shabbos Parshas VaYeishev 5748: “**This encouragement is interpreted in the eyes of the public as condoning all their actions.**”

5. In another important difference



Regarding the miracle at Entebbe, the Rebbe praised the soldiers, while Satmar claimed that this was not a miracle from G-d, rather a natural occurrence with its source in the sitra achra.

between Satmar and Lubavitch, the Rebbe’s approach has been that since the “medina” already exists, we should strive that it should conduct itself in an appropriate fashion, both materially and spiritually, and that we should help it in any way

possible. Whereas, Satmar fights the “medina,” and there are even those among them who do so by cooperating with the Arabs and Jewish leftists.

6. We can see an example of this clear distinction between Satmar and Lubavitch on the issue of the Western Wall in Yerushalayim and the various miracles that have taken place through the Israel Defense Forces, such as the rescue mission at Entebbe. While the Rebbe encourages davening at the Kosel, Kever Rochel, and M’aras HaMachpella, even though they were liberated by the Zionist army, Satmar forbids this. Regarding the miracle at Entebbe, the Rebbe praised the soldiers, while Satmar claimed that this was not a miracle from G-d, rather a natural occurrence with its source in the *sitra achra*.

7. In his seifer *Shemen Sasson M’Chaveirecha* (Vol. 3, p. 134), Rabbi Moshe Tzvi Neriya, of blessed memory, writes that when he was in yechidus with the Rebbe, he asked: “How is it possible to explain to a Torah scholar, without mixing in politics, **the opinions of the Satmar rebbe** (regarding the miracles of the military victories, etc.)? How can a Torah giant say such things?” The Rebbe’s reply: “G-d forbid to suggest that these opinions are derived from a lack of Ahavas Yisroel or from hatred of our fellow Jews *ch”v*. The reason for these well-known opinions stems from his concerns that after all of the recent events, people might tend to think that this is a matter of Redemption, and in order to refute such ideas, he adopted an extreme position that negates the concept from its very root. However, *ich habb braite plaitzes vail der Rebbe der Shver haht durchgetrahten main veg* (I have broad shoulders, for my father-in-law, the Rebbe, has already paved the way for me), and therefore, I am not afraid to state my clear opinion that while this is a matter of saving

Jewish lives, nevertheless, it has no connection to the Redemption or *is'chalta d'Geula*."

8. Once when one of the Satmar rebbe's close acquaintances came to the Lubavitcher Rebbe, the Rebbe asked how Satmar chassidim can deny miracles carried out by Zionists, saying that they derive from the *sitra achra*. Everyone knows how the Satmar rebbe himself was saved by Dr. Rudolph Kastner, and his chassidim celebrate his rescue every year on the 21st of Kislev. The Rebbe wrote to him further about the miracles of the Six Day War: "It's clear that the salvation of two and a half million Jews in Eretz HaKodesh, may it be built and established (including yeshivos, etc.) is a holy miracle from Heaven etc. Otherwise, 1) Why were people ordered in Williamsburg to say T'hilim? 2) What was the purpose in saying them?"

9. Yet, despite the abovementioned differing opinions between Satmar and Lubavitch, when we discuss the Zionist ideology and the halo of Redemption applied to the "medina," the Rebbe's fierce

opposition in negation of these concepts is identical to Satmar – and even more so. However, **Chabad's primary avoda is on the positive plane** of spreading Yiddishkeit and the wellsprings of chassidus, and therefore, the general public has not been exposed to Lubavitch's opposition to the concept of "the first blossoming of our redemption." The Rebbe even stated once that were it not for Satmar chassidim fighting so fiercely against Zionism, Lubavitch would have to do it.

10. This is the very reason that Chabad has not **openly come out in a state of war** against *is'chalta d'Geula* to this day. Instead, the matter has remained scattered throughout the Rebbe's sichos and letters, since this is not Chabad's shlichus in the world, though in principle, the Rebbe wanted such things publicized (as I prove in the seifer's introduction). However, the "disengagement" has now brought on its wings a type of order from Heaven that the time has come to expose the true face of the State of Israel and the Zionist Movement that spawned it, in order that every G-d-fearing Jew will cut himself from

EVERY PERSON WITH FEAR OF G-D IN HIS HEART MUST DISTANCE HIMSELF FROM THEM

The gaon R. **Eliyahu Chaim Meizels**, of blessed memory, *av beis din* of Lodz, writes, "The Zionists do not seek Zion; they say 'Our hands are held high, and the language is with us,' and they do not hope for the salvation of G-d. They wear the mantle of Zion in order to deceive the softhearted and ensnare them in their atrocities, just as when someone confronts a cheetah, he dances before it, laughs, even cries, until he draws it with ropes of dishonesty towards the hole. It then falls before him and he crushes its skull. Therefore, every person with fear of G-d in his heart must distance himself from them. He should not take their path and he should refrain from following their ways."

(excerpt from "L'Choshvei Shmo," #59, Iyar 5758)



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WHAT SHOULD WE PRAY FOR?

BY RABBI NAFTALI ESTULIN

A CERTAIN PRAYER

It says in the Midrash that when the Amalekim came to fight the Jewish people after the death of Aharon, they disguised themselves as Canaanites and spoke the Canaanite language so that the Jewish people wouldn't know who they were. "They said: We know that they have a tradition from their ancestors, who told them, 'the voice is the voice of Yaakov,' that they pray and are answered, and yet we are attacking them. They will think the attackers are Canaanites and will pray about Canaanites, and we will kill them. When they came, the [Jewish people] saw that their faces were Amalekite and their clothing and language Canaanite. They said: Master of the universe, we don't know who they are. In any case, treat them with Your attribute of justice, as it says, 'if You will give this nation.' Immediately, 'and Hashem heard the voice of Israel.'" (Yalkut Shimoni on Parshas Chukas)

We see that there are situations in which the Jewish people want to pray to Hashem that He save them, but they don't know what to pray for. Today as well, the Jewish people want to pray. There is a tremendous spiritual arousal among people and everybody wants to pray to Hashem that He save us from the danger we are in, but we don't know what to pray for.

Especially after Olmert announced his plans for the day after the war is over and blurted out to an Associated Press reporter his insane plans to use victory in the war in Lebanon in order to push ahead with the expulsion of 70,000 Jews from Yehuda-Shomron, we don't know what to pray for!

The Defense Minister, in a talk with soldiers that was broadcast in the media, said that the bigger their victory the more they will be able to carry on with their political plans. And we, who know what political plans he is referring to, don't know what to pray for.

If we pray that the IDF have a miraculous victory in the war in the north and annihilate Hezbollah, this will give Mr. Peretz the image of Mr. Security, which he sorely lacks. Before this last war they said that he doesn't have what it takes to implement such a complicated and wicked plan. But if he succeeds in vanquishing the enemy, he and his men will convince the nation that he can be relied upon to carry out the next expulsion. He will have proven that he knows how to deal with terror threats.

Not to pray for a miraculous victory in the north is certainly out of the question. Soldiers and civilians are being killed, so how could we not pray for a victory over the terrorists?

Just as the Jewish people in the desert came up with a solution, we also have a solution: Master of the

universe, we don't know how to pray for success in the war in Lebanon and avoid the "Realignment" in Yehuda-Shomron. We have one prayer and we are sure that when You accept this prayer, we will be victorious on all fronts. The prayer is for the true and complete Redemption with the hisgalus of the Rebbe MH"M, immediately!

MAY THEY ALL BE WORTHY!

In the sicha of Parshas D'varim 5715, the Rebbe quoted the maamer Chazal that Moshiach will come either to a generation that is entirely unworthy or a generation that is entirely worthy. The Rebbe explains that when Moshiach comes he will sift out the good and the evil and then he will take those who are "entirely worthy" to Geula, and then he will work on those who were "entirely unworthy" – to be able to include them as well in the complete Redemption.

We merited to be connected to the Rebbe MH"M and the Rebbe marches to Geula with us, but we must make every effort to include others with us, even those who are still in the category of "entirely unworthy," and to bring them too, to the complete Redemption.

Now is the time of the worthy. The Jewish people are spiritually aroused and people are waiting to hear words of encouragement. We, who merited to be connected to the Rebbe, have

what people need.

The Rebbe said on Shabbos Parshas R'ei 5751 to “announce and publicize all over, with words that come from the heart, that Hashem says (through His servants the prophets) to every Jewish man and woman, ‘see I have given you today a blessing,’ so that literally today, we see with eyes of flesh, the blessing of the true and complete Redemption.”

In the very next paragraph the Rebbe emphasizes, “It should be added and emphasized that the announcement and publicity of all this needs to be done even by those who maintain that they still haven’t (fully) assimilated this inyan in their understanding, grasp, and consciousness. Since they too have the inyan of emuna in a complete way, they can (and therefore, must) publicize it to others, starting with his own household (who certainly need not suffer that he hasn’t fully understood it), and all those in his environment, every Jewish man and woman. Certainly, by making the appropriate effort, their words will be

accepted and have the effect, including on the person doing the announcing and publicizing, that it will be grasped by him in a p’nimius’dike manner.”

