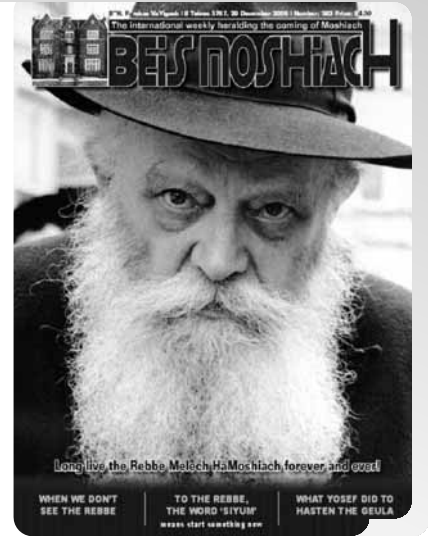


CONTENTS



4 | TO REVEAL THE SECRET OF THE END OF DAYS

D'var Malchus / Likkutei Sichos, Vol. 10, pg. 167-172

6 | TO LIVE MOSHIACH

Moshiach / Rabbi Shimon Weizhandler

11 | WHAT YOSEF DID TO HASTEN THE GEULA

Thought / Rabbi Yosef Karasik

14 | THE UNDERGROUND ASCENDS A LEVEL

Memoirs / Rabbi Yaakov Shmuelevitz

18 | CALLED BACK BY THE REBBE

Story / Nosson Avrohom

20 | WHEN WE DON'T SEE THE REBBE

Feature / Interview with Rabbi Moshe Orenstein by Mendel Tzfasman

24 | GOOD NEWS

Story / Temma Choroshochin

27 | GOAL SETTING YOSEF'S WAY

Insight / Rabbi Yaakov Lieder

30 | 'THERE ARE QUESTIONS ABOUT ISRAEL'S ABILITY TO SURVIVE'

Shleimus HaAretz / Shai Gefen

34 | MAKING HISTORY IN HISTORIC YAFFO (CONT.)

Shlichus / Mendel Tzfasman

38 | THE LEGENDARY RAV

Chassid / Shmuel Alexander

USA

744 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn, NY 11213-3409
Tel: (718) 778-8000
Fax: (718) 778-0800
admin@beismoshiach.org
www.beismoshiach.org

ERETZ HA'KODESH

ת.ד. 102 כפר חב"ד 72915
טלפון: (03) 9607-290
פקס: (03) 9607-289

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:

M.M. Hendel

ENGLISH EDITOR:

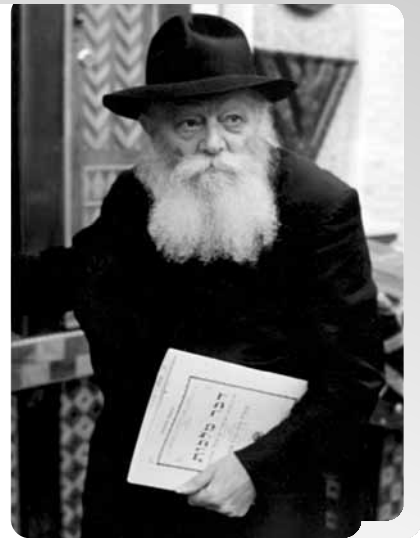
Boruch Merkur
editor@beismoshiach.org

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

Beis Moshiah is not responsible for the content of the advertisements.

TO REVEAL THE SECRET OF THE END OF DAYS

LIKKUTEI SICHOS, VOL. 10, PG. 167-172
TRANSLATED BY BORUCH MERKUR



1. On the verse, “Yaakov called his children and said, ‘gather and I shall tell you (*v’agida lachem*) what will happen to you in the end of days (*acharis ha’yamim*). Gather and listen and etc.” [VaYechi 49:1-2], our Sages say (brought in the commentary of Rashi with textual variations, as will be discussed in Section 8): “Yaakov wished to reveal to his children the end of days (*keitz ha’yamin*) [i.e., when it would occur], but the Divine Presence withdrew from him.”

It must be understood: How is this commentary on the verse, “Yaakov wished to reveal to his children the end of days,” derived? At first glance, the literal interpretation of the text regarding the words, “I shall tell you,” pertains to the blessings and the subject matter written later in the Torah portion.

There are interpretations [P’sachim 56a] that the proof is from the words, “*acharis ha’yamim*,” which is understood as “the end of days,” as we find in Tanach, the phrase, “*acharis ha’yamim*,” is interpreted as “*keitz ha’yamin*” (the end of days) [VaEschanan 4:30; Yeshayah 2:2; Yermiyahu 23:20].

But there are problems with that approach:

a) This is not sufficient proof, for “*acharis ha’yamim*” is not **always** interpreted as “the end of days.” Take, for example, the words of Bilam, where we find the phrase, “to your nation *b’acharis ha’yamim*,” and it refers to Dovid. [FN 5: Balak 24:14; commentary of Rashi ibid 24:17. And what Rashi writes there [on the words, “A ruler shall come out of Yaakov and destroy the remnant of the city” (24:19), “He [Bilam] says this regarding the Messianic King,” does not refer to “**your nation**” but to [the nation of] Edom.]

b) Even if we maintain that here “*acharis ha’yamim*” means “the end of days,” what is the proof that Yaakov wished to “reveal” this information to his children, to notify them **when** “the end of days” would be, a matter that is not to be revealed (“*liba la’puma lo galya*”)? [FN 6: Yalkut Shimon Shimon Yeshaya

remez 507. See also Sanhedrin 99a; Koheles Rabba 12:10]. Indeed, it is possible to say a **simple** interpretation – that even from the outset he only wished to tell them what would “happen,” what would occur to them in that time of “the end of days.” (In fact, he did tell them about some of these occurrences in the continuation of his words, as is explained in the commentary of Rashi there.)

c) Since Rashi, who only discusses the “literal interpretation of the text,” brings this interpretation, we must say that all of this is necessary in even the **literal** interpretation of the text.

2. The explanation: Since Yaakov said to them, “gather and I shall tell you...the end of days,” and then he reiterates, “Gather and listen, etc.,” this proves that there are two **separate** matters being discussed here, matters that are distinct one from the other, to the extent that each statement requires an **individual** gathering **unto itself**. It is understood that the second instance (“Gather and listen”) is directed towards the subsequent section in the Torah portion, which is not so regarding the preceding first instance (“gather and I shall tell”). However, if so, why is Scripture vague in not mentioning what Yaakov wanted to say? And why did he not say it? Thus, our Sages say, “Yaakov wished to reveal to his children the end of days,” but he did not reveal it because, “the Divined Presence withdrew from him” (for which reason it is not recorded in the Torah). Yaakov, therefore, began again, telling them, “Gather” – in a different manner, not like “gather” stated as a preparation to listen to words spoken with the manifestation of the Divine Presence [upon him] – “and listen, etc.”

However, explanation is still required: We infer from the Torah’s reiteration [of Yaakov’s instruction to “gather”], that Yaakov wanted to tell them something which he did not in fact say – and it was not recorded in the Torah portion – but

what is the proof that the message [he wanted to communicate] was the revelation of when “the end of days” would occur, something that is absolutely hidden? It is possible that he wanted to reveal extra details (on top of those that he had revealed to them) regarding what would occur to them in the time of “the end of days” (but for some reason this information was withheld from being revealed to them).

3. The explanation of the matter [FN 6: see also Section 8]:

It says in the Zohar [FN 7: Vol. 1 234b; see *Ohr HaTorah* VaYechi 383a], and it is explained in Chassidus [see FN 8], regarding the three terms [for spoken communications] – *dibbur* (utterance), *amira* (speech), *hagada* (saying) – that the difference between them is: “*dibbur*” is associated with the mouth, “*amira*” with the heart, and “*hagada*” refers to words of wisdom.

Among the distinctions between them is that *dibbur* and *amira* can be done with the superficial aspects of the soul. That is, with regard to *dibbur*, which is associated with the **mouth**, it is possible to pronounce an utterance in a manner that is “one expression in the mouth but another in the heart” [P’sachim 113b; Bava Metzia 49a]. Even speaking (*amira*) from the **heart** can be the opposite of the inner core of the soul, the opposite of one’s true will.

The latter point finds expression in the explanation of Rambam [Laws of Divorce Ch. 2, end] regarding the reason for the law, “They [officers of the court] compel him [with force] until he says ‘I want [to give the divorce],’ [the man’s will being requisite for the divorce to be legal],” for his [evil] inclination forced him [to oppose the court’s ruling that he must divorce his wife] (for which reason he **wants** and desires to transgress). However, one’s true will, in the inner core of the soul of every single Jew, is to conduct himself in accordance with the Supernal Will. By means of compelling him, they nullify the force [and control the evil inclination possesses over him] and his will that it gave rise

to, and he does what his inner soul desires. As it is plain to see, his prior saying, “I don’t want,” was not an instance of “one expression in the mouth but another in the heart,” for also in his **heart** he did not want to do so. To put it in terms of the well know phrase, “The eye sees and the **heart** desires” [see FN 11]. Rather, this instance of speaking (*amira*) stems from the superficiality of the heart. But in the core of his heart he always wants to do the will of G-d, may He be blessed.

Hagada, on the other hand, stems from the core of the heart. That is what the Zohar means when it says that “*hagada*” refers to “words of wisdom.” For the effect of words of wisdom – the **inner** (and esoteric) dimensions of the Torah – is to arouse and reveal the **inner** (and hidden) core of the soul [Likkutei Torah VaYikra 5c].

The same principle applies with respect to the *hagada* of the Holy One Blessed Be He, which amounts to the elicitation of the Light of the Infinite One into a state of revelation. In this spirit, our Sages say regarding Agada (i.e., the non-legalistic sayings of our Sages; etymologically related to “*hagada*”), “If you want to recognize the One Who spoke and the world came into being, you should learn Agada, for in so doing you will recognize the Holy One Blessed Be He, etc.” [Sifri Eikev 11:22 – see FN 13], for the inner (and hidden) core of the Holy One Blessed Be He illuminates and is revealed through Agada (the inner dimension of the Torah).

Thus, we shall understand that the word “*v’agida*” (I shall tell) alludes to the fact that Yaakov wanted to **tell** (*l’hagid*), to reveal to his children a concept that is very deep (*p’nimi*, internal), namely, “the end of days.” The whole concept of “the end of days” is the revelation of the ultimate in concealment and depth – the revelation of the hidden dimension of the soul and the hidden aspect of the Holy One Blessed Be He – by means of the esoteric dimension of the Torah.

[To be continued be”H]

www.MoshiachForKids.com

Check it out!! Educational and Fun!!

TO LIVE MOSHIACH

BY RABBI SHIMON WEIZHANDLER, MASHPIA, RAMAT GAN, ERETZ YISROEL

TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY



We customarily tell stories about tzaddikim at a Melaveh Malka, and when we sit together at a farbrengen, we also begin with the same custom: Once a woman passed by the Rebbe at Sunday dollars and asked for a bracha. The Rebbe gave her two dollars. Before hearing what actually happened afterwards, the chassidic head already “processes” the data, and we know that she gave birth to two children. We don’t know all the details, but the chassidic head is already trained.

A Jew comes to the Rebbe at dollars, and says, “I’m traveling to Brazil,” and the Rebbe gives him a dollar to give to tz’daka in Australia. Without knowing the details, we are certain that he arrived in Australia – after a day, a week, or ten years. There are an endless number of such stories, as the Rebbe states in “Basi L’Gani.” After telling a story about all the Rebbeim, when the Rebbe comes to the Rebbe Rayatz, he says that there are “an endless number of stories.” It’s hard to detail them all when there are so many examples.

We’ve been in the middle of this story for fifteen years now – the story of the Redemption. Our trained chassidic head knows with absolute certainty that there is a great “miracle” going on here. While it has not yet been completed due to technical difficulties, we already know how things will turn out in the end.

The Rebbe didn’t just give over some “vort” at dollars, but a promise – a clear prophecy! Not just one sicha, but an orderly torrent of sichos. We read stories about how the Rebbe said one word to someone and it was fulfilled. But we’re not talking here about one word, but an entire orderly series that the Rebbe gave us as a guide until the revelation of Moshiach

We’ve been in the middle of this story for fifteen years now – the story of the Redemption. Our trained chassidic head knows with absolute certainty that there is a great “miracle” going on here. While it has not yet been completed due to technical difficulties, we already know how things will turn out in the end. The Rebbe didn’t just give over some “vort” at dollars, rather a promise – a clear prophecy! Not just one sicha, but an orderly series of sichos. Excerpts from a Melaveh Malka held during the recent International Shluchim Conference.

Tzidkeinu.

Imagine to yourselves that a Jew enters a Chabad House and says, “Yes, I too was with the Lubavitcher Rebbe. I asked for a bracha, and the Rebbe pulled out a pen and wrote me a note with the name and number of a doctor I should visit in order to get well.” Then, they ask him, “Nu, and you’re healthy?” and the Jew replies, “What are you talking about? I’m not the slightest bit healthy!” They proceed to investigate in great depth as to why he isn’t healthy, and they discover that he didn’t go to the doctor at all. How can it be that you didn’t do what the Rebbe told you? He wrote it for you so clearly... The message is clear.

On the subject of Moshiach, the Rebbe gave us unambiguous instructions. Clear answers. The gematria of “shliach” plus another Yud (10) equals “Moshiach.” This is the gematria of the Rebbe. The Rebbe usually doesn’t say

gematrios, and when he does, he adds the qualification that “I didn’t find it in s’farim.” On Simchas Torah 5746, the Rebbe said this gematria, and cited the source: “Sifrei cheshbon” (literally, math books – and in a footnote on the words “Sifrei cheshbon,” the Rebbe adds: What kind of “Sifrei cheshbon”? “Sifrei cheshbon **ha’nefesh**” [personal accounting]. Edited sicha.) Somewhere there is a seifer called *Cheshbon HaNefesh Shel Shliach*, where it’s written what is the personal accounting of a shliach – his contemplating on the fact that the gematria of “shliach” plus another Yud is “Moshiach.”

The sicha of Parshas Chayei Sara 5752 is that very seifer of cheshbon ha’nefesh! Open it, read it, and make a proper accounting.

A FORM OF “YECHIDA”

This sicha contains three recurring expressions, and it would be appropriate to stop and dwell upon them.

The first recurring expression is “*yachid*” (only). When the Rebbe wants to sharpen a point, he repeatedly uses the phrase. In the original Yiddish: “*ein un eintzike*.” The **only** shlichus, the **only** Moshiach, the **only** shliach – but what exactly is the meaning of the word “*yachid*”?

When a chassid hears the phrase “*ha’shlichus ha’yechida*” – and it has a nice ring to it – he understands that the intention is the “*yechida*” of the shlichus! There’s a nefesh, ruach, neshama, and chaya, but here we’re talking about “*yechida*.” What is “*yechida*”? The very essence of the matter. The main point. Once when they wanted to explain what a Rebbe is, they would say that a Rebbe is “*yechida*.” The “Rebbe” of the shlichus, the main point – this is Moshiach.

The “*yechida*” that the Rebbe gave us (“*ha’avoda ha’yechida*” – the only avoda) is to bring Moshiach Tzidkeinu, to instill Moshiach in every detail in the life of shlichus.

