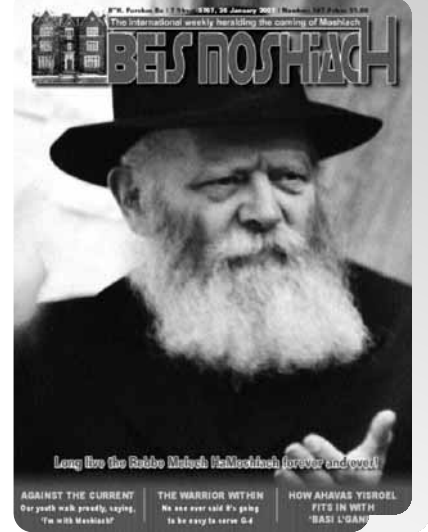


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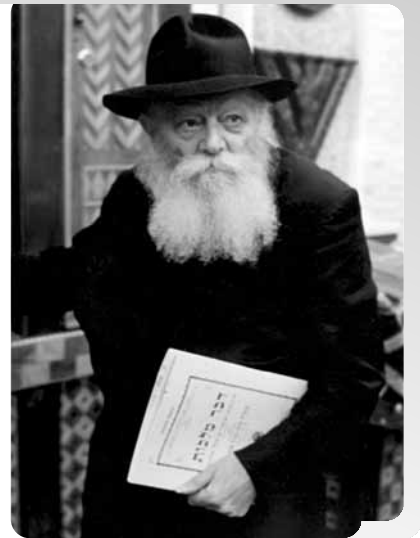
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REVEALING THE PERFECTION PRESENT IN THE WORLD

LIKKUTEI SICHOS, VOL. 6, PG. 81-85
TRANSLATED BY BORUCH MERKUR



1. It is known that at the time of one's passing there is the gathering together of "all of one's deeds and Torah study and service which he worked on throughout all the days of his life" [Igeres HaKodesh Ch. 27, end]. Thus, it is understood that the discourse (*maamer*) entitled "Basi L'Gani" ("I Have Come to My Garden"), which the Rebbe [Rayatz], whose anniversary of his passing we are marking, had given out for the day of his passing, serves as an expression of a central theme of all the service to which he devoted himself throughout the course of his life in this world. (This is especially apparent in the opening and conclusion of the discourse, for the meaning of every concept is more overtly apparent in its beginning and end [since the beginning – the head – **includes** the entire concept, and "everything follows the [concluding] seal" (Brachos 12a) – see Footnote 2 and 3 in the original].)

The following [two examples] are among the central themes of the service of the Rebbe, which he also demanded of all those who go in the ways of his teachings:

a) To disseminate Torah and Mitzvos – including the luminary (*maor*) of the Torah – **to every single place**, including such places which (ostensibly) have no appreciation (*keilim*) for Torah and Mitzvos in general, and certainly not for the teachings of Chassidus.

b) That the work of disseminating Torah and Mitzvos and etc. should be done with the utmost alacrity.

In fact, these two themes are alluded to in the opening and conclusion of this discourse ["Basi L'Gani"].

2. In the beginning of the discourse, the Rebbe cites the saying of the Midrash [Shir HaShirim Rabba Ch. 5, beg.] on the verse, "I have come to My garden, My sister, My bride": "Here it does not say, 'to the garden' (*la'gan*) but 'to My garden' (*l'gani*), meaning to my private [bridal] chamber (*l'ganuni*), to the place that was My main [place] in the beginning. For the principal manifestation of the Divine Presence was in the lower realms." That is, the indwelling of the Divine Presence in the lower realms, which occurred at the time of the erection of the Sanctuary (regarding which G-d says, "I have come to My garden"), already happened at the beginning of Creation (and not as the opinion of the one who says [in BaMidbar Rabba 12:6] that "it [i.e., the Divine revelation precipitated by the erection of the Sanctuary] was a novelty"). However, on account of the sin of the Tree of Knowledge, along with the sins done thereafter, "it ceased." But afterwards, at the time of the erection of the Sanctuary, "it returned to its former state."

In the conclusion of the discourse, the Rebbe cites the Midrash [D'varim Rabba 9:3], "One is not in a position of authority to say, 'Wait for me until I may make my assessments and until I command my household, etc.'" Since this is so, we may not defer the work incumbent upon us, for "Who is it who knows his moment and his time [of passing]?"

By bringing in the opening and the conclusion of the discourse these two particular passages of the Midrash, the Rebbe is expressing these two themes mentioned above: With the Midrash brought at the conclusion of the discourse he is indicating that the work must be done with alacrity, and with the Midrash quoted in the

beginning of the discourse he defines what comprises the work itself: disseminating Torah and Mitzvos **in every single place**, as will be discussed.

3. [In discussing the present state of the world, the teachings of Chassidus describe that] the world is (as the Alter Rebbe says [in *Tanya* Ch. 36]) “**full** of *klippos* [“husks” that conceal G-dliness] and the Other Side [which opposes the Side of Holiness],” meaning that every aspect of this world is full with *klippos*, to the extent that the very name of this world – since the name of every thing expresses its essence [see Footnotes 8 and 9 of *Likkutei Sichos* Vol. 6, pg. 35] – is “the World of Klippos and the Other Side” [*Tanya* Ch. 6, end of pg. 10b]. Of course, when a Jew considers the [negative] state of the world, he may reason as follows:

Since G-d has **created** the world in such a manner that it should be “the World of Klippos,” it is not conceivable that I should be able to change it. Therefore, I should separate myself from the world and close myself off within the four cubits of Torah and prayer, so as not to be involved with the world!

Regarding this [faulty reasoning], the Rebbe explains right away in the beginning of the discourse: On the contrary. The fact that the world is a world of *klippos* is (not something that defines the **essential nature** of this world, that it is necessarily that way, but) a peripheral matter, a notion that was **added** (after Creation), through the sin of the Tree of Knowledge and etc. In fact, with respect to its essential nature, there certainly is an advantage of this world over the supernal worlds, since the **principal** manifestation of the Divine Presence **was** specifically in the lower realms.

One could, however, continue to argue: It is indeed true that in the beginning of Creation it was different, but now the world is “full” of *klippos* and “the wicked dominate in it” [*Tanya* Ch. 6, end of pg. 10b]!

The response to this comes later in the discourse. Namely, the explanation that the ultimate intent of the creation and genesis of the worlds is because “The Holy One Blessed Be He desired that He should have a dwelling place in the lower realms” [Tanchuma, Naso 16], and the Divine intent will surely be fulfilled.

(Since Creation is (something that occurs continually, **every single moment** [*Shaar HaYichud V’HaEmuna*, beginning]) for the sake of this Divine intent, it is not possible that matters pertaining to the created beings – the deeds of man (the sin of the Tree of Knowledge and etc.) – should have the capacity to oppose and not permit, G-d forbid, the fulfillment of this Divine intent.)