The Jewish people yearn for good news. People want to hear words of encouragement, words of inspiration, and even translate emotional inspiration into practical inspiration. Any Lubavitcher Chassid who goes out to the streets these days on mitzvaim, sees Jews going over to t’fillin stands and wanting to do another mitzva and another mitzva.

The biggest news is one we all have, the Besuras HaGeula, the real and only solution to the situation we’re in. There’s no doubt that this news, that *aht aht kumt Moshiach*, especially with the emphasis that this was said as a prophecy by the Navi HaDor, will transform the tremendous spiritual arousal into an increase in Torah and mitzvos with the intention to hasten the Geula.

This is our role these days, to go out and set up t’fillin stands and



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spread the Besuras HaGeula; to strengthen ourselves and others in tz'daka whose power is especially great at this time, especially for hastening the Geula as it says, "Tzion will be redeemed with justice and her captives with tz'daka." With the power of Moshiach we, the few who are "worthy," will be able to transform everybody into "entirely worthy" with the hisgalus of the Rebbe, now.

PAIN, BITTERNESS, ACTION!

I met R' Zalman Deitsch a"h when I came to 770 at the end of the 60's. I was a young bachur who had come from Russia without friends and acquaintances, and R' Zalman included me in his group which had the best Chassidishe bachurim of that time. R' Zalman, who was a big maskil in Chassidus, was my chavrusa for Chassidus.

Shortly after R' Zalman became engaged, his father passed away. There's no describing the pain of a son whose father died young, all the more so, a chassan whose father died a few weeks before leading him to his chuppa.

I saw this great pain on R' Zalman's face at the funeral for his father. The funeral stopped near 770 and waited for the Rebbe. I had never seen such grief on someone's face.

As a close friend, I stood near him at the time. Around him was an empty circle and a path leading in the direction of the main door of 770, to enable the Rebbe to follow the aron.

Then, when the door opened and the Rebbe came out of 770, I realized

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that I hadn't yet seen true pain. The Rebbe's face was forbidding and for a moment it seemed as though all the pain in the world was concentrated in the Rebbe's expression. I couldn't bear that look and I turned back to my friend, R' Zalman.

He stood there, near the aron, and looked at the Rebbe. The Rebbe's deep pain dwarfed the pain of all those present. Paradoxically, R' Zalman seemed to experience relief. I felt as though the Rebbe was removing the heavy burden of pain from R' Zalman and taking in on his shoulder.

When I heard the terrible news

about R' Zalman's passing, I immediately recalled that scene. I could picture the Rebbe's gaze that expressed infinite pain, a deep pain, and I was certain that at R' Zalman's funeral too, the Rebbe was there and looking with deep and infinite pain for a true Chassid who went to the World of Truth.

If you ever saw the Rebbe at painful times, you know that the Rebbe's pain is not *atzvus*, sadness G-d forbid, but tremendous *merirus*, bitterness. Merirus for the lengthy exile, and as the Rebbe put it in the maamer in the kuntres Purim Katan 5752, "completely shaken, crushed." And this tremendous merirus bursts forth with great force to all the points of outreach activities, all leading up to one goal and one point: the hisgalus of the Rebbe MH"M and bringing the Geula.

If the above made you feel bitter, this should be immediately translated into action: go out to the streets and wherever possible and spread the wellsprings of Chassidus and publicize the Besuras HaGeula of the Rebbe MH"M. This is the way to rid ourselves of the reason for the merirus and pain and bring the true and complete Redemption. Then the promise will be fulfilled, "arise and sing those who dwell in the earth," and R' Zalman and his father and his brother Yosef who just passed away too, and their sisters who passed away in their youth, will be among them, may it be now.

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ONE YEAR SINCE THE EXPULSION: THE MEMORIES. THE LONGING. THE FAITH. THE HOPE.

*Exactly one year ago, Shai Gefen spent the days preceding the expulsion in the home of shliach, Rabbi Yigal Kirshnzaft in Neve Dekalim. One year later, when the consequences of the wanton destruction of Jewish communities have been smoke, fire, war and death, Shai Gefen met the Kirshnzaft family in their caravilla in Nitzan. He wanted to hear how they have been and what they have done since their expulsion. * In a moving dialogue, Rabbi Kirshnzaft described the events, the memories, the first days and the closing days in Gush Katif, and unforgettable moments.*

Just one year ago we spent the days preceding the expulsion in the spacious Kirshnzaft home in Neve Dekalim. It was a home that symbolized chesed and shlichus in the Gaza Strip. In those crazy days, the Kirshnzaft couple graciously hosted hundreds of guests as though nothing untoward was about to happen.

It was a vibrant home that was

busy and lively for 23 years. Yigal and his wife Tzipora raised twelve children there, with mesirus nefesh, under the constant threat of mortars and shooting from the enemy.

All this was cut off one year ago in Av 5765 when Jews dressed in black uniforms entered their home and began dragging people out to the waiting buses. After an agreement

made with the Police Chief, Yigal was allowed to leave the Gush as the last of the civilians. However, he couldn't take the sights and sounds and so he took his belongings and left the place that had been an inseparable part of his life.

For eight months, the family stayed in the Caesar Hotel in Yerushalayim and just four months ago they moved to a caravilla in Nitzan. As soldiers in the Rebbe's army, they opened a Chabad house for those expelled from Gush Katif, which covers all the areas where the expellees live.

They had to take a very deep breath and close their eyes in order to start all over again, but the Kirshnzafts have no time to deal with the unbearable personal pain that they live with daily. Shlichus comes before everything else.

I visited the shliach in order to hear firsthand how they're doing especially in light of the war in the north and the thousands of refugees from the north, who have come to the Nitzanim area.

One year later...

(A heavy sigh) Yes. We haven't digested it. This week there was a gathering for residents of Neve

Dekalim to mark one year since the expulsion. They showed a chilling video made by the Lubavitcher doctor Sozy Namir about the last day in his house in Gush Katif. The TV crew filmed the final day, the break-in to the house, and then all the memories come flooding back. Suddenly I realize that we too have been expelled.

How was this past year?

In short: it was a year of mourning. The expellees were all in a terrible state. People don't leave the house. There is no will to live. Most people aren't working. In Nitzan there is a high unemployment rate. It's hard to get people out of the house for programs. In the past, hundreds of ladies came to an event we made while two weeks ago only a few dozen women showed up.

People are inwardly focused. They are still in shock over what happened to them. People got very little out of what they are legally entitled to. It's shocking that those who went first to the expulsion commission in order to "get it over with" received the biggest blow and today they are the ones who are organizing the demonstrations against the government.

We have heard that the kids aren't doing well either.

The problems are unbearable. There are serious problems in terms of the breakdown of values. You have to understand that these are kids who grew up with faith in the Medina and the army while bowing to the government. Gush Katif had the highest percentage of residents who attained high rank in the army, as opposed to the national average. Now they have discovered that it's all rotten.

And yet...

There's a bit of light in this dark tunnel when we see how most of the people from Gush Katif are keeping in touch with one another and are trying, as much as possible, to preserve the unity of the community despite everything.

You spent eight months in a hotel

where you were tossed right after the expulsion on Thursday, 13 Av.

Those are scenes that will never be forgotten. The children cried nonstop. When it was Erev Shabbos Nachamu 5765 we told all our children that they could cry until Shabbos but as soon as Shabbos began they had to stop because on Shabbos there is no sadness.

We didn't leave our rooms for a week. Not just us but whoever was with us. It was literally a Shiva for mourning and Shloshim for eulogizing.

The days in the hotel weren't easy. We had robberies. In Gush Katif we didn't know about robberies and

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nobody locked their door at night. Suddenly, we the expellees were facing a new world. My computer and other belongings were stolen.

Recovering wasn't easy. Even those who wanted to recover found it very difficult. On the one hand you have to carry on, and on the other hand you have to deal with a 1001 problems. Farmers my age, 55, businessmen, workers and laborers all feel they can't start over again. Even those who want to go on suddenly discovered that everybody deserted them.

You were the first resident of Neve Dekalim nearly 24 years ago.

I participated in the development

of Neve Dekalim from the ground up. Exactly 24 years ago, in Av, we had the first caravan in Neve Dekalim placed and we lived in it while everything was still dunes. We were involved in all the construction and everything that moved in Neve Dekalim. We built it all with our ten fingers.

This week a picture of the destroyed hesder yeshiva was publicized and I still remember the groundbreaking ceremony when Dr. Yosef Burg came and we refused to allow him to speak since he cooperated with the expulsion from Yamit from where I was also expelled.

We went through everything while living in Gush Katif. Dozens of my friends were murdered in Gush Katif, may Hashem avenge their blood, including rabbanim, Rabbi Biran and Rabbi Shorshan and Rabbi Harama. They set the tone in the Gush.