“COMPLETED” – NOT WHAT YOU THOUGHT IT MEANT

In this same sicha, as in many other sichos during 5752, the Rebbe expresses himself with a new word in the Chabad lexicon: “*nistaima*” (completed). Prior to this time period, the Rebbe said that we have to increase and do more activities, and now suddenly, the Rebbe says “it’s been completed,” a complete turnover.

What exactly does “*nistaima*” mean? It depends upon who you ask. On its surface, it derives from the word “*siyum*” (completion). We’ve finished. There’s nothing more to do. However, in the Rebbe’s lexicon (as we always see in the sicha delivered to “the **completing** students of Beis

Rivka”), the word “*siyum*” has a far deeper meaning. It’s not that the matter is finished and we leave it, rather something new starts now. Similarly, when a person learns a language, it doesn’t end when he finishes learning, rather he **begins** practical usage of what he knows. When an artist completes a certain painting, only then does his enjoyment begin.

In the maamer of “*Basi L’Gani*” 5711, the Rebbe proclaims the central point of shlichus: bringing the Sh’china down through the nasi, Moshe Rabbeinu, Melech HaMoshiach, the seventh generation. This is the point. After forty years, in 5750, the Rebbe began speaking about Moshiach in very lofty terms, stating that forty years have been completed, prior to which “one does not come to comprehend fully the knowledge of his teacher.” As long as you haven’t reached the completion, you can’t get started, and therefore, the Rebbe says: After it has been completed, when you now have the shleimus, you now bring the “*yechida*.”

The Rebbe MH”M gives us a look on how the **Rebbe** see things. In the sichos of 5751-5752, the Rebbe doesn’t include us in the discussion whatsoever. The Rebbe says that whether you understand or not, the avoda has been completed, and now when there is a state of **completion and wholeness**, it is possible to **begin** the shlichus to bring the “*yechida*.”

AN INNER “ACCEPTANCE”

In answer to the question, “What do we really have to do?” we come to the third innovative expression in this sicha: “*kabbalas p’nei Moshiach*” (accepting Moshiach). What does the Rebbe want? Everything has been completed and everything is

*In the Rebbe’s
lexicon, the word
“siyum” has a far
deeper meaning. It’s
not that the matter is
finished and we leave
it, rather something
new starts now.*

already prepared, so whatever will be, will be fine.

On the 6th of MarCheshvan 5752, the Chief Rabbi of Eretz Yisroel, HaRav Mordechai Eliyahu shlita, arrived for yechidus with the Rebbe. It’s amazing to see how the Rebbe spoke with him with all the “*shpitzkait*” (which can be seen in the film of the yechidus). The Rebbe told him, “**All the current avoda has been completed, as my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe, said many times.**” The Rebbe then said, “**What remains now, everything has been finished and we just have to open the door and drag the Redemption in.**” The edited sicha concludes on this point, but we see in the film that Rabbi Eliyahu looks at the Rebbe and says to him, “We don’t have to open, we’ll take the doors down, there’s no need for doors. We’ll remove the doors.”

So what is the meaning of the expression of “accepting Moshiach”? The psychologists say that you can have a child at home, you give him food, clothes, and whatever else he needs, but he is not accepted, he’s not included. “*Miskabel*” means giving the matter over until it has been accepted and internalized.

This is the intention when the Rebbe says that we have to accept Moshiach – internal acceptance. Acceptance of the sovereignty, the sovereignty of Moshiach, is no easy task, and as the Rambam says about *kabbalas ha'malchus*: "They accepted upon themselves the sovereign, the ruler, and the superior."

The Rebbe comes and says that we have to bring fire into shlichus. At the Shluchim Conferences in 5752 and 5753, there was fire here. The fire of Moshiach. If there's no fire, then you don't have the "yechida" of shlichus. When we talk about Moshiach, we have to get the joint jumping by bringing in a fire of enthusiasm, a fire that will transform us.

How do we bring this about? The Rebbe states quite simply that every booklet, pamphlet, advertisement, and announcement must be instilled with Moshiach. This is our avoda: to instill the "yechida" into everything.

However, it turns out that it's not enough to be satisfied with this.

The Rebbe says that whether you understand or not, the avoda has been completed, and now when there is a state of completion and wholeness, it is possible to begin the shlichus to bring the "yechida."

I remember when during the year of Hakhel, people asked, "What does the Rebbe want from us? Why do we have to talk about Hakhel? What are we expected to do?" Rabbi Dovid Chanzin, of blessed memory, then said: Until today, the Rebbe told us to deal with mitzva campaigns, such as t'fillin, mezuzah, Shabbos candles, etc. Now, however, the Rebbe comes to us and says: Stop doing things in a roundabout way and start speaking directly to the point, the central point – *yiras Shamayim* (fear of G-d)! Until now, when we asked a young man in the street to put on t'fillin and he refused, saying that he "doesn't believe in it," we told him that it doesn't matter – the main thing is that you put them on, and eventually you'll believe. Today, however, the time has come to get straight to the point – fear G-d!

The same thing applies in connection with Moshiach. The Rebbe says that the time has come to instill the "yechida," the inner essence. In the kuntres on the teachings of chassidus, we learn how the "yechida" pervades everything. Similarly, the Rebbe proclaims in a sicha from Chanuka 5752 that the time has come to drink the oil by itself. Until 5752, the Rebbe spoke about the oil as something that flavors and seasons other things, but in 5752, the Rebbe began speaking about drinking the oil. We have to bring about the heart of the matter itself.

* * *

Action is the main thing. We must bring about an expression of the "yechida" in actual terms. We are constantly talking about it, but now the time has come to do something. We have only one option: the hisgalus of the Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach. Period.

How is it really possible to bring about a realization of the concept of "acceptance of the sovereignty"? This is rather difficult. I remember back in 5752, when many Anash signed the petition on *Kabbalas HaMalchus*. There were also those who couldn't sign, because the text of the petition referred to accepting the sovereignty in thought, speech, and deed with all five levels of a Jew's soul – but how can one possibly sign and make a commitment to the Rebbe that a person's every thought, speech, and deed will be wholly dedicated to the Rebbe? That's no easy task.

There's a maamer from the Tzemach Tzedek: "To understand what our Sages, of blessed memory, said that G-d only has the *Daled Amos* of halacha." Similarly, the Rebbe begins in "*Kuntres Beis Rabbeinu Sh'B'Bavel*": Since G-d only has the *Daled Amos* of halacha, and this is *Beis Rabbeinu Sh'B'Bavel*...G-d doesn't need the whole globe. He holds everything only for the sake of one house – *Daled Amos* – this is 770.

In a preface to his commentary on the Mishna, the Rambam writes something truly remarkable: People have inquired and examined: Why are there so many types of inanimate, vegetative, animal, and human beings? Why does the world need all these millions of specimens? The Rambam continues to say that researchers state that all inanimate objects were created for vegetative beings, the vegetative was created for the animal, and everything was created for man. Furthermore, within humankind itself, there are people of great wisdom and action who look into G-dliness. In other words, all of the millions of components in the universe were created for the small portion of mankind that possesses

wisdom and takes great action.

But we see that even among these people of great wisdom and action, the Rambam writes further, most of them don't grasp the essence of wisdom. They can learn it perhaps, but they don't grasp it. However, there is really only one who can attain the main aspect of wisdom and action, and all other people of wisdom and action were created for him, to serve him in society. In other words, everything was created for this one person who grasps the main thing.

This is the "yechida," the main *ikar*, and everything was created only for Moshiach, who is THE "yechida."

The Sh'l'a wrote "T'fillas HaMoreh" (Prayer For the Teacher). The melamed comes to *cheider* with vitality and good intentions. He knows that he is educating the next generations. But when he arrives in class, he comes across one boy who is upset after Shabbos, another frustrated due to problems at home, yet another who has to take Ritalin every day – and soon the melamed starts to forget his shlichus. The truth is he's right. He has to deal with these children, yet he confronts difficulties in progressing with the Torah that he so much wants to teach them. Therefore, the Sh'l'a wrote "T'fillas HaMoreh" in order that the melamed won't forget the main point of his shlichus – the "yechida" of his shlichus.

By the same token, the Rambam wrote "T'fillas HaRofeh" (Prayer For the Physician), so that the doctor won't forget with whom he's dealing – a *Yiddishe guf* (a Jewish body).

We, the shluchim, need "T'fillas HaShliach," in order not to forget the essence. We have the "Yechi." We live with Moshiach. *Mir leben*

mit "Yechi." It is forbidden for us to hide this vitality from others. We must spread the message out into the street.

While in Paris, the Rebbe asked a particularly unsettling question in a letter to Rabbi Shlomo Chaim Kesselman: Why aren't Anash doing anything about spreading *Yiddishkait*? At the end of the letter, the Rebbe writes that all the suffering endured by the Jewish

When we have something good and we don't share with another Jew, this tzimtzum causes the "breaking of the vessels," the diminishing of the moon, the sin of the Tree of Knowledge, the sin of the Golden Calf, and all the suffering endured by the Jewish People.

People is due to the sin of the Golden Calf. The sin of the Golden Calf stems from the sin of the Tree of Knowledge. The sin of the Tree of Knowledge stems from the diminishing of the moon. So it is written in chassidus. The diminishing of the moon is due to the spiritual "breaking of the vessels," and the spiritual "breaking of the vessels" stems from the tzimtzum. In other words,

everything is due to the tzimtzum.

The Rebbe then concludes that when someone has something and he keeps it to himself, this is tzimtzum. In other words, when we have something good and we don't share with another Jew, this tzimtzum causes the "breaking of the vessels," the diminishing of the moon, the sin of the Tree of Knowledge, the sin of the Golden Calf, and all the suffering endured by the Jewish People.

In the time of Noach, what did the headlines in the papers say about him? "A *meshugganer*!" Insane! He said for a hundred and twenty years that G-d promised him that He would send a flood, and no one paid attention to him. The local circulars gave him a small advertisement on the back of page twenty – for a fee, of course – about the building of his ark. Eventually, however, this became a point of history. Only Noach remained, and no one else from his generation...

* * *

We must go forward in this time following the Shluchim Conference with this sicha, the sicha of Shabbos Parshas Chayei Sara 5752, the sicha where the Rebbe told the shluchim: The avoda of *birurim* **has been completed**, and the **only** shlichus that we have left is to **accept** (greet) Moshiach Tzidkeinu.

The Rebbe Rayatz once said: How it is possible to grasp the "yechida"? Through feeling! We, the shluchim, have been privileged to have the feeling to take the "yechida" of shlichus. Therefore, we must go out with this feeling, and proclaim to all that this must be done!

Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu v'Rabbeinu melech HaMoshiach l'olam va'ed!

WHAT YOSEF DID TO HASTEN THE GEULA

BY RABBI YOSEF KARASIK, DISTRICT RAV BEIT CHEFER-EMEK CHEFER

*Why was Yosef picked to have the Jewish people named after him as in the verse, “He guides Yosef like sheep?” What new path did Yosef blaze? How is it that a young man who spent his youth and young adulthood in Egypt reached such a high G-dly level? Why didn’t the Jewish people stay in Egypt 400 years, as Hashem had promised Avrohom? * A fascinating look at the parsha through the Midrash, Kabbala, and Chabad Chassidus.*

THE EXILE IN EGYPT

The terrible galus in Mitzrayim began when Yosef was taken down to Egypt and ended 210 years later when Moshe Rabbeinu took the nation out of Egypt. Many commentators ask: Hashem decreed that the Jewish people would be slaves in Egypt for 400 years, as Avrohom was told, “Your children will be strangers in a land that is not theirs and they will enslave them and oppress them for 400 years.” Why were they liberated after only 210 years, 190 years early?

The part of the verse, “they will enslave them and oppress them for 400 years” wasn’t fulfilled either, because the Midrash says that the

servitude and persecution under Pharaoh lasted only 86 years and not 400 years.

THE REASON FOR GALUS

In Kabbala and Chassidus it explains the reason for the decree of servitude and exile in Egypt as follows:

Hashem’s reason for saying, “they will enslave them and oppress them for 400 years,” wasn’t to exact revenge on the Jewish people, Heaven forbid. Hashem wanted, rather, the important spiritual mission of “sifting the sparks” to take place.

The Arizal explains that at first Hashem created a primordial world called “the world of Tohu,” but this

world collapsed, as the Midrash says, “Hashem created worlds and destroyed them.” When Hashem emanated forth from His infinite power to create the world, there was a “shattering of the vessels” because the world wasn’t able to absorb the powerful G-dly revelation. The world of Tohu shattered into 288 pieces, which Kabbala calls “the 288 sparks.”

Hashem then created this world, fit to contain G-d’s revelation, albeit a revelation of less force. This world is called the “world of Tikkun,” because in this world we “fix” the G-dly sparks of the world of Tohu, which shattered.

Thus, the real reason for the decree of enslavement in Egypt for 400 years was so the Jewish people would be able to make the necessary spiritual correction to the G-dly sparks originating from the world of Tohu. Most of the 288 sparks – 202 of them – fell into Egypt.

According to this understanding from the Kabbala, however, the question is even stronger. Why was the time in Egypt shortened so drastically and how were they able to do the spiritual avoda to fix those sparks?

If the galus had only been a punishment, it could have been shortened when Hashem mitigated the severity of the punishment, but since the purpose of galus is spiritual, if its duration was shortened, then

the goal would have been more difficult to achieve, if not impossible! Was the spiritual *tikkun* (correction) ultimately made or not or did they speed it up and manage to accomplish the goal 190 years early?

WHAT YOSEF ACCOMPLISHED IN EGYPT

In the Midrash it says, “Yaakov Avinu was deserving of being brought down to Egypt in chains and Hashem said, ‘my firstborn son, and I will bring him down in shame?!’ [So what did Hashem do?] He sent his son [Yosef] ahead of him and he [Yaakov] followed.”

In this short, succinct Midrash we find the key to the proper understanding of Yosef’s role in Egypt. The Midrash reveals that the galus of Yaakov and his children in Egypt was supposed to begin with harsh and terrible servitude but this decree was not fulfilled – in the merit of Yosef’s challenging avoda.

In other words, Yosef’s descent to Egypt has significance not only in itself and in his personal mission, but also for his father. When Yosef was taken down as a slave, he exonerated his father and the rest of his family from descending to Egypt as slaves. We can say that Yosef filled the role of servitude placed on him as well as that which was placed on his father and the rest of the family and the entire Jewish people!

In Kabbala and Chassidus another concept regarding the avoda of Yosef in Egypt is revealed:

The fact that the Jewish people left exile early was thanks to Yosef, who did so much in his spiritual avoda in the birur of the sparks. This shortened the exile by 190 years and out of the 210 years they were there, only 86 years were harsh, because Yosef had already refined most of the G-dly sparks.

This is alluded to in the verse, “and Yosef gathered all the money in

Egypt.” Gathering the money and treasures alludes to gathering (i.e., refining) the G-dly sparks (called “*keseif*” in Kabbala) that were concealed in Egypt. “And Yosef gathered” most (202) of the G-dly sparks that fell into Egypt.

We see that Yosef had incredible and prodigious spiritual power and in ninety or so years, he managed to do what the entire nation was supposed to do in 400 years.