Ultimately, the world will in fact **become** a dwelling place for Him, may He be blessed. It comes out then, that the present change in the world – the fact that it is now “the World of Klippos” – is “a change that reverts to its former state” (since ultimately there will come a time when, “I will cause the spirit of impurity to pass away from the land” [Z’charya 13:2], as it was before the sin), and “a change that reverts to its former state is

not deemed to be a change” [Sukka 30a, Bava Kama 96b]. Thus, in an inner sense, also presently the world is a “dwelling place for Him, may He be blessed,” especially since the change (is not only one that **may** revert to its former state, but it) will certainly return to its former state, as mentioned above.

Since the revelation of the future will be in a manner of, “The land will be **full** of the knowledge of G-d as the waters cover the sea” [Yeshayahu 11:9], and “May **everything** that has been made come to know that You have made it” [T’fillas Amida of Rosh HaShana], consequently, also now it is so (in an inner sense) in **every** aspect of the world, even in a place where it

appears as if there is an opposition to G-dliness, to there being a dwelling place for Him, may He be blessed. Therefore, we must disseminate Judaism **in every single place** in order to **reveal** the goodness that is **present** in every place.

4. The Rebbe had arranged for the discourse to be given out on the day of his passing. Likewise, the lesson mentioned above, brought in the beginning of the discourse, is also connected with the concept of a person’s passing, as follows: [The same is true with regard to the lesson taught at the conclusion of the discourse, “One is not in a position of authority, etc.” – see FN 20.]

After the soul ascends from the body, the body decomposes, begging the question: What is the purpose

*The fact that it is now
“the World of
Klippos” – is “a
change that reverts to
its former state,” and
“a change that reverts
to its former state is
not deemed to be a
change.”*

of all the Jew's service, toiling throughout the duration of all the days of his life to refine his body, if it decomposes upon his passing?

In fact, the question is even stronger: The decomposition of the body (upon the soul's departure from the body) is (**not** something that is **novel** to it, but), as it is written, "You are dust, and to dust you shall return" (that with respect to the notion that also presently, "You are dust," **therefore**, "and to dust you shall **return**"). And being that "a change that reverts to its former state is not deemed to be a change," it is thus not a true existent even prior to its return to its original state of being dust. Since this is so, it follows, at first glance, that the service of Torah and Mitzvos is connected, G-d forbid, with a concept that is (even at the time of the service) not a true existence!

(There is, however, an apparent counterexample to the latter reasoning. Namely, the fact that] the Luz Bone [i.e., a small bone, located in the spine] (which remains over from the body) never decomposes [B'Reishis Rabba Ch. 28, etc. – see FN 24]. Also, with regard to the resurrection of the body **in its entirety**, it says [Yeshayahu 26:19], "Your dead will be **enlivened**" (and not, "[re]created"), for the manner of resurrection will be (not that a new body will be created, but) that the body will be [re]**constructed** from the Luz Bone [Zohar II 28b].

(Nevertheless, since the body in itself is "dust," and that which is obligatory in **its** regard is, "and to dust you shall return," it follows perforce that the very fact that (the resurrection [of the body] will not be in a manner of a new creation, but that) it will be [re]constructed from the Luz Bone is an instance of a new "creation," for the nature of the body itself is "dust." [Thus, the question returns: What is the lasting benefit of the service of Torah and Mitzvos when it is accomplished through the transient physical body, something that is not a true existent?])

5. The answer to this is: On the contrary! Since "the principal manifestation of the Divine Presence was **in the lower realms**," which indicates that [the phrase said in the morning blessing before Krias Shma], "It is us that You have chosen," refers specifically to the physical body [Tanya, Ch. 49, pg. 70a, beg.; *Toras Shalom*, pg. 120], therefore, the body is actually a true existent,

utterly impervious to decomposition. The change it underwent, through (the sin of the Tree of Knowledge and its outcome), "and to dust you shall return," is only with respect to its superficiality, not its essential nature, for (as discussed above in Section 3) the deeds of man cannot change, G-d forbid, the choice of the [Divine] **Essence** (*HaAtzmus*), Which chose the Jewish body.

This itself explains the fact that the Luz Bone, the *Etzem Luz* (did not receive nourishment from the Tree of Knowledge and) is not subject to decomposition. Namely, it is the essence (*atzmizus*) of the body, and the essence (of the body) has no connection with (sin and) decomposition.

And since, "It is us that You have chosen," also applies with regard to the body **in its entirety**, it is thus understood that in an inner sense, also the body in its entirety has no connection with decomposition. The fact that in the Future to Come it will be [re]**constructed** from the Luz Bone is on account of this very notion – that it is the choice of the Essence. Accordingly, it comes out that, on the contrary, in light of the fact that "a change that reverts to its former state is not deemed to be a change," even now it is a true existent.

6. The Evil Inclination, however, is a "craftsman in its work" [see Shabbos 105b]. After we have defused his argument – that we may not, "Heaven forefend," be involved with the body and the world – by reasoning that in an inner sense,

they are entirely good and holy, and the service [of being involved with the body and the world] is only for the sake of outwardly revealing the goodness contained within them, the Evil Inclination begins arguing with people from the opposite perspective:

In an inner sense, the body and this world are good even prior to the service [of refining them]. Even with regard to revealing this fact, it is a sure thing (as mentioned above) that ultimately, through this Jew or through another Jew, they will become "a dwelling place for Him, may He be blessed." Why then must you be so enthusiastic in your service of Torah and Mitzvos in order to refine and purify the body and your portion in the world. In particular, what is the big deal if you put it off for later?

*The Evil Inclination
argues: Why must
you be so enthusiastic
in your service of
Torah and Mitzvos in
order to refine the
world. What is the
big deal if you put it
off for later?*

Regarding this [faulty reasoning], the Rebbe explains in the conclusion of the discourse: a) There is the concept of, "Wait for me until I may make my assessments," "I may command my household," and as is known regarding the response of the Alter Rebbe [Seifer HaMaamarim 5708, pg. 191]: "You always convey what you need. Regarding **what you are needed for**, however, you say nothing!" b) "Who is it who knows his moment and his time [of passing]?"

It has already been predetermined, regarding every thing in the world, through whom the thing will be refined [FN 36: See *Likkutei Dibburim* Volume 4, pg. 596b; *HaYom Yom*, pg. 84]. It has also been predetermined when the refinement shall be done. It thus follows that by deferring [this service of refining aspects of the world], one would, G-d forbid, lose his "assessments" and his "household" and etc. [Like the example of the Exodus from Egypt, which had to be "in the blink of an eye," for were they to delay, G-d forbid, they would not have been able to be redeemed, etc.

(Alshich on Parshas Bo 12:37 (forward) in the name of the Zohar) – see FN 37.]

Thus, the service must be done with alacrity, not wasting a single moment that could be used for the service of disseminating Torah and Mitzvos in general, and especially the dissemination of the wellsprings of Chassidus, to every single place. And this must be done with joy and **desire** and etc. (which naturally gives rise to alacrity [see *Igeres HaKodesh*, end of Section 21]), as the Rambam puts it (regarding the Days of Moshiach), "they **longed for** [that era]" [Laws of Repentance 9:2; see also Laws of Kings 12:4 – see FN 39].