We also made all the family simchos: the brissin, naming girls from the bima in shul, kiddushim. We fought for every meter of land in Gush Katif. Those were 24 years of war against the Jewish community, war against Arabs as well as Jews. There was no day without a battle. We knew every nook and cranny in Gaza. There was no meter that we weren't familiar with.

Over the years you developed extensive contacts with all the military people and police in the area.

That is correct. Over the years we went out at night in order to bring coffee to the soldiers, as well as to do Chanuka and Purim mivtzaim with them. I'm talking about thousands of people. We had connections with all the military commanders and the police, from the little guys to the senior officers including top commanders. We went to the furthest outposts and visited them all.

I know the entire Strip like the palm of my hand. Until the cursed Oslo Accords we traveled in Gaza freely. We did some secret missions in Gaza, rescuing Jewish girls from

marriages with Arabs. Some things are better left unsaid though maybe one day the stories can be told.

One of the good things that resulted after the outbreak of the Intifada was that many Arabs threw their Jewish wives out, thus saving their lives. Obviously, our connections with the military command and the officers in the area helped us a lot in these matters.

And you experienced miracles while living in Gush Katif

We ourselves experienced open miracles. Two years ago we were coming back from Kfar Chabad when we were ambushed. The baby, Menachem Mendel, was miraculously saved despite the shrapnel all around him. We found out later that he had been holding a picture of the Rebbe.

Our Nechemia was also miraculously saved after a mortar landed in our yard.

A month before the expulsion I experienced a big miracle when I was with R' Zev Ravnoy from Los Angeles who had come especially to volunteer, to be with the mitzva tank for three days. We were injured by a mortar that landed right near us. One piece of shrapnel that entered my back simply disappeared, to the amazement of the doctors.

Gush Katif was a Gush of open miracles. In light of everything that has happened since the expulsion, everybody can understand what we lived through and what standing in Gush Katif entailed.

People are just now beginning to understand what we went through

thanks to the missiles landing in the north. They are just beginning to understand our mesirus nefesh despite the nonstop mortars that we had for five years. Jews are leaving the north in droves while the Jews of Gush Katif stayed put, with mesirus nefesh.

And in the midst of all that the Kirschznzafts were busy with shlichus.

I remember that we wrote to the Rebbe in 5748 about the work we did over Chanuka. The Rebbe thanked us for the report and added that our job was to be happy and to make others happy. We didn't understand what the Rebbe wanted from us. Were we clowns? But then the Intifada began and all the tzaros that followed in its wake and we were the source of calm and simcha for the people of the Gush. Many stayed until the end because of

R' Yigal Kirshnzaft with the caravillas of Nitzan in the background



In recent years the army was busy preparing for the expulsion with a huge budget. They used psychologists and various programs to carry out the expulsion. They brought horses from Germany and the most advanced break-in equipment in order to break into houses. Tens of thousands of soldiers were drafted to do this and they were led by the soldiers in the Air Force.

the work of our Chabad house.

My wife worked with great mesirus nefesh. One of the big things she did in recent years was to organize a Rosh Chodesh gathering, which was attended by hundreds of women from all over the Gush. We brought top-notch lecturers and lots of simcha. This is one of things that strengthened the Gush and the people so they wouldn't break.

6000 mortars flew on and around the houses with no prior warning, no sirens. There were ambushes. Nevertheless, not only didn't people run but many Jews came to support us. They continued to build. Over 3000 mortars landed in a square

kilometer in Neve Dekalim over a five year period. We didn't have "open territory." People screamed at us, "Are you crazy? What do you need it for?" There was a de-legitimization campaign from all directions and when a similar thing is going on in the north, we see the difference.

I'm not blaming people for leaving the north. It's the normal thing to do. Ditto for Sderot. Life in Gush Katif was supernatural. We saw k'dusha in people. Gush Katif was a Gush of Torah and chesed in an unprecedented way. As for the Ahavas Yisroel, there was nothing like it. In shul, people would "fight" in order to forego aliyos and honors, and you just don't see this in other places. It was just giving and giving.

After the expulsion, people were forced to begin dealing with the world, "olam" from the root meaning hidden, with all that this signifies. One of the tremendous difficulties that expellees have had to contend with is living in other places in a different atmosphere, when they had gotten used to the brotherly love in Gush Katif for decades. Those were years in which we literally lived in a state of Geula.

What sticks in your mind more than anything else from the terrible days of the expulsion?

I think that the residents of Neve

Dekalim will forever remember the Chanukas HaBayis of the Mikva Chabad which happened on the last day, followed by the Hachnasas Seifer Torah that was brought to Gush Katif by the Matteh HaOlami to Save the Nation and the Land.

The dancing and simcha ... we never saw anything like it. Just the other week a neighbor said that this is what he took with him from Gush Katif. Apparently, this was the final birur before the big churban.

Did you ever think that one day you would be thrown out?

No. With us in Gush Katif, ruchnius reigned, not gashmius. They spoke about handing it over to the Arabs so many times and in the end it always fell through. Even Rabin who went with the Oslo Accords said that the Gush would remain. Even Sharon said, "Din Netzarim K'Din Tel Aviv." The miracles we experienced gave us the confidence that we wouldn't be thrown out.

Where did you fail?

As far as we're concerned, we didn't fail. The people of Gush Katif were heroes who exhibited incredible mesirus nefesh. Today everybody is opening their eyes and realizing what we went through and under what conditions we had to leave. There was nothing like this in the history of the

COMING FULL CIRCLE (1)

R' Yigal spoke about the media and Gush Katif:

Over the years, the journalists tried to undermine the settlements of Gush Katif by presenting us in a negative light. When it came time for the expulsion, they saw good and well who the residents of Gush Katif were and how strong in spirit we were. Many of them completely changed their views.

The journalist Uri Revach who used to be a reporter for Channel 2 was hostile towards Gush Katif. At one point, we had to excommunicate him. But then he did t'shuva and he came dressed as a Chassid to the Yud-Tes Kislev farbrengen in Gush Katif in order to support us, and he told us his moving story.

To see Uri Revach davening Maariv in Gush Katif with d'veikus was for me, really coming full circle.

Jewish people.

A resident of Chaifa just wrote an article in the paper in which he asked forgiveness for throwing residents of Gush Katif out of their homes when they came to plead for their lives. "Now I understand what they went through," he wrote.

There was a story that somebody came to you to ask forgiveness. Is it true?

Yes. A very well-educated woman, a psychologist from one of the nearby moshavim came to our home and with tears in her eyes she asked us forgiveness for not standing by us and for supporting the expulsion. My wife and I didn't know what to say to her. She left a contribution for the Chabad house and asked that we start a shiur in their home.

A number of people have called, who we knew from the past, some of whom have fled their homes in the north. People who now see what an upheaval the expulsion was, realize what a mistake they made by sitting off to the side.

What do you think about the army fighting in the north and the south and not achieving their objectives?

That was expected. In recent years the army was busy preparing for the expulsion with a huge budget. They used psychologists and various

programs to carry out the expulsion. They brought horses from Germany and the most advanced break-in equipment in order to break into houses. Tens of thousands of soldiers were drafted to do this and they were led by the soldiers in the Air Force. Why is it surprising that the army was caught unprepared? Is it surprising that these are the results?

Where are the terrorists shooting from? Precisely from those areas we were expelled from. The Arabs who received *parnasa* from the Jews are crying more than us. A farmer told me that an Arab called him and cried that nothing was growing in his hothouses. He was doing exactly the same things that he did when he worked for the Jew but he wasn't successful. They're not seeing the blessing and they acknowledge it. Aside from the training camps from which they attack Jewish cities, there's nothing there.

What sort of cheshbon ha'nefesh do you expect from the public?

Sad to say but there were parties who in exchange for 290 million shekel agreed to support the expulsion and enabled Sharon to carry it out. It wasn't for naught that the Bostoner Rebbe (whom I had the privilege to host in Gush Katif) said that everything that is going on now, is *midda k'neged midda* (measure for measure).

A cheshbon nefesh has to examine how we enabled this crime to take place which caused a churban, aside from robbing the lives, *parnasa* and dignity of innocent residents. Many Jews now feel what it means to be expelled.

As for Chabad – the Rebbe screamed about *shleimus ha'Aretz* in a way that he screamed about nothing else. I'll say it gently: **We expected much more from Chabad.**

At the same time, I would like to praise those rabbanim who supported Gush Katif with *mesirus nefesh*, people like Rabbi Dovid Drukman, rav of Kiryat Mochkin, the *Matteh HaOlami* to Save the Nation and the Land headed by Rabbi Volpe and Rabbi Rapp, and all the distinguished people and *mashpiim* who came to be with us during the expulsion and supported us.

I think the Jewish people have a lot to learn from them and from all the people who supported us nonstop. It's a pity that the leadership and the bigshots didn't understand what the people understood.