YOSEF’S SPIRITUAL LEVEL

The personality of Yosef is illuminated in *sifrei Drush* and *Musar*, but we are focusing on the Kabbalistic-Chassidic view of this tzaddik. The descriptions in Kabbala and Chassidus of Yosef’s d’veikus and bittul to Hashem are astounding.

The ultimate d’veikus in Hashem is called in Kabbala, “bittul ha’merkava lifnei ha’rocheiv,” “bittul ha’etzem,” and this is how Yosef is referred to, “Yosef is G-d’s chariot ... he doesn’t feel himself at all; there was no ego present. He stood as a stone before the king.” This is why he is called, “tzaddik elyon,” supernal even relative to other tzaddikim, for he attained a higher spiritual level than other tzaddikim.

Yosef merited connecting to very high G-dly levels, to the world of Atzilus, and in other places in Kabbala it explains that he merited to reach the level of Ein Sof. The Tzemach Tzedek put it, “Yosef is the Yesod of the aspect of Atik which is Yesod of the aspect of Adam Kadmon, which is higher than the worlds of Tikkun and even the worlds of Tohu.” (And in other places it says that Yosef’s level is “Atzmus Ohr Ein Sof before the Kav.)

In a few places it says that Yosef’s strength was even greater. In *Sifsei Kohen* it says that Hashem Himself (in certain respects) is called Yosef! The final Geula, which will be through Hashem Himself, will be through Hashem as He is called Yosef!

This all needs to be explained. Why did Yosef merit this lofty level? Why was it a youth who spent his years in decadent Egypt, occupied with running the country, rather than in the company of his holy father and brothers, the one with such a high level to the point that it is he who is such a great tzaddik?

YOSEF’S ACTIVITIES IN EGYPT

Chazal say that Yosef’s involvement in Egypt was spiritual and not just material. This refers not only to his personal avoda with spiritual matters – studying Torah, keeping Shabbos, and living a life of sanctity and purity – but also to his spiritual influence on Egypt.

Not only was Yosef not influenced by the impurities of Egypt but he influenced Egypt and drew the Egyptians near, to some extent, to the realm of holiness. It says in the Midrash that Yosef implanted in Egypt an awareness of a G-d in the heavens, fulfillment of the 7 Noachide Laws and circumcision.

This was Yosef’s own work for his father, brothers, and the rest of the family, even when they were in Egypt, lived in a Jewish area, in the Jewish “ghetto” (in the positive sense), the land of Goshen. Their livelihood entailed raising sheep, which enabled them to remain removed from the Egyptians. They didn’t need to mix with the outside world and therefore they had no connection and contact with the gentile world.

Yosef, on the other hand, was involved in Egyptian life. He lived in the capitol city, from where he ruled the entire country, and despite this he remained righteous. While taking care of the kingdom and materialistic matters in a place of impurity, Yosef remained battul to Hashem, and cleaved to Him. He was even mekarev the Egyptians.

Yosef broke the barriers that existed down below and was mekarev

and brought into the realm of k'dusha also those who, in essence, were far from holiness and sanctity. He instilled G-dly powers within the physical-material world and into the lowliest place, so that holiness entered not only the realm of holiness and the "four cubits of halacha" but also the material realm and a place of impurity.

These two things said about Yosef – his being possessed of a lofty G-dly power, as well as his ability to bring G-dliness into Egypt – are connected. It was through his prodigious power that he was able to break the barriers and even bring gentiles into G-d's covenant!

YOSEF'S NAME

When Rochel Imeinu called her son Yosef, she explained it with a prayer and a request, "may Hashem send me another son" ("Yosef" means add, increase). According to some commentators, especially according to Kabbala, Rochel wasn't just asking for something for herself – that she merit another child – but it was also a prayer for this child, for Yosef to have the quality of "increasing." As soon as Yosef was born, Rochel his righteous mother saw this outstanding trait that wasn't present in his brothers and ancestors.

What is "increasing"? The true manifestation of increasing or adding is when there is a completely new creation that didn't exist before in any form. It's an idea that absolutely cannot be implemented and won't even be considered theoretically, since it is absolutely impossible. When something like this is created, it's called a genuine gain or increase.

Indeed, as Rochel said, this genuine addition was fulfilled only in Yosef:

Until Yosef it was not possible to break through barriers and to bring under the wings of the Sh'china those things which by their very nature are

distant from and opposed to holiness. Yosef broke through and was mekarev even those things which couldn't possibly, even theoretically, be drawn to holiness.

Until Yosef (and for a long time afterwards), the Jewish-spiritual world was closed off from the outside gentile world. Yosef started something new by interacting with the world of Egypt and becoming its leader.

YOSEF AND HIS BROTHERS

Yosef was not only mekarev the gentile world to the G-dly truth but Yosef also refined the negative actions

Yosef brought to our Father in heaven "their bad talk," the bad deeds, and he asked Hashem that He forgive them so that their bad deeds be erased and leave no negative impression.

of the Jewish people themselves, their sins. This is how the sifrei Chassidus explain the verse, "And Yosef brought their bad talk to their father" – that it alludes to Yosef's deeds in refining his brother's actions.

The simple understanding of the verse, "he brought their bad talk" reflects badly on Yosef, who spoke negatively of his brothers, but in Chassidus it explains that there is a positive angle here. Yosef brought to our Father in heaven "their bad talk," the bad deeds, and he asked Hashem that He forgive them so that their bad

deeds be erased and leave no negative impression.

This is how they explain the verse, "And she conceived and gave birth to a son and she said, "Hashem has gathered my shame," and she called his name Yosef, saying, 'Hashem should give me an additional son (*ben acher*)'"

"Shame" is something negative, a sin. In the merit of Yosef, "Hashem gathered my shame." All shame is gathered before the Master of Forgiveness and He pardons them. "Acher" (another) means far from holiness and spirituality. Yosef accomplished that even someone in the category of "*acher*," removed from holiness, is a "son" of Hashem.

ALL ISRAEL IS CALLED BY YOSEF'S NAME

In chapter 80 of T'hillim, the Jewish people are called by Yosef's name, "He guides Yosef like sheep," and as Rashi puts it, "all Israel is called by Yosef's name." And it says in Amos, "Perhaps Hashem will take compassion upon the remnants of Yosef." What is the connection between Yosef and all the Jewish people that they are called by his name? This is not merely an external appellation, for we see that the entire nation has an essential connection with the avoda of Yosef HaTzaddik:

Yosef's enormous spiritual strength and his work to hasten the redemption of the Jews from Egypt, exists within every Jew. This is why the entire Jewish nation is called Yosef.

The Rebbe himself testified in his famous sicha of Chaf-Ches Nissan 5751 – that one Jew can bring the true and complete Redemption: **May there be one, two, three who come up with a plan of what to do and how to do it and furthermore and most importantly, to actually bring the true and complete Redemption immediately and with joy and goodness of heart.**



THE UNDERGROUND ASCENDS A LEVEL

BY YAAKOV SHMUELEVITZ, SHLIACH IN BEIT SHAAN

*The Chassidic underground in the Litvishe Yeshivas Itri continued to grow in strength as its members strengthened their connection with the Rebbe and with Chassidic customs in every (underground) way. * About changing the nusach ha't'filla, about a major argument that broke out between the Mivtzaisten and the Chassidisten, about their collective sneaking out to see a slideshow of the Rebbe. * Chapter 3*

One day, we members of the Chassidic underground heard that in Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim, on Shabbos, they only learn Chassidus. After verifying whether this was true, we decided unanimously that we had to do the same. From the next Shabbos on, we all began learning

Chassidus exclusively during all the study sessions.

There was one little problem though, we weren't that knowledgeable in the "fine print" of *Likkutei Torah*. Fortunately, there was a boy in yeshiva from a Lubavitcher

family who knew a bit more than us in Chassidus. We had just one more little problem which is that this bachur wasn't particular about being in *zal* (what they call *beis midrash*) throughout the study sessions. He would come, open a volume, and then disappear "for a few minutes" (a yeshivish way of saying an unspecified amount of time).

We members of the underground did not, Heaven forbid, want to speak *lashon ha'ra*. When a question arose and we wanted to ask that bachur, and we saw his volume open but he was gone, we put out the word that the bachur simply reached the level of "*bittul b'metzius*" (negation of self out of existence).

In such situations, having no choice, we would wait until he came back to *Olam HaZeh*, and then he would explain what we needed to know.



Above: A class picture of the talmidim of Yeshivas Itri during the period of the underground

SIDDUR T'HILLAS HASHEM WITH A DIFFERENT COVER

One day we found out that Chabad has its own nusach for davening, called Nusach Ari. After a serious talk with our *Tanya* teacher, shliach Rabbi Berel Shur, we learned that the Alter Rebbe composed this nusach for whoever wants to go in the ways of Chassidus and it makes no difference what nusach he davened previously.

One after the other we changed our nusach to the Chabad nusach. I was very afraid of what people would say, so I came up with this idea. I had a siddur with a leather binding that I



Rabbi Shmuelewitz today

had gotten for my bar mitzva which was Nusach S'fard. On the cover it said, "*Siddur HaShaleim*."

I took this siddur, carefully cut and separated the siddur from the binding, removed the siddur and put the Chabad siddur in its place (which I had also separated from its binding). That's how I had a Chabad siddur, but if anybody watched me daven they would see the usual Nusach S'fard siddur!

Slowly we learned and kept all Chabad customs, clandestinely or openly. I remember the Shabbos before Yud Shvat. We read that everybody should get an aliya. Of course, the gabbaim in yeshiva wouldn't give all the Lubavitchers an aliya on one Shabbos. Clearly that was too much.

We secretly asked permission from one of the gabbaim and early in the morning we took a seifer Torah to one of the dormitory rooms and had a minyan for Krias HaTorah. This is how we were able to fulfill this Chassidishe minhag.

THE SLIDE SHOW

Despite everything that came before, the high point was the slideshow. In those days there were no videos, only films made from still slides. Photographer Levi Yitzchok Freiden was the only one who had permission from the Rebbe to stand opposite him and photograph him as he wished and at every event throughout Tishrei.

After a month like this, packed with special moments, Freiden returned to Eretz Yisroel. It took him two weeks to prepare the movie and it was shown in three large halls in Yerushalayim, Kfar Chabad, and Chaifa.

All the Lubavitchers in the area went to the hall nearest them. Each one paid twenty or thirty liras and was able to watch a film of the Rebbe during the recent events of Tishrei.

We in the Chassidic underground didn't know what to do. The show began at 8:00 at night, just when the third study session in yeshiva began, and we were fourteen bachurim who were interested. Interested? We just **had** to see this, but there was no way we could ask permission to go and see it – forget about it. However, to go without permission was also out of the question because if they caught fourteen boys who went together to a Chabad event, that would be the end of our underground.

Marathon discussions ensued in the attempt to find a solution. We finally decided as follows: two of us would be "sick" two days before and go home (those whose parents would allow them to go). Two would be "sick" the day before and would rest in their rooms. Two would go to a

"wedding," two to a "bar mitzva," and so on. One thing was certain, we would all go and see the film presentation for the first time in our lives!

Our connection to the Rebbe was deepening and the underground continued to solidify and unite, becoming ever more Lubavitch.

SOME PROBLEMS

One day an argument broke out among the members of the Chabad underground, a terrible fight, one which nearly broke up the underground. At that point we were eight bachurim. I don't remember how many of us were on each side of the debate but it was a bitter dispute.

The topic was: which is more important, Chassidus or mitvtzaim? Yes. In those days we also did

LEADER OF THE UNDERGROUND

As in every underground, there was a leader and ours was Dovid Kramer. He was the one with final say (and also the first say) in everything. He was also the founder of the underground. He is the one who learned *Tanya* with me the first time in my life and continued to learn with me a little bit each day, and not just with me but he sat with each one and learned with them until the boy was apprised of the secret of our group and was ready to join the ongoing *Tanya* classes, the farbrengens, mitvtzaim, etc. In short, until he officially joined the underground.

He was a real leader. He cared about everyone individually and he also looked at the group as a whole and made sure it grew stronger and made progress. He was also someone worthy of emulating, not just for the Lubavitchers but among the talmidim in yeshiva in general.

He organized unofficial shiurim in yeshiva on shmiras ha'lashon with dozens of bachurim joining and listening and asking questions. He was definitely an expert and he was able to immediately respond clearly regarding the details of the halachos.

They once asked him what is the connection between *Tanya* and the halachos of guarding your tongue (since he was punctilious in both and studied and taught them) and he answered them.

He was the son of a rosh yeshiva (Litvish, of course) and was full of energy and simcha, a ball of fire and holy enthusiasm. At weddings he stood out in the dancing. He also knew how to act out the "T'chiyas HaMeisim" dance-performance.

For me and for many others, he will always be my teacher and rebbi who set me on the path of Chassidus, light and chayus.

mivtzaim. Not far from the yeshiva was a small military camp within Yerushalayim, the Allenby camp, mostly populated by border guards.

On Fridays we had five to six hours of free time to visit home and get ready for Shabbos. We Lubavitchers went to Allenby camp, got permission to enter ("We are from Chabad" was our line and this opened all gates, to our delight) and put t'fillin on with the soldiers.

I won't forget my first time on mivtzaim, when I put t'fillin on a soldier, around forty years old, and he began to cry and tremble while wearing the t'fillin. I looked at him and didn't know what to do. Nor will I forget the question we were asked each time we returned to yeshiva, "How many put on t'fillin?" All in all, it was a terrific feeling and a great privilege to enable Jews to do the mitzva of t'fillin. Yet it was over Mivtza T'fillin that the fight erupted.

I don't remember how it started, but apparently it was a result of not having guidance and no organized leadership. The head of the

I won't forget my first time on mivtzaim, when I put t'fillin on a soldier, around forty years old, and he began to cry and tremble while wearing the t'fillin. I looked at him and didn't know what to do.

underground, Dovid Kramer, had already left the Litvishe yeshiva for Tomchei T'mimim in Kfar Chabad, and then one day, when some bachurim returned all excited from mivtzaim and said how nice it was, some of the others shouted: What do you think – that the main thing is mivtzaim?! What's it worth when you

don't learn Chassidus properly?

The mivtzaim-goers responded: Yes, the main thing is mivtzaim! The Rebbe said so.

In short, a debate ensued with hellfire and brimstone. Mivtzaisten against Chassidisten. The debate got more serious until we were nearly in two camps. It wasn't pleasant, but we didn't know how to extricate ourselves; it was an argument about sacred principles.

Then salvation came. Our teacher, Dovid Kramer, sent a message from Kfar Chabad that he heard rumors about serious arguments and that he would be visiting on a certain day and would talk with whoever was interested and straighten things out.

We looked forward eagerly to his arrival and each of us had "yechidus" with him. After he heard all the views he gathered us all and informed us – you're not going to believe this but both sides are right! Chassidus is very important and mivtzaim are very important, and the most important thing of all is achdus. And that was that.

Van Service



15 passenger van for all your travel needs:

airports ,pick ups, weddings, etc.

long distance trips, and light moving

718-756-5656

שרות הסעות

שדה תעופה ◇

חתונות ◇

הובלות קטנות ◇

Crown Travel International



- Express service
- Fully Computerized

- שירות אקספרס
- המשרד ממוחשב

331 Kingston Ave.
(2nd Flr) Brooklyn NY 11213

(718) 493-1111

Fax: (718) 493-4444

Get your tickets within minutes!