In this manner we shall prepare the entire world for the fulfillment of the promise, "The land will be full of the knowledge of G-d as the waters cover the sea," which will happen soon, in the literal sense.

(From the address of Yud Shvat and of Shabbos Parshas B'Shalach 5729)

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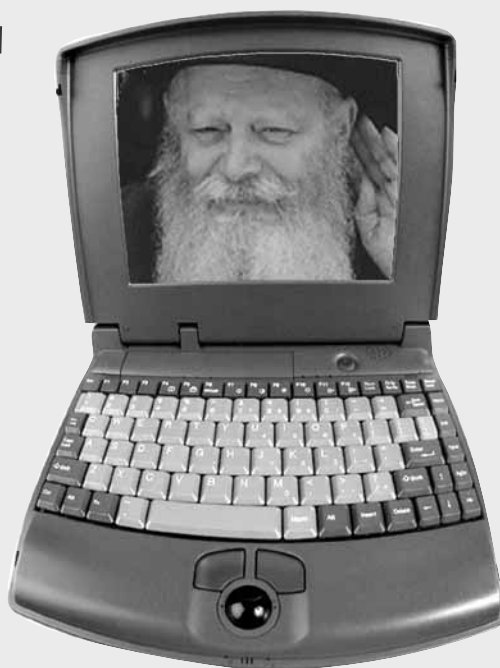
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A DAILY DOSE OF MOSHIACH & GEULA: 7 SHVAT – 13 SHVAT

*Selected daily pearls of wisdom from the Rebbe MH”M
on Moshiach and the Redemption.*

COLLECTED AND ARRANGED BY RABBI PINCHAS MAMAN, SHLIACH, RISHON L'TZION, ERETZ YISROEL
TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY

7 SHVAT: MELECH HA'MOSHIACH – THE ASPECTS OF MALCHUS AND CHOCHMA

The Rambam writes that Melech HaMoshiach will be from the House of Dovid and from the seed of Shlomo.

From the House of Dovid – the main aspect of malchus, for since Dovid was anointed, he merited the crown of kingship, and the sovereignty belonged to him and his seed forever.

From the seed of Shlomo (in its inner sense): The days of Shlomo bore a resemblance to the state of the True and Complete Redemption. Peace reigned in his time, for which reason he was called Shlomo. Shlomo possessed the fullest aspect of chochma: “And he was the wisest of all men.” In this capacity, all the wisdoms of the gentiles were essentially nullified in relation to the wisdom of Shlomo – not through war, but a resemblance of the complete state of peace of the Future to Come. This concept pertains to the most complete aspect of malchus.

(excerpt from a sicha of the Rebbe MH”M)

8 SHVAT: THE LEADER OF THE GENERATION IS MOSHIACH TZIDKEINU

The leader of the generation is “Moshiach”...beginning with the simple interpretation of “Moshiach” (“Moshiach Hashem”)

derived from *mashuach* (anointed)...and there will be no offense taken, if they interpret “Moshiach” in the simplest sense – Moshiach Tzidkeinu – as this is the truth: the leader of the generation is the Moshiach of the generation.

...even those who claim that such an approach and such descriptive titles are beyond their ability to grasp intellectually, it makes no difference whether they have the ability to grasp this or not, and there is no time to wait until the matter can be grasped through their power of intellect.

(Simchas Torah 5746)

*“Miyad” alludes to:
Moshiach (Menachem
is his name), Yosef
Yitzchak, Dovber (the
second name of the
Rebbe [Rashab],
nishmaso Eden).*

9 SHVAT: THE NAME OF MOSHIACH OF THE GENERATION IS MENACHEM

So it will be with us in actual deed, immediately *mamash*, with all the interpretations of “miyad” (immediately), (including the acronyms of the overall generations – Moshe, Yisroel (the Baal Shem Tov), Dovid (Malka Meshicha).*

*FN 148: To be more specific in relation to our generation, the acronym “miyad” alludes to the three time periods pertaining to my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe, leader of the generation, and according to the order of proximity to us: Moshiach (Menachem is his name), Yosef Yitzchak, Dovber (the second name of the Rebbe [Rashab], *nishmaso Eden*).

(Shabbos Parshas Mishpatim 5752 – boldface in the original)

10 SHVAT – THE YAHRTZAIT OF THE REBBE RAYATZ

AND THE BEGINNING OF THE NESIUS OF THE REBBE SHLITA MH"m: THE AVODA OF OUR GENERATION – COMPLETING THE DRAWING DOWN OF THE MAIN ASPECT OF THE SH'CHINA INTO OUR WORLD

Thus, it is demanded from each and every one of us, the seventh generation, for all sevenths are beloved, notwithstanding the fact that we are not the seventh generation by our own choice nor through our avoda, and in several matters, it is possibly not as we wished.

Nevertheless, all sevenths are beloved, for we are in the Heels of Moshiach and at the conclusion of the Heels, and the avoda is to complete the drawing down of the Sh'china, and not just the Sh'china, but the main aspect of the Sh'china – and specifically into the lower worlds.

(maamer, Basi L'Gani 5711)

11 SHVAT: MOSHIACH TZIDKEINU WILL BE REVEALED IN 770

In simple terms, Moshiach Tzidkeinu will come immediately and be revealed here, in the four cubits of my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe, leader of the generation, where he spent the last ten years of his life in this world – davening, learning, and proclaiming “Immediately to Redemption.”

And so it will be with us, “immediately” in the literal sense, and particularly since many decades have already passed since the proclamation of “Immediately to Redemption,” with an even greater intensification in matters of Torah and mitzvos.

Thus, the time for the True and Complete Redemption has surely arrived already in actual deed, immediately mamash.

(Shabbos Parshas Haazinu 5749)

12 SHVAT: MOSHIACH'S PROCLAMATION OF THE REDEMPTION IS HEARD FROM CHUTZ LA'ARETZ

“Melech HaMoshiach...stands on the roof of the Beis HaMikdash and announces to the Jewish people, saying, ‘Humble ones, the time of your Redemption has arrived.’” (Yalkut Shimoni – Yeschayahu 499), as was and continues to be proclaimed, especially as of late.

We note the precise language of the Midrash, “stands on the roof of the Beis HaMikdash. The roofs were not sanctified, and this alludes to the fact that the proclamation of ‘Humble ones, the time of your

Redemption has arrived’ comes from the Diaspora, which was not sanctified with the holiness of Eretz Yisroel (demonstrated by the difference between the roof of the Beis HaMikdash and the inside of the Beis HaMikdash itself).

(Shabbos Parshas Chayei Sara 5751)

13 SHVAT: IN THE FUTURE TO COME, THE MOST LOFTY CONCEPTS WILL BE IN HUMAN TERMS

In relation to G-d's revelation of the reasons and secrets of the Torah, “there will come forth from Me” – even though the level of Torah is one that cannot be revealed by man, rather by G-d Himself (“from Me”), in any event, it will come down to earth, in the understanding and comprehension of human intellect.