Was everything you did a waste?

G-d forbid. We did all we could to strengthen Jews and we carried out our *shlichus* to the best of our ability. In the end, everybody will see how Gush Katif was the strength of Am Yisroel, the backbone that supported it all.

There's no doubt that everything that has happened are signs of the Era of *Moshiach* when things are unclear and truth is lacking etc. but I have no doubt that when the *Geula* comes, everybody will see how Gush Katif was the spearhead in our war for Eretz Yisroel. Certainly, everything that took place until now was part of the birth pangs before the *Geula*.

On the day of the expulsion you had a moving conversation with Police Chief Karadi who oversaw the expulsion. What did you discuss?

He wanted to come to my house. He was at the blockade of Neve Dekalim and was afraid to enter with

COMING FULL CIRCLE (2)

After we were expelled from Yamit, we were very depressed. We went to Rabbi Yisroel Ariel of the *Machon HaMikdash* with Boruch Marzel and other activists in order to ask him what to do. Rabbi Ariel said to me, "Now is the time to get married." And so I did, shortly thereafter.

Everybody remembers the wedding in Kfar Chabad that was attended by many of the expellees of Yamit. Right after that we went to start *Neve Dekalim* in the deserted sand dunes of Gaza and our firstborn Dovid was born.

We've closed a circle because the year after our expulsion from Gush Katif, we have married off our firstborn. This symbolizes that we continue to build and to establish generations despite the terrible churban, and with Hashem's help, the Jewish people will ultimately be victorious.



R' Yigal at work at his Chabad house

his car. He asked me to come and get him. We sat, Rabbi Dovid Nachshon, Rabbi Leibel Mochkin, and myself, for an hour and a half, and pleaded with him not to commit this crime.

Rabbi Nachshon told him, "One can acquire his world in one hour,' how dare you do this to your friend?!"

Unfortunately, they preferred following orders than following their conscience.

Did they try contacting you after the expulsion?

They tried but I let them know that there was no forgiving what they did. One of the commanders called me and wanted to hear that I had remained his friend. I told him, first do t'shuva and then we'll talk. Karadi wanted to visit me at the hotel but I told him, better

he didn't come.

It looks as though many of the perpetrators of the expulsion have been punished. Do you also feel that way?

Definitely. What took place here was like what took place in Sodom and Amora. We see time after time that whoever harms Eretz Yisroel doesn't get off scot-free. Whoever looks at what happened here this past year will come to the same conclusion.

Whoever took part in the churban was punished. The Rebbe told Moshe Katzav that he would personally fight Prime Minister Shamir if he continued with discussing concessions to the Arabs. We see, less than a year after the expulsion, what happened to the prime minister, his son, his advisors,

the ministers, the party and its leaders, and now the position of the Chief of Staff of the expulsion is shaky, and so on. I only hope that today's leaders will learn the lesson and won't try it again!

Sadly, many of those involved in the expulsion were religious.

I would call the blind loyalty to the Medina and considering it a Jewish Kingdom, actual avoda zara. The Medina became more holy to them than the Torah and there were (still are) many of them who think this way. They forgot Hashem and preferred the IDF commander.

In recent weeks we have distributed the book *Bein Ohr LChoshech* to rabbanim and important public figures from the Gush as a response to their fraudulent and

dangerous nationalism.

I can only tell you that on Yom HaAtzmaut this year, the Disengagement Commission invested a fortune into the celebrations in Nitzan. They brought many performers but the people voted with their feet and didn't go. There has definitely been a big change, with some of them having internalized what a fraud and danger this nationalism is.

Are you still getting calls from people?

People call me from all over the world to encourage me. One Jew from Switzerland wrote me many times. He was simply bowled over by everything that happened and the miracles that took place. There are many like him. It's definitely encouraging. We also thank all those who sent donations for residents of the Gush.

What can you say about the Chabad Chassidim who were in your home at the time of the expulsion?

We have no words with which to express our deep thanks. It strengthened us very much and helped us. I want to mention the T'mimim who learned in the yeshiva organized

by R' Poltorak. The shliach in Chevron, Rabbi Danny Cohen, Rabbi Dovid Nachshon, the mashpia Rabbi Zalman Notik, and many others who cannot all be enumerated; and mostly the T'mimim who worked tirelessly, with the tank, who worked until the end to bring hope and simcha to the residents.

You haven't presented a claim to receive compensation. Why?

When we discussed whether to negotiate with the commission in order to get early compensation, I absolutely opposed it. Many people asked me, "What should we do? We have to look out for ourselves?" I said that in the worst case we would celebrate the marriages of our children with pita and olives...

Whoever listened to me and didn't respond to them, got more in the end and those who caved in and cooperated with the government, suffered.

I didn't make any claims for compensation. I didn't even accept the National Insurance that I got for myself and my son's injury. Unfortunately, anything associated with Gush Katif

entails dealing with difficult and deliberate treachery and bureaucracy. They undermine the residents in a way that's hard to believe and many of them are entangled in court battles in order to get the minimum.

You are living in Nitzan now and you have opened a Chabad house to work with the expelled families. How are you managing?

Our current work is focused on individuals. We try to reach all the expellees, wherever they live and keep in touch. We try to provide for their Jewish needs. We took on a new shliach and we also have a mobile library that will go to a different area every day, to where the expellees live.

A yeshiva will open in Nitzan for those who finished K'vutza in order to bring a chayus here.

Do you hope to return to Gush Katif?

We're sure it will happen. The question is when. With Hashem's help we will rebuild Gush Katif and it will last forever. The yearning for Geula is growing. May we see Gush Katif rebuilt along with Moshiach Tzidkeinu and the Beis HaMikdash, now!



Right: Just before the expulsion, Police Chief Karadi talking with Yigal



Rabbi Volpe with torn kuntreisim in the rubble that was all that remained of the Kirshnzaft home

Yigal during the expulsion

T'SHUVVA BEYOND NATURE

BY CHANA KATZ

Bucharim Yeshiva, Kfar Chabad—Some 400 Anash are living here now. (More of Tzfat is here than there.) Entire families are living in a single dormitory room, but remain thankful for every single blessing. At night-time it's a quite a scene, with mothers bathing their young children in the public bathroom and trying to get everyone to go to sleep in spite of the noisy circumstances.

All three dormitory buildings have been completely filled, and Collel

Chabad has opened yet another complex: the Beit Sefer Avodah, about two minutes from here.

Already, 15 families have moved in there. No one knows what will be, especially when the yeshiva students return to Bucharim, but everything in the world seems up in the air. As Rachel Hendel said, "The head of the baby is already out." No one can imagine life ever going back to usual.

It has been more than a month since Collel Chabad has worked at a

capacity that seems almost above nature, making things work, and trying to meet all the needs of the flock, at a cost one Collel Chabad official put at \$100,000 per week.

No one expected to be gone from their homes for so long, but here it is a month after the war broke out, and yesterday alone—before the sun even set—some 160 katyusha rockets blasted into northern Israel.

"But it's not a matter of life and death," my husband reported today

BUCHARIM VILLAGE—Motzaei Chamisha-Asar B'Av—The horrible news came that 15 Israeli soldiers were killed in fighting in Lebanon that evening, one of them, the 27-year-old nephew of Tzfat Anash Moshe and Mi'eira Kallo. With tears in her eyes, Limor Ben Shmuel, wrote the Rebbe for a blessing that the war would finish and Melech HaMoshiach would succeed and we would all return to Jerusalem in true peace.

As we talked with Mrs. Ben Shmuel about the very special answer she received from the Rebbe, we got to truly experience what it meant to have words from the heart penetrate the heart. (All year long, our 10-year-old daughter talked about a favorite teacher she had at Or Menachem in Tzfat. Only a few weeks ago did I learn that this "Morah Limor" of whom my daughter had spoken so fondly was the same woman who moved with her family into the dormitory room across the hall from us.)

As Mrs. Ben Shmuel patiently translated the Rebbe's answer into English for us, she interspersed each thought with stories and examples that seemed to grow more

powerful by the moment. Things like this are difficult to put into words but we will try because it is truly worth it to share the inspiration and pass it on to others.

Mrs. Ben Shmuel had been doubly upset by the fact that the soldier's lives appeared to be "hefker" and unnecessarily endangered and that even now, in the middle of war, there are still politicians who have the deadly absurdity to talk of "peace."

"We have to pray for Moshiach," said Mrs. Ben Shmuel. "They (the government) and army make mistake after mistake. Nasrallah, *yimach sh'mo*, is the head of Hezbollah, which means 'army of G-d.' But they are the opposite of k'dusha. We (Tzivos Hashem) are the true army of Hashem."

* * *

Mrs. Ben Shmuel put her letter into *Igros Kodesh*, volume 23. The answer, she later realized was on page 438 (which should have been Reish-Tzaddik-Ches) except the letters were changed on that page in order to avoid using a word which means murder). Instead, the

from Tzfas. “It’s a matter of *gilui Elokus* (revealed G-dliness).

