

CONTENTS



4 | WHY THE RIGHTEOUS HAVE NO REST

D'var Malchus / Likkutei Sichos, Vol. 15, pg. 137-144

8 | THE LOGIC OF INTELLIGENT DESIGN

Science & Geula / Prof. Shimon Silmani

12 | ZERO HOUR

Miracle Story / Rabbi Yitzchok Meir Lipszyc

18 | IT TAKES A SOUND MIND LIKE AVROHOM AVINU'S TO CORRECT THE WRONG THINKING FROM THE DAWN OF CREATION

Thought / Rabbi Yeheskel Lebovic

22 | DOESN'T THE RAMBAM SAY THAT THE ONLY DIFFERENCE BETWEEN EXILE AND REDEMPTION IS "SUBJUGATION TO GENTILE KINGDOMS"?

Focus / Rabbi Sholom Dovber HaLevi Wolpo

24 | THE ESCAPE FROM RUSSIA 1946-1947 (CONT.)

Memoirs / Rabbi Shneur Zalman Chanin

28 | PAYING THE PRICE

Shleimus HaAretz / Shai Gefen

32 | REB PERETZ AND REB IZIK

Memoirs

34 | VACATION & REDEMPTION SERVICES

Profile / Yisroel Yehuda

40 | IT'S NO MISTAKE!

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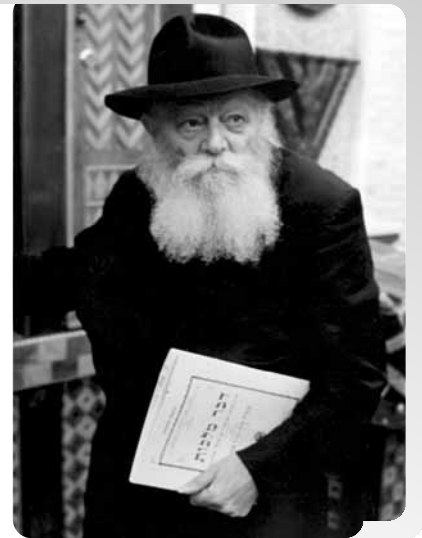
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WHY THE RIGHTEOUS HAVE NO REST

LIKKUTEI SICHOS, VOL. 15, PG. 137-144
TRANSLATED BY BORUCH MERKUR



There are two versions of the saying of the Sages that appears at the end of Tractate Brachos (as well as the conclusion of Tractate Moed Katan): a) “**Torah scholars** have no rest – not in this world and not in the World to Come, etc.” b) “**The righteous** have no rest, etc.” (The latter version is cited in several places. [Footnote 3 in the original: *Ohr HaTorah*, VaEschanan pg. 67; *Hemshech* 5666, pg. 12.])

We may assert that the terminological difference in the respective versions underscores a difference in their meaning: According to the version that reads, “**Torah scholars** have no rest, etc.,” the saying of the Sages speaks of a virtue that is unique to Torah study (“**Torah scholars**”), as will be discussed. In contrast, the version that reads, “**The righteous** have no rest, etc.,” does not speak about Torah study’s distinctive virtue per se, because the term “righteous” includes masters of good deeds who are **not Torah scholars**.

We must understand the reason for the difference between the two approaches.

2. In *Likkutei HaShas* the Arizal explains the notion that “Torah scholars have no rest, etc.” as follows: “for in the world that follows death, Torah scholars are involved in Torah study, ascending from level to level and from yeshiva to yeshiva...for just as G-d, may He be blessed, has no end, likewise His Torah has no end.”

This explains the reason for the version that reads, “**Torah scholars** have no rest, etc.” Namely, it is specifically Torah (in the familiar manner of speech, the object (*cheftza*) of the Mitzva of Torah study) that is at the level of “it has no end.” Thus, there is similarly no rest (no end) to the ascent of **Torah scholars** (the subject (*gavra*) of the

Mitzva of Torah study) who delve into Torah study. However, with regard to the [other] Mitzvos, although they too are the Commandments of G-d (Who is infinite), they themselves (in terms of their being an object) are limited. In fact, they must be limited. That is, both with regard to the Mitzvos in general, of which it is said, “Do not add and do not detract” [D’varim 13:1; 4:2 – see FN 8] (Torah study, however, is different: it **must** be done in a manner of an increase in understanding and etc., as it is said in the Laws of Torah Study [of the Alter Rebbe, 2:2 – see FN 9]), as well as with regard to each Mitzva individually. [For example] t’fillin must be specifically four passages, not five, and etc.

Thus, also with regard to masters of good deeds (the subject of the other Mitzvos) there is an end and there is rest.

That is, the two alternatives (rest or no rest) correspond to the two levels: limited and limitless.

3. [The same principle accounts for] the difference between them (Torah and Mitzvos) with regard to the degree of obligation incumbent upon the person (the subject): The obligation of Torah study has no limitations. In the terminology of the Rambam [Laws of Torah Study 1:8 – see FN 11]: “**Every** Jewish person is obligated in Torah study, whether he is poor or rich, whether he is complete in his body [i.e., healthy] or one who suffers, etc.” Also (with regard to time), the obligation upon the person is **constant**. This is not so, however, with regard to the [other] Mitzvos; every Mitzva has its limitations (in a designated time or place and the like).

4. Accordingly, however, it is difficult to understand the reason of the version (approach), “**The righteous** have

no rest, etc.,” which, as stated above, includes within it also masters of good deeds (the service of [the fulfillment of] the Mitzvos): How is it possible to attain “they have no rest,” which signifies a notion of limitlessness, (also) through this service (which is limited, as stated above)?

We must, therefore, say that also with regard to Mitzvos there is indeed a concept (and the virtue) of limitlessness, in light of which the reason for the version, “**The righteous** have no rest, etc.,” is also understood.

5. At first glance it is logical to say that the law of forsaking Torah study for [the fulfillment of] a Mitzva that cannot be done by others compels the notion that Mitzvos also possess the aspect of limitlessness. For if they are only at the level of limitation, how can they supplant Torah study, which is limitless?

But in truth this does not prove that also Mitzvos are at the level of limitlessness, for the fact that Torah study is forsaken for [the fulfillment of] a Mitzva that cannot be done by others is not on account of a virtue associated with the **Mitzvos**, but on account of the fact that neglecting to fulfill the Mitzvos results in a lack in the study of **Torah**, as will be explained.

6. The Alter Rebbe says [in Laws of Torah study, *ibid*] (with regard to the reason for the aforementioned law): “He should interrupt his Torah study and do the Mitzva...for this is the entirety of man. As the Sages said [Brachos 17a], ‘The purpose of wisdom is repentance and good deeds.’ And if one does not do so, it comes out that he has **learned** not for the sake of doing, and ‘it would be better for him, etc.’ [i.e., ‘had he not been created’].”

The Alter Rebbe states the reason (for “He should interrupt his Torah study and do the Mitzva”) in positive terms: “for this is the entirety of man,” [namely] to fulfill Mitzvos. Then [in negative terms] he adds, “And if one does not do so, it comes out that he has **learned** not for the sake of doing” (that is, without the fulfillment of the Mitzvos, Torah study is not as it must be). The implication [of this addition] is that the reason, “for this is the entirety of man,” is insufficient; this reason alone does not account for the fact that [the fulfillment of] a Mitzva can supplant Torah study. It is indeed true that the fulfillment of the Mitzvos is “the entirety of man,” nevertheless, being that it is something that is limited, it cannot supplant something

that is limitless (Torah). Thus, the Alter Rebbe adds: “And if one does not do so, it comes out that he has **learned not for the sake of doing.**”

That is, the fulfillment of the Mitzvos is “the **entirety** of man” (the person in his entirety – i.e., including his intellect, and) as the Sages said, “The purpose (*tachlis*, which also means: the completeness) of **wisdom** is repentance and good deeds. And (on account of the fact that the fulfillment of the Mitzvos is the purpose and completeness of wisdom (i.e., Torah)) if one does not do so, it comes out that he has **learned** (in an inappropriate manner, for it was done) not for the sake of doing.”

7. [Returning now to the discussion of the apparent limitless quality of Mitzvos] we may assert the following explanation: Mitzvos are composed of two aspects: a)

Every Mitzva has its distinct, designated definition, which differentiates one Mitzva from the other Mitzvos. With respect to these defining attributes, Mitzvos are at the level of limitation. b) There is a common denominator to all Mitzvos in virtue of which they are all beyond limitation. In fact, these two aspects are apparent in the liturgy of the blessings recited over Mitzvos: The portion (and the) common (denominator) to them all is, “Who has **sanctified us with His Mitzvos**,” whereas the portion that is unique (and specific) is, “and commanded us the Mitzva of such and such,” and the like.

That is, the various **details** that define the performance of every Mitzva, which distinguish one Mitzva

from the others, express the **limitation** of Mitzvos. In contrast, by virtue of the common idea found in all the Mitzvos, namely, that they are all commandments – “*mitzva*,” meaning “commandment,” i.e., a manifestation of the blessed Supernal Will, which is found **equally** in **every Mitzva** – the Mitzvos are **without limitation**. That is, on account of the fact that G-d’s Will, which is in the Mitzvos, transcends their limitations and distinctiveness. [Indeed, this aspect of G-d’s Will transcending distinctiveness bears ethical significance] as reflected in the saying of the Sages, “One should not sit and compare the relative weight [i.e., stringency] of the Mitzvos of the Torah, etc., [rendering some as] the lightest of the light, etc., [and others as] the most stringent of the stringent, etc.”

Moreover, [the preeminence of the Supernal Will in the

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attain the level of
“they have no rest,”
which signifies a
notion of
limitlessness, through
the service of good
deeds, which is, at
first glance,
inherently limited?*

Mitzvos, in virtue of which all Mitzvos are equal, is expressed in practical Torah law. Namely, in the principle that] “[one who is] involved in a Mitzva is exempt from the performance of another Mitzva” [Sukka 25a]. It is known [Hemshech 5666 – see FN 22] that the reason [underlying this principle] is that all the Mitzvos are actually integrated one with the others, to the extent that when one fulfills one Mitzva it is a semblance of the fulfillment of all the other Mitzvos. This is by virtue of the (essential) Will [of G-d] that is [reflected equally] in [all] Mitzvos, which transcends [their] distinctiveness.

It comes out that although one may be involved with a particular Mitzva (notwithstanding the fact that with respect to its details it is separate and distinct from the other Mitzvos, nevertheless) he is connected through it to Mitzvos in general, to their limitlessness.

8. Just as this is so with regard to the Mitzvos themselves (object), so it is also with regard to the **fulfillment** of the Mitzvos by Jews (subject): Although the specific obligation of each individual Mitzva is indeed limited in the context of time and space (as mentioned above, Section 2), there is, however, a **constant** obligation incumbent upon Jews with regard to (the service of [G-d through the performance of]) the Mitzvos collectively. As our Sages say in the Mishna [in the conclusion of Meseches Kiddushin]: “I was **created** [in order] **to serve** my Master.” In other words, every moment during which one is “created” – that is, every moment of a person’s existence – is for the sake (of the duty and purpose) of serving his Master, as was said above, “for this is the **entirety** of man.” In fact, there is a ruling in the *Shulchan Aruch* [Tur *Shulchan Aruch*, Orach Chaim, siman 231 – see FN 27], “**All** your deeds should be for the sake of Heaven,” and, “In **all** your ways, know Him.”

9. According to all the above, the difference – in approach – between the two versions is understood: With respect to the limited details in the Mitzvos, it is only “**Torah scholars** [who] have no rest, etc.” But with respect to the Mitzvos in general, [a level] which is limitless, all “**the righteous** (including masters of good deeds) have no rest, etc.”

10. Additional explanation, however, is required with regard to the following notion: It is explained (in several

places [FN 28: See *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. 14, end of pg. 174ff. **There it is elucidated.**]) that the reason why (specifically) “**Torah scholars** have no rest – not in this world and not in the World to Come, etc.” is as the Arizal says in *Likkutei HaShas*: “This is the esoteric principle of ‘Man goes out to his work.’ That is, [Man goes out] to the pursuit of Torah study on that which he worked on in this world. For when a man goes out from this world, he goes first to his ‘work,’ meaning to the pursuit of Torah study on that which he worked on in this world, etc.” Thus, it is only “**Torah scholars** [who] have no rest, etc., in the World to Come,” since the only aspect that is relevant in the Garden of Eden, the destination to which “Man goes out”

from this world, is “his work” in the pursuit of Torah study, not the work (of the pursuit) of the fulfillment of the Mitzvos.

Accordingly, the version that reads, “The righteous and etc.,” is not understood: It is true that the concept of infinite ascent is also associated with Mitzvos, for they also possess the level of limitlessness. However, how can we say that “**The righteous** have no rest, etc., **in the World to Come**”? The “work” of the fulfillment of the Mitzvos does not exist in the Garden of Eden!

The explanation: It is known that there are two meanings for the term “World to Come”: a) Garden of Eden (referred to as the “World to Come” because “it comes to a person after the life in this world” [Rambam, Laws of Repentance, conclusion of Chapter 8 – see FN 32], b) the World of Resurrection [Sanhedrin, beginning of Perek Cheilek – see FN 33].

In light of this [dual meaning] one may assert that the meaning of “World to Come” in **this** saying of the Sages depends upon the [context in which it appears] in the two respective versions: In the version that reads, “**Torah scholars** have no rest, etc.,” which is on account of the virtue of **Torah**, the term “World to Come” means (also) the Garden of Eden (for there, only the “work” of Torah study is relevant, not Mitzvos), whereas in the version that reads, “**The righteous** have no rest, etc.,” which includes the service of Mitzvos, “World to Come” means the “World of Resurrection,” for then there will once again be a time of “work” in Mitzvos as well.