...this means that “the new Torah” that will be revealed through him (Moshiach) in a manner of prophecy will be drawn down and clothed in human intellect as well, and “he will teach the entire people,” who “will be great chachamim and know hidden matters, and they will attain the knowledge of their Creator, according to the capacity of a human being. In other words, even the loftiest concepts of the “new Torah” will be attained and instilled within human intellect.

(kuntres “Torah Chadasha M'Iiti Teitzei” 5751)

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WORKING ON HISKASHRUS

INTERVIEW BY RABBI SHOLOM YAAKOV CHAZAN

*Hiskashrus is a serious matter, internal, and deep and consequently difficult to achieve. Difficult though it may be, it's the goal! A Chassid needs to know that his goal as a Chassid is to cleave to his Rebbe, both with his intellect as well as with his middos, and then in his actions. * A fascinating interview with Rabbi Yossi Paltiel, mashpia in Yeshivas Chovevei Torah and a popular lecturer on Chassidus. * Part 2 of 2 * Presented for Yud Shvat.*

When someone reads this and sincerely wants to arouse the desire in his heart to know what the Rebbe wants of him in every detail of life, how does he arouse this desire?

First, he needs to acknowledge and contemplate that there is nothing aside from avoda p'nimis. That means, hishakshrus itself has to be in a p'nimius'dike way. There has never been another way.

After assimilating this basic understanding, he has to do what it says in the *HaYom Yom* (24 Sivan). Someone asked how to be mekasher to the Rebbe when he never saw him face to face. "Genuine hishakshrus is through Torah study. When he learns

my maamarei Chassidus, reads the sichos, and joins with other Chassidim and the T'mimim in their learning and farbrenging, and he fulfills my request in reciting T'hilim and observing the times for learning – that is how hishakshrus is achieved."

There are three components here and the three together create the hishakshrus: learning the Rebbe's teachings, fulfilling his horaos, and participating in farbrengens. When a Chassid learns the Rebbe's teachings, he knows what the Rebbe wants of him. When he fulfills his horaos, he accustoms his body to follow the Rebbe's ratzon. When he participates

in Chassidishe farbrengens, he internalizes it all in the p'nimius of his soul.

Whoever thinks they can be mekushar just by learning the Rebbe's teachings and fulfilling his horaos is mistaken. The farbrengen is the place where Chassidim turn theory into practice.

Naturally, when we're talking about a farbrengen, we don't mean just any gathering of Chassidim, but a serious farbrengen where the most inner feelings can be expressed.

Some say there is too much farbrenging nowadays. Birthday farbrengens raised the average number of weekly farbrengens to new heights. The mother of a talmid in one of the Chabad yeshivos wrote to the Rebbe after the Rebbe announced Mivtza Yom Huledes. In the answer she got, she was told to check whether in Lubavitch back in Russia they farbrenged any less.

So, we need to farbreng, though we have to ensure that the farbrengens are deserving of that name and don't turn into something superficial. A real farbrengen is the best place to internalize all the aforementioned points, and as mentioned before, it takes time. You don't become a Chassid the moment you decide you want to be one. That's when the avoda begins.

We need to know that our goal is to reach the point where we do

everything the Rebbe wants. In order to achieve this goal, we first need to learn **what** the Rebbe wants, and to understand why the Rebbe says what he says, until it becomes our **own** view, in the deepest and innermost way.

Aside from the practical points that are spoken about at farbrengens, what should the emphasis be? Is there something that can help us endure the remaining moments of Galus?

In addition to avoda, which we spoke about earlier, there is the soul of Chassidus, which strengthens and gives us ko'ach for avoda, through simcha and bitachon. When a person is sad and depressed, doubts arise. When a person is broken and is in a gloomy frame of mind, he simply cannot make decisions about his future. That's a proven recipe for disaster. If a person is in this state, he needs to know it's not the time for thinking and definitely not a time for decision making. We need to strengthen our simcha and bitachon. That

is what gives us the ability to withstand challenges and difficulties.

Bitachon and simcha are interdependent. When a person is happy, he has bitachon, and vice versa. Someone wrote to the Rebbe about certain things that interfered with his avodas

Hashem.

The Rebbe responded:

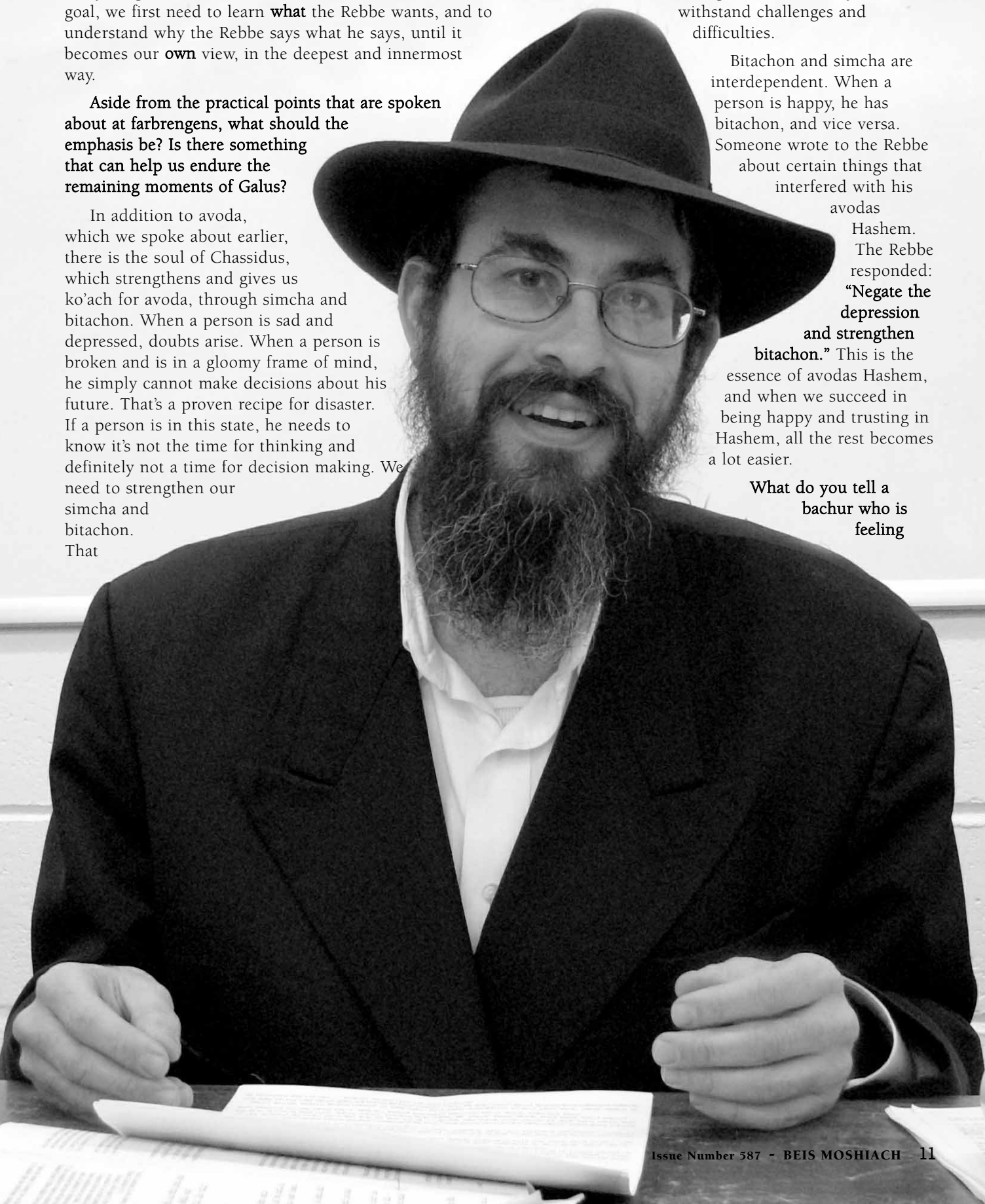
"Negate the depression

and strengthen

bitachon." This is the

essence of avodas Hashem, and when we succeed in being happy and trusting in Hashem, all the rest becomes a lot easier.

What do you tell a bachur who is feeling



down? How do you encourage him?

A Polische Chassid once went by the Rebbe for dollars and he said to the Rebbe that he heard that the Rebbe speaks passionately about the need to be happy. The Rebbe nodded and agreed. The man asked: Why and from what should a person be happy? The Rebbe answered in wonder: What do you mean? You are a Jew!

At first glance, this doesn't seem to be much of an answer, but when you think about it, you realize that this is the point. When you think about the fact that you are a Jew and that you have the Torah and you have Hashem, you are immediately happy.

When speaking with Chassidim, you can add: We are Chassidim! When we think about the privilege of being Chassidim – that we have a Rebbe, and that we have his teachings and guidance – there is no better reason to be happy.

All the avoda of Torah and mitzvos since the Giving of the Torah goes against the flow of this world, “whose actions are harsh, and the wicked dominate.” The goal of Mattan Torah is not only that we have to bring goodness and kindness into the world, as well as G-dliness, but we can change the world and transform it into a world illuminated by the principles of Torah and mitzvos, justice and righteousness. This is the goal of every Jew.

In order to do this, we need to believe in things that are foreign and unusual to the world at large, and overcome all hardships. The strength and courage to fulfill this in daily life is derived from our belief and confidence in our success, with Hashem's help, and this gives us true happiness. The happiness reinforces the bitachon, etc, until it has the desired effect.

After we've heard the prophecy

and besuras ha'Geula from the Rebbe, when we contemplate it, we feel true simcha and strong bitachon that immediately we will merit to see it all before our very eyes. The truth is that every Jew believes in the Rebbe's prophecy of Geula, it's just that sometimes there are things that block this emuna. We just need to remove the dust and klipos and when this inner emuna is uncovered in all its purity, we won't think to ask why we should be happy and have bitachon.

Some look critically at the special preparations that are made for

*Whoever thinks they
can be mekushar just
by learning the
Rebbe's teachings and
fulfilling his horaos is
mistaken. The
farbrengen is the
place where
Chassidim turn
theory into practice.*

certain dates. They think that if there's a need to strengthen hiskashrus, this need exists all year round. Why connect it to Yud Shvat? They ask whether focusing on certain issues at certain times of the year turns those things into seasonal and superficial things.

Let me tell you a story that I once heard about R' Itche der Masmid. One night, when the Rebbe Rayatz was receiving people for yechidus, a young man stood near R' Itche and saw him preparing for hours for yechidus. R' Itche finally got up and left the Rebbe's house.

The man followed him and asked him why he didn't go in for yechidus. R' Itche said that he felt that he wasn't sufficiently prepared for yechidus with the Rebbe.

The man concluded as follows: If R' Itche was still not ready then he certainly wasn't ready! He also went home.

The next yechidus night, the same scene repeated itself. R' Itche prepared for hours and finally decided he wasn't ready and he went home. The man concluded that he wasn't ready either and he went home too, and so too, on the next yechidus night.

The man finally realized that R' Itche was progressing night after night while he just slept another night and ate another two or three meals. He understood that in his spiritual state he could not allow himself to wait until he was ready and the sooner he had a yechidus the better for him, for it would certainly affect him for the better.

There aren't many Chassidim in our generation, if any at all, of R' Itche der Masmid's caliber. Most of us are closer to the spiritual level of the other man, and like him, we need to acknowledge that without specific dates for which we prepare ourselves, we will never change.

Without target dates, one day follows another and we can always postpone change for tomorrow, and tomorrow for the next day. So Hashem arranged for us a number of dates that are connected with specific themes that we need to be strengthened in. These dates are stations where we refresh ourselves for our journey through life.

For example, Hashem established Rosh HaShana as a day when we stop what we're doing and focus on kabbalas ha'malchus. A Jew can't tell Hashem he's not ready and ask for a delay of a few more days before

blowing the shofar and accepting Hashem's sovereignty. If there were such a thing, we'd never accept His malchus, since we'd always procrastinate. Hashem set a date when we must accept His malchus, even if we're not 100% ready, and even if we're only 50% ready. Rosh HaShana is a stop sign that tells us: ready or not, now is the time!

Yud Shvat is also a stop sign that calls out to us and says: Stop! Ask yourself where do you stand in avodas ha'hiskashrus. How much have you internalized the changes Moshiach will bring about in the world? Have you internalized the awareness that the core point of Moshiach and the core point of hiskashrus is that your personal desire be to fulfill the Rebbe's will with the awareness that it's good for you materially?

In addition, we need to remember that when we mark a special date that is connected with a particular inyan, this is an auspicious day and we receive special kocho to realize that

particular inyan. On Yud Shvat, the day the Rebbe accepted the nesius, we are certainly granted special abilities that help us strengthen our hiskashrus to the Rebbe. That is why it's important, in the days preceding Yud Shvat, to prepare ourselves so we are proper keilim to receive the revelations of Yud Shvat.

At the Kinus HaShluchim 5752, the Rebbe said that the main shlichus today is kabbalas p'nei Moshiach and this ought to permeate every detail of shlichus. How does kabbalas p'nei Moshiach permeate hiskashrus to the Rebbe?

One of the Rebbe's main horaos regarding kabbalas p'nei Moshiach was to learn inyanei Geula and Moshiach. In the summer of 5751 the Rebbe explained the need to learn inyanei Geula, for learning about Moshiach causes the concept of Moshiach to be internalized. This is very interesting, because generally speaking, the Rebbe puts the emphasis on action more than avoda p'nimis. Yet, when it comes to kabbalas p'nei Moshiach, the Rebbe

found it necessary to point out that the goal of learning inyanei Moshiach and Geula is to internalize inyanei Moshiach.