קח את הכרטיס שלך בתוך מספר דקות!

CALLED BACK BY THE REBBE

BY NOSSON AVROHOM

In my brief shlichus in Eilat I went with a friend on Mivtza T'fillin every afternoon among the employees of the exclusive Harrods Hotel. Then we set up a t'fillin stand with an array of material on Jewish subjects on the promenade, where thousands of tourists pass by daily.

Erev Yud-Tes Kislev one year ago, a tall man approached the stand whose hands were tattooed and whose overall appearance bespoke someone who was far from an observant life. To our surprise he happily agreed to put on t'fillin and he seemed quite moved as he did so.

When he removed the t'fillin straps we got into a conversation. His appearance and emotion made us curious about him, so we began talking about the Chag HaGeula and about the Rebbe.

When we mentioned the Rebbe he broke out in Goosebumps.

"You're going to tell *me* who the Rebbe is?! In the course of my life I've met hundreds of rabbanim and mekubalim and tzaddikim, but the Rebbe is my guide, my model. Anytime I do a mitzva, I am reminded of him. Any step I take in life, I ask for his help. He is like my father!"

This is the story the man told us:

Twenty years ago I went to New York. It was after very difficult service in one of the units of the Air Force. Like many Israelis my age, I decided

to take a break from the tense atmosphere in Israel and vacation in New York, where I figured I would also be able to support myself more easily.

From the moment I stepped foot in New York I felt at home. I quickly acclimated to American life and found work as a limousine driver. I worked at that for a few years and got to meet many people from the business world in New York and outside New York. I wasn't surprised that most of them were Jewish.

A friend of mine introduced me to a Jewish-Syrian girl who lived in Flatbush. After a while we decided to marry. This was a happy point in my life. I felt terrific since I was living a good life, had found a good woman, and made decent money.

As the years went by though, we were bothered by our not having any children. We really wanted a child and we went to top doctors, but nothing helped.

Now I'll tell you how I met the Lubavitcher Rebbe. Back in Eretz



Yisroel I had heard of the Rebbe as a Jewish leader whom politicians and senior officials went to see. In the newspapers he was referred to as a miracle-worker. We heard some miracle stories and these were not necessarily from religious Jews. These people connected their personal miracles with the Rebbe's bracha.

The first week I arrived in New York I heard that the Rebbe gives out dollars for tz'daka every Sunday. I made my way to Crown Heights in order to be blessed by him. When it was my turn after a long wait, I wasn't able to open my mouth. The Rebbe's appearance made a strong impression on me. I didn't have enough time and after I received the dollar I found myself pushed outside.

From then on I went every so often to get a dollar from the Rebbe. Although I had no time to talk to him, his appearance and manner, especially his eyes, captivated me. I knew that this wasn't just another rabbinic figure.

The months and years passed and my wife and I still didn't have a child. I decided to go to the Rebbe and ask for a bracha for a child. I knew it would be difficult for me to talk to the Rebbe but I resolved that nobody would stop me.

The next Sunday I went to Crown Heights. I waited in line for a few hours, as usual, and then there I was, facing the Rebbe. The Rebbe gave me a dollar and wished me "bracha v'hatzlacha," and this time too, before

I could open my mouth I was out the door.

I was upset and I stood outside and tried to get back in again. I tried to convince the person who had pushed me out that I needed to speak to the Rebbe. I explained that I didn't want to bother the Rebbe, but I just wanted to ask him for a bracha for a child. He was stubborn and didn't let me in.

I didn't give up. I resolved not to move from the threshold of the Rebbe without a bracha for a child. Our argument lasted about half a minute and then suddenly I was being called. I was completely bewildered. I was sure that the Rebbe had heard our argument but I didn't have much time to think and within seconds I was back in front of the Rebbe.

"You wanted to ask something?"

My lips trembled and my teeth chattered. A real fear took hold of me, the likes of which I didn't feel even during my most difficult days in the army. In a choked voice I told the Rebbe that I was married for a number of years and had no children yet.

The Rebbe looked at me with a fatherly gaze and gave me a dollar, another dollar for my wife, and a third dollar for the child who would be born. I was elated. I kissed the Rebbe's hand and had nearly walked off when the Rebbe added that each day I should give three coins to tz'daka.

I went out to the street and on each of the dollars that I received I wrote down who it was for. I was imbued with a feeling of serenity. I knew that I had received a bracha that would be fulfilled.

Indeed, less than three months later I was told that my wife was expecting a baby. All my friends, relatives, and acquaintances knew that the bracha came from the Rebbe. From then on I am particular about giving three coins to tz'daka every day, no matter where I am. Now you know why I trembled when the Rebbe's students asked me to put on t'fillin.

* * *

Rafi's son is named Ben E-l. When I asked him why he chose this name he said, "I felt that this child was given to me by G-d, a supernatural gift in the merit of His emissary, the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

"Today Ben E-l is sixteen and an outstanding player on the youth team of the B'nei Yehuda soccer league. All the experts say he has a rosy future."

Does he know the miracle of his birth? I asked.

"Of course," said the father. "He has told the story to his friends."

As Rafi walked off I thought, there goes another Jew who is connected to the Rebbe MH"M, Nasi HaDor. Who would have believed it? Who knows how many other Jews like him are walking among us?



KINGSTON ROYALE SUITES

Luxury Guest Accommodation



Voted the best guest suites in Crown Heights for 2005!

If you are coming to New York for a Simcha or Yom Tov, let the friendly staff at Kingston Royale make your stay one to remember

256 Kingston Ave, Crown Heights | Tel: (1) 347 721 7636 | Web: KingstonRoyale.com

- ✓ Only 1 block from 770
- ✓ Only 1 block from Oholei Torah
- ✓ Natural light Throughout
- ✓ Fully Air-Conditioned
- ✓ FREE Internet On Demand
- ✓ Video Security
- ✓ Groups Welcomed
- ✓ Crib available

Rabbi Moshe Orenstein, Rosh Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim in Netanya, in an exclusive interview with Beis Moshiach:

WHEN WE DON'T SEE THE REBBE

BY MENDEL TZFASMAN

*Following my interview with Rabbi Moshe Orenstein, Rosh Yeshiva of Tomchei T'mimim in Netanya, about the significance of Hei Teives (English Section Beis Moshiach #582), I decided to use the opportunity to ask a number of questions on chinuch-related topics affecting today's bachurim. * Part 2*

How can you demand kabbalas ol and iskafia of bachurim today?

How? The Rebbe gives the kochos for this, since these are demands that come from the Rebbe himself. Not many know to what extent the Rebbe demands avoda p'nimis from the bachurim, avodas ha't'filla and iskafia.

A few years ago, the yeshiva in Netanya published *Siach Tamim* (which we've started publishing again). These booklets contain a long series of articles, bringing hundreds of quotes from the Rebbe that express the Rebbe's strong desire to see true ovdei Hashem among the T'mimim. We got a lot of feedback from people who said they hadn't known that it went this far.

I have a letter from the Rebbe that was written to us, a young group of talmidim who learned *Likkutei Sichos* every night. It's a general-personal letter at the end of which the Rebbe hand-wrote: **with blessings for talmud Torah with fear and love**. Just like that! The Rebbe expects love and fear of Hashem from young talmidim!

The world is undergoing upheavals in every area, including that of education. Is there room for change in what is demanded of talmidim nowadays? Doesn't Tomchei T'mimim need some reforming?

Chas v'shalom reform! Picture a general training his men for over a hundred years to conquer a certain goal. The problem is that the more

progress they make, the harder it gets. When they finally get to the goal, do you think that because of the difficulties the general will give up on that which he strove for and trained for, for a hundred years?

Of course your tactics need to change in accordance with your situation, but not the goal!

What in fact changed?

When I began working with talmidim over a decade ago, I found it necessary to take them on trips to air out and refresh themselves. At the time it took courage to do this because yeshivos here just don't do that, but I saw how effective it was and I've increased the number of outings despite the flak I get.

We did this in conjunction with a two-day trip following around various shluchim. We visited a number of Chabad houses in the south of the country and they welcomed us graciously. The Chabad house directors exposed the talmidim to what life on shlichus is like. We also toured various places along the way. Every 13 Iyar we take all the talmidim to the gravesite of the Rebbe's brother. Every year we have a sort of Yeshivas Kayitz at a resort area.

These days are packed with special Chassidishe activities and hearts open up and we acquire a special feeling of camaraderie. These are experiences that the talmidim will remember in their minds and hearts forever.

Yes, these are changes but only tactical changes. The goal was and still is the same, till the coming of Moshiach and then too: to be true ovdei Hashem who are mekusharim heart and soul to the Rebbe MH”M.

We always speak about the generations going downhill yet this past decade we’ve seen incredible things like the trips to the Rebbe every year, mivtzaim on an unprecedented scale, an enormous number of sifrei pilpulim, etc. How can we understand this seeming dichotomy?

Once (I think I heard this from R’ Mendel), Reb Zalman Aharon (Raza) was sitting next to his brother the Rebbe Rashab as a group of T’mimim stood before them. Apparently the T’mimim made a strong

impression and the Rebbe turned to Raza, pointed at them and with a sense of satisfaction he said, “These are my elite commandos” (and the Rebbe used the Russian word for it).

It’s worth living a hundred years just in order to give a moment of true nachas to the Rebbe! Indeed, many T’mimim are outstanding in their utter dedication, with no agenda, to the Rebbe and his inyanim. I often look at the bachurim and say to myself: The Rebbe points at them too and says, see the fruits I have produced.

What’s lacking then?

I think that today’s bachurim are lacking simple love for the Rebbe. They are big believers, and are even devoted to the Rebbe, but they don’t love as much and thus the main thing is missing. When you don’t see the Rebbe, a lot of avoda is required. But there’s no doubt that it’s definitely possible.

When we stood a few feet away from the Rebbe, minutes before Kol Nidrei, and we heard how the Rebbe blessed us and said that the brachos were given, “from the innermost depths of the heart,” we didn’t need (that much) avoda. It picked us up so high and we yearned for it even when we had seen just a few hours before.

Another point, there are T’mimim who are devoted to the Rebbe’s inyanim, with good intentions, but in their enthusiasm they might do things that are the opposite of giving the Rebbe honor. They lack basic Chassidishe sensitivity. Though as I said, this often goes along with sincere intentions.

I think that today’s bachurim are lacking simple love for the Rebbe. They are big believers, and are even devoted to the Rebbe, but they don’t love as much and thus the main thing is missing. When you don’t see the Rebbe, a lot of avoda is required. But there’s no doubt that it’s definitely possible.



What is the solution?

It's definitely a different sort of avoda than in the past. It's much harder, but who doesn't want to be in the Rebbe's elite commando unit? You simply must have set times to meditate on those things that arouse love, like how the Rebbe guides me through the *Igros Kodesh*, in my personal matters, how he serves as my guide when I am confused. How the Rebbe, through the *Likkutei Sichos*, brings so much light and chayus into my life. How would my Chanuka look if not for the Rebbe's sichos about the holiday, giving such a desire to experience it? How would my Shabbos look, how would my life look without the Rebbe, Heaven forbid?

When we ponder these questions frequently, we are sure to see results. In order to fall in love with the Rebbe as a result of learning a sicha and the like, you can't learn it superficially; it has to be a serious and deep study. To understand what I had before the sicha and what the Rebbe innovated for me; how this helps me understand ourselves and the world around us and how this guides me in our avodas Hashem. In this way we will feel completely dependent on the Rebbe and truly feel that we have no life without him.

Is it possible?

The bottom line is that ultimately we all love and are devoted to the Rebbe.

The Rebbe quotes the halacha at the end of chapter two of Laws of Divorce about how every Jew truly wants to fulfill Hashem's desire and it's only his Yetzer that compels him to act otherwise. When a man screams that he loves his wife (and therefore does not want to divorce her when the halacha requires him

to), the Torah comes and says: No! You love Hashem more!

The Rebbe told of a cantonist who lived in Lubavitch, who dedicated his entire life to the Czar. When he was in his eighties he realized the bitter truth: the Czar wasn't worth his devotion. What a pity on a man who wasted his whole life on something that turned out to be false.

We T'mimim have one true love and that is the Rebbe. We dedicate our lives to him!

How can each of us, even T'mimim who did not see the Rebbe uncover that love in his heart?

I've already said that the direct way is to seriously study *Likkutei Sichos*. The "I will approach the king" of a Tamim is in a volume of *Likkutei Sichos*; learning in a way that you put yourself into it, including understanding it with the ramifications on our outlook on life, on ourselves, and the world.

There are other things that can help. Many of the T'mimim were at the Rebbe when they were little and they have a picture of it. It's a good idea to carry this picture around. It has to have a powerful effect to see how the Rebbe devoted his time to you in this way. Even if you don't have a picture of yourself and the Rebbe, maybe your parents or older brothers do.

The same applies to dollars from the Rebbe. Just having something the Rebbe handled, always with us, has an effect. If you don't have a dollar right now, you can get one. Here in yeshiva, when a talmid finishes learning the first twelve chapters of Tanya by heart, he gets a beautiful certificate, in the center of which is a dollar from the Rebbe.



Another point, there are T'mimim who are devoted to the Rebbe's inyanim, with good intentions, but in their enthusiasm they might do things that are the opposite of giving the Rebbe honor. They lack basic Chassidische sensitivity. Though as I said, this often goes along with sincere intentions.

It is also important to be proficient in the Rebbe's biography. The natural inclination is to say, what can be innovated in that? Unfortunately, I can say from experience that bachurim are lacking knowledge in everything

associated with the Rebbe's history.

I discovered this when I held Chassidishe contests in yeshiva. It's important to be proficient and to care about the events that took place since Yud-Alef Nissan 1902. When a talmid lives with the Rebbe's history, it definitely has an influence on him.

What is the secret to the success of your yeshiva in Netanya? How is it that the bachurim are so into learning inyanei Moshiach and Geula and have such a strong hiskashrus?

First, we have a bracha from the Rebbe. In the winter of 5752 the yeshiva, through the shliach and rav of the community, Rabbi Menachem Wolpo, received the

Rebbe's haskama and bracha. I am sure this is why we are successful.

In order to live with Moshiach, you need to learn in-depth and master the material on inyanei Moshiach and Geula. We try to have our magidei shiur, once in a while, close their Gemaras and teach on the inyan of Moshiach, something b'iyun in Nigleh, devoting two days to this. Maybe we should do this more often.

How can you identify someone as a Meshichist even when he isn't learning inyanei Moshiach? When a poor man stands in your doorway with torn clothing and fresh wounds, do you have to ask him if he needs help? This is what the Rebbe wanted on Chaf-Ches Nissan

5751 and did not see: how is it possible that Chassidim gather and they consider it possible that Moshiach won't come that day and not even the next day or the day after?

Each of us has a jar of pure oil within us that is untouched by tzimtzum and untouched by cynicism. Each of us has the child (the "meshichoi"), young and innocent, within us. We just need to add oil to the flame which is Ahavas Yisroel with no agenda – t'filla p'nimis, pure, without ostentation. Then the Rebbe can point to us and say with undisguised pleasure: you can see he is meshichoi!