[To be continued be”H.]

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THE LOGIC OF INTELLIGENT DESIGN

BY PROF. SHIMON SILMAN, RYAL INSTITUTE AND TOURO COLLEGE

One of the most important revelations of the Era of Moshiach will be of the G-dly force that maintains the existence of the world. Just like the physical aspects of the universe are plainly visible now and no one needs to be convinced of them, in the Messianic Era, the G-dly creative force will be perceived by all and it will be clear and obvious that “G-d created the heavens and the earth.”

Where did the world come from? Was it always here? Did it start with a Big Bang? How does one even begin to answer these questions?

The first statement in the Torah is, “In the beginning, G-d created the heavens and the earth.” We Jews have held fast to this belief throughout history while the philosophers of other nations maintained that the world was always here.

It was not just a matter of curiosity. If G-d created the world – and us – then our existence has a purpose and we have a responsibility to our Creator to fulfill that purpose. We are not free to live as we please.

This is why the Mitzva of Shabbos is so important. It is an observance that expresses our awareness that G-d

created the world in six days and rested on the seventh. He is our Creator and we were created to serve him. We, therefore, have an awesome responsibility to live our lives in accordance with His will and we experience a tremendous joy in having the merit to serve Him.

The creation of the world by G-d further implies that G-d Himself can do what He wants with it and give it to whomever He wants. He gave the Land of Israel to the Jews as an inheritance and it is ours forever.

INTELLIGENT DESIGN

Our belief in the Creator did not remain a matter of belief alone. Jewish sages and philosophers throughout the ages presented logical arguments that prove that the world has an origin.

Rabbi Akiva, the great sage of the Talmud, once explained to a non-believer that just as the existence of an intricately crafted object proves that there was a craftsman who crafted it, so too the universe itself proves that there is a Master Craftsman Who created and crafted it.

The greatest Jewish philosophers – such as Rav Saadia Gaon (in *Emunot V'Deot*), Rabbi Yehuda HaLevi (in the *Kuzari*), and Rambam (in the *Guide for the Perplexed*) – gave extensive philosophical proofs that the universe was created. Some of these arguments are quoted and summarized by the Tzemach Tzedek, the 3rd Rebbe of Lubavitch, who also explains their Kabbalistic basis (in *Seifer HaChakira*).

Throughout history, however, this remained a matter of controversy between those who believe in the Torah and those who do not. One of the most important revelations of the Era of Moshiach will be of the G-dly force that maintains the existence of the world. Just like the physical aspects of the universe are plainly visible now and no one needs to be convinced of them, in the Messianic Era, the G-dly creative force will be perceived by all and it will be clear and obvious that “G-d created the heavens and the earth.”

Melech HaMoshiach himself once explained the logic of Creation as follows: Suppose you find a book. You open it and you see sequences of letters. The letters form words that have

meanings. The words also relate to each other in such a way that they form sentences that express ideas. Furthermore, the sentences combine to form paragraphs and chapters, conveying deep intellectual concepts. Would it occur to you that this book came into being as a result of an

explosion in a printing shop? Would any normal mind accept such a conclusion? The universe, with all of its intricate and complex structure, from the subatomic particles to the organic molecules of life, to life itself, to the cosmos and beyond, constitutes a system that is unimaginably more

complex and structured than the book in the above example. Certainly it was deliberately created by a conscious Creator.

This brings us to discuss the theory which has become known as “Intelligent Design,” which says that the complex structure of the universe and everything that’s in it attests to the existence of an intelligent being that designed and created it. This is essentially the argument that the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach used and it’s logic is very compelling. Yet it has encountered stubborn resistance from the scientific community. At the same time it has growing support among many scientists and educators. Some school boards have introduced it into the public school curriculum in their communities.

When the school board of Dover, Pennsylvania introduced Intelligent Design into the school curriculum in 2005, they were taken to court by some unhappy parents. During the proceedings, a scientist on the witness stand who was defending Intelligent Design was approached by the prosecutor, who placed a pile of books on Evolution in front of him and asked the scientist how it is that he doesn’t accept what is presented in all those books. The scientist replied simply that the arguments presented there are not conclusive and have not been proven.

I submit that we could have given a much better answer, based on what we explained above. I submit that those very books on Evolution prove that Evolution is wrong and that the Intelligent design concept is correct. For, would any normal person think that all those books with all those words and paragraphs and ideas – whatever the ideas may be – were the result of an explosion in a printing shop? No! They were obviously designed by an intelligent author. Well, the entire universe is certainly much more structured and complex than a pile of books. Case closed.

“By learning about and publicizing the concept of continuous Creation, which is one of the fundamental precepts of Chassidus, we bring the Geula closer and make it happen faster.”¹

—The Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach



USING A SUPERCOMPUTER TO PROVE CREATION

In the mid-1980's, I was working as an applications consultant for a supercomputer company (ETA Systems, a subsidiary of Control Data Corporation). I worked in a consulting office at the University of Minnesota advising scientists and engineers on the use of the Cyber 205 supercomputer. There were two other consultants in the office, one black and one Chinese. The black consultant would often ask me questions about Judaism. One day he said to me, "I know that it says in those books over there," referring to the *Chitas* (*Chumash*, *T'hilim* and *Tanya* in one volume) and *Siddur* that I had on the shelf, "that G-d created the universe...." He went on to say that a physicist friend of his told him that the universe had evolved. He wanted to know how one can prove that the Torah is right. (He was not trying to challenge me but was sincerely interested.)

"Look," I said to him, "the universe has such a complex structure. How could it have just evolved? Someone must have designed it and set it up." He agreed that that made sense but wanted to know how we could actually *prove* it.

"Take, for example, the Cyber 205," I responded. "Do you agree that it is a very complicated computer?" The entire purpose of our office was to explain the intricacies and complexities of the Cyber 205 to the users.

"Of course!" he exclaimed.

I then continued, "What if someone told you that the Cyber 205 had evolved. No one designed it. No one built it. It just got there by itself – from an explosion in some engineering laboratory. What would you say?" To this he did not respond. He just burst out laughing at the absurdity of such a notion. "So how much more so," I concluded, "the entire universe – of

which the Cyber 205 is just a small part!"

A scientist recently wrote in the Harvard Magazine that "Any researcher who can prove the existence of intelligent design within the accepted framework of science will make history and achieve eternal fame. He will prove at last that science and religious dogma are compatible. Even a combined Nobel Prize and Templeton Prize (the latter designed to encourage search for such harmony)

The early scientific researchers, going back to the time of Isaac Newton, were actually motivated by a belief in G-d. Since the universe was created by G-d, they reasoned, He must have created it in an orderly fashion. They then set out to find that order.

will fall short as proper recognition."²

Well, we have proved it and, I guess, we have achieved eternal fame.

But I want to emphasize that Intelligent Design is more than just a valid argument. For the underlying concept – that when you see a complex design you understand that some intelligence designed it – lies at the foundation of all scientific thinking. Otherwise why look for structure and design in the universe in

the first place? Who says that there is any logical structure? And even if we have seen structure in so many things, why assume that the next thing you find has any structure, and why exhaust yourself to try to find it? Why assume that everything in the universe is structured and has a logical explanation? In fact, the early scientific researchers, going back to the time of Isaac Newton, were actually motivated by a belief in G-d. Since the universe was created by G-d, they reasoned, He must have created it in an orderly fashion. They then set out to find that order. As Newton said, "This most beautiful system could only proceed from the dominion of an intelligent and powerful being."

In fact, the very existence of intelligence and logic itself indicates Intelligent Design. Our intelligence is logically structured; it is not random. The design of intelligence proves Intelligent Design.

Furthermore, even in those phenomena where we see randomness, the mathematical analysis often shows that an overall structure can be identified, patterns can be discerned and conclusions drawn. There is intelligence in randomness also. To my mind, this is a most amazing aspect of G-d's creation.

"FROM MY FLESH I SEE G-D"

Now, being primarily mathematicians and physicists (at RYAL Institute) we tend to focus on physical science. But if we go further and consider the human being, we come to the awareness of the Creator in a more awesome way.

Begin by considering the structure of the atoms and molecules that make up the human body. This alone is mind boggling. One needs all of Quantum Mechanics to understand atoms and molecules. Now these particles make up biological cells and tissues which have their own amazing

structure. And these make up organs and systems of organs within the body which work together and are coordinated by a brain. This is a truly awesome structure!

But it doesn't end there. All that we have said until now applies equally to an animal as to a human. Above and beyond all this is the human which has – intelligence, the ability to think and speak. Where does intelligence come from if not from the Omniscient Intelligence? Where does all this structure come from if not from the Master Designer? Thus, Rabbi DovBer of Lubavitch, the Mittlerer Rebbe, wrote about “the wondrous wisdom that is evident in the anatomy of the human body. All the scholars of medicine have exhausted themselves trying to understand it...because it is a G-dly wisdom. Similarly among the animals and the plants and the earth and everything contained in it, there is G-dly wisdom through which all this was made.”³

We would think that everyone would be convinced of this. But remember that there is a catch: Once you accept the Intelligent Designer,



The Cyber 205 Supercomputer

the Creator, G-d, you are forced to accept the instruction manual that comes along with the creation: the Torah and its 613 Mitzvos for Jews and 7 Mitzvos for non-Jews. There are implications on how we are going to live our lives. This, of course, accounts for the irrational resistance to the concept of Intelligent Design.

So Professor Anthony Flew of England was not convinced. He was an atheist. In fact, he was the world's leading authority on atheism for half a century, lecturing, writing books on it, etc. But then the genetic code was broken and this was too much even for him. On Chanuka of 2004, he announced that he believes in G-d. The structure of DNA, he explained, was so awesomely complex that it

could not have just evolved. It must have been designed and created by G-d.

This radical declaration shook up the whole international atheistic community which was relying on him for guidance for half a century. When asked how he could make such a statement after all those years of atheism, he replied simply, “I am 81 years old and I can say whatever I want!”

Meanwhile, the scientist who led the team that cracked the human genome, Francis Collins, director of the U.S. National Human Genome Research Institute, in his book *The Language of God*, explains his belief in the creator this way:

“When you have for the first time in front of you this 3.1 billion-letter instruction book that conveys all kinds of information and all kinds of mystery about humankind, you can't survey that going through page after page without a sense of awe. I can't help but look at those pages and have a vague sense that this is giving me a glimpse of God's mind.”

[To be continued be"H]

NOTES:

1 *Seifer HaMaamarim Meluket*, vol. 3, p. 181

2 Edward O. Wilson in *Intelligent Evolution* Harvard Magazine,

Nov-Dec 2005, page 31; brought to my attention by Yehudah Freeman.

3 Quoted in *Seifer HaMaamarim Meluket* vol. 5, pp. 120-121

B.H

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ZERO HOUR

BY RABBI YITZCHOK MEIR LIPSYC
SHLIACH TO SIMFEROPOL, CRIMEA

*When we finished the conversation I felt lost, I felt despair. I went to my room and closed the door and then it all burst forth. I cried to Hashem and to the Rebbe. I cried bitterly about our having gone out on shlichus: "You sent us to this place without money and the situation is intolerable. There is no money and no chance for a school." While I was at it, I added other personal complaints to the list. * Miracles on shlichus.*

I relate the following stories which I personally experienced in order to show the Special Providence with which the Rebbe watches over each one of us, especially the shluchim, his children. The Rebbe helps us in what we do despite the disasters we get caught up in, like a benevolent father who looks after his children.

The following story took place in 5757. We had to buy a house in Simferopol. After looking around we found a house that seemed right. After negotiating with the owner I was given two weeks to decide whether we were going to close on the deal or not.

Of course, I asked the Rebbe whether to buy the house and I added another, more essential question: what was my role in shlichus? In other words, what sort of activities should I focus on? I had a number of suggestions and ideas at the time.

Some suggested that I open a school, some suggested I focus on the youth, one offered me the use of a large building for a particular need. Shlichus has many angles to it and I didn't know whether to do all these things, one of them or some of them.

Close to the time that I wrote the letter I was at the Shluchim Office in New York to get something. When I left I met my friend, the director of the office, Gedalia Shemtov. He was my former student when I was a shliach in Detroit and we have a warm, personal connection.

After a hearty shalom aleichem, Gedalia gave me a friendly slap on the back and said, "Itche Meir, sorry for mixing in to your business but take my advice, if you start a new shlichus, start small. Work from your house."

What a strange bit of advice. At the time I already had a shul next to

which was an office and everything went through my office there. Why should I close my already existing office and work out of my house? I thanked him politely for his advice and went on my way.

Two weeks went by. My visit to 770 was over and I had to be heading back to Crimea, to my shlichus. It was late and I had a flight to catch yet no answers from the Rebbe were forthcoming. I could ask about the shlichus another time but I really had to know whether to buy the house or not.

I ran to 770 in order to write again but this time I decided I wouldn't wait for an answer to come my way but would put the letter into a volume of *Igros Kodesh*. Earlier, I had made a personal resolution regarding writing the Rebbe in the *Igros Kodesh*. When I write to the Rebbe and open the *Igros* I do this only with my mashpia. This prevents me from seeing what I want to see and the mashpia is the one who objectively relays the Rebbe's answer. I did it this time too, despite the time pressure.

The mashpia opened the volume and read the answer. He looked at my question and back at the answer. I was curious but tense too.

The mashpia asked me, "Did you recently ask the Rebbe about your role in shlichus, about what to focus on?"

"Yes," I answered in surprise. "Two weeks ago I wrote to the Rebbe about that. How do you know?"

"Because the Rebbe answers that you should buy a house and work

from there!”

Those words – when had I recently heard them? Precisely two weeks ago when the Rebbe sent Gedalia Shemtov with the message and I didn’t understand that this was the answer.