This morning, my husband returned to Tzfat with two other men who had come to the Kfar to visit their families for the day. “When we were driving, Yossi made a good point. He said two soldiers were kidnapped and all this started. For years, soldiers (and civilians) have been murdered and maimed and the government did nothing. Now it’s almost beyond nature how all the soldiers are fighting to defend Eretz Yisroel and putting on t’fillin and everyone wants to do Torah and mitzvos.

“Before we even got to Amiyad junction,” he continued, we got a call from someone who said a katyusha had landed next to Yossie’s house in Ibcorp (a community of mostly Russian immigrants about 10 minutes from Tzfat) and a woman was killed. There was another man in the house at the time, in his nineties, who reportedly wasn’t hurt. Yossie said that man did incredible *kibbud av va’eim* his whole life.

It’s almost beyond nature how all the soldiers are fighting to defend Eretz Yisroel and putting on t’fillin and everyone wants to do Torah and mitzvos.

“After I dropped Yossi off at Ibcorp I got back to Kiryat Chabad. And when I pulled up to the driveway I saw (Shlucha) Rena Leichter and (Mrs. Etta) Reinitz passing out cartons of canned goods and fresh dairy products. I volunteered to deliver them to the families that didn’t have cars and when I got up the road I saw Shalom (a bachur), who needed food, and helped me deliver.

“We’re telling people not to listen to the news. The news is not the truth.

The truth is people like Mrs. Leichter and Mrs. Reinitz.”

Also people like Kiryat Chabad resident Moshe Berenson, who was away from Tzfat but returned in order to check the Eiruv on several occasions to make sure that it was not affected by the rocket attacks. Someone said this morning that the new children’s playground recently brought to fruition by Anash city council member Moshe O’hayun, was completely destroyed by a rocket last night. Building nine of Me’Or Chaim, where the Chabad Shul in that community is located, sustained a direct missile hit when a Katyusha smashed through one apartment and exited through another.

* * *

It’s hard to walk too far around here without hearing someone telling a story about a letter he or she received from the Rebbe. One woman who wanted to go to Jerusalem said she got a letter from the Rebbe to stay in Kfar Chabad. Another woman, currently relocated from Tzfat to Jerusalem, who wanted to come to the Kfar, got a letter

letters of the page on which she received her answer were changed to Ches-Tzaddik-Reish, a word that means the area (courtyard). (“I wrote that I wanted to be in the Beit HaMikdash—not Tzfat,” she said.)

She had written in her letter about feeling like she was in a prison, yet seeing the full moon outside (it was Chamisha-Asar B’Av), she felt as though it was very special. (The letter she opened to was dated the 14th of Kislev and the Rebbe also referred to a full moon).

The Rebbe had written the letter on Yud-Daled Kislev, and he talked about standing between geula to geula—but not just a personal redemption or the redemption of a particular generation, but the redemption of all generations.

* * *

Just a day earlier, Mrs. Ben Shmuel heard a sicha being taught by Mrs. Rachel Shabi, in which the Rebbe taught why Chamisha-Asar B’Av and Yom Kippur are singled out as being special when compared to other Yomin Tovim:

During the decree of death on the Generation of the Desert every Tisha B’Av, the Jews would prepare their graves and lie down in them, and many perished while some lived. When the decree finally came to an end, and no one died that Tisha B’Av, the Jews were in a state of disbelief, and only on Chamisha-Asar B’Av did they come to the realization that the decree had finally ended.

* * *

The Rebbe, MH”M continued: “How can we bring the Geula? We learned that all the truth will be from (the descendants) of Dovid HaMelech . . . Pada V’Shalom . . . there are three things we need to do. . . the men should learn Torah.....g’millus chassadim and they should pray with the tzibbur.. He who does these things frees Hashem from the Galus, as it were.

And to do all the mitzvos in the light (full moon of Chamisha-Asar B’Av) of Torah Chassidus! Now it will be lighter and lighter, Moshiach promised, until the real and true Geula Shleima.

from the Rebbe to stay in Jerusalem. Almost everyone got letters encouraging them to be a strength and light wherever they are.

Someone asked the Rebbe when they will go back home, when the being in limbo will end.

"I'm surprised at your question," the Rebbe replied. "Your home is Hashem's home," the Beis HaMikdash.

There's no turning back!

* * *

A number of years ago, Tzfas Chassid and scholar Rabbi Alter Eliyahu Friedman, compiled the Rebbe's teachings on the Geula in a book called *From Exile to Redemption*. In the first volume, one section talks about the impending signs of Moshiach. One of the statements from the Gemara was that "Galilee will be desolate and Gavlan destroyed." Having lived in Tzfat in the Galilee, I always wondered to myself what exactly that meant. Now, most of the Galilee has emptied of its residents. When I saw Rav Friedman the other day, I asked him if this is what the Gemara related millennium before. "Yes," he said.

* * *

Bruria A. worked as the house mother last year for the Machon Alte-Chaya Mushka Seminary. Now she has become a house mother of sorts here, joining a core group working around the clock to deal with the large and small issues that crop up by the minute. Her main message, though, is "Be b'simcha."

"We have to be happy because we

see the prophecy (of the Geula) the same way Rabbi Akiva saw the prophecy about the Beis HaMikdash," said Bruria. "Yechezkel (HaNavi) said all the people from the Galilee will travel from place to place. We see it's coming true. And who can understand more than the women—who give birth and know the pain—that Moshiach is coming soon. We have to be b'simcha because simcha breaks all bounds."

* * *

In the past two weeks, there have been two simchas right here at the

"No one says 'how are you' anymore, as is the common greeting. Every one asks of her friend, 'Where are you?!"

Bucharim as families celebrated the first haircutting of their three-year-old sons. Although the main simcha itself was held in 770 here at the Kfar, the joy spread to the dormitory hallways, where the haircutting was completed.

And speaking of blessings, some of Tzfat's sheitel machers also have relocated to the Kfar. Chana S. spent the entire day last Erev Shabbos giving fancy hairdos to the dozens of young girls living in the dorms. With every bit of joy, Mrs. S. gave the excited girls the same hairdos she would do for

those back in Tzfat for a wedding or bar mitzva—without charge. A big thank you to Chana and blessings for making our girls ready even b'gashmius to greet Moshiach.

Also last week, many members of Anash who scattered in many different directions over the month, were reunited at the wedding of HaRav Shalom and Ariela Levkevker's daughter. Only three women had attended the Shabbat Kalla the previous Shabbos back in Tzfat.

"There was a lot of crying at the wedding," but everyone was so happy because they felt free to express all their stored emotions," said one wedding participant. "At one point, many of us were crying and then Mazal F. started laughing and said, "No one says 'how are you' anymore, as is the common greeting. Every one asks of her friend, "Where are you?!"

* * *

Following the Rebbe's directives to go out on mitzvaim, some women went on several occasions to the nearby town of Or Yehuda. Personally, mitzvaim like that were always difficult for me, but I remember vividly a speaker this past Gimmel Tammuz who related how much he dreaded the thought of going to the most non-frum street on Tel Aviv every Erev Shabbos on mitzvaim. He said the one thought he had in mind the whole time was that he himself wasn't going to be there (in a sense) but rather it would be as if the Rebbe handled everything. With that thought in mind, I convinced myself that I wasn't going on mitzvaim, but the Rebbe was going with us.

**ADD IN ACTS
OF GOODNESS & KINDNESS
TO BRING MOSHIACH NOW!**

DAILY MIRACLES AMIDST THE DEATH AND DESTRUCTION

BY NOSSON AVROHOM

*Most of them land suddenly, without prior warning – showers of missiles that fall upon towns in the Galil and the north. People didn't realize what it entailed until they saw the horror before their eyes. A split second or a few meters can spell the difference between life and death. * Stories of great miracles which took place in recent days.*

VIEW FROM THE YESHIVA

"I was standing on the porch of my room in the yeshiva dormitory, watching in shock and wonder the scene unfolding before my eyes, only a few kilometers away at the yishuv of Biriya on the road to Tzfas. One after the other, I saw katyusha missiles landing, a total of five, and every one of them landed in the woods around the yishuv. Not one missile landed in the yishuv."

I heard this description from one of the T'mimim in the yeshiva in Tzfas, in response to my question about seeing miracles.

The third week of the war was worse than the previous two, in terms

of casualties and injuries. The number of missiles landing in Eretz Yisroel more than doubled, close to two hundred a day. However, we can't ignore the many miracles taking place. Some classify the events as "coincidences," and others as "good luck"; we must call these events by their proper name: miracles! There is a Conductor orchestrating events.

MIRACLES IN ACCO

The city of Acco lived through a traumatic weekend with five people dying from one barrage of missiles. These casualties were added to the growing and tragic statistics of the many dead and wounded in the

current war. Despite the tragedy, when I asked R' Yosef Mekmel, the director of Chabad institutions in the city, if they are seeing miracles, he answered unequivocally: "People here are witnessing dozens of miracles. They clearly identify them as such, and are expressing their thanks to Hashem."