L'chaim u'livracha!

Esther's Party Grill

463 Albany Avenue Brooklyn, NY 11213 718-735-4343

CATERING ON OR OFF THE PREMISES

CORPORATE ACCOUNTS WELCOME.

SHLUCHIM; SPECIAL RATES FOR

SHABBATONS & PARTIES



COME SEE

**OUR BRAND NEW
SUSHI BAR**

OPEN FOR IN HOUSE DINING

TAKE OUT & CATERING

**UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF THE
BEIS DIN CROWN HEIGHTS**

FREE DELIVERY TO YOUR HOME OR OFFICE

"The quickest way to reveal Moshiach is by learning the Torah sources about Moshiach & redemption" שי"פ תוריע ומצורע היתנשי"א



Radio Moshiach & Redemption

1620-1640 AM around Crown Heights & Boro Park
& 1710 AM in parts of Brooklyn **24/6**

worldwide live broadcast: www.RadioMoshiach.org



הרב אהרן יעקב שוויי
חבר הבר"צ ד"ק קראון הייטס

ב"ה

APPROBATION

I strongly recommend the esteemed project of Radio Moshiach, which operates here in our neighborhood of Crown Heights, "Here has Hashem commanded His blessing," as well as in other surrounding neighborhoods. Radio Moshiach enables countless individuals to listen to the Rebbe's Farbrengens, to divrei Torah in the concepts of Geulah and Moshiach, to niggunei Chabad and more, which generates a holy, uplifted atmosphere in the homes of all listeners.

Radio Moshiach is constantly growing – and there is still room for expanding and further developing this unique project. Therefore, it is a mitzvah to support Radio Moshiach and assist its development in any way that you can. All those who assist and support this project, will surely merit to be blessed from Hashem, the Source of all blessings, with visible and revealed goodness, both physically and spiritually.

Upon this statement I affix my signature, Sunday 20th Tamuz 5766

For donations or dedications make checks payable to:

"Radio Moshiach & Redemption"

383 Kingston Ave. #94, Brooklyn, NY 11213

718 756-4530 Tel/Fax 363-1652 Email: RadioMoshiach@erols.com
יחי אדוננו מורנו ורבינו מלך המשיח לעולם ועד

GOOD NEWS

BY TEMMA CHOROSHOCHIN

I thank Hashem for giving me the desire, initiative, the stubbornness and strength, to be a shlucha of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, to be one who connects people to the Rebbe and who merits to see them emerge from darkness to a great light after receiving the Rebbe's brachos.

* * *

Braindel is my friend. Despite the age difference between us, we are friends. She is an energetic, serious, and talented woman with a full measure of yiras Shamayim. The soul connection between us enables her to consult with me and to willingly accept my responses. From my part, I admire her greatly and feel close and comfortable with her.

One time that I visited her she confided, "Forty women are saying T'hilim right now for my older sister Chana."

"Forty women?!"

"Yes. I have a sister who has been married for fourteen years now and still doesn't have children. In another few days dozens of women will do the mitzva of separating the dough from their challa in her merit."

Months and then years passed in which dozens of women joined forces to fulfill many mitzvos in Chana's merit. All segulos were tried not just once but several times, but there were no positive results.

One day my friend looked especially sad. The medical treatment that her sister had undergone had made her stomach swell and women who saw her were already rejoicing,

thinking a mazal tov was impending. Chana didn't want to venture forth into the street anymore. Her pain was so great that she fell into a deep depression.

If that wasn't enough, she fell in the street a few times and the doctor suspected something serious and asked her to take a CT scan of her head. The suffering of being childless for so many years was compounded by terrible fear for her life.

Chana is a woman who belongs to a large Chassidic group in Eretz

"Although we don't see the Rebbe now, his brachos through the Igros Kodesh still make miracles!"

Yisroel. Her husband asked their Rebbe for his consent that Chana undergo the test. Chana's parents, seeing how miserable she was, decided to cheer her up that Chanuka (5763) with a stay at a hotel in Netanya.

Braindy told me all this and I felt terrible hearing the latest news. I pictured to myself the image of Chana when she came to the bris of Braindy's oldest son. I thought of how the Baal Shem Tov explains that from whatever you see and hear you need to learn a lesson in avodas Hashem.

Why was I hearing this story? What was I supposed to do? I am a chassida of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, but Chana has her own Rebbe...

I decided to tell my friend about the shlichus I received from the Rebbe, about his consent and blessing, to be the director of the Organization of Friends of Beit Chabad Even Yehudah. I described to her the miracles that people have experienced through the Rebbe's brachos, about requests for brachos put in the *Igros Kodesh*. I suggested that she ask the Rebbe for a bracha for her sister.

She refused, saying they have their own Rebbe and wouldn't ask another Rebbe for a bracha. I continued to tell her about all the Admurim and G'dolim who came to the Rebbe. I tried to explain, to the best of my ability, that the Lubavitcher Rebbe is the Nasi, the "general soul" to whom all the souls of the generation are connected. I gave examples of great miracles that happened to people who turned to him.

I continued explaining and insisting and then I added, "Although we don't see the Rebbe now, his brachos through the *Igros Kodesh* still make miracles!"

Braindel said that her sister was fed up by all the advice and segulos. She had done everything not just once but several times. Now she didn't want to hear any more suggestions, as important as they might be. "The only thing that I am



willing to do is to speak to my mother," she said.

"Fine," I said.

"What exactly am I suggesting?" she asked.

"They should check the mezuzos and t'fillin at Rabbi Landau's office in B'nei Brak. I also recommend that she give tz'daka to the Chabad house. The Rebbe Rayatz promised that whoever helps the Rebbe in his inyanim will be turned into a channel for brachos."

I noticed my friend's wedding album on the table. She looked somber. Her t'fillos as a kalla were that her older sister be blessed with a child.

A few days later my friend told me that her mother had conveyed Chana's consent to ask the Rebbe for a bracha, along with a donation to the Chabad house. Braindel's deep sadness over her sister's plight

affected me and I too felt pained by the situation. I pictured Chana, 33 years old, who had tried all the segulos and had undergone difficult medical treatment, praying with her husband and the entire family for a child. And now her falling and the CT scan that she had to endure...

Braindel and I sat down to say the daily Chitas. We put coins in the pushka and I guided her in how to write a pidyon nefesh to the Rebbe. I explained that we were now in a sort of yechidus with the Rebbe and therefore we had to connect to him through thought, by gazing at the Rebbe's picture.

The letter was put at random into volume 8 of *Igros Kodesh*, pages 110-111. On the right side was a letter in Yiddish dated 17 Teives, the month we were in. It began with the words, "bracha v'shalom," indicating that the Rebbe was addressing a woman.

The Rebbe then writes that he

would mention them at the gravesite of the Rebbe Rayatz. He then adds that he is surprised that after speaking with the Rebbe several times regarding a shidduch for her daughter and viewing this pessimistically, Hashem had now showed her miracles and she found a good shidduch. And yet in her letter, she didn't mention a word about it and doesn't seem to view this as a source of happiness for her daughter's entire life, consequently, happiness for her and her husband. Additionally, they are privileged to see kindnesses from Hashem the likes of which they had not anticipated.

Therefore (the letter went on to say) they ought to thank Hashem from the depths of their heart for this and only afterwards to complain about things that are presently not as they would wish. Understandably, matters need not progress slowly and continue the same way, because

Hashem wants to give a Jew whatever he needs and not to exchange one thing for another. Nevertheless, one must not ignore what Hashem does for Jews. When you thank Him for the miracles He has done, the thanks is expressed in strengthening in Torah and mitzvos, and this itself hastens additional brachos from Hashem.

And may Hashem help so that you can convey good news from you personally, your husband, and from all of you together.

I thought these words conveyed a promise that from now, all would be well. I quoted the last line to Braindel and continued reading the letter on the left side which was easier to understand since it was in Hebrew.

The letter was about health: **I received your letter of 5 Teives in which you write about your health, which has made you depressed. You should remove yourself from this path since Hashem is the Healer of all flesh and He does wonders. Even if you don't know the Creator's intent – and therefore, sometimes the Evil Inclination raises questions and thoughts that confuse a person from spiritual health and even physical health – you must constantly know that this is the wiles of the Inclination and you need to be strong with trust in Hashem Who, with time, will send a refua in all that you need, and even before the refua.**

The letter concluded: **with blessings for a speedy recovery. I await good news.**

I wrote a receipt for the donation and noticed again that the date of the Rebbe's letter about health was 18 Teives. A few days later Chana said the CT scan showed that everything was fine, baruch Hashem.

A few days later, Braindy asked me, this time of her own initiative, for another bracha from the Rebbe in the *Igros Kodesh*. Her sister Miri was the mother of a three and a half year old and had no other children. I wrote another letter to the Rebbe and put it in the *Igros Kodesh*.

Then my friend surprised me when she informed me that they were leaving the neighborhood. I realized that my shlichus with them was over.

One fall day, eleven months later, my phone rang. Braindy calmly asked me to write to the Rebbe and ask for another bracha for Chana, who was in the delivery room, for a quick and easy birth.

I was thrilled about this news about a woman who would become a mother after fifteen years. I wrote to the Rebbe. Later in the day I got another call from Braindy, who told me that Chana had given birth to twins, a boy and a girl, and they were healthy and the birth had gone fine. The date was 22 Cheshvan 5764, less

than eleven months since the request had been made.

Three months later, in Shvat 5764, Miri also gave birth to a son.

Braindy called me again and said that Chana's mother-in-law wanted a bracha from the Rebbe too. She had two older sons at home. One was divorced and the other never married. She was beside herself over their being unable to find their matches. Could she call me? I agreed, of course.

The mother-in-law called and besides for her sons, she asked for a bracha for herself that she find a suitable job. The very next day, she got a job she liked. After a short time the divorced son married and even the mother-in-law said that she was lovely.

Once again, I was no longer in touch with Braindel. Then came 22 Cheshvan 5767. Three years had flown by. It was time for Chana's son's upshernish. I called Braindel to wish her mazal tov and was told that the formerly divorced-now married son had had a son and a daughter and that the single son had done a shidduch and was getting married that month. Chana had had another child, a son, born in Elul 5765.

(Upon request, the names used in this story are pseudonyms.)

Make a "Mivtzah Kashrus" in your own computer!

Introducing JNET-The world wide web without the world wide worry™

While The Internet can be a helpful tool for business, education and personal use it can also be a potentially dangerous one.

That's why J Net was created.

Using exclusive multi-tiered intelligent filtration, the J Net portal is probably the most effective consumer resource for eliminating material not conducive to our needs.

More than virtually foolproof, J .NET is also easy - both to install and use. Plus its available in both dialup and high speed DSL and backed by highly trained customer service experts that will solve your problems fast.

Most important, you can now get the JNET Advantage for only a bit more than non-filtered on line providers.

If you're ready for the world wide web without the world wide worry, you're ready for JNet.

✓ DIAL UP ✓ DSL ✓ Unlimited Access ✓ 24 Tech Support

✓ 4 Profiles per Account ✓ Web Mail

Call us toll free at 1-866-866-JNET (5638)

(mention code "770" for special ANASH Rate)



GOAL SETTING YOSEF'S WAY

BY RABBI YAAKOV LIEDER
DEAN SYDNEY SEMINARY, SYDNEY AUSTRALIA

*Yosef had a vision. He wanted to be in a position where he could make a difference to the world. He wanted this so strongly and thought about it so much that he even had two dreams about it. * We have to live with Moshiach now, because only by living with this reality will we give ourselves over completely to the task of actualizing it in this physical world. * Part 1 of 2*

In recent times, many books have been written on the subject of 'Goal Setting'. These books explain how you can become a high achiever and succeed in today's world. The gist of their suggestions is: "Aim for the stars and you'll reach the moon." They use examples of sports players who have won gold medals, politicians who reached positions of power, and people who have become financially successful. They use these techniques of encouraging people to emulate these success stories on a regular basis, either consciously or subconsciously, and have been immensely successful and these books sell! These books suggest that we use them as role models, and urge the reader to: "Do what they did and you get the same

results they got. If it worked for them, it will work for you."

The Rebbe teaches us that if you want to know whether something is good for us, examine what the Torah has to say about it. If it is good, the Torah will allow it, and if it is not, the Torah will instruct us not to do it. The Torah is called 'Toras Chaim,' a Torah of life, so that following the ways of the Torah not only provides us with a reward in the World to Come, but also guarantees a meaningful life in this world as well.

The Rebbe used the following example. In the seventies/early eighties there was a major shift in the role society wanted fathers to play at the time of childbirth. Until then, fathers had to wait outside the

delivery room until the baby was born. The new trend suggested that it was very important for the father to be present inside the delivery room at the time of birth so that a bond could be formed between father and baby at the moment of birth. The assumption was that this would create a bond between the father and mother of the new born child, as they would have shared the experience of the birth.

At that time, Rabbi Moshe Feinstein a"h, along with various other Poskim, gave a p'sak din. According to halacha it is forbidden for a husband to be present in the delivery room at the time of childbirth. The publication of this ruling resulted in a huge outcry. "How can the Rabbis refute what everyone in the medical field is saying?" But there were also those who argued, "Maybe times have changed. Now that doctors have discovered how important this bonding is, the Rabbis should find a way to allow it?"

The Rebbe, on the other hand, had a very simple but unique approach. Regardless of what the doctors were saying, the simple fact that the Torah forbade it was proof enough that it could not be any good!

Indeed, in recent years, new evidence is emerging, suggesting

that it can actually be quite damaging for the relationship, if the father is in fact present in the delivery room at childbirth.

So let's go back to Goal Setting and see if we can get some free advice from the Torah, without having to spend millions of dollars on research, or even \$25 to buy a regular 'Goal Setting Self-help' book.

RULE 1: DESIRE IT

According to Chassidus, desire is one of the highest powers of the soul, as without desire nothing would ever be achieved. No person who attains the state of a happy marriage, financial security, and spiritual fulfilment does so by accident. I have never heard a principal of a school or a president of any organization say, "I can't understand how it all happened! I just woke up one morning and I find myself here as principal or president..."

Yosef had a vision. He wanted to be in a position where he could make a difference to the world. He wanted this so strongly and thought about it so much that he even had two dreams about it. It is for this reason that his brothers were so angry with him. They understood that what he spoke of was not merely a dream; it was a clear and strong desire, and they interpreted it to mean that he wanted to rule over them.

RULE 2: BE A DREAMER

All significant reality begins with a dream. The great achievers throughout time started their life's journey with a dream. The definition of a dream is a vision that sounds and looks impossible when you measure it against your current stage in life and your past life's experiences. The example of

Yosef, dreaming at the age of seventeen, that one day he would be a king, regardless of current and past experiences, illustrates the powerful possibilities that could be unleashed by a dream.

What you need to decide is that the past does not equal the future and that you are prepared to take on and accomplish something that you have never done before!

The Rebbe, on the other hand, had a very simple but unique approach. Regardless of what the doctors were saying, the simple fact that the Torah forbade it was proof enough that it could not be any good!