Okay, at least I had an answer, baruch Hashem. However I was still surprised. Why did the Rebbe tell me to work out of my house when I had an office at the shul that was set up and operating for a while already? I knew that the Rebbe wouldn’t leave me curious for long and I would soon understand the reason.

I arrived back in Simferopol and we bought the house. Then I opened a new office in one of the rooms of the house. I didn’t close the office at the shul but used that office for things having to do with the shul. The rest of the work was done at my home office.

Four months went by and things began to become clearer.

The head of the community, a Jew with an appreciation for Yiddishkeit,

suddenly died. A new Rosh HaKahal had to be elected. This position in the CIS is a powerful one and naturally there were many people who wanted to fill it.

One of the candidates who was well-liked by the public seemed unqualified to me, to put it mildly. He was married to a non-Jew and was not religiously observant and so he couldn’t serve as a role model. In addition, he had an unstable personality. He wasn’t exactly the person I wanted to work with in the years to come.

Being an open and direct person, I went to him privately and told him why I didn’t support his candidacy. I explained that I didn’t want to publicly embarrass him by not supporting him which is why I was speaking to him privately.

He promised me that he wasn’t interested in the position and that he wouldn’t be a candidate in the elections. Only two days went by and I was shocked to see that he wasn’t

keeping his word. He was a candidate and was very actively campaigning.

At election time, the members of the election committee convened to hold a vote, which was done with the show of hands. When his supporters saw that I and many others were voting against him, they simply circulated among the voters and put down their hands. And that’s how this man became the Rosh HaKahal, against my wishes.

This happened on a Thursday. I soon realized that I had better open a new place for the davening and a short while later I announced that I was opening a shul in my home.

Baruch Hashem, there was great interest and the minyan continued to grow, new people joined and my home was too small to contain everyone. We had to rent a separate place for the t’fillos. I saw Divine Providence at hand.

The opposition, the new Rosh HaKahal and his friends were sure that after I left the shul I would soon pack my bags and leave the city but this idea never occurred to me, of course. When they realized that I was still there and operating successfully, they came up with a new-old plan to hasten my departure: informing on me to the authorities!

Equipped with forged documents with various complaints against me, they went to the government offices and told lies. Not much time elapsed and the law enforcement officials decided they were taking my visa and I had to leave the country. This decision was made after Purim and it stated that I had to leave the country in fifteen days. The visa expired Erev Pesach.

My wife and I were at a loss. We quickly did whatever we thought would help including calling R’ Gedalia Korf of Ezras Achim and other Chassidim with connections, but they were unable to change anything. Again and again they told them we had broken the law. Which law? They



didn't have to tell me but the bottom line was I was **expelled**.

I couldn't be helped by local contacts because I was a criminal and it was dangerous for them to help me. The future did not look rosy at all.

* * *

We are shluchim, shluchim of the king and we don't live natural lives. Some are more accustomed to miracles and some less but we all live with Hashgacha Pratis on a daily basis in a most remarkable manner.

Here too, the Rebbe prepared the "cure" before the "blow." This is what happened:

A few months before this sorry story, I received a humanitarian delivery from Washington which contained 540 tons of food. This was meant to be distributed among the residents of our city.

One day, the head of the k'hilla came with an offer. "We will sell the food for you. Some of the money will go to you minus a certain percentage for us."

Of course, I refused and I explained that the food was meant for distribution and not for personal profit. They tried to persuade me not to be naïve and explained that in the CIS there were different rules than what I was used to. Nevertheless, I stuck to my guns and said that I had received the food, as an American citizen, and it was meant to be distributed which is precisely what I would do with it. Period.

My firm refusal and their disappointment over not being able to make easy cash were the excuse for the later libel to the authorities. Several months after distributing the food, on the verge of humiliating expulsion, I received a phone call from a gentile businessman from Belgium. He serves as president of one of the largest humanitarian organizations in the world. He had heard about me because of the last distribution. He was very impressed by the fact that I distributed the entire

shipment not only to the members of my k'hilla but to the population at large.

"That's rare," he said, "because usually, each person looks out for his own ethnic group. If the aid comes from the Germans, it is distributed to Germans; if the source is Jews, then only Jews receive it. You distributed the aid to every needy citizen without regard for their religion or ethnic origin. I would like to meet you personally and perhaps, to even offer you an appointment as the overseer of an aid project throughout the CIS."

I politely explained that I could not make a trip to Brussels for the simple reason that I had no money for a ticket. This wasn't a problem for him and he said he would pay for the ticket.

"There is another reason why I can't take on the responsibility of a big project like this. I am the Rebbe's shliach and my life is dedicated to shlichus. If I take on this project how will I be able to do the work for which I came here? However, I am willing to organize the distribution throughout the Crimea." As for the distribution in other countries of the CIS, I referred him to R' Gedalia Korf.

We arranged to meet the day after Yud-Alef Nissan, our Rebbe's birthday. I knew that if I met him I wouldn't be able to get back into the Ukraine because of my visa. I told Gedalia to travel alone and to take on the aid in the CIS and to guarantee, in my name, my assistance to the project in the Crimea.

In the meantime, the pressure at home was increasing. The visa was about to expire. What was going to happen? My wife was very nervous with the feeling of uncertainty. Should she prepare for Pesach when we were told we would be expelled Erev Pesach? Should we prepare a public seider? Or should we get ready to leave the country and celebrate Pesach somewhere, somehow. Time was running out!

We finally decided to prepare for Pesach as usual including public s'darim. If we were expelled, we'd have things like the matzos and wine prepared to take with us wherever we'd go while the T'mimim-shluchim who came would take care of the public s'darim. And maybe, just maybe, there would be a miracle, for only a miracle could help us at that point.

Actually, none of this was our personal problem. There was someone who had sent us there and he would see to our shlichus. My wife was satisfied with this line of thinking and began preparing for Pesach as though no threat of expulsion hung over our heads.

*I asked the Rebbe
whether to buy the
house and I added
another, more
essential question:
what was my role in
shlichus?*

* * *

Gedalia Korf went to Brussels alone in order to meet with the president of the humanitarian organization who had spoken with me. Gedalia was supposed to explain to him that I was unable to make it.

The meeting took place and the president of the organization wondered where I was, for I was the main person in this arrangement. Gedalia began to tell him about the hardships I had to contend with, about the threatened expulsion.

Then and there the president picked up the phone and said, "Why didn't you tell me about this problem?"

"I didn't think you could help," apologized Gedalia. What did a businessman from Brussels have to do with the visa department in Simferopol?

Well, there was a connection, and how! The president said he would take care of things forthwith.

He had connections with the highest levels of the Ukrainian government. Each year he sent a significant contribution to the government to the tune of ten million German marks. Consequently, he was considered the personal friend of all the Who's Who among the government elites.

His first phone call was to the Ukrainian prime minister and he firmly demanded the reinstatement of my visa. In order to speed things up, he announced that if the matter wasn't expedited immediately, they wouldn't see a nickel from him!

They say, "Who needs protektzia when you have connections?" The prime minister had heard about my impending expulsion and he squirmed as he said that I had committed a crime which was why I was being expelled.

At this point, the president of the organization allowed himself to say things which no president of an organization would dare say: I personally know Rabbi Lypszyc and there is no way that he did anything illegal! If you cannot prove that he committed a crime, there will be no more money!

The Ukrainian prime minister couldn't forego the humanitarian aid with all the concomitant benefits that accrued to him personally. That day he called the visa department to find out precisely what were my terrible crimes. He was astonished to discover that the visa department had no idea. The request had come directly from the Ukrainian religious department.

Another phone call to the religion department in Kiev and all was clear. The request had come from the

religious department in the Crimea. Urgent clarification was requested. The prime minister himself was involved.

The national minister of religions called the local minister of religions in Crimea, who began to stammer when he heard the question. The minister of religions in Kiev quickly realized that there was no basis for the accusation for it was all lies. He told his colleague in Crimea that if he valued his



Rabbi Lypszyc

position and wanted to hold on to it, he had better make sure that within 24 hours Rabbi Lypszyc had a valid visa!

The local minister of religions found himself in a quandary. He could be penalized for the illegal expulsion, yet, he couldn't endure the humiliation. He called me and asked me to sign a document that said I had committed a crime but I did so

innocently since I wasn't familiar with the local laws and that I committed to behave from now on.

Why should I sign to a lie? I understood that he was offering this compromise because he was in a predicament. I decided to play my own hand. "I'll sign my version which will say that you thought I had committed a crime but afterwards you discovered that you had misunderstood. Even so, I have a condition to my signing which is that not only will you return my visa that was going to expire in two months but you give me a visa for three years! This way we all come out ahead, neither of us will be forced to lie."

A visa for three years?! The man was flabbergasted. Whoever heard of such a thing in the Ukraine?

I informed him that the law had just changed and religious functionaries were able to receive long-term visas. After a lengthy discussion, he decided to give me a visa for a year and the next time I would get one for three years (at this point I get five year visas!).

Time passed and the Rosh HaKahal's men went to him again, asking him to get rid of me, but he chased them out of his office shamefacedly.

The Rebbe had taken care of me, miraculously.

** *

The following story has still not reached its miraculous denouement but we trust that the miracle is nigh and you will see why shortly.

We have a successful school that annoyed several people. They went to the education ministry and closed us down. The reason given was true this time, payments were late and the roof wasn't fixed. We were given a date by which these two problems had to be resolved and if not, the school would close.

I wrote to the Rebbe about these developments and my wife wrote

separately. Each time we opened to the same answer: bitachon in Hashem!

Time passed and we tried increasing our bitachon. The government postponed the final date time and again and we kept going. We had no money because money that was supposed to come, never came. We wrote to the Rebbe again and once again opened to the same answer: bitachon in Hashem!

At the end of Cheshvan 5766 I went to the Kinus HaShluchim in New York while my wife remained in Crimea. She got the final warning, the ultimatum, namely that she had to take care of the payments and the roof by Tuesday. That day, we were given an appointment to meet with the Education Minister – who was bribed against us – in his office.

On the Wednesday before the meeting, I spoke with my wife on the phone. I hadn't gotten the money we needed and had no idea how to obtain the money either. My wife had an idea which didn't seem realistic to me. Our conversation ended on a depressing note.

Afterwards, my wife told me that "when we ended the call I felt lost. I felt I was sinking into a depression. I went to my room and closed the door and then, then it all burst forth. I cried to Hashem and to the Rebbe. I cried bitterly about our having gone out on shlichus: 'You sent us to this place without money and the situation is intolerable. There is no money and no chance for a school.' While I was at it, I added other personal complaints to the list.

"When I had calmed down, I left the room and went to the bookcase. I took a volume of *Igros Kodesh* from the shelf and expected to read encouragement and bracha from the Rebbe and maybe get some counsel about what to do next.

"The Rebbe wrote (the content, not an exact quote): I received your letter and was a bit surprised by the tone. Although perhaps it is justified,

something else is expected from a believing Jew, especially when I told both of you that you need bitachon(!).

"The Rebbe went on to say – with open ruach ha'kodesh – in connection with suffering, you should know that every moment of suffering is a blessing in disguise and you will soon see that all the suffering is a bracha. And the Rebbe went on to enumerate, one by one, all the things I had yelled about, including the personal matters."

After opening to such a detailed and on-the-mark letter from the Rebbe we were sure the money would

"Yes," I said, "you must go. You have to show up. There's no other option and Hashem will do as He sees fit."

My wife went to the meeting and met the minister. You can imagine, perhaps a little bit, how tense she was at this meeting. The future of the mosdos chinuch were going to be decided and it didn't look good. Yet, we had the Rebbe's bracha. My wife thought her racing heart could be heard by everybody in the room.

"We greatly admire your school, especially in light of the fact that you are operating under a severe lack of

In the meantime, the pressure at home was increasing. The visa was about to expire. What was going to happen? My wife was very nervous with the feeling of uncertainty. Should she prepare for Pesach when we were told we would be expelled Erev Pesach? Should we prepare a public seider? Or should we getting ready to leave the country and celebrate Pesach somewhere, somehow. Time was running out!

come in and we would miraculously emerge victorious but the Rebbe had his own ideas.

On Tuesday my wife called to find out whether I had managed to raise the money we needed. Unfortunately, I didn't have good news for her. No time was left for maneuvering. Only one hour remained before the meeting with the minister.

"What am I supposed to do?" asked my wife. "How can I go to the meeting without money? Does it pay to go? Maybe it's better to do nothing?"

resources. As a token of our esteem, we will postpone the date of the payments."

The miracle had happened. That's for certain. The question we were unable to answer was why did the tough minister, who was incited against us, suddenly become our admirer?

This mystery was solved when my wife learned that the minister was new at his job and the minister who had been bribed against us had been pushed out the day after the bureaucratic process against us began!

IT TAKES A SOUND MIND LIKE AVROHOM AVINU'S TO CORRECT THE WRONG THINKING FROM THE DAWN OF CREATION

BY RABBI YEHESKEL LEBOVIC

RAMBAM: CODIFIER OR HISTORIAN!

Q. Why does the Rambam, at the beginning of his section about the details pertaining to idol-worship (Hil. Avoda Zara 1:1-3), go into a lengthy historical background. He traces the phenomenon of idol-worship at the dawn of history starting as a “mistaken notion” regarding the honor and worship of the forces of nature and celestial bodies, erroneously conceiving this to be the “Will of G-d” (then still recognized as the Creator) to accord such honor and worship. And only after several generations did the idol-worship deteriorate into worshipping these forces alone and ignoring G-d. As a rule, the Rambam only states *laws* in his *Yad Chazaka* (often giving reasons for them but), omitting historical background. Why does he do it here?