Rabbi Mekmel chooses to lead off with a "fresh" miracle which occurred with the brothers of the director of preschools, R' Avrohom Arush.

"These two brothers run a carpentry shop in the industrial area in the city. They kept the shop open despite the barrages of missiles which have targeted the city. Last Tuesday, around 8 AM, there were a lot of hits in the area of the shop. From the sounds of the explosions, the two realized that the hits were very close by, and without delay they hurried into an inner room.

"A brief instant later, a powerful explosion rocked the area. They realized that this time it was even closer than before. After things quieted down, they went out to the work area of the shop and were stunned by the sight. A missile had scored a direct hit on the shop, razing everything to the ground, but not one piece of shrapnel penetrated into the room they were in.

“Other laborers in the area came running to see what happened at the site of the hit. They entered the area of the shop, and to their collective shock, they saw everything was laid to waste and destroyed except the picture of the Rebbe hanging in the corner.

“The two brothers have a deep connection with the rav of the Chabad community, Rabbi Nosson Oirechman. They both attend the shiurim regularly and join in the various activities. At this point they were so overwhelmed by their personal miracle that they wanted to express gratitude to Hashem, and they came to shul to make the HaGomel blessing.

“There is another member of the community named R' Uri Saidov. One day, about two weeks ago, he parked his car across the street from his house. He stepped out of the car and was still standing nearby, when suddenly, without warning, a rocket landed on the road between his car and his house. The car windows blew out, and the car itself was pocked with holes from the shrapnel. Miraculously, he was not even scratched.

What made the miracle even greater was that the neighbors discovered pieces of shrapnel had hit the base of the gas balloons in front of the house. It is terrifying to even think what would have resulted if they hit the belly of the balloons and they blew up. Many people who witnessed the event and saw how close he was, could not believe that he came out of it without a scratch.

“One of our baalei t'shuva is a special young man by the name of Alex Spivaks. He is a member of the community and resides in one of the neighborhoods in the northern part of the city. One morning, he was lying in bed debating if he should get up or go back to sleep. Some strange feeling pressed upon him to stay in bed a little longer.

“A few minutes later, he was jolted awake by a powerful blast. He jumped out of bed in shock, and could hear another explosion which was very close. He ran towards the kitchen and saw that the room was filled with shrapnel. It turned out that the katyusha penetrated and exploded in the building across from him, and the ball bearings flew in all directions, including into his kitchen. One could hardly imagine what would have happened if he had gotten up earlier and gone into the kitchen for his morning coffee.

“What is especially interesting is that the day before he had joined us in Mivtza T'fillin and the distribution of food to the various shelters around the city. He worked very hard and didn't have a free moment. The exhaustion from his deeds of kindness and charity surely contributed to his miraculous escape.

“The fourth miracle that I would like to recount, occurred with a Jew named Leonid Suvayev, a recent baal t'shuva. He is a senior citizen who began his return to Yiddishkeit through the Kollel Tiferes Zekeinim, which is run by the local Chabad House. He has become very interested in Yiddishkeit, and in recent weeks purchased Chabad t'fillin. He started wearing tzitzis, began growing a beard, and in general has bypassed many of the old-timers.

“He also merited to experience a revealed miracle when a katyusha landed right next to his house on Rechov HaAliya. Parts of the house were completely destroyed. He was in one of the rooms and didn't have a scratch on him. He walked out of the house into clouds of smoke and soot, and nobody could figure out how he emerged unscathed. However, as we have said, Hashem's kindnesses have no end and we see many miracles.”

I asked Rabbi Mekmel, how they manage to cope with the trauma of the recent losses and how to encourage the public in these difficult

times. In response, he told me about the close contact between the Chabad House and the residents throughout the year:

“The shliach Rabbi Oirechman does special programs with the residents, and many of them are connected in one form or another with the Chabad House. Naturally, in these times, many are looking for encouragement from the shluchim. We visit every place where there were rocket strikes and injuries; we put t'fillin on the people and distribute material on Judaism and strengthening of emuna. Additionally, we distribute food to the needy who are ensconced in bomb shelters. Rabbi Oirechman holds talks encouraging the people and has a great impact on many residents. Incidentally, the shul attached to the Chabad House is the only shul that opened its doors the past Shabbos, and it was packed to the rafters.

MIRACLE AMID THE HEAVY ARMOR

An especially astounding miracle is told by Rabbi Boaz Kali, who has spent recent days, along with other volunteers, in intensive activity on the northern border:

On one of the early days of the fighting, we arrived at the border area. That day, there was a gathering of long rows of tank divisions and the armored vehicles of the infantry along one of the roads, close to the yishuv Avivim. Many media outlets showed up to monitor and report on the troop movements.

We worked tirelessly amongst the troops, and put t'fillin on many of them, as well as signing up many hundreds of soldiers for a letter in a Seifer Torah. After we finished, suddenly, a missile fell close to one of the tanks, and baruch Hashem, it did not explode. All of the soldiers nearby were shocked and they all admitted that it was a huge miracle. Many of them drew a connection between our

activities in that place and the fact that the missile did not explode, because if it had exploded there would have been many casualties (as evidenced by some more recent tragedies).

NO EXPLANATION

Rabbi Mendel Kumer is one of the outstanding activists in the Tzfas and other northern border areas. He works to keep up the morale of the residents in the rearguard and in spiritually strengthening the soldiers on the northern border and forward bases.

When I spoke with him about miracles that he witnessed, we could hear sounds of children in the background. "I'm organizing a mini-day camp in one of the shelters," he said. "Life is difficult in the northern cities these days and the children, who spend most of their time in shelters, are having a hard time.

"Miracles, however, are rampant. There is a family in building 232 in the Canaan neighborhood near Kiryat Chabad. A katyusha struck the top floor of the building, went out the window on the right side of the

building, and hit the next building, but it didn't explode! Many people were in both buildings at the time. The missile penetrated places where people were at the time and only the fact that it didn't explode saved many people from tragic fates!

Two elderly Jews who were in the room where the katyusha first hit, left the building astounded by the miracle that had taken place before their very eyes. The reporters heard about the miracle from them. Aside from soot and a small fire in the window where the missile went out, nothing happened.

One of the police sappers described the enormity of the miracle when he explained how the katyusha works. According to him, after the first explosion, additional parts fly off the missile and they also explode and cause tremendous damage. It was an open miracle.

"There's another building in Canaan, number 206. A katyusha landed on it and exploded in front of the building on a pile of blocks that were there. Aside from a dog belonging to one of the neighbors and

people in shock, there were no casualties. But the miracle that took place there was even bigger than that:

"Four American bachurim live in one of the apartments in that building. Minutes before the missile landed they arrived in their car and parked near the building. Two of them went up to the apartment while the other two were supposed to wait in the car for the other two to come back down, but the two in the car decided to get out and go to the nearby grocery store.

"The sound of the explosion made them jump. After a few minutes in which they took cover, they crawled out from under the building and went back to their car which was riddled with shrapnel and on fire. Even they couldn't explain their decision to get out and go to the store when it wasn't really necessary, but this is what saved their lives."

Mendel Komer has another story:

"I recently heard of an incredible miracle that took place in Nahariya. An elderly Jew who heard the siren ran from his house to the shelter. He was wearing slippers at the time. While running, he lost his slippers. As he bent down to pick them up, a missile flew over his head and exploded a few dozen feet away from him!

"I'll finish with a miracle that took place here Erev Shabbos. Someone parked his car near the grocery store and bought food for Shabbos. When he left the store on his way to his car and began to load up his packages, his wife called him and asked him to go back to the store since she had forgotten to ask him to buy eggs.

"He went back to the store and while taking a box of eggs he heard the sound of an explosion. Smoke spread throughout the area and after things quieted down he went out and saw that his car was on fire after a direct hit from a katyusha. The car was demolished."



Destruction in Tzfas

ONLY MOSHIACH!

BY RABBI SHOLOM DOVBER HA'LEVI WOLPO
TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY

G-d certainly does not want ch"v to punish the people dwelling in Tzion, rather to change the direction its head is taking so that everyone will get the message – Eretz Yisroel belongs to Am Yisroel, and not one inch should be given to the Arabs.

A few weeks ago, I had an argument with one of the prominent rabbanim who supports the position of "is'chalta d'Geula." He agreed with me that according to the prevailing situation, the State of Israel should not be called "the first blossoming of our redemption," however, he said that we should at least pray that the "medina" becomes "the first blossoming of our redemption" **from this moment on.**

I replied that the "medina" can never mark the start of the Redemption, not just because it's rotten to the core, but also due to the fact that all concepts of "democracy" are in contradiction to Moshiach and the Redemption. On the contrary, "is'chalta d'Geula" can only be when **the "medina" reaches a state of despair**, and its leaders see that due to the government's conduct, they cannot bring salvation to the Jewish People. As a result, they will cry out "Only Moshiach!" and this will be the arousal from below for the coming of Moshiach and the commencement of the kingdom of the House of Dovid,

which is the absolute opposite of everything pertaining to the "medina" and the foundation for its existence.