When you were a baby, you did not decide that judging by your past experiences, there was no way you would ever be able to walk. If you were to have adopted this approach, you would not be on your feet today. What did you do? You decided simply that you would go ahead and try. True, in the process you fell a number of times, but nevertheless you continued trying until the impossible happened, and your dream became a reality. The same method that worked then, can be applied to anything else you are prepared to dream about.

RULE 3: CAREFUL WHO YOU SHARE YOUR GOAL WITH

In life, there are always some people around you (and you'd better find out who they are quickly if you don't yet know) who feel that the pie called 'Life' is not big enough for everyone, and that if you are going to have a part of it, they will be losing out. Know one thing: don't ever share your dreams, goals and aspirations with them. They will try to undermine you.

Yosef caused his brothers' increased hatred against him by sharing his dreams with them. Perhaps they felt that if and when Yosef reached his goals, it would be at their expense. They would have to compromise their freedom. On the other hand, his father, Yaakov, was awaiting the fulfilment of the dream. Yaakov nonetheless reprimanded Yosef for sharing his dreams with his brothers. He knew the value of this lesson from his personal experience with his brother Eisav and from the story about the first set of brothers in the Torah, Kayin and Hevel. Jealousy, even amongst brothers, can lead to appalling destruction, as in the extreme example of the primal sin of fratricide, the murder of Hevel by Kayin.

Indeed, in the Torah, this first murder on earth was committed when there were only a few people alive in the world. At that time, there was more than enough of everything for everybody. Yet, Kayin still felt threatened by Hashem's recognition of Hevel. He was convinced that this acknowledgement was taking something away from him, and it was that fear which led him to kill his own brother.

RULE 4: PICTURE YOUR DREAM ACCOMPLISHED

Visualise that you have already achieved your goal. You must believe in advance that you will reach your goal no matter what, because as long as you believe that success is assured, you will be sure to make the maximum effort and simcha towards achieving your goal. Effort and Simcha – these are the two *most vital ingredients* for success (*Igros Kodesh Yud Gimmel, page 280*)

Yosef kept on repeating his dreams in great detail. In his mind, they were already a reality that existed firmly in the mental world; all that was left for him to do was to bring them into the physical plane. The Rebbe said that before the age of three he already had a clear vision in his mind of Moshiach; of how the Beis HaMikdash would look, of how the Kohanim would serve Hashem and of how all the Jews would be together in Yerushalayim. To the

Rebbe, Moshiach wasn't just a dream that would perchance happen one day. It was a reality that was simply awaiting its final appearance in the physical world.

The Rebbe wants us to begin seeing and feeling Geula in great detail *now*. He kept telling us over and over again that Moshiach is already here; we just have to open our eyes! We have to change our way of thinking, and start thinking about Moshiach as a reality. We have to live *with Moshiach now*, because only by living with this reality will we give ourselves over completely to the task of actualizing it in this physical world.

RULE 5: HAVE A PLAN

“Failing to plan is planning to fail,” a wise man said. In order to succeed, you need a clear road map that will guide you on the best possible route to follow in achieving your goal.

Yosef appeared before Pharaoh for one reason: to interpret his dreams. He did this job very well. However, he did not stop there. He knew that in order to prevent Pharaoh's dreams from fading away and to ensure that they became reality, a proper and detailed plan of action was required.

He offered Pharaoh a plan to consider as to how to deal with the upcoming seven years of abundance that would be followed by seven years of hunger. The goal was to ensure they would be totally prepared for the hunger years. Yosef suggested a detailed plan with precise methods on how to save during the good years in order to lessen the burden of the hunger years. He also suggested a management plan that would be necessary for the plan to succeed.

Yosef knew that failing to have a plan would mean that this dream would fade as many dreams do.

[To be continued, be"H]



Yossi Ben-Aharon, former Director General of the Prime Minister's Office, and former head of the Israeli Delegation, which negotiated with Syria at the Madrid Conference in an exclusive interview with Beis Moshiach:

'THERE ARE QUESTIONS ABOUT ISRAEL'S ABILITY TO SURVIVE'

INTERVIEW BY SHAI GEFEN

*Israel must change its foreign policy and come to the realization that peace cannot be achieved following the "land for peace" model. * Syria does not want peace and all public statements on its part are only to strengthen the tottering totalitarian regime of Assad. * If we would not keep folding and making territorial concessions to the Arabs, they would have given up their dreams of destroying us, long ago. * An interview with the man who spent days and nights sitting opposite the Syrian negotiating team.*

Mr. Ben-Aharon, the headlines are screaming "Assad stretches out hand in peace." As one who spent many months face-to-face with the Syrian team in Madrid, would you stretch a hand towards them at this juncture?

Even the father, Hafez el Assad, "stretched out his hand in peace." However, we inspected that hand. Every government from the Madrid

Conference onward, including Netanyahu's, were willing to pull back to Lake Kinneret and concede to the demands of the dictator, but it never helped. Time and again, it was revealed that the Syrian government is a dictatorship that is virulently anti-Israel and anti the West.

Having dealt with the highest levels of that government, how do



you view the Syrians?

Assad sees his position and ideology as pure Arab. They are the outstanding representatives of what they call "Arabism," and they look down upon countries like Egypt and Jordan as inferior in terms of their Arabism. They see everything in terms of a struggle under the banner of Pan-Arabism. As a result of this outlook, they do not come to us with requests, only demands, as the leader of the Syrian delegation explained to me in Madrid.

They demand the Golan Heights be returned immediately and unconditionally, not in exchange for anything. Another thing that he said to me was, "Whatever you have taken in Palestine is plunder and does not belong to you." He spoke along the lines of the current leader



of Iran.

How do you explain the joyous response of our politicians to the Syrian dictator's false offer of peace?

First, we need to be freed of the insanity of our politicians who are still captives of the phony concept of peace, namely that territory is the key to a local and lasting peace, and that the only thing we need to do is concede a piece of land. It is very painful to me that we don't learn our lesson. The facts have shown that every territory we have conceded has come back to haunt us, especially those given to the Arabs known as Palestinians.

What is really behind the Syrian declarations of peace?

My experience from negotiating with the Syrians and the conduct of the Syrian government under both Hafez el Assad and his son have shown that they have their own agenda. However, our leaders persist in ignoring the facts in a manner that is both bizarre and foolish. Their priorities are first and foremost: to preserve the Syrian regime in its current form as well as to avoid any step that might weaken the harsh totalitarian regime which rules the Sunni majority with an iron fist. As a result, there is a reluctance to come to terms with Israel, which would mean the flying of an Israeli flag over an embassy in Damascus. Let me state unequivocally that no Syrian leader is prepared to make peace with Israel.

The Syrian government retains strong ties with every violent anti-Western terrorist group, both strategically and militarily. The Syrian strategic view derives from the standpoint that its foreign policy is a source of ideological, strategic, and military popularity in the region. This can be seen in their pacts with Iran, Al Qaeda, the

Palestinian terror organizations whose leadership is based in Damascus, and especially with Hezbollah and the Shiite population in Lebanon.

In that case, why pose as if they are interested in coming to terms with Israel?

That is part of the tactic that Arab governments have adopted, starting with Nasser in Egypt back in the 60's. Even Saddam Hussein in his time sent a secret message to Israel that he is interested in coming to terms. These dictators behaved this way in the past to play off the conflict between the two superpowers, America and Russia, and they reaped dividends from one or the other. Similarly, today, Syria is doing this to impress Washington and as such to profit from this pose.

Sadly, the Americans have not learned their lesson. I am referring specifically to James Baker, the author of the recent report calling for diplomacy with Damascus and Tehran. He has yet to learn the significance of the tired tricks employed by the Arab countries.

I worked opposite the Syrians for more than half a year. The Syrian delegation was led by the Syrian deputy foreign minister, Muafak Elaf, and one of the members was the current foreign minister. The chief delegate held the entire group in an iron fist, and did not allow them to speak freely. We tried to engage them, but he did not allow it. He had a great deal of diplomatic experience and knew all the tricks and ploys, but the situation was and remains the same. Any proclamations on the part of Syria are only to profit and benefit from the West, especially since the Baker Report.

You mention the Baker Report. You also worked opposite James Baker, who served then as the

First, we need to be freed of the insanity of our politicians who are still captives of the phony concept of peace, namely that territory is the key to a local and lasting peace, and that the only thing we need to do is concede a piece of land. It is very painful to me that we don't learn our lesson. The facts have shown that every territory we have conceded has come back to haunt us, especially those given to the Arabs known as Palestinians.

American Secretary of State. What is your reaction to his report?

We were a triumvirate that worked with him for many long hours, made up of Yitzchak Shamir as Prime Minister, Elyakim Rubenstein, and myself. After he left the State Department, Baker set up his institute for public policy in Texas, which according to my information is partly funded by the Saudis. The director of this institute is Ed Djerejian, a well-known Pro-Arab who served in a high position under Baker. Baker drew very clear conclusions, namely that realistically speaking the US needs to deal with these governments as they are currently set up to ignore the civil rights abuses and religious fanaticism. This position directly contravenes that of President Bush, who insists that any final agreements can only be reached through freedom and democracy.

I am happy to see that most pundits and experts in the US have spoken out sharply against the Baker Report, and they seem to understand that it is not relevant. The respected voices in the neoconservative community tore the report to pieces, explaining that it is based on an anachronistic view of the world, held by those who believe that the key to peace is concessions.

Perhaps this insanity is something they got from us?

Sadly, we have no shortage of believers that the key to peace is to cave in as much as possible to prove that we are people of peace. This is despite the fact that it is manifestly clear that this approach has led to strengthening the forces of fanaticism in the Arab world.

As you see the current map of the region, are you concerned for the survival of Israel?

The current regional strategic picture – if you don't look from the perspective of Jewish faith – raises a

big question mark as to the survivability of Israel. We are starting to see signs of Western pundits questioning the legitimacy of a country which faces constant threats to its very existence and has succeeded in solidifying such a threatening force that includes virtually the entire Moslem world. These countries are now armed with the most cutting-edge Western weaponry and are driven by religious fervor and the desire to destroy the Zionist entity at all costs. This view is not only being

This view is not only being expressed by the President of Iran, but also by many Jewish thinkers in England and the US, who caution that perhaps creating such a country and the way it has been run to date was a mistake.

expressed by the President of Iran, but also by many Jewish thinkers in England and the US, who caution that perhaps creating such a country and the way it has been run to date was a mistake.

How did we deteriorate to such a degree that there seems to be no way out?

Undoubtedly, if we had conducted ourselves as the Arabs would if they were in our place, the Arab world would have given up their dream of annihilating us, and

would be focused on other goals. Our behavior through concessions, caving in, handing over land, and rewarding Islamic terror nonstop has brought Israel to the current situation.

What does Israel need to learn from all that?

There is a plan to destroy Israel, and it is being promoted by various groups in the Islamic world. This is eminently clear and we can no longer deny it. Israel must free itself from all preconceived notions, which have been long discredited, whose foundation is that territorial concessions lead to peace, and that the Arab world will be satisfied with that. The truth is the exact opposite. Everything happening today is a direct result of this approach adopted by every Israeli government, including those headed by the Right-wing parties. We have sixty years of experience with this fiasco.

Why doesn't Israeli public opinion understand this?

There is some recognition and understanding in the public at large, but this hasn't sufficiently seeped into the media and political echelon, and this represents a very great danger.

In the spirit of Chanuka, which we recently celebrated, do you have any words of encouragement?

The Greeks attempted to rule over the Jewish people with help of the Hellenists, but the Chashmonaim quickly understood that we can't coexist with Hellenism and we need to raise the flag of Judaism and faith even if it requires an armed struggle. Eventually, HaKadosh Baruch Hu granted a brilliant victory, specifically to those who followed the path of pure faith and he handed over the powerful into the hands of the weak, and the many in the hands of the few.

MAKING HISTORY IN HISTORIC YAFFO

BY MENDEL TZFASMAN

*Even before the establishment of the kingdom of the House of Dovid, Yaffo (Jaffa) was a prominent city. It is through the port of Yaffo that Shlomo HaMelech imported the cedars from Lebanon to build the Beis HaMikdash. Today as well, Rabbi Eliyahu Tamam, Shliach of the Rebbe MH”M in the city, is working to help rebuild the Holy Temple through his efforts there in preparing the residents for Moshiach. * I spent a long day circulating with Rabbi Tamam through the alleyways of Yaffo. We visited and surveyed the unique activities being done in this ancient and beautiful city. * Part 2*

Studies have shown that many of the fantastical and unrealistic technological advances suggested in early science fiction works, have over time become realities, including some of the wildest fantasies. R’ Eliyahu has his own unique way of doing things, which some will claim is a bit “out there,” but the results show that his “dreams” turn into realities in the city of Yaffo. They force you to stop and think, “Perhaps, after all, he is right in his approach.”

We set out on foot from the Peddlers Square towards the old Seraya

Amphitheater, passing the Turkish arch erected over the Jerusalem Gate (so named for those who would go to Yerushalayim on the holiday during the Temple era, and also because it faces towards Yerushalayim). We continued in the direction of the Kidumim plaza, which led us to the ancient mesmerizing alleys that wend towards the sea. At this time of day, sunset, it is the most peaceful place to hold a brief conversation.

“In my opinion,” says R’ Eliyahu, “The very arrival of a shliach of the Rebbe in a city, a neighborhood or

even a moshav, makes him into the Baal HaBayis of the place. As such, he can accomplish anything, say anything, and explain even the deepest and most ‘extreme’ ideas. In reality, there is no force that can stand in his way – except of course, he himself. There are times when we shluchim create our own roadblocks, when we begin to think that perhaps the message won’t go over. Maybe I won’t succeed in getting this project off the ground, or to realize this dream.

“In truth, there are obstacles and impediments which come up continuously. The Rebbe once said regarding Mivtza T’fillin when it encountered some opposition that the very fact that there is opposition to a matter of holiness proves its importance and necessity. In fact, many times, the more important the undertaking, the more the forces of impurity rise up and try to obstruct it. However, when the shliach is convinced that nothing in the world can stop him, then in fact nothing in the world can stop him. This is because he is an emissary of the king, and a king has the power to break through all barriers. Therefore, he too has the power.”

The above is actually an accurate portrayal of the events surrounding the construction of the Chabad mikva in Yaffo. Shchunat Dalet (Neighborhood #4) in Yaffo was well known to the undercover police of greater Tel Aviv as a center for the drug trade, with all the

attendant criminal activities. In the center of the neighborhood there was a small house that officially served as a storage facility for the gas balloons of the nearby buildings, but in actuality was a hangout for the criminal element.

Rabbi Tamam saw the house and thought to himself that it would be perfect for housing a mikva. He thought about those who are forced to exhibit mesiras nefesh for this mitzva by walking to a distant mikva, as well as those who due to the hardship don't bother to go at all. "In this place, a mikva will be built," he decided to himself.

He didn't waste any time and he approached the residents of the nearby buildings and asked their permission to turn the place into a mikva, and he even began raising funds for the construction. The project became the joke of the day in the local community. The neighbors would nod their consent to him, while considering his plan a complete delusion, as it was a brazen statement against the biggest crime lords of the city.