A. It is because he wants to stress two points: The first one is that to abide by the prohibition of idol-worship, it is not sufficient to go through a list of prohibitions relating to action and speech. First and foremost, it has to start with the recognition (in thought and attitude) that idol-worship and ascribing

independent importance to any entity, save G-d Himself, has absolutely no place. Once this belief has been firmly anchored in thought and belief, can one proceed to enumerate the laws and prohibition stemming and resulting from such acceptance.

SOUND REASONING

The second point is that this kind of acceptance and belief is actually strongly rooted in sound reasoning. Without outside influence bearing on him, every thinking person can clearly see the fallacy of this “mistaken notion.” This is why at the dawn of history it would have been impossible for man to radically shift into idol-worship as we usually refer to it. His logical mind would have prevented him from making such a radical leap. It had to be gradual. The logical mind finds it easier and more reasonable to believe in and perceive the Creator through His Handiwork. The Creator thus couldn't possibly have been pushed out of the picture at that point. It *had* to start with the mistaken notion that, somehow, homage is due by *G-dly decree* to the “hand that feeds us,” i.e., the natural forces without which we would

cease to exist.

Q. How can you prove this second point?

A. This can be proven by pointing to what follows in the text of the Rambam, where he mentions how Avrohom Avinu battled against the rampant idol-worship of his generation, how he emerged victorious in his polemics with the proponents of idol-worship and how he eventually influenced tens of thousands to desist from idol-worship and worship only G-d Himself. This too, is a historical narrative, which is open to the same question raised above.

The Rambam does so to demonstrate that a sound mind, like Avrohom's, will not, at the end of the day, remain under the alien influences prevailing in the current era, that it can make a 180 degree turn, and even influence others in the process. Would this reasoning process not be so evident to the thinking mind, he would not have been able to make such inroads into the general population.

Q. Why does the Rambam state here that Avrohom was 40 years old when he “recognized his Creator”? I know that there are several views

regarding this, including the one that from very early on, at the age of three, Avrohom recognized the Creator. Why does he choose that view vs. the views that he was 3, 48, 50, etc.

A. This only proves the above-mentioned approach in understanding the Rambam. It is true that Avrohom was very precocious and that his fertile mind *started* to work in that direction from early on. It stands to reason, however, that this was a gradual, cumulative process, which *culminated* at age 40, the age at which *all* individuals develop a natural, heightened state of *Bina*, understanding and deductive reasoning (Pirkei Avos end chap. 5). So this further indicates that *every* individual possessing a good measure of *Bina*, especially around age 40, is able to start shifting his life and set of values in the right direction (rather than going through a “mid-life crisis”).

SUCCESS: NO HANDS ON

Q. What does the Rambam mean by using the term (in reference to the influence he had on his followers) “he *planted* that belief in them”?

A. For precisely the same reason. He wants to indicate that this type of reasoning is so sound that – even tough at first one needs the benefit of a teacher, a *mashpia*, etc., in order to be set in the right direction (especially when having to overcome years of opposite influence) – eventually these notions of truth will naturally *grow on their own* once planted, much the same way you don’t have to stand over a seed, once well planted, to make sure it grows properly.

Q. Can you find another authority who concurs with this thought?

A. Rashi concurs. In *B’Reishis*

(6:9) he mentions two opinions regarding the comparison of Noach to Avrohom, one being: “if Noach *would* have been in Avrohom’s generation, he wouldn’t have amounted to much anything (in comparison).” This is open to an obvious question: Noach *did* live in Avrohom’s generation! Avrohom was 58 when Noah died, so they did live concurrently!

Q. Yes I’ve heard that many commentaries raise this question on Rashi. How do *you* resolve it?

A. By bearing in mind that

***A sound mind, like
Avrohom’s, will not,
at the end of the day,
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current era, that it
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degree turn, and even
influence others in the
process.***

Avrohom’s influence on his contemporaries had to be gradual.

First he was victorious in his philosophical polemics. Then he *started* to influence his generation. And eventually, he planted those seeds so successfully that he didn’t need “hands on” anymore. It was only at that later point that that generation could be referred to as Avrohom’s generation. And by then, Noach had long been gone. He indeed was not part of *that* part of the generation.

WHAT IN THE WORLD HAPPENED IN EGYPT?!

Q. I am puzzled by what seems to contradict your whole premise!

A. What’s that?

Q. Further on in the same text, the Rambam goes on to describe how the Jews in Egypt became influenced by the Egyptian culture and its idol-worship in which they (the Jews) participated, forgetting the monotheistic path established by Avrohom, and that it took Moshe and G-dly Revelation and Intervention to set things straight. According to your premise – that sound reasoning precludes idol-worship – how could an entire nation, *already* exposed to true monotheism, go so far astray in Egypt? Where was *their* sound reasoning?

A. I’m glad you asked this, for therein lies another great lesson! Sound reasoning does play a great role, as mentioned, for man is basically an intellectual being; he cannot ignore the voice of reason. But, short of ignoring the voice of reason, he might seek to *reinterpret* the voice of reason and direct it into a process of justifying (reasonably!) his wrong choices, down to actual idol-worship, as our ancestors did in Egypt. Therefore, as important as reason is, it is not *sufficient* as a sound *foundation* to build upon. Therefore, the Rambam mentions the foundation of faith, Emuna, and Revelation from On High as needed in tandem with sound reasoning to serve as the strong foundation of our faith.

WOW! CHASSIDUS IS DEEP!

Q. Is there an additional Chassidic depth to this topic?

A. Yes, indeed!

There are two dimensions to the topic of idol-worship: (a) the positive: recognizing G-d as the only

Being possessing absolute, independent existence, to Whom homage and worship should be directed. (b) the negative: the thorough existential negation of any other being, as the existence of all other beings is dependent upon G-d.

In each of these, the positive and negative, reason and intellect can go only so far, beyond which one has to “fall back” on faith and G-dly Revelation from on High.

Q. Please explain.

A. In the positive angle, human reason can clearly perceive G-dliness from within Creation, can recognize the existence of the Author by openly seeing His Work (of nature), but G-d is *greater than that which is apparent through His Creation* of the universe. That transcendent aspect cannot be perceived by reason; we *believe* in it on the strength of what G-d revealed to us through Moshe and our Rebbeim and Chassidus.

Q. And in the negative angle?

A. *Total* negation of all existing, created entities, negating their possessing any independent importance (or even true existence) *whatsoever*, cannot be achieved by virtue of reason alone. This is because reason and intellect itself is a “limited, existential entity.” As an existential entity, it cannot *totally* negate, even in attitude, the existence and importance of other entities! In order to fulfill that aspect of idol-negation, one must resort to the G-dly connection afforded us

At the dawn of history it would have been impossible for man to radically shift into idol-worship as we usually refer to it. His logical mind would have prevented him from making such a radical leap.

through the prophecy of Moshe and the Divine connective medium of the Mitzvos.

OBVIOUS PARALLELS THROUGH SOUND REASONING

Q. Do you see any parallels of this discussion within our current generation?

A. There are several obvious parallels. The Rebbe is the Avrohom of our generation. He started to “recognize His Creator” and the mission incumbent upon him, from an early age. He gradually influenced his generation, until it could eventually be referred to as “his generation.” He emerged victorious in his early encounters with the evil

forces of German superiority complex, similar to idol-worship, as well as the atheistic forces of communism. He confronted the apathy of American materialism and appealed to the “sound reasoning” of the disillusioned searching Jewish youth of the 60’s and 70’s. He spread forth the wellsprings of Chassidus at an unprecedented pace and intensity, reaching the furthest corners of the globe, and thus appealing to the “sound reasoning” of *all* mankind, influencing millions to turn away from the false beliefs they had been steeped into and becoming believing Noachides, very much the same way Avrohom had influenced people of all creeds in his day.

As far as his “people,” his Chassidim, are concerned, he planted in us his teachings to the extent that things continue growing and “mushrooming” on their own at an unprecedented rate, though he currently is not “standing over us.” *Unlike* Avrohom, however, whose devotees kind of got lost in the shuffle after Avrohom’s death (as the Torah had yet not been given), the Rebbe will surely soon conclude what he started and lead “his generation” to the Geula shleima b’karov mamash!

(Based on Likkutei Sichos vol. 20 pg. 13-24)

In honor and merit of Perel Leah bas Esther Hadas, and her Yom Huledes on Mar Cheshvan 6, for a year of good health, hatzlacha rabba, Chassidishe nachas from the entire family, and kabbalas p’nei Moshiach!

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DOESN'T THE RAMBAM SAY THAT THE ONLY DIFFERENCE BETWEEN EXILE AND REDEMPTION IS “SUBJUGATION TO GENTILE KINGDOMS”?

RABBI SHOLOM DOVBER HALEVI WOLPO
TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY

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

It's not exactly true to say that according to the Rambam there is no process of natural Redemption, since the Rambam says, "There will be no difference between these times and the days of Moshiach

except for our subjugation to the [Gentile] kingdoms." Thus, when we have an independent state, we are already in the days of Moshiach. Yet, while we are still at the height of the process, nevertheless, this process has begun without subjugation to the

Gentile nations.

Furthermore, even though the subjugation has not yet been totally finished and we are not yet fully independent, this is merely a stage in the process. Moshiach has other spiritual jobs to do in the stages of the Redemption, and we have already stated earlier that the Redemption of Israel comes in stages, little by little.

ANSWER:

1. When the Rambam writes that the main distinction between the Exile and the Redemption (in the first stage) is the nullification of the subjugation to the [Gentile] kingdoms, this has no connection whatsoever to the concept of a "natural Redemption," because this subjugation will be ended through

the wars that **Melech HaMoshiach will wage** when he will fight the wars of G-d and be victorious.

The Rambam himself writes in his commentary on the Mishna (Sanhedrin 41): “But the days of Moshiach are a time when sovereignty will return to Israel, and they will return to Eretz Yisroel, and **that king** will stand in the place of his kingdom Tzion, and his name will be exalted, reaching the farthest corners of the earth. His kingdom will surpass the kingdom of Shlomo. Indeed, the nations will make a covenant of peace with him; all the lands will serve him on account of his great righteousness. Miracles will be revealed through him, **and anyone who rises up against him, God will destroy and place him in his hand.** All of the p’sukim testify to his fortune and our fortune in him, but actually nothing will change from what it is now except that there will be sovereignty to Israel. In the language of the Sages, ‘There will be no difference between these times and the days of Moshiach except for our subjugation to the [Gentile] kingdoms.’” It is stated explicitly in the Rambam that even the nullification of the subjugation to the [Gentile] kingdoms will be done **by Melech HaMoshiach.**

2. Similarly, it is simply stated in the Gemara (Megilla 34b), as well as the Rambam that you quoted, that the nullification of the subjugation to the [Gentile] kingdoms is what distinguishes “the days of Moshiach,” i.e., the time when Moshiach is here and taking action. See Rashi’s commentary in the Gemara (Sanhedrin 91b) where he explains that “the days of Moshiach” means “when the subjugation will end.” Therefore, it clear from this that the nullification of the subjugation to the Gentiles is an action by none other than Moshiach.

3. In his seifer *Netzach Yisroel*, Ch. 50, the Maharal explains the saying of our Sages that “there will be no difference between these times and the days of Moshiach except for our subjugation to the [Gentile] kingdoms” means that there will be a miraculous revelation of G-dliness **within a framework of nature**, and not **the cancellation of nature.** This is what the Maharal calls the natural Redemption of “[if] they have not merited, [Moshiach will appear as a man who is] poor and riding upon a donkey” (“*chamor*,” in reference to “*chumrius*,” physicality). He emphasizes further that the



aforementioned saying of our Sages cannot mean “as long as we, our children, and our children’s children will not be subjugated...and no more – **for this cannot be said whatsoever.**”

4. Even regarding the nullification of the subjugation to the Gentiles in its simplest sense, the clear facts are that there is almost no subjugation of Jews by the Gentile kingdoms today anywhere in the world, whether in Communist or Arab countries, **and this obviously has no connection whatsoever to the medina**, but to

G-d’s great and Divine Mercy. Apparently He wanted that even in the final moments of Exile, there will be fulfilled “and to all the children of Israel there was light in their dwellings,” just as we find at the Exodus from Egypt even before their redemption began (and particularly when Melech HaMoshiach has already been revealed and takes action in the world, as will be explained).

However, amazing as it may seem, the only place where thousands of Jews, soldiers and citizens, are killed simply because they are Jewish is specifically in Eretz Yisroel under the rule of the “medina.” Furthermore, all this is a result of the *Galus’dike* policies of surrender by those who call themselves “Zionists,” whose actions encourage wars and terrorism.

5. The Gentile subjugation in Eretz HaKadosh is great and terrible, to the point that we see openly a process of self-destruction, where the state is destroying itself, and its soldiers represent the cause of the enemy, fighting against the settlement of the land, uprooting communities, handing over the inheritance of the Jewish People to terrorists, opening the borders between Egypt and Gaza in order that Al Qaeda terrorists can place their heavy weapons on the Israeli border, destroying cemeteries, and causing a shame and disgrace to the dead.

6. Therefore, not only is there presently no nullification of the subjugation to the Gentile kingdoms in the State of Israel, and thus there is no indication of Redemption, this has delayed the Redemption and does not enable Melech HaMoshiach to nullify Gentile subjugation – even in Eretz Yisroel.

THE ESCAPE FROM RUSSIA 1946-1947

BY RABBI SHNEUR ZALMAN CHANIN

*Sixty years have passed since the famous exodus from Russia and yet much is still unknown. The following is an account of the escape as heard from R' Chaikel Chanin. **
Part 2

[Continued from last week]

ARREST IN THE BUCHARIAN MARKET

My father began researching how to get out of Russia. He tried to find a way to take his wealth out too. He began inquiring about different ways of traveling and who the smugglers were. In the meantime, something happened in Samarkand that put R' Nissan into immediate danger, disturbed the serenity of the Chassidim even more, and strengthened the view of those who leaned towards immediate flight.