When I said these things, I never imagined how close we actually are to this reality. Since this war began over a month ago, the Galilee has been made ruined and desolate, soldiers and civilians alike have been killed, and most importantly, the government doesn't know what to do in order to stop the Katyusha rocket fire. It has reached the point that Israel appears humiliated before the world community, as a relatively small organization holds an entire country by the throat, even before Syria and Iran become actively involved, ch"v.

Due to our numerous sins, we have seen the realization of the Rebbe MH"M's words to Rabbi Yalles, of blessed memory, when he said that by giving away portions of Eretz Yisroel to the Arabs, the State of Israel will become a "humiliated country." Who would ever imagine that we could reach such total humiliation so quickly?

Everyone understands today that this situation was caused by the fleeing and withdrawals of Begin, Rabin, Netanyahu, Barak, and Sharon, who "opened the entire land before them." For some reason, we don't hear today the Four Mothers or the media that gave them support, as thanks to them, Ehud Barak's soldiers ran away from Lebanon in the most disgraceful manner, leaving behind them bunkers, weapons, and highly advanced intelligence centers, thus showing to the nations of the world that we are a people that runs off and is afraid to fight.

Hizbollah has utilized this time period to the fullest. During the past several years, the Israel Defense Forces have lost their intelligence connections in Lebanon, as all those who were supplying them with information – i.e., the South Lebanese Army and their cohorts – have been abandoned by the State. Thus, the terrorist army was able to bring in tens of thousands of missiles, build thousands of secure and fortified bunkers, and the General Security Services, the Mossad, and the honored commanders of the IDF did nothing to prevent it.

And where were all those commanders? Instead of being involved with the protection of Eretz Yisroel and preparing the armed forces for combat, the entire army worked for the past several years towards only one objective: how to uproot the Jewish People from the inheritance of their forefathers. Now,

all of a sudden, soldiers find themselves in a situation for which no one had prepared them. In fact, it took them at least two and a half weeks to recover from the shock and understand what was going on.

Even after the government ministers finally got through their thick skulls exactly what they were facing, every time the army came with a plan of action necessitated by the prevailing dangers, the government limited the action to a minimum. They placed conditions to protect “innocent” civilians, thus restricting the scope of military operations and risking the lives of our soldiers. This is precisely what happened during Operation Peace for the Galilee, when every step in the conduct of the war was made with great hesitance, enabling the terrorists to plan their own steps properly, know in advance when and where our soldiers will attack, and prepare for every obstacle.

This has created a strange and most dangerous situation. Every time the army brings a proposal to the government, the ministers clip its wings. Eventually, after a couple of days, the government is left with no choice other than to approve the plan previously submitted by the military. However, the situation on the battlefield has since become more dangerous, and the army now requests an intensification of military force. Here again, government approval comes only after another couple of days, when the authorized action proves no longer sufficient and *ch”v* hostilities continue.

What can be more stupid than notifying cities and villages in time of war that the IDF is about to attack a certain location. This immediately leads to the terrorists entering their bunkers or escaping from the area, and most importantly, preparing surprises for the army that announced its pending arrival with great fanfare. In other words, in order

to save the lives of Lebanese civilians, the government risks the lives of Jewish soldiers.

When twenty-six people were killed in a building collapse, the political leaders in Yerushalayim and the military commanders began sobbing, beating their breasts and saying the “*Al Cheit*,” and this resulted in continued public worldwide condemnation of Israel. There can be no doubt that if we

Now, Israel is awaiting the wonder drug called “the multinational force” to come and protect us. It is quite obvious that not a single Italian, Turkish, or r”l German soldier will fight the terrorists or keep them from stockpiling Katyushas shipped from Iran.

would have declared at the beginning of the war that we take no responsibility for the deaths of citizens in those areas where the Hizbollah fires and stores its missiles or other weapons, and they bear full responsibility for what happens there, no one would make a peep in protest when civilians are killed.

Now, Israel is awaiting the wonder drug called “the multinational force” to come and protect us. It is quite

obvious that not a single Italian, Turkish, or r”l German soldier will fight the terrorists or keep them from stockpiling Katyushas shipped from Iran in preparation for the next war. If so, there will be a return to the tragic loss of more Jewish lives and we’ll find ourselves back to the starting point or *ch”v* in an even far worse position.

Another unbelievable aspect to the “ceasefire” proposal is that we must (or perhaps have already agreed to) hand over “Shaab Farms” to Lebanon. This is something extremely dangerous, for if the terrorists will attain any territorial gain from kidnapping soldiers or firing missiles, this will give them a basis to prove before the whole world that they won the war.

The main thing to emphasize here is that if the war is not concluded with total victory over the terrorists, it won’t take long before we are faced with the “Palestinian” army in Gaza, possessing the same abilities as Hizbollah. Iran and Al Qaeda already have a presence throughout Gaza, particularly in those settlements that Sharon uprooted and handed over to them. The terrorists will then have all of Eretz Yisroel covered completely r”l from north to south.

At this stage of unparalleled deterioration of our national security, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert comes before the foreign press and releases a cruel, stupid, and derelict statement that IDF victory will give new momentum to his “realignment” in Yehuda and Shomron. He also didn’t forget to note that we have almost achieved victory already, and the proof is that missile attacks have been significantly reduced for several days.

He hadn’t even finished making his statement when a barrage of rockets began to fall on the entire northern region, resulting in the worst day since the beginning of the war, with considerable injuries and property damage sustained across the

full length of the front.

This comes to teach you that we're talking about confused and irresponsible people who cannot admit to the terrible mistake they made when they drove the Jews out of Gaza. It has reached the point that in the middle of this war, they are ready to inform the enemy that its hostilities are bearing fruit, as we will soon present them with all of Yehuda and Shomron to enable them to prepare bunkers and Katyushas for the entire central region of Eretz Yisroel.

It is interesting to note that if we could imagine to ourselves what would happen if some rosh yeshiva, "Torah giant," Admur, or the like would protest for decades against giving away territory to Arabs, warning what might happen, the chareidi papers wouldn't stop writing about it. *Look at the Divine wisdom and ruach ha'kodesh of this tzaddik – everything that he prophesized has come to pass!* However, in our case, since we're talking about the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach, no one says a thing.

The complaint is not merely against them. I recall at the golden anniversary celebration commemorating the founding of Kfar Chabad, HaRav HaGaon R. Moshe Yehuda Leib Landa, chief rabbi of Bnei Brak, stood up and shouted in the direction of the rabbanim, "Why when the Rebbe calms everyone down and says that there's nothing to fear, even when missiles are flying, everyone's calm. But when the Rebbe cries out that we're talking about the lives of millions of Jews at risk, we're not afraid and we continue with business as usual, instead of going out and fighting against the government in order to nullify the decree?"

Due to our great sins, we have come to the frightful situation that the Rebbe told us about in advance.

When we take a look back, we see that we never snapped into action. Not only was Chabad, in Eretz Yisroel and the world at-large, not united in battle as *Chayolei Beis Dovid* against the government's deceitful policies, but central Chabad forces were actually fighting every step of the way against action on this front through the Rebbe's shluchim.

However, the truly burning question is: What do we do now? If we contemplate deeply on the matter, we will understand that G-d certainly does not want *ch"v* to punish the people dwelling in Tzion, rather to

***The Galilee has been
made ruined and
desolate, soldiers and
civilians alike have
been killed, and most
importantly, the
government doesn't
know what to do in
order to stop the
Katyusha rocket fire.***

change the direction its head is taking so that everyone will get the message – Eretz Yisroel belongs to Am Yisroel, and not one inch should be given to the Arabs. The moment that the people grasp and internalize this fact, the response will be "hard and heavy," G-d will have achieved His objective, and the victory of the Jewish People will then be assured.

For this reason, the Committee for the Salvation of the People and the Land of Israel has published an informational booklet entitled "We Told You So," distributing a quarter

of a million copies. It is clear that since the Jewish People are today in a state of *cheshbon nefesh* as a result of recent events, to the point that even left-wing leaders are starting to admit their mistakes, if this booklet will be distributed all over the country, it will be able to register a fatal blow to the realignment plan and thus prevent the next expulsion *r"l*. But most importantly, it will bring the Jewish People to do *t'shuva* over the terrible expulsion we experienced last year and the handing over of the other territories to the terrorists in years past.