The Rebbe did say that we shouldn't wait until we internalize it before spreading the message further, since one's wife and children, for example, shouldn't suffer because of his spiritual limitations. Nevertheless, the Rebbe wants us to study inyanei Geula until they are fully internalized.

Perhaps we could say that the Rebbe wants us to know what is really involved when we address the issue of kabbalas p'nei Moshiach. When we talk about the coming of Moshiach, before we learn inyanei Moshiach and Geula, what do we picture? Assuming we're not little children who immediately think of the nosh that will grow on trees, what we see are our loved ones who passed away and the Beis HaMikdash descending from heaven, and the world in peace. This is also a "candy that grows on a tree."

After learning inyanei Geula and Moshiach, we understand that although those things will happen, they aren't the outstanding feature of Yemos HaMoshiach. The chiddush of Yemos HaMoshiach is that we will have the shleimus of Torah and mitzvos, shleimus ha'Am, and shleimus ha'Aretz. From the Rebbe's sichos we learn that the main shift of Yemos HaMoshiach will be the shleimus in the fulfillment of Torah and mitzvos, with the complete integration of this physical world.

The main chiddush of Yemos HaMoshiach will be that all that spiritual perfection will be one with this physical world of ours. It won't be a utopia that is realized on another planet, but a reality right here. This will be the biggest miracle of Yemos HaMoshiach, a world totally in sync with Torah, a world that thinks as the Torah thinks.



The Rebbe said (*Likkutei Sichos* vol. 35, p. 209) that the fact that, according to the Rambam, there is no difference between this world and Yemos HaMoshiach except for servitude to the nations, and yet the world will operate according to Torah – that’s the biggest miracle!

We see this point in everything the Rebbe did for it was all aimed at a single goal: to conquer the world:

Moshiach includes within him a number of elements as they are enumerated in the sicha for Parshas Balak (*Likkutei Sichos* vol. 18): 1) his personal exalted level, 2) his effect on the Jewish people in the fulfillment of Torah and mitzvos, 3) his impact on non-Jews, with force if necessary, 4) his influence on non-Jews as a teacher who does not simply force the world to fulfill the Torah but guides it to understand that not only are the Torah’s instructions correct, they are also beneficial. This is the main point of Moshiach: to bring about a shleimus to Torah specifically within the world, so that the world itself understands that fulfilling mitzvos is the best thing for it.

Today, when we are closer than ever to Yemos HaMoshiach, the avoda is easier than ever. If we just look at what’s taking place in the world (as the Rebbe points out many times), we see how even non-Jews are beginning to think differently, opting for justice and righteousness. For the most part, instead of warring, they persuade one another to act kindly, which is the goal of Torah. They also believe that the guidance of Torah is best for them and they act accordingly!

There is an interesting phrase in a sicha about the story of Nachum Ish Gamzu (*Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 2, p. 394), that when he brought the dust instead of the jewels to the king, Eliyahu HaNavi was there as a minister. He suggested that they

check to see whether this was the dust that turned to arrows like the dust Avrohom used. Of course, they needed to check it out in an actual war.

The Rebbe says: wars are not lacking by non-Jews...and so, for thousands of years wars were a part of a goy’s life. Yet now we see a change in approach in recent years

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among most nations of the world – that they seek an end to war and want peace agreements (as explained in *Sichos Kodesh*, for example Toldos 5750, Mishpatim 5752, etc.).

If the goyim can understand that without war they achieve a better material life, all the more so (l’havdil) can we internalize the idea

that through following the Rebbe’s instructions in every detail of life, we will have a better life, not only spiritually but materially too.

In addition to hiskashrus to the Rebbe, the Rebbe spoke about the need for kabbalas ha’malchus of Moshiach by the people. This seems deeper than the avoda of hiskashrus. How do we implement it?

What I’m about to say is not based on anything written and it’s one of those things that a person can’t know how it will be until it happens, but it’s my *hergesh* (feeling).

When Moshiach appears and the world recognizes him as Moshiach, all will have to accept his malchus and follow his orders. I think this won’t be easy. People think that when the Rebbe appears we will all be tzaddikim and will easily listen to the Rebbe’s horaos. I’m not so sure about that.

As I mentioned before, the Rebbe spoke a lot about the main shleimus of all parts of Torah happening in Yemos HaMoshiach. Even at that amazing time, when we will see the Rebbe again, there will be a yetzer ha’ra which will delay us from carrying out the Rebbe’s horaos and we will have to work hard to overcome obstacles.

It’s true that the Geula can take place in a way of “I will hurry it,” and then it will be completely different, but we can’t forget what the Rebbe explained regarding the natural process described in the Rambam which is **according to Torah**.

Even if in the end, Moshiach comes in a way of “I will hurry it,” the **inyan** of Moshiach is not miracles and wonders but Torah and mitzvos, and everything is in the hands of heaven except fear of Heaven. Therefore, we will need serious spiritual avoda in order to



get ourselves to fully comply with the Rebbe's horaos.

Kabbalas ha'malchus means to follow the king's orders. We can assume that after the hisgalus there will be new instructions which will certainly surprise many of us and we

need to be ready for a situation in which we will have to strive hard in order to follow them. We need to think about what will truly happen when Moshiach comes: the simcha and the responsibility each of us will have.

To me, the idea of "all of you stand at the ready" means for us to be ready to be soldiers of Moshiach, in terms that he will define. Therefore, one of the ways of preparing for the avoda that we'll have after the hisgalus is to accustom ourselves **now** to follow all the Rebbe's horaos. This way, after the hisgalus, when we suddenly receive challenging, new orders, we will carry them out anyway.

In the final moments of Galus, so close to the hisgalus, the Rebbe wants this inyan to be fully realized by us, and not that we wait until after the Geula.

The story is told of two men who stood in *Gan Eden HaTachton* near the Rebbe's room. At that time, all the doors to 770 were open and the two men stood and spoke about the coming of Moshiach. Suddenly the Rebbe came out of his room, turned to the men and said: It will be just like that! One minute before he wasn't here yet, and one moment later he is.

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HOW AHAVAS YISROEL FITS IN WITH 'BASI L'GANI'?

BY RABBI AVROHOM SHMUEL BUKIET
SHLIACH OF THE REBBE, MASHPIA IN YESHIVAS OHR SIMCHA

In the first maamer that the Rebbe said when he accepted the nesius on Yud Shevat 5711, the Rebbe says that our role, in the seventh generation, is to complete the avoda that had begun in the first generation. The Rebbe even brings Moshe Rabbeinu as an example, for Moshe was the seventh in the enumeration of tzaddikim in each generation starting with Avrohom. This is the theme throughout this first maamer.