Rabbi Yitzchok Koppelman (later, the Litvishe rosh yeshiva in Lucerne, Switzerland) arrived in Samarkand as a refugee. Like other G-d-fearing Jews, he remained there and became very friendly with the Lubavitcher Chassidim.

One day in 1946 as R' Yitzchok walked in the Bucharian marketplace, a car pulled up and four plainclothes men got out and asked him to accompany them. Despite his resistance and it being a public place, they forcibly put him in the car and he was taken to the NKVD offices. They interrogated him for hours and ultimately released him on condition that he leave Samarkand immediately.

R' Yitzchok didn't want to endanger himself so he immediately packed his bags and left for the train

station. Before he left he managed to meet with a Lubavitcher and he asked him to tell R' Nissan to flee immediately because at the NKVD offices he learned that they were after R' Nissan and were about to arrest him.

That very night R' Nissan left the city for Tashkent. Aside from a few individuals nobody knew where he had gone and where his hiding place was. My mother took it upon herself to visit him and bring him food each day as well as to report to him about what was going on and to ask his advice on behalf of Anash.

The conclusion of the incident was clear. If R' Yitzchok, who wasn't a Lubavitcher and wasn't a communal figure but a religious Jew who sat all day and learned, was treated that way by the NKVD, it was far

“R' Nissan is indeed an oved Elokim, a great Chassid, and mashpia, but he is not a Rebbe. If we're talking about a 'rebbe,' then I'm a 'rebbe' just like he is. I am telling you that we must flee the USSR, the sooner the better. Who knows what tomorrow will bring, for 'there isn't a day whose curse...'”

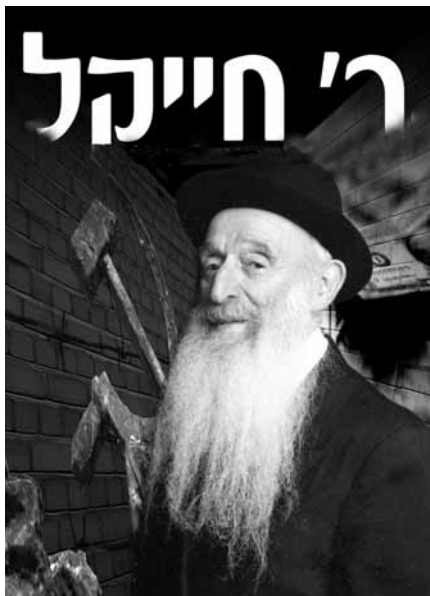


(From right to left) R' Isser Klugant, R' Chaikel Chanin, and R' Leibel Mochkin

more dangerous for the Chassidim to live in Soviet territory where Torah institutions, Jews and Judaism could not thrive. They had to leave as soon as possible. But as Anash began to seriously inquire about joining the Polish repatriation, they found out that the offices in Tashkent and Samarkand, as in most cities, had been closed. They could not arrange the paperwork and permits there.

A TRUSTWORTHY MAN AMONG THE SWINDLERS

The identities of the organizers of the smuggling was kept secret.



What was known was that some of the organizers were crooks who took enormous sums of money but didn't always provide anything in exchange. There were rumors that there were also double agents among them who would tattle to the Russian authorities. So when my father decided to leave Russia, no matter what, he traveled to Moscow in order to check things out for himself and to decide whether to trust these people.

After several days in Moscow and after meeting with several people who arranged papers, my father decided that these people weren't trustworthy, to put it mildly, and that it was better not to endanger himself and enter the lion's den but to return to Tashkent.

By Divine Providence, before he left Moscow he met Yehuda Leib Mochkin, son of his friend, R' Peretz Mochkin. R' Leibke was a young bachur at the time but a busy askan who devoted all his energy to saving Anash from the clutches of the communists and to helping them leave Russia. My father asked him to travel to Lvov, where the Repatriation offices were still open to the public and gave him money for travel expenses. He

asked Leibke to send him a telegram in Tashkent if he thought there was a way to leave the country.

My father knew that Leibel Mochkin worked with those shady askanim yet he relied on him as a Chassid, son of a Chassid, and hoped that the merit of Leibel's fathers would stand by him and Leibel would be the one through whom his salvation would come. My father always said that if Leibel didn't enter the picture and didn't endanger himself in arranging the papers and *eshalonim*, neither he nor many other Chassidim would have left Russia. Until his final day, my father thanked Hashem for sending him Leibel to take him out of that Gehinom.

A few days later a telegram arrived from Leibke in Lvov which said that most of the Polish refugees had already left and the repatriation system had to be arranged all over again including arranging a special *eshalon*, arranging with the border guards and those who checked passports not to look too closely, to prepare papers of dead Poles and other details. All this could take weeks.

When my father realized it would take time until he could leave Tashkent for Lvov and from there to leave the country, he decided to take care of himself a bit. My father had a hernia that he suffered from for years. At the time it was wonderful since it exempted him from army service. Now that he had to wait several weeks anyway, he decided it was the right time to have it operated on so that when the time came, with Hashem's help, he would be able to travel in good health.

He spoke to the doctor, made all the necessary arrangements and entered the hospital so that he could undergo the operation the next day.

TELEGRAM

The very day my father checked into the hospital, my mother brought him a telegram from Leibel Mochkin. Leibel had found a way out which seemed to be safe and was able to arrange the papers, and my father should come to Lvov as soon as possible because it was likely that he could arrange a number of eshalonim for the refugees.

My father, who was in the hospital's pajamas, asked my mother to bring his clothes immediately because they were about to flee the Soviet Union. My mother was shaken primarily by the fact that my father was about to take this initiative while going against R' Nissan Nemenov.

My father maintained, "R' Nissan is indeed an *oved Elokim*, a great Chassid, and mashpia, but he is not a Rebbe. If we're talking about a 'rebbe,' then I'm a 'rebbe' just like he is. I am telling you that we must flee the USSR, the sooner the better. Who knows what tomorrow will bring, for 'there isn't a day whose course...'

"According to my understanding, the Rebbe is of the opinion that we should travel and even according to *daas tachton*, *daas balabatim*, from the perspective of solid reasoning I am sure we have to get out of here. If we don't take the opportunity we are committing suicide."

He told my mother firmly that if she didn't bring him his clothes he would travel while wearing the hospital garb.

Apparently my mother didn't know about the exchange between my father and R' Nissan and his beis din and that after giving them money for the yeshiva to last them an entire year that they had agreed, unwillingly, to his leaving. She was shocked and didn't know what to do. On the one hand, my mother

greatly esteemed my father's cleverness and she knew that even the great Chassidim took his opinion into account and relied on him even in matters that entailed danger to life.

On the other hand, she was afraid of defying R' Nissan. She considered it like defying the Rebbe,

G-d forbid. She decided to listen to my father and bring him his clothes but she resolved to go to R' Nissan and consult with him.

UNEXPECTED TURNABOUT

R' Nissan heard the whole story and then he asked my mother where my father was because he wanted to speak to him about an urgent matter.

THE GRANDMOTHER AND UNCLE WHO STAYED BEHIND

Before he left, my father successfully made all the arrangements so that my mother and sisters could leave. He also made arrangements for his sister Esther Rochel and her husband R' Chaim Minkowitz and their family, and my aunt, my mother's sister, Mussia Nimotin, from Moscow to Lvov-Lemberg.

My father very much wanted to take his mother-in-law, my grandmother, Itta Mera Nimotin and my uncle, her son, Refael, but they were unwilling to leave. My grandmother didn't want to leave because she still hoped to see her husband, Rabbi Shmuel Nimotin (may Hashem avenge his blood) once again. She thought he was still alive and in jail or sent to exile and wanted him to have a home and wife to return to if they would release him.

She said how would he feel when he would find out that his entire family had fled the country and left him behind?

Official word about his being killed *al Kiddush Hashem* by the NKVD had not yet arrived. My father tried to convince her to flee and to prove to her that all hope was lost and that my grandfather was no longer alive, but she remained strong in her hope and her determination to stay.



R' Refael Nimotin

My uncle Refael had his own reasons to stay. First, he didn't want to leave his mother alone in Russia. Second, his wife didn't want to leave her father's family and they didn't want to leave Russia. So the two of them remained in Russia.

My grandmother died on 16 Tamuz 1956. My uncle left Russia for Eretz Yisroel with the great aliya in 1980 after sitting in jail, being exiled, and suffering a great deal. He died on his 96th birthday on 9 Nissan 5765 and is buried on Har HaMenuchos in Yerushalayim.

After they spoke for a while, and R' Nissan saw that my father was adamant about leaving and nothing would stop him, he suddenly changed his mind and to my father's surprise he said, "I am going with you. Please take me with you and the way you will leave, I will leave!"

My mother estimated that he was probably at home and preparing to leave for Lvov. When R' Nissan heard this he left his hiding place and went to my parents' house. He found my father packing. My father told him that he was leaving Tashkent after making certain that his wife and daughters could travel and that he still didn't know how he would get to Lvov, but he was leaving.

After they spoke for a while, and R' Nissan saw that my father was adamant about leaving and nothing would stop him, he suddenly changed his mind and to my father's surprise he said, "I am going with you. Please take me with you and the way you will leave, I will leave!"

This was completely unexpected! At first my father considered pushing R' Nissan off for that's all he needed, to take another "wanted criminal" along with him and endanger himself even more. When he thought a bit longer though he concluded that since R' Nissan was an extraordinary man, a big yerei Shamayim and an *oved Elokim*, perhaps in the merit of taking him along Hashem would help and save them all. Hoping that their trip would be successful, my father wholeheartedly agreed to have R' Nissan join them.

My father had to decide what to do with the house and its contents, which items to take along and which to leave behind, how to leave the city without arousing suspicion that they wouldn't be coming back and how to transfer his wealth to the other side of the Iron Curtain. He gave R' Mendel Futerfas and Mumme Sarah several suitcases that contained large sums of money so they would take them, in exchange for a nice fee, to Lvov and from there out of the country. What happened to that money I will relate in a later chapter.

In addition, as several Anash testified, my father didn't suffice with the money he left for Tomchei T'mimim but distributed money, while still in Tashkent, to his friends and acquaintances so they could buy passports and tickets.

The moment R' Nissan decided he was joining my father, the signal was given to the rest of the Chassidim to prepare to flee as R' Zalman Shimon Dvorkin a"h wrote in his memoirs, "When the Chassidim heard that R' Nissan was getting ready to leave with Chaikel Chanin, a sort of Heavenly voice went out to Anash which said: **Chevra, we must leave!**"

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יחי אדונו מורנו ורבינו מלך המשיח לעולם ועד

PAYING THE PRICE

BY SHAI GEFEN

The headlines lately are about what is going on in the Philadelphi Corridor. Since the IDF abandoned it to the mercies of terrorists within the framework of the Disengagement Plan, hundreds of tunnels were dug for the purpose of smuggling weapons. It is estimated that thousands of tons of weapons were smuggled via these tunnels and this was done under the auspices of Egypt, with whom we have a peace treaty.

At a government session that took place last week, ministers demanded that the army return to the Philadelphi Corridor. Shimon Peres, second in command, referred to the deterioration of the situation in the Gaza Strip, "We gave Gaza to the Palestinians and they are threatening their own futures," he said. "Hamas is out of control, shooting. They don't respect agreements and aren't willing to sign to agreements. Who will support them? I am very upset about this. This wasn't our intention. We gave Gaza to the Palestinians, allowed them to deal with their problems out of goodwill, and they are undermining their future and bringing on the demise of their land and government."

Evidently not only Palestinians are undermining their future and bringing on the demise of their land and government but Israel is also doing the same and bringing tragedy upon itself.

We all know where the various peace treaties have gotten us and nevertheless we are still hearing calls

for more treaties with our enemies to give away more land to them. Not to mention that nothing has been done to take back the land we foolishly gave away.

Since the cursed Disengagement the Kassams haven't stopped flying. When Gilad Shalit was kidnapped in the Gaza Strip, Israel entered the Strip temporarily, but as in Lebanon they don't turn back the clock. They fear that it will be interpreted as an admission of failure and worry about what the nations of the world will say. They prefer the cowardly approach, letting the terrorists know they have nothing to fear.

All of us in Eretz Yisroel are paying the price for Disengagement, but instead of learning the proper lessons, once again we see that they're trying to solve the little problems instead of addressing the core issues. The problem is neither the Philadelphi Corridor nor the shooting of Kassams. The source of the problem is that Israel decided to give its land to its enemies and according to the principle that the Rebbe taught us, concessions lead to further concessions and withdrawals lead to further withdrawals.

Since the Camp David Accords, Israel has divested itself of its acquisitions and has rewarded our Arab enemies. In order to spur Israel on to continue conceding to the Arabs they are pressuring us with ongoing armed battle. As long as the enemy knows the withdrawals and concessions will go on throughout Israel, there is no reason why they

should stop their terrorizing and preparing for future war.

The solution is not to re-conquer the Philadelphi Corridor but to change the reality of recent years. Merely conquering the Corridor alone will not solve the problem. Only an outright announcement that Israel rescinds all the decisions it made in recent years and recognizes its egregious errors, and its return to all the places they abandoned, can solve the problem.

The Philadelphi Corridor is only a microcosm of what results from the withdrawals and our running away. All attempts at "peace" proved to be fatal errors. We still remember the boastful claim of the Expulsion General Dan Chalutz on the eve of the Disengagement. He said that if the Arabs dared to shoot Kassams after the withdrawal, "We'll show them who we are." What actually happened? They shoot and we do nothing.