Since this is a very expensive project, with an estimated cost of \$300,000 and no source of funds to cover the expenses, we asked the Rebbe MH"M in *Igros Kodesh* for a bracha. We received an answer from the 7th of Menachem Av (the exact date that the booklet was brought to the printers), in which the Rebbe writes that his father-in-law, the Rebbe Rayatz, was pleased that the printing is continuing to progress, and they will surely try to make it as attractive as possible. In connection with the expenses, the Rebbe writes that he has already issued instructions to transfer the money, adding that it is "my (the Rebbe's) responsibility." Afterwards, he explains at length the saying of the Tzemach Tzedek that something that is printed is "for generations." We therefore included this booklet with last week's issue of *Beis Moshiach*, calling upon all Anash to contribute towards its printing and distribution.

May it be G-d's Will that the humiliation endured so far by the "medina" will be enough in order that they will understand that we have to rely only upon our Father in Heaven and our Righteous Moshiach, and the Rebbe MH"M will be revealed very soon and will bring the Complete Redemption.

WORKING FOR THE REBBE

BY YISROEL YEHUDA
PICTURES BY MEIR DAHAN

*Each one has a job and no, you won't find them on the "official" list of shluchim at Chabad.info nor at the Kinus HaShluchim. Yet, each of them does mitzvaim in a way that would make any Chabad house proud. When I say, "Wow, you're mamash a Chabad house!" they sigh and say, "halevai." * Stories about unofficial shluchim, working people who combine Hafatzas ha'Yahadus and Chassidus and the Besuras HaGeula with their daily job.*

ONE VIDEO WITH THREE ADVANTAGES

It was shortly after a Lubavitcher from Emanuel, Avinoam Aharoni, "exchanged a cow for a donkey," i.e., he exchanged his old jalopy for another larger one. As for the reason for the exchange, this he explained at a farbrenge one Shabbos:

"As you know, I work in B'nei Brak. Some time ago I went to work in my car and by Divine providence I had borrowed a tape by Rabbi Ginsburgh from a friend so I could listen to something as I traveled.

"At one of the turnoffs, I picked up a hitchhiking soldier. It was

obvious that he was deep into his mandatory service. He tossed his huge kitbag to the back seat and then collapsed next to me in exhaustion while muttering, 'Stop at the Morasha Junction for me,' and immediately fell asleep.

"When we got there, he was still asleep. I gently woke him up while helping him to get up and get his bearings. He got out, stretched, took his huge backpack and then, before he closed the door, asked, 'Who was talking on that tape? It was good!'

"The voice of Rabbi Ginsburgh could still be heard playing when I pressed the stop and eject button and

gave the tape to the soldier and said, 'I have plenty, you can have this one.' I made a mental note to buy a replacement tape for my friend.

"That gave me an idea. If a soldier who seemed to be sleeping enjoyed the tape so much, the car and hitchhikers represented a great opportunity for outreach. A short while ago I bought a larger vehicle with more places to sit. I set up a small video screen and since then, every time I go somewhere, the rear of my van becomes a free, mobile, Chassidic cinema!

"The feedback is terrific. People who didn't seem the type sit glued to it. Even when I stop at the place they asked for, they continue sitting and watching. I couldn't believe that videos of the Rebbe would interest people that much.

"A video of the Rebbe in a van has a number of advantages. First, you can do mitzvaim without exerting yourself. Second, one mitzva leads to another. Since I set up the video machine, I've been taking more hitchhikers. Third, I try to drive within the speed limit so that my passengers can see as much of the video as possible!"

EVERYONE'S A SHLIACH

In the *Sichos Kodesh* the Rebbe says that every Chassid, every Jew, is

a shliach working for the Nasi HaDor. Many certainly wonder about this. How are they, who are busy working from morning to night outside the home, serving as the Rebbe's shluchim?

Apparently, it's possible and you just need to bring it from the potential state to the realm of action. The power of influence is given to every Chassid, of every age, so that he or she can influence another person and be mekarev them to a life of Torah and Chassidus, and especially to announce the Besuras HaGeula.

We went out to see Chassidim who work at various jobs who use their work for hafatza of Torah and Chassidus and the Besuras HaGeula. It seems like there are many Lubavitchers who do this. Some of them do it on an astonishing scale, while others reach people that no conventional Chabad house will get to. Many such unofficial shluchim could be written about but since there are so many, we had to choose just a few to profile.

The first person we approached was Rabbi Pinchas Schwartz, the man behind the Chassidic puppet theater. Although the puppets can't talk, they convey a message better than a thousand words.

In 5751, Pinchas left the army and with the Rebbe's blessing he and his wife started a puppet theater. A year later his puppets broke significant ground when he was included in the Yahadus B'peula programs held in Binyanei HaUma, where he produced a show on an unprecedented scale in the world of puppet theaters.

The Chassidic Puppet Show appears each year before all sorts of audiences: chareidim, datiyim, and non-observant. Pinchas manages to enthrall thousands of viewers with sixteen different funny and dynamic performances. The common



Avrami, a puppet with peios and a cap

denominator among them is that they are all very emotive and tug at the heartstrings. The young viewers (there are usually plenty of adults too) enjoy the shows, which are typically based on well-known stories from Chazal.

Pinchas tells us of the shlichus aspect of what he does and the Jewish-Chassidic messages that are conveyed with each show:

"When we present a story, we emphasize certain points that we want the viewer to internalize."

For example?

Take the message of Geula. Many stories of Jewish folklore are based on situations in which the Jews are saved from their enemy. Each of these stories has the Jew davening to Hashem to annul the decree. At this point, in addition to the prayer for the specific situation, we also include a heartfelt prayer for the Geula and for Moshiach to come and redeem us from our tzaros. This is how the young viewer learns about the importance of Geula and the obligation to ask for it.

Aside from that, the shows are full of authentic Jewish concepts. Usually,

when performing for a chareidi audience, we emphasize Geula and when we perform for other audiences we convey Jewish-Chassidic messages which there are plenty of in each show.

For a number of years you performed at the "Pesach Experience" in Kfar Chabad.

Yes. We performed there, next to the Matza Bakery, mainly for children from non-observant homes. Then we were invited by Chabad houses and various social centers. This is how we reach all kinds of people.

As far as the performances there, I have a few stories to tell. One time we did a show called, "The Dream of a Jewish Boy." This is an unusual show because it's not based on a story from Chazal but on the famous letter that the Rebbe wrote Israeli president Ben Tzvi, "From the day that I went to cheider and even before that, I imagined the future Redemption..."

In this show there is no false accusation like in the other shows, but it's all a dialogue between a grandson and his grandfather. The message is about Geula and Moshiach and audiences love it.

At the end of the shows I call some children to the stage. One time there was a group of Yemenites in the audience and I emphasized the fact that each of these children had a name connected with Geula – like Moshiach, Tzedek, etc.

At one of these shows a little girl asked my daughter, “Do you really believe in Moshiach?”

“Yes,” answered my daughter spontaneously.

“You know what?” said the girl, “Me too!”

On another occasion a teacher approached me and said, “What I don’t manage to get across in fifteen lessons, you accomplish in 25 minutes.”

The chareidim know you are Lubavitch and that you convey Moshiach messages. What do they think about it?

Over the years we heard many horaos about every subject in Judaism and life in general. We were told to convey some of these messages to other groups even though they have different views. How do we do it? The secret is, “lights of Tohu in vessels of tikkun.”

Our puppets aren’t rabbis or lecturers. They don’t preach and don’t obligate anyone. They’re just cute, so it’s very easy to accept their message.

Every message can be given over and people can be receptive if you know how to go about it.

A puppet show is an excellent way of conveying a message in an experiential way. When a child enjoys something he internalizes the content more deeply even if he was educated to oppose that idea or view. When the “threatening” view is wrapped in a pretty package, it’s much easier to digest.

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it’s very easy to accept their message.

I was once invited to perform for a non-observant audience. The shliach warned me that they are very sensitive. One time, one of the counselors sang, “Moshiach, Moshiach” and all the teachers walked out. Well, the show was full of obviously Jewish messages and everybody enjoyed it.

The story repeated itself in the north. It was before Purim when we performed Megillas Esther. In the middle of the show, Mordechai called out in a bitter voice, “Jews, do t’shuva!”

At the end of the show we had children come up to the stage and the puppets danced among them. One of the children hugged the puppet called Avrami (see picture). Then the kindergarten teacher told me that this child brings a treife sandwich every day with yellow cheese and a frankfurter, and if he would see a religious Jew on the street he surely wouldn’t hug him.

It’s true for the non-observant crowd and for the chareidim too. The puppets are cute and are a wonderful medium through which to convey a message.

I would like to make one thing very clear. Our messages are not embedded or blended into the show, so as to be nearly invisible. We make sure the Jewish and Geula messages are overt and emphasized. In order to influence others, we need to believe in the messages we are conveying, then everything goes over better and smoother.

Incidentally, before we chose a name for our company, people referred to us as the “Moshiach theater company” or the “Chabad theater company.” Due to the content of the shows, people readily identified who we were and what we were about, and they still enjoyed themselves.

[To be continued be”H]



The Schwartz family’s puppets dancing together