However, many who knew him, his approach and results, knew that nothing



Rabbi Eliyahu Tamam

would stand in his way. It was those people who agreed to help him physically and financially.

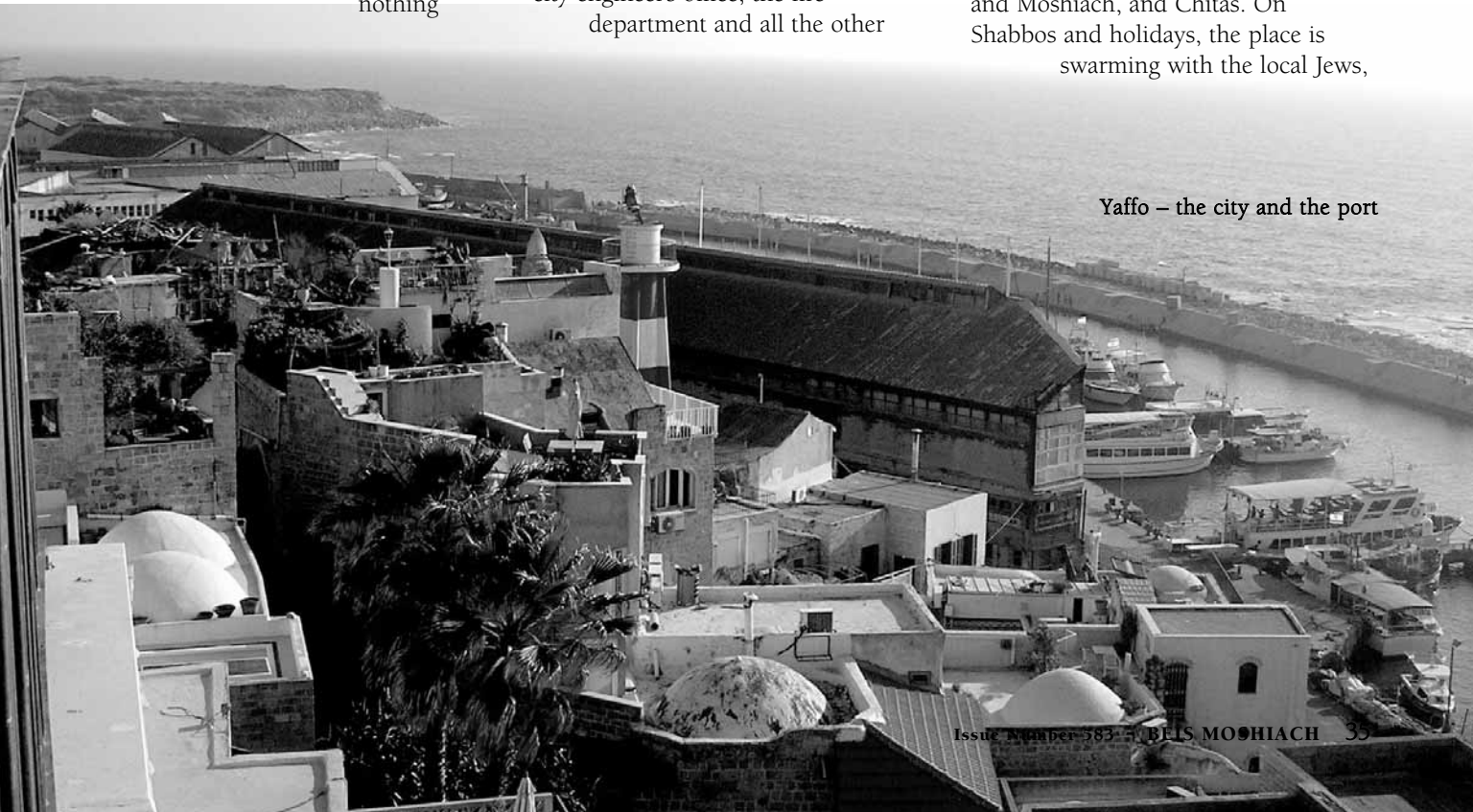
When he raised enough money to begin construction, he showed up one day with a construction crew including some of the local characters, in order to dig the pit and renovate the building. He did this without any permits from the mayor's office, the city engineer's office, the fire department and all the other

bureaucracies who need to rubber stamp such a process.

It didn't take long before he began to receive legal orders to cease and desist, as well as demolition orders and other fun stuff, but after a long struggle a Chabad mikva now stands on the site that was a center of daily criminal activity. A landscaped garden surrounds the building; the waiting room has running videos of the Rebbe, copies of *Beis Moshiach* and the Beis Chabad newsletter, and today, many families utilize the facility.

The success didn't go to the head of the shliach, but it certainly spurred him onward. Near the center of drug activity there was a storefront that served as a successful gambling joint, where many locals came to smoke and drink. He decided that he was going to turn that storefront into a Chabad House, and through that change the face of the neighborhood and ultimately the city itself.

The details of how it happened are less interesting than the final result. The Beis Chabad in Schunat Dalet in Yaffo now holds daily minyanim for davening, as well as classes in Chassidus, Halacha, Gemara, Geula and Moshiach, and Chitas. On Shabbos and holidays, the place is swarming with the local Jews,



Yaffo – the city and the port

who come to join the prayers and participate in the heartwarming farbrengens with Rabbi Tamam. Many of the residents owe their current observance of Torah and Mitzvos to those amazing farbrengens.

Additionally, the shlucha, Mrs. Yocheved Tamam runs a series of classes for the women of Yaffo, as well as highly successful Rosh Chodesh gatherings that draw participants from the entire spectrum of Yaffo Jewry.

* * *

One fine day, R' Eliyahu found himself embarking on the road to establishing a yeshiva for baalei t'shuva. This was as a result of a number of answers that he received via the *Igros Kodesh* at the time that he requested a bracha for health for his daughter, who came down with a terrible illness. The Rebbe in his letters spoke repeatedly about establishing a yeshiva. He well knew that such an undertaking requires great inner efforts and prodigious financial resources. He had no doubt that the yeshiva would become a reality, the only question was how to go about it.

One day, when he sat down to an impromptu farbrengen after a learning session with the lawyer who handled the mikva affair, he told the man about the answers from the Rebbe and that this was his next project.

The response from the lawyer left him stunned. "Listen," he said, "I am trying for the longest time to purchase a new home, but it simply is not working out. I heard about a segula for buying a house, to give a tenth of the proposed cost of the home to tz'daka, and I am prepared to donate to you a tenth of the cost of the house I would like to buy!"

When Yitzchak Mordechai, one of the returnees and friends of the Chabad House, heard about the plan, he jumped for joy and arranged to meet with the Rabbi in order to see how he could be of help in getting the project off the ground. Yitzchak Mordechai is an individual who in

journalistic jargon would be called someone who is "worth an article."

He was raised and educated in Yaffo, and he drew from R' Eliyahu much Chassidic warmth and hiskashrus to the Rebbe. After he became observant, he left Israel and settled in greater New York, where he visited the Rebbe many times and merited blessings and revealed miracles. Even after leaving Eretz Yisroel, he continues to live and breathe Yaffo and maintains a warm connection with the Rabbi. Each week there is a *Tanya* shiur in his living

"Rav Tamam, with mashke, niggunim and lots of Ahavas Yisroel, frees you from all of your hang-ups and enables you to feel free to observe Torah and mitzvos with joy and love; simply to be your true self..."

room in Flatbush for friends and neighbors, "like in Yaffo."

On the spot, he promised to contribute and to fundraise tens of thousands of dollars for the yeshiva. He mobilized his friends and acquaintances to get involved in establishing the yeshiva. In his words, "This was always my dream, to set up a yeshiva in Yaffo." As per the Rebbe's instructions that "a shliach should make another shliach," Rabbi Avrohom Kali was brought to run the yeshiva. The story of his arrival in the city is connected to an interesting episode as he tells in his own words:

"At a certain point, Rabbi Tamam suggested that I go out on shlichus to Yaffo. When my wife and I were searching for a suitable place for shlichus, he contacted us and he asked me to open the yeshiva. For some reason, the decision was put off, even after receiving an answer from the Rebbe that this was in fact our shlichus.

"A short while later, when I applied at the American Consulate for a visa to travel to the Rebbe, the gentile woman in charge refused to grant me one, saying, 'You need to establish yourself first in Israel.' When I heard what she said, I immediately thought that since she does not have true free will, these words were a direct message from the Rebbe to me that I needed to establish myself first in Eretz Yisroel, namely to immediately go on shlichus. On the spot, I ordered a taxi and called Rabbi Tamam to tell him I was on my way."

The nucleus of the yeshiva was not built in a day. In the beginning, R' Avrohom had to invest sweat and labor dragging together the guys from here and there to participate in the learning and davening in the yeshiva, but slowly a core group emerged from a wide spectrum of characters. These include the Israeli backpacker returning from a tour of the Far East and even a student from a Litvishe yeshiva drawn to the light of Chassidus.

The yeshiva is currently located on Jerusalem Boulevard, the main artery that runs from Tel Aviv to Bat Yam and numbers more than a quorum of bachurim who are baalei t'shuva. The staff has also grown, and aside from Rabbi Kali, there is Rabbi Menachem Mendel Friedman, who serves as the mashpia, and Rabbi Avrohom Maidanchik, who is the Nigleh and Smicha teacher. The hands-on action man of the yeshiva is R' Itai Gabbai, a graduate of the Chabad yeshiva in Ramat Aviv, who is responsible for the outreach activities and mitvzaim in the area of the yeshiva, as well as shiurim,



Storefront Chabad House

farbrengens, etc.

Alongside the yeshiva, there is a proper dormitory and an additional apartment for the bachurim shluchim who come to help out the yeshiva.

Each week, on Thursday night, a group from the yeshiva head out to a special shiur in "D'var Malchus" held on the rooftop of one of the buildings in an outlying neighborhood of Yaffo, colloquially referred to as the "neighborhood of the youth." This neighborhood has become, in recent years, home to many of the youthful travelers returning from India, and only "wakes up" during the nighttime hours.

On special Chassidic holidays, Chassidic farbrengens are held there. It turns out that the thirsting Jewish souls were not slaked in foreign lands, and they continue to seek spirituality in Eretz Yisroel, which the Chabadniks happily provide.

During our visit to the yeshiva, I could not help but be impressed by the unique atmosphere. There is a wonderful geniality and maximal attention provided for each student. All divisions are broken down in the yeshiva between the different backgrounds and characters of the students.

Of course, there is also Rabbi Tamam with his extraordinary personality along with his amazing

farbrengens, which attract dozens of his mekuravim. "Here we don't allow the bachurim to get the label of 'baal t'shuv'" explains one of the shluchim, "Here, there are constant 'shakeups,' in a positive sense of course. Rav Tamam confers with us about what needs to be done, and about how we can't be satisfied with the status quo. His words don't just emanate from the heart – they reflect his own personal conduct, and as such have made the yeshiva what it is and the students into what they are."

Yitzchok, one of the many baalei t'shuv of R' Eliyahu, who works as an acupuncturist describes the shliach in terms of his discipline: "R' Eliyahu is the acupuncturist Rabbi."

In response to my wonderment as to the meaning of his comment, he explained, "The goal of acupuncture is to free up the blockages and obstructions of the flow of energy, which prevents the body from functioning properly. Rav Tamam, without needles, but rather with mashke, niggunim and lots of Ahavas Yisroel, frees you from all of your hang-ups and enables you to feel free to observe Torah and mitzvos with joy and love; simply to be your true self..."

For a long time, R' Eliyahu was known throughout Yaffo, thanks to the thousands of "small" activities, which

brought him to visit every place. "Today," he says as we depart from the boardwalk late into the night, "We are working on an 'inner track,' to bring the residents to connect in a deeper way to the Rebbe by learning his teachings and fulfilling his directives. The way to do this is to 'drag' young and old to come learn in the yeshiva."

Surprised, I asked, "Is it practical to approach a youngster on the street and suggest that he 'come to yeshiva and learn something?'" Calmly, he answered, "That is a question about how strong your conviction is that he can, and needs to, come. In the past, indeed it was difficult, and in the eyes of many it was 'out of the question' to stop someone on the street and ask him to put on t'fillin in middle of the marketplace. Today, to convince someone to put on t'fillin may take five minutes of coaxing, and to invite him to yeshiva requires a few more minutes, and that's it. In the end, he will come..."

What are your plans for the future?

"Firstly, not far from the yeshiva there is a large campus that serves as a branch of the University of Tel Aviv. With the recent arrival of university students to Yaffo, there is a lot more work for us to do, and we are planning on buying an adjacent building for the yeshiva and dormitory. The price is astronomical, and from a material standpoint seems like a wild dream, but," he adds resolutely, "You will return one day to write an article about the chain of miracles that led to the purchase of that building."

"Our most important objective is to carry out the only shlichus that remains, the kabbalas panim of the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach in actual fact, together with many 'T'mimim' and 'Chassidic baalebatim' produced in Yaffo. There is no shortage of raw materials here. Every young person and student represents a 'potential sirtuk.' We only have to actualize this potential."

THE LEGENDARY RAV

BY SHMUEL ALEXANDER

*Many legends are associated with the unique person, Rav Meir Ashkenazi a”h, who was the rav of Shanghai for 25 years. * In the following article we read of his life which began in Russia, continued in Manchuria, returned to Russia, and wandered to the Far East to Shanghai, China. * Shortly before Yud Shvat 5710 he came to 770 and after the passing of the Rebbe Rayatz, he was one of those active in working on the kabbalas ha’nesius by the Rebbe MH”M.*

IN THE WAYS OF HIS FATHERS THE CHASSIDIM

Rabbi Meir Ashkenazi was born on 25 Kislev 5651 (1890) in Tcherikov, which was considered one of the cities in the “Pale of Settlement” in Russia. His father was Rabbi Shneur Zalman and his mother was Kayla. Both were of Chassidic stock with Kayla being of the celebrated Zislin family, whose roots date back to the Chassidim of the first Nesiim.

According to family tradition, two of the mother’s uncles, brothers of her father, R’ Meir’s great-uncles,

were on a very high spiritual level and were known among their acquaintances as members of the 36 Tzaddikim of that generation. They were Chassidim of the Tzemach Tzedek and they traveled to him periodically.

(This fact might fit with that which is told in the compilation *R’mach Osiyos* about Chassidim who asked the Tzemach Tzedek whether there were still 36 tzaddikim in the generation. The Rebbe said that there were and he added that two of them traveled to Lubavitch. Maybe he was referring to these two uncles.)

R’ Meir’s Chassidic roots were apparent when he was a young boy and he was raised as a Chassidic child whose only desire was to fulfill the Almighty’s will. We don’t have many details about his childhood but in light of his work throughout his tumultuous life, one can readily assume that even as a child he was destined for greatness.

When he was 15 in 5666, he was accepted as a student in Yeshivas Tomchei T’mimim in Lubavitch after he underwent all the entrance exams. He was not there long since less than a year later he contracted typhus that was epidemic in those days and he had to return home.

Even the brief time that he spent in Tomchei T’mimim was enough to implant in the outstanding student the Lubavitcher midda of mesirus nefesh, lack of ego and compromise. This stood by him for the rest of his life which was a life of mesirus nefesh for others from his youth till his last day.