INVESTIGATE THE DISENGAGEMENT!

After the war in Lebanon various organizations and many people demanded a government inquiry. Why did the leadership fail the soldiers and why was this war an abysmal military and political failure?

Interestingly, no such investigative committee has been convened to examine the failure of the Disengagement Plan and to put on trial all those who collaborated in this crime. Today all can see that our security problems didn't begin on the



eve of the war in Lebanon but long ago with our shameful retreat from Lebanon six years ago and the Disengagement.

Till now they've tried to cover it up but in recent weeks we've heard several admissions and apologies, whether from within the army echelons or from political bodies that were partners to the Disengagement. They admitted that the Disengagement is what led to the war in Lebanon and they spoke about the serious dangers that this delusional plan brought upon us thanks to Sharon & Co.

Why shouldn't a government inquiry be made into how the Disengagement Plan was accepted despite the warnings of security experts? What was the basis for expelling Jews from their homes in the Gaza Strip and northern Shomron? All can see that what Israel was on the eve of the Disengagement will never return; this was a political and security disaster which created such a rift in our society that it will take years for it to heal, if it heals at all.

How can life go on without a serious inquiry when many of those complicit in that crime remain unaffected? The Right and all those who care for the future of Eretz Yisroel should insist on an investigative committee that will inquire as to why this Plan, which threatens our very existence, was implemented.

DESTROYING OUTPOSTS – NATIONAL TRAGEDY

The Defense Minister and his supporters are busy with outposts. Dozens of Jews who live in Yehuda-Shomron were served with evacuation orders. It's unbelievable how each time a political leader is in trouble and has to prove himself he immediately turns to settlements and in impinging on our security.

Sad to say, the leadership in Yesha is weak and instead of fighting for its life they immediately show willingness to compromise without understanding that the political power of the Defense Minister is shaky and is not a serious threat. Whoever thought the leadership

Till now they've tried to cover it up but in recent weeks we've heard several admissions and apologies, whether from within the army echelons or from political bodies that were partners to the Disengagement. They admitted that the Disengagement is what led to the war in Lebanon and they spoke about the serious dangers that this delusional plan brought upon us thanks to Sharon & Co.



One of the tunnels discovered by the IDF during recent action in the Philadelphi Corridor

changed direction and learned its lesson is mistaken.

This is why we must remember that even if the government dropped the Convergence Plan, it's only due to temporary pressures. We must continue to do all we can to stop them. We couldn't relax when Olmert announced that he was shelving the Convergence Plan. The only reason he said that was because he couldn't carry it through and not because he had a change of heart. Just a few months ago, in the midst of the war, Olmert shamelessly announced that victory in the war would mean: on with Convergence!

Destroying outposts will continue to bring tragedies upon us and giving away land in Yehuda-Shomron entails danger to life for all those who live in the cities of the Shomron, the lowlands and the north. It's not "only" a destroyed outpost but the destruction of additional territory in Yehuda and giving it away to our enemies.

We must raise a hue and cry from one end of the world to the other so that these terrible things will not be implemented. We have the ability to do so! Let us join forces and understand that we cannot sit by while the security of each one of us is compromised and the fate of millions of Jews is in open danger.

The dangers faced by the residents of the north during the second war in Lebanon is only a sample of what will happen to all the residents in the center of the country. We must stop the evacuations!

WE CAN STILL FIX THINGS!

25 years ago, on Shabbos Parshas Noach 5742 the Rebbe said an amazing sicha about the situation at that time which applies to us today:

As was said several times, they cannot maintain that this was something in the past and it cannot be corrected, for this is something

that pertains to the future too. Those who returned the territories say, "I ate and will eat more," and when the goy sees that they are fazed by him and they satisfy his demand, obviously this arouses his desire to demand more!

I spoke with a very influential Jew who took part in the discussions

He said to me that they got themselves into a situation which cannot be changed and they must fulfill all the terms of the agreement. I asked him: What will be in the end? He answered: Hashem will help! I was happy to hear that he believes and trusts in Hashem but I told him that Hashem wants to help when we do things in a natural manner in accordance with His will!

about signing a peace agreement. He said to me that the signing of the agreement was under very heavy pressure even though they could have agreed in principle to sign a "peace agreement" and they could have discussed the details of the conditions in a relaxed manner, not

under pressure!

I asked him: Now we see the results of the signing of this agreement, so why are they thinking about conducting themselves in the future in the same way? Why don't they change their approach?

He said to me that they got themselves into a situation which cannot be changed and they must fulfill all the terms of the agreement.

I asked him: What will be in the end?

He answered: Hashem will help!

I was happy to hear that he believes and trusts in Hashem but I told him that Hashem wants to help when we do things in a natural manner in accordance with His will!

I asked him: How long will this situation and approach go on?

He said to me: Hashem knows.

We parted amicably. I believe in Hashem and he believes in Hashem, but if they continue with this approach, those who decide how long this will go on will be the terrorists (the PLO)! ...

Real peace can only come about by acting in accordance with Hashem's will –Hashem's name is Peace – and only through the Torah's instructions, whose "ways are paths of pleasantness and all its pathways are peace." After the great descent described at length previously, may we begin the ascent, as the saying goes about the revolving wheel. In other words, when we reach the lowest point, below which there is nothing, we must begin the ascent.

A SOLDIER OF THE REBBE

This past week marked five years since the murder of Rechavam ("Gandi") Zeevi (may Hashem avenge his blood). He was one of the only voices on the political scene who took the Rebbe at his word and saw himself as the Rebbe's Chassid. Over

the years I interviewed him several times for *Beis Moshiach* and each time he remarked in wonder how only the Rebbe understood and foresaw the situation and only by listening to the Rebbe would the situation change.

Since Zeevi's murder there is nobody on the political scene who follows the Rebbe's guidance and we all see the sad consequences. I recall that in one interview he said that Netanyahu convinced him to join his Coalition in exchange for a promise that he would hold a referendum about withdrawals from Yehuda-Shomron.

Zeevi was inclined to agree, especially since pressure was exerted on him, but he wanted to know the Rebbe's opinion. He called Rabbi Wolpo who immediately conveyed the Rebbe's negative view of a referendum with the dangers that are inherent in it.

He told me that he went to Netanyahu's office and told him that he couldn't join his Coalition since the Lubavitcher Rebbe opposed it. Thus, he saved himself from being a partner to Netanyahu's government which signed the Wye Accords.

Rechavam Zeevi left Sharon's government and shortly before his death he announced that Sharon had become the visionary of the Palestinian state.

Unfortunately, those who were supposed to carry on his legacy veered from his ideology and joined Sharon's government and were partners to the agreements including the expulsion from Gaza and northern Shomron.

Lilui nishmaso I will quote an amazing segment that the Rebbe wrote to Zeevi when he was a General serving as the Commander of Central Command. The letter was written on Rosh Chodesh Adar I 5730 and we read of the nachas and joy he gave the Rebbe because of his outlook on inyanei Eretz Yisroel (free translation):

Your letter about shleimus ha'Aretz gave me special pleasure and inner joy, because I am sure that even though you only mentioned Yehuda and Shomron you meant all of Eretz Yisroel to its borders as delineated in our Torah, the Torah of Life, which was given by the G-d of heaven and earth.

I fervently hope that with your nobility of spirit and using your influence you will see to it that this view penetrate into populations that will grow and expand until this view establishes the policy and the negotiations with the nations, so that all who set the policy will see reality as it is. I refer to, Heaven forbid, retreating from the present borders, which is an open invitation to invasion, attack, and strike actions at every point in the country, undermining the security situation to the point of actual danger, Heaven forbid.

Certainly you and your colleagues are well aware of the situation even more than I am. Please accept my apologies for going on at length about this.

May we merit to soon see the fulfillment of the promise of "arise and sing those who dwell in the earth" and he among them with the true and complete Redemption, when we will merit the complete Eretz Yisroel till the Great River, the Euphrates, including the lands of Keini, K'nizi, and Kadmoni.

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REB PERETZ AND REB IZIK

A chapter in the biography of Reb Peretz Motchkin

Rabbi Izik Mintz o.b.m. came from a non-Lubavitch home. While he was still young he studied in Central Lubavitcher Yeshiva in New York and became a full-fledged Lubavitcher Chassid.

Reb Izik Mintz once related to his good friend, Reb Meir Plotkin, how he decided to become a Lubavitcher. In the fall of 5714 (1953), after studying a few years in the Lubavitcher Yeshiva in New York (on Bedford and Dean), he traveled to Montreal to continue his studies in the Lubavitcher Yeshiva over there.

In those days, people traveling from New York to Montreal would typically travel by train. There was no major highway then between New York and Montreal. Traveling by car was often treacherous and time-consuming, as the route winded through the snowy mountainside.

Nonetheless, Izik traveled through the snow with a few lively yeshiva-boys. Fortunately they arrived safely in Montreal, but it was way after midnight and way after the time people had gone to sleep.

In those years the yeshiva didn't have a dormitory, so the bachurim would sleep in the houses of Chassidim and eat at the homes of two Chassidim, Reb Zalman Butman and Reb Dovid Leib Marosov.

Izik and the boys were tired and

hungry. Izik asked, "Where are we going now?"

The boys answered, "We are going to eat."

"But it's the middle of the night!" Izik protested. "Where can we go at this hour?"

The boys explained that in this house, the home of Reb Peretz Motchkin, they never locked the door. Izik, who was raised in America, wasn't able to comprehend that in Montreal a person shouldn't lock his door at night.

"There is a home here in Montreal that is very hospitable."

"Do people live in this house?! It's 2 AM!"

"There is a couple with a son."

"Surely they're asleep now. We

can't just barge in there."

But the boys assured him, "This home is different."

The boys explained that in this house, the home of Reb Peretz Motchkin, they never locked the door.

(Rabbi Plotkin testifies that the front door of Reb Peretz's house was deliberately left open for this purpose – that if somebody needed to eat something or a place to sleep, Reb Peretz's house was available. When Rabbi Plotkin was a bachur, he entered into this house many times in the middle of the night when either mashkeh or farbaisan was needed for a farbrengen – and the door was always open.)

Izik followed the boys into the house and saw how the bachurim took food and made themselves at home. "This is not your house!" he cried. "How can you do this? It's not proper!"

Izik had never seen such a thing – to enter somebody else's house in the middle of the night when the family is sound asleep and help themselves to food. But eventually he came to terms with the fact that what was going on was simply beyond his comprehension and he joined in, sating his hunger.

After eating, Izik quickly grew tired and wanted to go to sleep, so

he asked, "I suppose we are sleeping here too?"

"Yes," they told him.

"How can a person enter someone's house in the middle of the night, when the owner of the house is asleep, and just decide to stay the night?"

"The bachurim began to lose their patience: "Here you have a bed. Go to sleep!" The bed looked like it came from Tashkent.

Izik ended up sleeping in Reb Peretz's house, and it became the house that he stayed in throughout the course of his studies in Montreal.

* * *

Over a period of time, Reb Izik got situated in Montreal. One Thursday night, after learning in Mishmar with Reb Nissan Mangel, Izik went home at 3:00 AM. When he came to Reb Peretz's house, he heard somebody crying. He listened further, and then he realized that it was a man weeping.

Izik assumed that there was some problem and he wanted to go help

the man. Izik got up and started making his way towards the sound of the crying. Izik saw a door which was not totally closed, so he figured he should knock on the door. Then he opened the door a little and saw a Jew with a long white beard sitting there in a hat and jacket and a gartel covering his eyes with his hands and crying. Izik wanted to go over and ask: Maybe I can help you? Perhaps you need something?

Eventually Izik realized that he wouldn't be able to help the man, who turned out to be Reb Peretz, but he tried to figure out why he was crying, perhaps he received bad news or he heard something from his children in Russia.

Reb Izik was inspired by this exceptional man, and saw what a true Chassid is, a Chassid whose entire existence is only the Rebbe and Chassidus, Lubavitch and Tomchei T'mimim, this was the topic of his conversation, his pleasure and wish every second of the day. After all of this, when Reb Peretz makes an accounting during the recital of Shma, it led him to painful cries,

almost till the rise of the morning.

Izik came to understand why Reb Peretz's house is so different from the other houses, why his doors are always open to provide food and shelter for any Jew, and he came to understand that this Chassid with the white beard, Reb Peretz, was crying while saying Krias Shma Al HaMitta.

Reb Izik continued learning in Tomchei T'mimim; he grew and became greater in his knowledge in Nigleh and Chassidus, and over a period of time he observed many Chassidim. But the real Chassidus and the Chassidic truth he constantly saw in the image of Reb Peretz. He saw Reb Peretz' devotion to the Rebbe and he saw his unusual ability during farbrengens to explain and to convince others that they should also be connected to the Rebbe.

Reb Izik appreciated Reb Peretz for succeeding to materialize the Chassidic ideal not only in Leningrad and Tashkent, but even in Montreal and New York.

Reb Izik once told Reb Meir Plotkin: "There are two people in the world that whatever they would ask me to do I would do it for them: the Rebbe and Reb Peretz. What he (Reb Peretz) did for me and what the Rebbe did for me, nobody else did."

Reb Izik always retained his American boy outlook. As a very young man, while still a bachur, he directed Beis Rivkah Girl's School in Montreal. One could write a lot about what he accomplished during his stay in Montreal, but it all began with the fact that he studied in Tomchei Tmimim and that by Divine Providence, G-d provided his lodging in Reb Peretz's house, and in that home he came to realize what a Chassid means and what a Rebbe means, and what it means to listen to the Rebbe. Such were the lessons that Reb Izik learned from Reb Peretz Motchkin.