Another prominent theme in the maamer is that of Ahavas Yisroel. The Rebbe tells stories from all the Rebbeim that have to do with Ahavas Yisroel. This is what the Rebbe says before he tells the stories:

All those things which the Rebbe, my father-in-law demanded, and so too the rest of the n'siim, they themselves fulfilled. This is like what Chazal say, "He tells his words to Yaakov, His statutes and laws to Yisroel," that what Hashem does, He tells Yisroel to do and observe, and what He commands Yisroel, He Himself does.

So too with the horaos of our n'siim – what they demanded of the mekusharim and those who belonged to them, they fulfilled themselves and did ... Like the inyan of Ahavas Yisroel, where we have a number of stories



from each of the n'siim ...

It's hard to see how Ahavas Yisroel fits in here. When learning the maamer on a simple level, one doesn't see any connection between the topic of Ahavas Yisroel, which appears suddenly in the maamer, to the bulk of the maamer, which is about creating a dira ba'tachtonim. If the Rebbe wanted to prove that everything the n'siim tell us to do, they do themselves, he could have brought many other examples.

From the fact that the Rebbe tells a personal story about each of the Rebbeim, we understand that there is a connection between the theme of the maamer and Ahavas Yisroel.

When we take the first maamer, which is the basis and foundation for the Rebbe's nesius which follows the previous six Rebbeim, we see two outstanding points mentioned earlier: 1) dira ba'tachtonim, which will be fully achieved in Yemos HaMoshiach in the seventh generation, and 2) Ahavas Yisroel, which the Rebbe inserts in the middle of the maamer along with stories.

In order to understand this, we need to look at an amazing sicha from Parshas VaYakhel in which the Rebbe asks why does it say, "and Moshe gathered" specifically with the mitzva of the Mishkan when we don't find Moshe gathering the people in order to command them with regard to any other mitzva.

The Rebbe finds the explanation in an earlier time, the days preceding Mattan Torah, when the Jewish people reached the state of, "and the Jewish people camped there – as one man, with one heart." This unity was necessary before the giving of the Torah because it is only through achdus that the Jewish people can contain the G-dly revelation in this world and receive the Torah.

This is the idea of "VaYakhel" (*k'hilla, achdus*) which was a

prerequisite for the construction of the Mishkan. Before drawing down G-dliness into this world (“and I will dwell in them”), there needs to be Ahavas and Achdus Yisroel.

Mattan Torah and the construction of the Mishkan express the same point: dira ba’tachtonim. The Mishkan created a situation in which, “And they will build for Me a Mishkan and I will dwell among them,” dira ba’tachtonim. Mattan Torah, the time the decree that separated the upper worlds from the lower was abolished, is when the Sh’china began to descend into the lower realm with Hashem descending on Har Sinai.

The goal of “making Him a dira” within the world of diversity and separation is accomplished by bringing the Unity of G-d into the world of separation. This is no simple task!

Therefore, as a prelude to these two mitzvos which express the inyan of “dira ba’tachtonim,” the Jewish people are tested. It’s like Hashem saying, “Let’s see if we can bring Achdus Hashem amongst you. Can you live among yourselves in unity? If you can live among yourselves in unity, then it is also possible to bring the Unity of G-d down into the world.”

The inyan of “VaYakhel” is a prerequisite for building the Mishkan and “and Yisroel camped” is the prerequisite for Mattan Torah. It is only after there is unity amongst us, as one

man with one heart, that Achdus Hashem can begin to be brought down into the world, making for Him a Mishkan in the lower realms.

This is how we can explain the seemingly inexplicable inyan and stories about Ahavas Yisroel in the middle of the maamer, because the maamer is about our role in completing the dira ba’tachtonim. Since the maamer speaks about the pinnacle of Achdus Hashem in the world (as it’s explained in chapter 37 of *Tanya*), in order to achieve this, we need Ahavas Yisroel amongst ourselves as we find with the construction of the Mishkan and Mattan Torah.

This topic of Ahavas Yisroel/Achdus Yisroel is a prerequisite for bringing the Geula to the world. This is why the Rebbe talks about it at length, explaining and bringing examples from each of the Rebbeim, with the emphasis being to show that in all generations, starting with Avrohom Avinu, the first, the goal has been to bring the Sh’china from heaven down to earth. This was the goal throughout the generations though how the goal was furthered in each generation differed.

In general, in recent years, we see an amazing thing. The Rebbe spent a lot of time innovating mitvzaim that have to do with Ahavas Yisroel. We see this with Mitzva Yom Huledes, the frequent farbrengens, Hakhel, and others. As in the point brought in the maamer, the Rebbe did this himself by

increasing the number of farbrengens to every Shabbos (which was not the case throughout the nesius), giving out dollars for hours, etc. etc., all of which demonstrate Ahavas Yisroel.

Then of course, there is the final sicha that we heard, as of now, on Shabbos VaYakhel 5752, in which the Rebbe spoke a lot about Ahavas Yisroel.

According to what was explained previously, we can understand this quite well now. The very same period of time in which the Rebbe emphasized Kabbalas P’nei Moshiach Tzidkeinu, a moment before completing the dira, the Rebbe also spoke about Ahavas Yisroel, as a preparation for that moment.

Today – as we prepare for Yud Shevat, and are in the final moments before the goal of “and the earth will be full of knowledge of Hashem like the waters cover the seabed” – we must intensify our Ahavas Yisroel. The purpose is not to nullify the cause of the Galus, which began because of unwarranted hatred, but to serve as a fitting preparation before the world openly becomes a dira for Hashem in a way that “all flesh will see.”

Today, more than ever, we have to try to look out for the welfare of our fellow Jew, physically and spiritually, and with Hashem’s help we will immediately merit to see the Rebbe and proclaim in unison, “*Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu V’Rabbeinu Melech HaMoshiach L’olam Va’ed!*”



THE WARRIOR WITHIN

BY BORUCH MERKUR

*No one ever said it's going to be easy to serve G-d, and to never sway. This challenge is the fate of the Beinoni, a warrior for life, fighting for his life against the Evil Inclination. But now, being on the very threshold of Redemption, things are about to change – in fact, the change has already begun! * A new series about the service of G-d.*

THE VOICE OF WISDOM OVER THE FOLLY OF EVIL

When the wicked Eisav was blessed by his father, Yitzchok, he was told “you shall live by your sword,”¹ granting him the ability to be victorious over his enemies in battle²; he was to be a warrior.

In contrast, Eisav's brother, Yaakov, is identified by his voice, as in the verse, “The voice is the voice of Yaakov, but the hands are the hands of Eisav,”³ indicating a more refined, inward character trait, one that is manifest in the service of G-d, in particular through the study of G-dly wisdom in the academies for Torah study. Indeed, just as “the voice of Yaakov” precedes “the hands of Eisav” in this verse, so is the strength of this trait preeminent; it overpowers “the hands of Eisav.”⁴ Thus, Yaakov was also a warrior, but one whose focus is inward, directed toward the battle within, a battle for the victory of G-dly wisdom and the service of G-d over the folly of evil and vice.