While still in Tomchei T’mimim he became close with R’ Hirshel Tumarkin, who tested the boys in the yeshiva. R’ Hirshel became his primary teacher and R’ Meir acquired a path in life for the rest of his life from him. Many years

after he had left the yeshiva, they maintained their connection and R' Meir received smicha from him.

Years later, one of his acquaintances, R' Sholom Chaskind related that even at the end of R' Meir's life (in the US), when his back was bent and his beard white as snow from the suffering he had endured, he refused to allow him to carry his t'fillin on the way to shul.

The reason he gave was that in the distant past, when he wanted to carry the t'fillin of R' Hirshel (who was R' Sholom's great-uncle), R' Hirshel had refused because, "A general's medals are worn on his chest and not carried by his attendant."

RAV MEIR'S WANDERINGS

The Ashkenazi family didn't remain in Tcherikov for long. During World War I the family had to flee for Harbin in Manchuria, a faraway country in northeast Asia. A community of refugees who came from all over Russia had begun to be established and the Ashkenazi family joined.

Among the refugees who fled from Tcherikov to Harbin was the Soloveitchik family, a family of Chassidim and scholars whose family head served as the mara d'asra of Tcherikov before the war. R' Meir became a son-in-law in this family when he married Toiba Liba, who was his helpmate in all his holy work. R' Meir was a disciple-colleague to his father-in-law, the former rav.

This wandering to Harbin was only the beginning of many travels. In 5678 (1918) the Ashkenazi family and the new couple moved back to Russia to Vladivostok, where Rav Ashkenazi became the rav of the city. The reason they moved there is because Rabbi Daniel Chaskind, the old rav of the city, begged young Rav Meir to come to his aid in strengthening the community whose spiritual level was declining. He needed young, fresh blood to rejuvenate the community. The local shochet was, to put it mildly, not G-d fearing, and Rav Ashkenazi was asked to fill his place and provide kosher meat for the k'hilla.

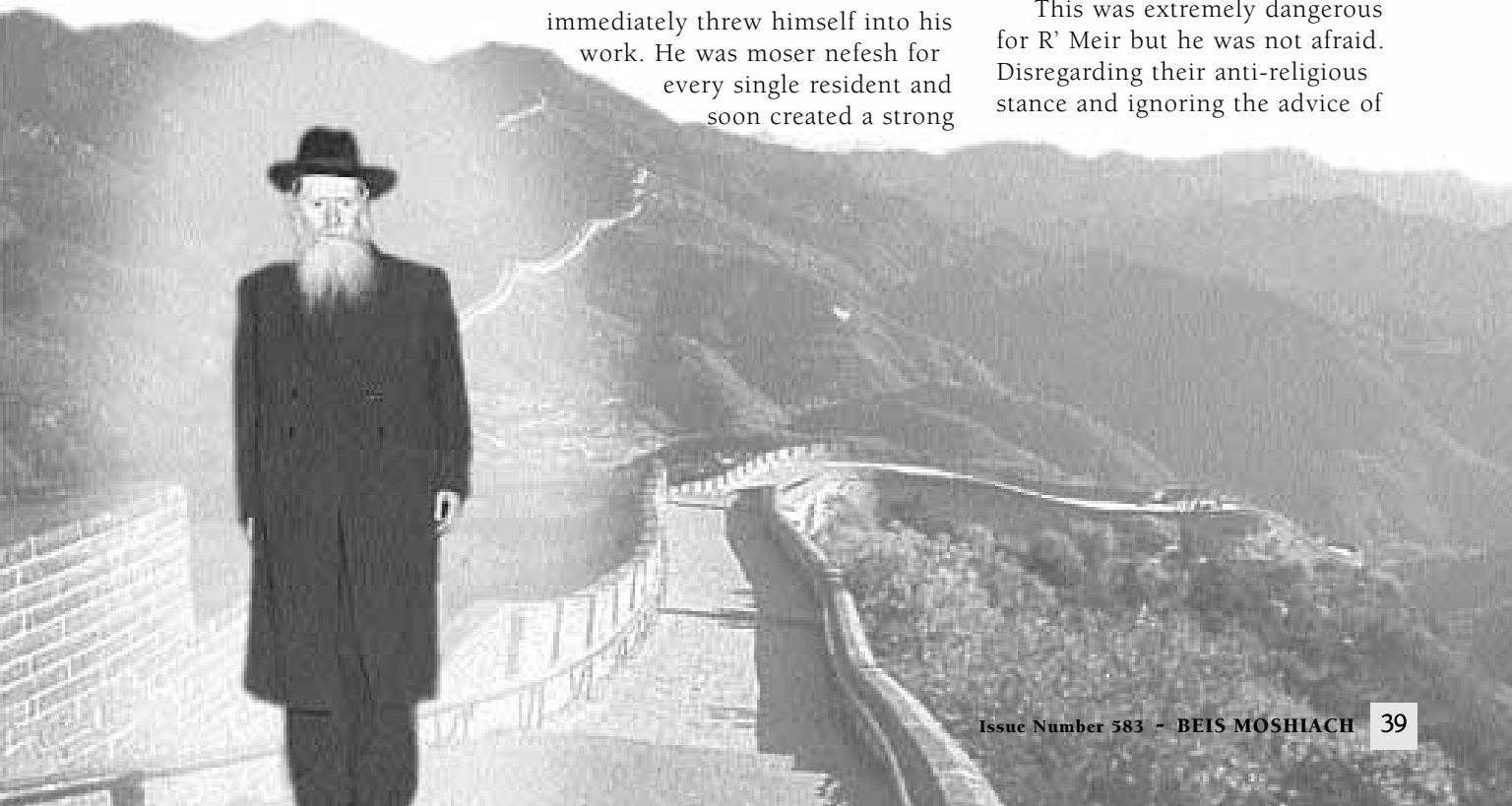
R' Meir went to Vladivostok and immediately threw himself into his work. He was moser nefesh for every single resident and soon created a strong

nucleus that set the community on its feet. His devotion to people with no agenda and asking for nothing in exchange endeared him to the community whose members were ready to do anything he wanted.

In addition to the established residents of Vladivostok who were directly under his authority, R' Meir's love and devotion was extended to guests and passersby. They knew that the rav's home was the place to go for hospitality. It reached the point where once, his mesirus nefesh for another Jew entailed actual mesirus nefesh.

It was when the Bolshevik revolution began to be felt and Czar Nikolai, who was afraid for his skin, decreed death to any revolutionary or those who aided them. A young group of non-observant Jews who were abetting the communist revolution, ended up in Vladivostok. They looked for a safe place to stay without having to fear informers. They wanted to stay with the rav because he was known as an Ohev Yisroel and a gracious host.

This was extremely dangerous for R' Meir but he was not afraid. Disregarding their anti-religious stance and ignoring the advice of



friends who sought his welfare, stating that the mitzva of Ahavas Yisroel demands mesirus nefesh for every Jew, he took them in.

At a later point it turned out that this deed was his salvation. The revolution was successful shortly thereafter and people quickly tasted its bitter results. The rav of Vladivostok was called for questioning, which served as a clear hint that he should flee the country as soon as possible. This wasn't easy since the Iron Curtain had dropped and there was no getting in and out.

In addition, the situation of the k'hilla was unbearable and they were unable to support him, so R' Meir was left without parnasa and with no way to support his family, including his parents, whose burden of support fell on him. They decided to somehow leave the country.

At that time, Rebbetzin Ashkenazi thought they should ask for help from one of their former guests who was now a leading government figure. Perhaps he could help them obtain exit permits. R' Ashkenazi refused to try, saying that you don't ask for a reward in exchange for a mitzva, but his wife feared for their lives and she wrote a letter which resulted in their being allowed out of the country.

After eight years of rabbanus, in 5686 (1926), Rav Ashkenazi left Vladivostok with a moving parting letter from his k'hilla. He headed towards a new position: rav in Shanghai. This wasn't the original plan. At first they planned on emigrating to the US. R' Ashkenazi had heard about the life of freedom there which enabled one to observe a full Torah life amidst material plenty. He also had a rabbinic position waiting for him there.

However, R' Ashkenazi's reputation from Vladivostok reached the Russian émigrés in Shanghai and they jumped at the opportunity to have him as their rav. They sent R' Meir a letter in which they pleaded with him to serve as their rav.

The decision to move to Shanghai wasn't easy. It had a pathetic community whose future was uncertain. The material life there held sway and threatened to overtake one's spiritual life. The founders of the k'hilla who went to Shanghai for the purpose of openly keeping Torah and mitzvos, found themselves losing the younger generation.

R' Hirshel had refused because, "A general's medals are worn on his chest and not carried by his attendant."

Furthermore, in addition to the Russian community, there was also a Sephardi community of émigrés from Baghdad which was well-established and the tension between the two communities did not contribute much towards the wretched situation.

This is why it was obvious that a refugee from communist Russia who sought to live a true Jewish life and to raise a family in a Jewish atmosphere would not consider leaving the frying pan for the fire which was Shanghai. Yet R' Meir was not one to seek out solely what was good for him and his family and he wasn't fazed by the low spiritual standing of the Shanghai

community.

R' Meir moved to Shanghai and immediately began to fortify Jewish life there. With his pleasant nature he managed to win over the leaders of the Sephardic community who gave him great respect. This led to achdus between the Jewish communities in Shanghai and led, in the distant future, to full cooperation regarding saving war refugees in World War II (as will be related later on).

R' Meir held farbrengens from time to time which were attended by all members of the k'hilla, Ashkenazim and Sephardim. Thus, R' Meir began to plant Jewish and Chassidic values within Shanghai a city which later turned into one of the Jewish capitols in the world.

We can see how important rejuvenating the k'hilla in Shanghai was from the correspondence between the Rebbe Rayatz and Rabbi Ashkenazi regarding communal matters. If you examine the series of letters of the previous Rebbe you will see that in the month of Kislev 5689 (1928), when the Rebbe and Rebbetzin married, the previous Rebbe wrote fewer letters, only thirty in all. Yet, some of those letters which needed to be written that month were addressed to the Shanghai community and Rav Ashkenazi.

WHEN THE SECRETARY HAD TO SEND A REPORT

Despite Rav Ashkenazi's achievements in Shanghai which revived the community, it was obvious that he would have to entrust his son's chinuch to others. Shanghai wasn't a place to raise a Chassidishe boy in the original Chabad spirit and whatever R' Meir had gotten in quiet, little Lubavitch which was saturated with Chassidic "moisture," his son would not get



The talmidim of the yeshiva in Shanghai at a farbrengen with Rav Meir Ashkenazi

in Shanghai.

So in 5694 (1934), when Rabbi Ashkenazi's parents moved to Eretz Yisroel to spend their final years in Yerushalayim, R' Meir sent his son Moshe (who is Rabbi Moshe Ashkenazi, rav of the Chabad community in Tel Aviv) along with them. Moshe was just bar mitzva and he learned in Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim – Toras Emes by the famous mashpia, R' Alter Simchovitz.

This was a great sacrifice for R' Meir. The distance between Eretz Yisroel and China did not enable him to keep in touch regularly with his son who was under the care of his grandparents. His grandparents were the ones who married R' Moshe off to Devora, daughter of the famous Chassid, R' Eliezer Karasik.

Father and son were so far apart to the point that R' Meir did not know what was going on with his son at all. He didn't know if he was learning diligently or had, Heaven forbid, joined the Zionists and dropped his religion as so many religious children had done. At some point, R' Meir heard that his son was walking idly about the streets of Yerushalayim and he didn't know whether this rumor was true or baseless.

R' Meir sent a letter off to the Rebbe Rayatz in which he wrote of the rumor and asked for help. In response, the secretary, R' Chatshe Feigin wrote back quoting the report sent by R' Alter the mashpia to the Rebbe in which he enumerated each talmid including Moshe. This instantly negated the rumor which had so perturbed R'

Meir. In the margin, R' Chatshe further encouraged him by stating that "a letter sent to the Rebbe is not exaggerated."

REAL MESIRUS NEFESH FOR ANOTHER JEW

The famous chapter in R' Meir Ashkenazi's life began a few years later, in 1940. That year, because of the war, a wave of refugees began to flow into Shanghai, which was known as a city of refuge for the "Torah world" and other Jews. Thousands of refugees arrived there from all over Europe and Russia bereft of all, having fled the Nazis for the unknown.

R' Ashkenazi's mesirus nefesh and Ahavas Yisroel rose to the fore. He put himself aside and devoted himself to the refugees; day and night he toiled on behalf of the

spiritual and material benefit of his fellow Jews.

Human nature is such that during a fire people try to concentrate on saving important things while foregoing the little things. R' Ashkenazi however, did not neglect even the little things. He combined political and financial activism with personal aid, finding himself simultaneously worrying about a building for dozens of families and a bed for one person.

Whoever turned to R' Meir for help was answered. Countless times he set aside his own needs for the good of others. While hunger prevailed in his own home, he made sure that the neighbor had enough to eat. His small salary could not be handed over to him since on the way home it would be used up. The communal leaders of the k'hilla gave it to his wife so she would make sure the money was used for household needs.

R' Meir's home became a hostel. He wasn't one of those whose help is reserved exclusively for outside the home. At a gathering in his memory one of the speakers, a Litvishe rav, said, "When I first arrived as a refugee in Shanghai, I had no money in my pocket. They immediately sent me to the Ashkenazi family where I was graciously welcomed and where they fed me and gave me a place to sleep. I was shocked when I got up in the morning and discovered that the rav and rebbetzin had spent the

The Ashkenazi family saved her life, despite the fact that her future father-in-law was, at that very time, waging an open war against Lubavitch and the Rebbe Rayatz which ultimately endangered R' Ashkenazi himself.

night somewhere else."

A similar incident: When a group of T'mimim arrived, R' Meir welcomed them and gave them a place to sleep. When they got up in the morning they saw him sleeping next to them on the floor. He had given them his bed.

There were also times that the mitzva of Hachnasas Orchim entailed danger. The kalla of Rabbi Shneur Kotler (son of the Litvishe rosh yeshiva of Lakewood and later rosh yeshiva himself), was very sick due to the wartime conditions with a severe case of malaria. Aside from the great danger by her very presence, the rebbetzin had to rub

the patient's body with butter a few times a day because this was the only cure for that illness in those days.

The Ashkenazi family saved her life, despite the fact that her future father-in-law was, at that very time, waging an open war against Lubavitch and the Rebbe Rayatz which ultimately endangered R' Ashkenazi himself.

There weren't only physical dangers in hosting guests but also spiritual dangers. In their house lived a Jewish soldier from the English army who was captured by the Japanese. R' Ashkenazi had him released and took personal responsibility for him to ensure that he would observe a religious life. This soldier was gifted and had a high academic position and he knew many languages. R' Meir enlisted him in his work. The guest lived in their home for a long time and this is how his spiritual life was saved. R' Meir disregarded any spiritual dangers this man posed in his home.

Later on they learned that the soldier was from an illustrious family who had, for various reasons, put him up for adoption by a non-Jewish family. All he remembered from his home was that his mother was Jewish. R' Meir left such a strong impression on the man who thanks to him remained a Jew, that when R' Meir died, he said Kaddish for an entire year.

[To be continued be"H]

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