The Rebbe giving Kos Shel Bracha to Izik Mintz's brother. Izik is on the right.

VACATION & REDEMPTION SERVICES

BY YISROEL YEHUDA

*Ronen Amit is a creative fellow whose profession is producing gimmicks and unusual events. He heads an organization called "Ronen - Vacation and Tourism Services." You never imagined that at a lecture on Moshiach and Geula, you would be treated to such an experiential and practical display on how to speed up the Redemption, but this is precisely Ronen's expertise. * Another article in the series about unofficial shluchim, working men who combine hafatzas Yahadus and Chassidus and the Besuras HaGeula with their daily work.*

In the afternoon of the seminar that took place at the end of the summer on the subject of Moshiach and Geula, Ronen Amit was invited to speak on the topic of "Gimmicks of Geula." At the appointed time he went up on stage, a big knitted kippa on his head and a big smile on his face. Without saying a word he took a large straw basket filled with candies, went off the stage and walked around throwing handfuls of candy to the

astonishment of the hundreds of people.

You would be surprised too, since you never saw a "seminar" like that one. Ronen finished circulating and returned to the stage behind the microphone, where he encouraged the audience to open the wrappers and say the bracha. "Perhaps the hundreds of brachos that will be said will tip the scale and the world to the side of merit, salvation and Geula!"

* * *

This is Ronen's uniqueness. His profession is producing gimmicks and unusual events. You would never have imagined that at a lecture on Moshiach and Geula you would experience such a hands-on approach to hastening the Geula. The candy surprise was only the first in a series of surprises throughout the lecture.

"Ronen - Vacation and Tourism Services" isn't a brand name familiar to many of Anash, but in the exclusive and sparkling world of events and festivals, he is known as one of the most professional and exclusive organizers for very special events.

Ronen is an organizer and creator of conventions and special and creative events beyond anything you can imagine. People turn to him for an unforgettable experience for their guests.

Ronen is a special guy. He is gifted with unusual creativity and originality. He conveys quality and dignity along with pleasantness and calm. You can sit with him for hours and enjoy every second of it. His ability to communicate and his originality have made his vacation services one of the most exclusive and leading organizations in the field. To demonstrate just how exclusive his

service is, his company sometimes receives orders to set up events to the tune of thousands of shekels, days and nights of frenzied preparations, with a relatively large staff for an event with an audience of – only two people.

Besides running his company, Ronen also runs a Chabad house along with an active shul, as well as a chesed organization that provides clothing and other basics for needy families.

Upon entering Ronen's office you immediately realize this is no ordinary business. The walls are covered with certificates and letters of thanks from various organizations along with articles from newspapers about the work of his organization.

Then there are the Chabad flyers that fill the table in the waiting room. There are pictures and drawings of the Rebbe hanging throughout the office. Along with videos of events he's done there are many videos of the Rebbe as well as Chabad s'farim available for whoever might want to peruse them.

For Ronen, combining business and mitzvaim begins with the order to commission an event. The first consideration after hearing the details of the order is: can Judaism be included here or not. If the answer is positive, he'll do it; if the answer is negative, Ronen will politely refuse to take it on even if he stands to lose a lot of money.

Ronen knows how to use the tools at his disposal. One of his main rules of thumb is that when an event is elegant and suits the style of the customers you can put all the *tochen* (content) you want into it and everybody will be satisfied. Certain events that he put on were notable for their open Jewish substance but thanks to the fantastic tools he utilizes, it was "b'ofen ha'miskabel."

One day a mother called him because she wanted to have a "musical party" for her daughter's bas mitzva. Ronen asked for the date and she said, "Friday afternoon."

"Listen," said Ronen, "We can do it! We hold events



everywhere, on sea, on land, in the air, but not on Fridays! If you are willing, we can arrange an unforgettable bas mitzva party for your daughter, something unique that she never experienced before, and we will even negotiate the



Getting the message across through simcha



price for the middle of the week, but the event cannot take place Friday afternoon-evening!”

Ronen’s powers of persuasion and his captivating personality won the mother over and she agreed to the date and his ideas for the party. The celebration began at a point near a stream somewhere. The participants strolled along the stream when they suddenly noticed a fisherman leaning over his net. The fisherman looked at them in surprise and asked them why they were there.

They told him they had come for a bas mitzva party and the excited fisherman told them the story of his life, about his work, and about the mitzvos he did as a fisherman. He even described how he had recently celebrated his daughter’s bas mitzva and what their customs were for generations in celebrating bar and bas mitzvas, what they signified, etc.

The fisherman (who was none other than an actor hired by Ronen) related fascinating things to them. The children stood around in a half-circle, riveted to what he had to say about mitzvos and the special quality of a birthday.

At this point, Ronen interrupted his story and with his warm smile he said, “If it had been a rabbi, they wouldn’t have listened in the same way. You can love to listen to a rabbi but when a fisherman sitting on the banks of a stream is talking to you, it’s altogether different.”

The connection between the fisherman and the group deepened and he offered to host them in his hut in the thick of the forest. They agreed and he led them along winding paths until they saw a small woods illuminated with special lights. Pillows and cushions were strewn about on the ground and big pots were on the fire from which delightful fragrances wafted. They were all invited to join in preparing the meal which included grinding wheat, preparing dough,

cooking, etc.

The idea of a raucous musical event was long forgotten. The participants at this bas mitzva had an incredible experience that they’ll never forget; nor will they forget the message.

* * *

Another episode that illustrates how a message can be communicated via the proper media is connected with another bas mitzva that took place on Chanuka. The event began on the bus as they traveled to their destination, when the bus’ sound system announced a news flash. The announcer said that traffic had been halted somewhere in the country (the very place where they were headed) because they were searching for

At this point they all realized he was an actor but they were all mesmerized by his performance...

someone dressed as a Greek soldier who was frightening people in the area. “Security forces are sweeping the area in order to find the man.”

The passengers were stunned. They assumed that the event might be cancelled. The bus was soon stopped by a policeman who told them all to get off the bus and to gather in a winding ditch on the side of the road.

The guests, confused and nervous, crowded in the small ditch trying to digest what was going on. Then suddenly, from within the darkness, a tall man in shiny Greek armor with a sword in hand accosted them.

“Who are you? What are you doing here?” he shouted menacingly at them.

“Who are you?” asked one brave person.

“Who am I? I am a proud soldier in the army of the mighty Aspasyanus! I was in the Beis HaMikdash...,” and here, to the astonishment of all, the soldier began to tell them the story of the jug of oil as it appears in the sources (and not as it’s told in general literature). He told them of the righteous Maccabees, about the miracle of the jug of oil and its significance and it was all in the first person, told by someone who was there and had experienced the entire amazing story.

“I heard the Kohen Gadol warning the Kohanim to take care of the little jug and to show it to generations to come,” told the soldier and then he confessed, “I stole the jug. I have it! I heard the Kohen Gadol say that hidden within the little jug lies the secret to the strength of the Jewish people.”

At this point they all realized he was an actor but they were all mesmerized by his performance. Silence prevailed as the soldier removed a small, historic jug from his satchel. He gave it to the people present and they excitedly opened it to find an old, crumbling parchment paper inside. They gently opened it and read the words, “*Shma Yisroel Hashem Elokeinu Hashem echad.*”

“This is the secret of the power of the Jews!” The soldier nodded and his eyes sparkled. He turned on his heel and without saying another word he disappeared into the darkness.

The next part of the event was similar to many parties with themes of light and oil. Here too, the Jewish angle was put into everything. The amazing conclusion to the event took place on their way home.

The guests, still under the spell of the Greek soldier, discussed what he had said about the power of the Jewish people and the special quality of mitzvos. One of them got up and



asked, "Why shouldn't we keep some mitzvos now too?"

"What mitzvos can we do on the road?"

"We can take hitchhikers," was the answer and the passengers began looking out for potential hitchhikers at each of the deserted bus stops and at the half-dark junctions. At one bus stop they saw a desolate hitchhiker standing and waiting for a ride. They asked the driver to stop for him. The passengers were excited about the mitzva that fell into their laps and they invited the man to board their bus and to travel with them to his destination.

The bearded, religious man who wore a big kippa and had tzitzis that blew in the wind, looked at the kids and said, "Don't you recognize me?"

They looked at him uncomprehendingly. He said, "I am the Greek soldier that you met on the road! After I saw the power hidden within the Jewish people and the miracles that Hashem does for them, I decided to convert. Now you see me as a Jew who is proud of his nation and his G-d!"

The former Greek soldier passed among the dumbfounded passengers, giving out a personal gift to each one:

a small jug with a piece of parchment wrapped inside that said: *A little light dispels a lot of darkness. Light and simcha have the power to penetrate places where we need human warmth. There is no light stronger than the light of Hashem – may Hashem shine His face on you and be gracious to you. Since the time of the Beis HaMikdash and until today, Hashem illuminates with His kindness and we hope that from today on – each one of us will illuminate wherever we go with the proper light and simcha and we remember the verse, "Shma Yisroel Hashem Elokeinu Hashem echad."*

"That experience," said Ronen, "brought the holiday of Chanuka to life for them with all the Jewish light it contains. Think about how each of the guests brought home the little jug along with the amazing story he experienced (even though he knew it was just a performance). Each of them conveyed the Jewish excitement he felt and many other Jewish sparks were ignited."

* * *

Ronen considers himself a Chabad house in every way. One of the things that many directors of Chabad houses have to deal with is shalom bayis. One of the interesting stories in connection with this happened a few years ago.

The phone in Ronen's office rang and on the line was a famous woman who worked in the entertainment field. She wanted to host a special event in honor of her anniversary and wanted him to take on the project.

Ronen quickly thought through his options as far as hafatza was concerned in such a situation. He couldn't come up with any connection between the anniversary party and anything Jewish but his heart and professional intuition pushed him to take on the project. He knew that at a certain point he would be able to find a way to properly promote Judaism. Ronen said okay and the event began to take shape.

The date was approaching and Ronen was busy organizing, planning, and arranging every last detail in the best possible way. One morning his phone rang with the same woman on the line. She announced that she had given birth to a son and then she dropped the bomb, "I am calling to cancel the event."

"Why?!" asked a shocked Ronen.

"Because we are separating. I have no reason to make anything for him."

At this point, Ronen understood why he had gotten involved and what he had to do. He was reminded of the story in the Gemara of the couple who came to Rashbi in order to be divorced. Ronen didn't know what he would do next but he knew what his goal was.

He said to the woman, politely but firmly, "Listen, you are making the event. If there is a financial problem I am willing to cover the costs!" Then more softly he said, "You know what? You are separating so why shouldn't you celebrate? Have the event as you planned but instead of marking your anniversary, let it be a divorce party!"

Ronen said this with just the right mix of sweetness and determination and the woman was convinced. She agreed to the bizarre event and Ronen continued his preparations.

The day of the party arrived and the couple was brought in a carriage pulled by horses to a small grove where a special meal was prepared that was cooked right there. In a small wooden hut decorated with candles and other special adornments was a wooden table upon which the meal was served with much pomp and ceremony. The unique furniture and décor along with the good food and the quiet atmosphere greatly pleased the couple. The team of waiters served them and Ronen carried out his plan.

Like Aharon the Kohen he went to each of them and praised the other spouse. "Look at what a surprise your wife prepared for you. What a party! What an atmosphere! Notice how much she admires and respects you..."

And to the wife he said, "Your husband can't get over this event. He can't say enough about you..."

Several years later, Ronen is still in touch with the couple whose shalom bayis was restored thanks to "Ronen – Vacation Services."

* * *

The impact of these special events is not only on the participants but also on the staff who produces them, most of whom are not religious. About a year ago, they produced a huge event for the purpose of giving people practical tools to protect their personal wealth and even to increase it. The event took place at the time that the new law against Bank Overdrafts went into effect. Top economists and businessmen were invited to participate.

In the crowd was planted an actor who played the role of a businessman by the name of Mr. Naim Elazar, who used to run a large packing plant for citrus fruit called Tapuzei HaSharon.

The man fascinated the crowd with his fascinating life story which described the ups and downs in his life. In the course of his account he was able to convey the idea of "tithe

so you will be rich" in a dramatic way.

The premise of the presentation was the approach that "tithe so you will be rich" is a practical and intelligent tool to amass wealth, just like following the guidance of various experts in money related fields. Actually, the impetus for the entire event was the Rebbe's instruction (in the Sichah of Truma 5752) that every Jew must be rich b'gashmius.

Some time after the gathering the professional actor hired for the event met Ronen and described his experience, "I was sitting at home and recovering from my work at the event when the thought suddenly occurred to me, 'Ronen prepared me with a text about the enormous importance of maaser. Do I do that?' I immediately decided to begin giving maaser and I've seen success every since!"

Another example that illustrates Ronen's influence on his staff goes as follows:

For a certain period of time, Ronen adopted an immigrant Russian boy. Then he raised a nice sum of money and was able to bring the boy's parents to Eretz Yisroel too. The boy has unusual artistic talent. He is able to draw people, scenery or other things, on the spot, at an event.

During the course of the financial event the artist drew a special picture of the Rebbe MH"M and the Alter Rebbe, with a spring of water between them, to symbolize Divine influence and bracha. Ronen uses this artist's services a lot as it adds a special flair to events.

This artist (who is now a married man) stems apparently from Chassidic

A TIKKUN FOR THE HASKALA MOVEMENT

Some time ago, Rabbi Shmarya Harel went to the city of Klem in Germany. The Enlightenment movement began from the shul in this town. In order to make some kind of tikkun, they decided to build a large model of the Beis HaMikdash.

R' Harel took Ronen Amit along and they began to work on it. It was done nicely and attracted many Jewish visitors who heard an explanation about the Mikdash, its role among the Jewish people and mainly, about its future role in the Geula.



stock but when he emigrated to Eretz Yisroel this connection wasn't apparent. He learned in Kfar HaRoeh and lived with Ronen. The more time he spent with Ronen and participated in Ronen's events, the more he connected to his Chassidic roots and today he is a Lubavitcher Chassid.

The reach and impact of "Vacation and Tourism Services" are especially effective, in light of the fact that it reaches people that would ordinarily not have any contact with a Chabad house. Most of this crowd was educated against religion. They are not the type of people who would readily agree to participate in an event with a religious flavor. Even if they would get involved somehow in a discussion about religion, it would be hard to convince them or influence them intellectually or emotionally.

However, through an event like Ronen's, Jewish concepts come in a roundabout manner. The audience didn't come for a Jewish event; they came for a relative's event. Thus they are exposed to an event of Jewish content without their "firewalls" automatically blocking the information and they leave after having heard an authentic Jewish message.

Until now we've spoken about instilling Jewish messages and about combining mitzvaim and work. A Chassid reads this article and wants to do mitzvaim at work or anywhere else but he doesn't see the possibilities. What do you say to someone like this?

"The first thing every Lubavitcher has to know is: everybody can do it! Every person was born with his individual talents and needs to use them to influence others. Hashgacha pratis puts a person in a particular place of work and in the company of certain people, and that's where he can work."

Someone might say, "Easy for you to say, you are talented; you even have a business..."

"Their perspective is wrong. We

have to internalize the awareness that we are children of the King. This is not an exaggeration nor a cliché but the honest truth. Just as the king's only son can do as he pleases, we too have the tools and the wherewithal to go out and accomplish, and our Father-King will see to it that the obstacles are removed.

"It may seem to us that we are untalented, but this isn't so! Each of us has a level of ability with which he can accomplish a great deal. Whoever can sing should sing; whoever can write, should write; whoever can draw, should draw. Even someone who thinks he has no talent can still accomplish much using the minimal

"Every Lubavitcher must get up in the morning and ask himself: 'What does the Rebbe want of me?' and keep this in the forefront of his mind all day."

abilities that he definitely has."

For example?

"To smile..."

Meaning?

"When you open the door for someone, wherever you are, and welcome them with genuine concern for their welfare, you've accomplished something! When he sits there with you, no doubt he will see the picture of the Rebbe and after he leaves he will remember that those people associated with the Lubavitcher Rebbe are nice guys and it's worthwhile being connected with them and their leader. Thus someone, was drawn a bit closer

to Chassidus.

"This applies to the street, work, anywhere. Every Lubavitcher must get up in the morning and ask himself: 'What does the Rebbe want of me?' and keep this in the forefront of his mind all day."

In your opinion, what direction ought the work to take nowadays?

In my opinion we need to aim at the religious and chareidi communities. The dati community has tremendous potential for work especially after the crisis it just experienced. We know how to work with the irreligious community already and have managed to penetrate most sectors and the awareness there is great. There is still much left to do but we already have a presence there. Now we have to reach these specific groups and spread the light of Chassidus to them."

Ronen's lecture at the seminar in inyanei Moshiach and Geula was nearly over when someone got up and asked for the floor. All heads turned in his direction in surprise as the person didn't look like "one of us." He had no beard and the large kippa looked as though it was put on for the occasion.

People were even more surprised when the man began to attack Ronen and say that he didn't think they were dealing with the right issue and that all efforts ought to be put into spreading the Seven Noachide Laws in order to hasten the Geula and the revelation of the Rebbe MH"M.

Ronen was taken aback, but as an experienced speaker he recovered quickly and praised the man for his good point. It was actually a plant, one of Ronen's actors whose lines brought out more strongly certain messages which Ronen focused on in his speech, about the need to spread the Besuras HaGeula everywhere and to prepare the world for the coming of Moshiach. The successful gimmick also helped spur on the Chabad crowd.

IT'S NO MISTAKE!

BY NOSSON AVROHOM

The letter containing the answer came quickly. I was very excited. Happily, I opened the envelope and quickly read the letter. When I finished, I began again and only then did I notice that the letter was addressed to "Esther," my daughter who was only ten years old at the time. My friends insisted that the Rebbe doesn't make mistakes, but I was convinced that in fact it was nothing more than a mistake. Disappointed, I stuck the letter away in one of my drawers.

"If in the past, I had doubts that every movement and action of the Rebbe has profound significance, then I needed this story to lay those doubts to rest permanently. This was decisive proof that the Rebbe does not err, even if at first it seems difficult to understand."

This is how Mrs. Liora Almaliach of Rishon L'Tzion introduced her amazing story, which she animatedly recounted:

"Thirty years ago, I married my husband Eliyahu and we lived like the average Israeli couple. There were a few remnants of tradition that stuck to us, but not much more than that. We settled in the city of Rishon L'Tzion.

"After we already had three daughters, baruch Hashem, my husband began to take an interest in

returning to our Jewish roots, and he started the process of drawing closer to Yiddishkait. The source of his Torah education at the time was a Litvishe one. Sadly, the closer he got to Judaism, the further I pulled away. The harshness and lack of empathy that characterized the Litvishe approach at that time, towards those who did not follow their way, caused me to be disgusted with the life of Torah and Mitzvos altogether. I refused to hear anything on the subject, and I refused to be a partner with him in his spiritual journey.

"My absolute refusal remained steadfast even after the rav of the city paid a personal visit to persuade me. I did not relate to his message and did not consent to be a party to it. We got to the point where the teachers and

spiritual mentors of my husband told him that if I would continue to resist, he would have no choice but to divorce me. These words angered me even more.

"It was then - at the height of my spiteful rejection of any advance in Yiddishkait, that Chabad entered into the picture. One of my husband's friends, a Lubavitcher named R' Eliyahu Amitai, suggested to him that I attend a shiur in Chassidus given by Mrs. Chana Segal a"h in the home of Chaya Bider. 'I am confident that this shiur will change her whole perspective on Yiddishkait,' he said assuredly.

"Following a difficult campaign to persuade me on the part of my husband, I finally agreed to go, certain that it would end the same way as all the other lectures and seminars I had attended. However, I was quickly disabused of that notion. The calm and tranquility together with the heartening messages conveyed in the words of Mrs. Segal, drew me in as though by magic. Suddenly, I understood that Yiddishkait doesn't have to be so intimidating and harsh.

"It didn't take long. After attending another few shiurim, I concluded that Chassidus was my path. If Judaism is the truth, then that truth is most apparent in the way of Chassidus Chabad. My husband adjusted to the new approach, and pretty soon we joined the larger extended family of Chabad Chassidim.

"After about a year of being part of Anash of Rishon L'Tzion, I became

pregnant. For a number of reasons, I was very concerned, and as a Chassid, I sent a letter to the Rebbe detailing the situation and asking for a bracha for an easy birth.

“The answer wasn’t long in coming, and I was very excited. I opened the envelope, and quickly read the letter which gave a bracha for an easy and proper birth. When I finished, I began to reread from the beginning when I noticed that the name of the addressee was Esther, which was the name of my daughter, who was ten years old at the time. For a few long moments, I stood there stunned and confused.

“Later, I told my friends about what happened, and all of them insisted that the Rebbe does not make mistakes and everything is exact according to Divine Providence. Personally, I was convinced that it was a mistake, and that they just found it easier to pretend otherwise, so I stuck the letter away in one of my drawers. Thankfully, with Divine Assistance, my son was born healthy and whole, and I forgot the matter entirely.”

* * *

“Close to twenty years passed, and my daughter Esther grew up and set up her own home, and moved to Modiin. She had two healthy children and then she became pregnant with her third. One day, during the advanced stages of her pregnancy, I decided to

finally organize all the papers and faxes stuck into my various drawers.

I discovered the letter of the Rebbe written to me twenty years earlier, with the seeming ‘mistake’ in the name. I opened the letter with awe as I flashed back on the events of those days. Besides

enjoying a nostalgic stroll down memory lane, I said to myself, ‘This very daughter is now pregnant. I will give her the letter, which ironically has her name on it.’ I planned to surprise her the following Shabbos, when she would be visiting with us.

“Already on Friday, right after she arrived, I could see that something was wrong. She appeared distraught and her movements seemed hampered by some internal conflict. At first, I tried to ignore her unusual conduct, but when I saw some clear warning signs of trouble, I got up the courage to ask her what was going on.

At that point, she unburdened herself to me. She told me that she had recently undergone an examination, and that following the examination, the doctors told her that the condition of the child is not normal. They added that they weren’t certain exactly what the problem was, but certain indications lead them to suspect Downs Syndrome.

“A tremendous pain filled my heart. I didn’t know what to say, how to respond or what to do. A few seconds passed, and the thought of the letter of the Rebbe from twenty years previous popped into my head. It was



Eliyahu Almaliach receiving a dollar from the Rebbe

supposed to have been addressed to me, and to our surprise it was addressed to our ten-year-old daughter. Suddenly, I understood the whole story. This was proof that the Rebbe knows everything and sent his calming message twenty years in advance. Additionally, by Divine Providence, it was only a few days earlier that I had discovered the letter. I couldn't help but be overcome by the stunning confluence of events orchestrated by Hashem.

"Back then, I thought the Rebbe simply made a mistake and mixed up the names. Now, I understood that the Rebbe does not make mistakes, even if things appear inexplicable at the time to us with our physical eyes.

"I rushed to tell the whole story to my daughter and her husband, and they were shocked. It seemed as if my daughter got a booster shot of encouragement and serenity, and she began to read the letter with tears streaming down her face.

"At that moment, I knew that there was nothing to worry about, and that the Rebbe certainly knew back then how events would unfold and he gave his blessing.

"During the following week, additional tests were performed and the doctors retracted their earlier diagnosis of Down's syndrome, but they said that they could clearly see a hole in the heart. Once again, confusion and concern came to the fore. My daughter was greatly worried while I, on my part, continued to remind her of the Rebbe's letter and tried to lift her spirits.

"In a good and auspicious time, the baby was born and indeed, he had a hole in his heart. The doctors all agreed not to operate at that time and suggested they wait a few months until the child would be stronger. My other daughter, Miriam Maman, a shlucha in Kiryat Rishonim in Rishon L'Tzion, decided that despite the earlier letter from the Rebbe written

***We got to the point
where the teachers
and spiritual mentors
of my husband told
him that if I would
continue to resist, he
would have no choice
but to divorce me.
These words angered
me even more.***

twenty years prior, she would write to the Rebbe via the *Igros Kodesh*.

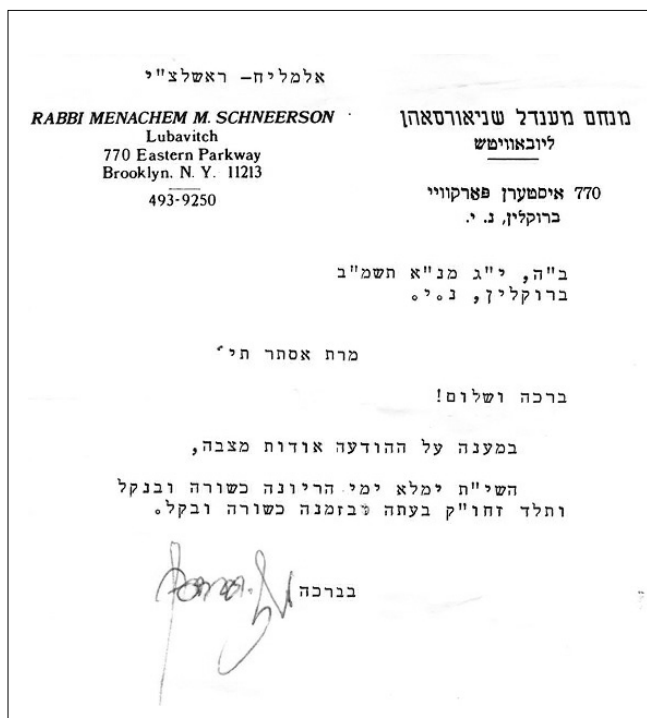
She opened volume 19 of the *Igros Kodesh* to page 224-225, which contained letters dated the 17th and 18th of Adar and conveyed numerous blessings for good health.

"This took place in the latter days

of the month of Shvat. The doctors made it clear that the operation should be pushed off a few months until he became stronger. The child was being cared for in the Asaf HaRofeh hospital, and my daughter, his mother, expressed the hope that she would be able to take him home for Pesach so as to properly prepare for the upcoming surgery.

"What actually happened is that after a routine test early in the month of Adar, they decided to operate immediately without the normal wait. The infant was quickly dispatched to the Belinson Hospital in Petach Tikva, and the surgery was a success. He remained under observation for a week's time. His recovery was rapid, and following satisfactory results on his tests, they decided to release him.

"We felt that matters were unfolding in a manner completely above nature. We knew that the Rebbe's blessing was hovering over us all throughout, and that he was literally a child of the Rebbe. Only after he was released, were we stunned



The Rebbe's letter

to discover that it was exactly during the night between the 17th and 18th of Adar, the exact dates of the two letters we received as a response in the *Igros Kodesh*!

“After only a few months, with Hashem’s help, the child was fully recovered as if nothing had ever happened. I make it my business to

recount this miracle at every opportunity.”

Liora concludes her amazing story, “The Rebbe never makes a mistake even if we are certain that there was a typographical error, or a mix-up on the part of the secretaries and the like. Everything that comes from the Rebbe is exact and correct. If that is the case

in a personal matter, how much more so in a general matter, namely, the prophecy of the Geula. We are fully confident that the final prophecy of the Rebbe to date, will be fulfilled speedily, and we will merit to immediately see with our own eyes the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach in all his kingly glory.”



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