AN INNER BATTLE

The notion of an inner battle is illustrated with the following story, as told by Rabbi Nechemia of Dubrovna:

I once saw a Russian soldier being whipped. His crime? While standing watch on a winter night, his feet had frozen in his boots. “Had you remembered the oath you took to serve the Czar,” his commander berated him, “the memory would have kept you warm.”

For twenty-five years,” concluded Reb Nechemia, “the incident inspired my service of the Alm-ghty.”

(Once Upon a Chassid, pg. 217; Shmuos V'Sippurim Vol. 3, pg. 226)

The Warrior Within is like the soldier who is faced with the challenge of fighting off the coldness of indifference and indolence by summoning his inner strength. He strives to stay inspired to properly fulfill his role as soldier, servant of G-d, King of kings, by remembering and contemplating the oath he took to serve Him.

The first words of the holy *Tanya* introduce this fundamental concept: “It has been taught (Nida, Chapter 3, end): An oath is administered to it [i.e., the soul before it is incarnate]: Be righteous; do not be wicked.” In heaven, where the soul basks in the radiance of G-d's glory,⁵ it needs no special oath, something to inspire it and remind it about G-d and its purpose in serving G-d; it experiences G-dliness firsthand. But immediately preceding its journey into the physical world – a world (*olam*) that serves to conceal (*helem*) G-dliness, one that is cold to the reality that “I was created [in order] to serve my Master”⁶ – “it is administered an oath (*mashbiim oso*),” meaning it is “sated” (*soveia*) with the spiritual strength required to serve G-d,⁷ even in the face of the most trying and arduous circumstances. To that extent, the fiery inspiration generated within has the force and power to find outward expression and warm up frozen limbs, to be victorious over “the hands of Eisav.”

THE ORIGIN OF THE EVIL WITHIN

There was a time when there was no internal struggle. Man was free from evil, and goodness prevailed without

obstruction from within. Both his soul and his body were pure and holy by design, untainted by evil, begging the question: how is it possible that he could come to sin? The Rebbe poses this question as follows:

At first glance, it is a profound wonder: how is it possible that there could be sin present in the person of the First Man (Adam HaRishon), of whom it is written, “He [G-d] blew within his nostrils a soul of life,” and whose body was “the formation of the hands of the Holy One Blessed Be He”?⁸ ... Thus, how is it possible that sin could exist in him?

(Basi L’Gani 5731, 2nd discourse, pg. 42)

The Rebbe’s answer focuses on the primordial cause. Namely, G-d, being omnipotent, created a situation whereby even a being of complete purity can be subject to the temptation of evil. Thus, man in his original purity was miraculously granted the power of free choice, the capacity to choose evil.

Ostensibly, the Divine will for the possibility of sin, evil, was manifest in the trickery of the Snake in the Garden of Eden, leading up to the forbidden act of eating from the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge. Thus, we see that (the potential for) evil existed in the world from the outset, but it was – at least for some time – external to man. The Snake, however, infected humanity with its venom, defiling the original purity of humanity from that instance and lasting throughout the generations.

In describing the role of the Snake, the Zohar quotes the verse in B’Reishis:

“The Snake was more crafty than any beast of the field.” Rebbe Yitzchok said: This [Snake] is the Evil Inclination. Rebbe Yehuda said: [It is] literally a snake. They approached Rebbe Shimon [to resolve their difference of opinion]. He said to them: Certainly it is all one [and the same]. It was Samael who appeared upon the snake. Indeed, the form of this snake is the Satan. It is all one. This teaches us that at that moment, Samael descended from heaven riding on this snake. All the creatures saw his form and fled from him. They came to the Woman with seductive words and introduced death to the world.

(Zohar I 35b)

The Zohar continues with the subsequent fall of Adam, the First Man, and a description of the role of the one who was granted the power to correct the stance of man on the earth (leading us back to the beginning) – none other than Yaakov:

Certainly it was with craftiness that Samael brought curses upon the world, destroying the first “tree” [a reference to Adam HaRishon, the First Man —Ziv HaZohar] that the Holy One

Blessed Be He created in the world. This matter was under the jurisdiction of Samael until the arrival of another holy “tree,” namely Yaakov. He took from him [i.e., Eisav] the blessings so that Samael should not be blessed above [in heaven] and Eisav below [on the physical plane]. For Yaakov was the likeness of the First Man. The beauty of Yaakov was that of the First Man ... It is written, “The Snake was...crafty” – this is the Evil Inclination; this is the Angel of Death. Since the Snake is the Angel of Death, he introduced death to the entire world.

(ibid)

Thus, the world and all of humanity was subjected to the Snake’s venom: death and evil. This state continued uninterrupted, until the respite of the Giving of the Torah: “Until the Jewish people arrived at Mount Sinai, its pollution did not cease from the world.”¹⁰

There at Mount Sinai, where all the children of Yaakov stood together to receive the Torah, G-d’s will and wisdom, the Evil Inclination was nullified from the world and they were armed with G-dly holiness to fend off the Snake. However, after the sin of the Golden Calf, they were disarmed and they were once again subject to the attack of the Snake, the Evil Inclination.¹¹

Thus, until the arrival of the Messiah – when “I will cause the spirit of impurity to pass away from the land,”¹² as it was before the sin – the role of humanity (for the most part) is to serve as warriors and overcome the onslaught of the Evil Inclination.

NOTES:

¹ B’Reishis Toldos 27:40

² Ramban ibid

³ Toldos 27:22

⁴ Toldos 27:22

⁵ Rambam’s Laws of Repentance 8:2: “The Early Sages said [Brachos 17a], ‘In the World to Come there is no body or corporality...rather, the righteous sit with their crowns on their heads and they derive benefit from the ray of the Divine Presence.’”

⁶ Mishna Meseches Kiddushin, end.

⁷ Kuntres U’Maayan, maamer 14, Ch. 1

⁸ See B’Reishis Rabba (24:5), etc. – see footnote 52 in original.

⁹ B’Reishis 3:1

¹⁰ Zohar I 52, referring to the Snake.

¹¹ Ibid

¹² Z’charya 13:2

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A CHASSIDISHE SHABBOS IN VENICE

*Rami Benin was raised in Bologna, Italy, learned about Venice and its rich Jewish history, and wanted to set up a Chabad house. He dreamed that every Jew who visited Venice would find a place where he could feel at home and get what he needed, materially and spiritually. * Ofra Badosa stayed in Venice for Shabbos, and describes her experiences.*

The train moved slowly through the changing scenery, snowcapped mountains to our left. Every so often we passed by small, quaint towns. After traveling for several hours, the train drove alongside a blue lagoon and in the background one could begin to see houses on the horizon. This was Venice, a jewel of a city!

Can I describe in words how beautiful Venice is? Can I describe the little alleyways, the picturesque canals, or how quiet it was on the water? Even if I described it, you would be missing the charm, the magic, which just cannot be depicted in words. When I was there, I felt as though I was on some huge stage set.

Venice was founded 1500 years ago, but it began to flourish 900

years ago when wealthy merchants who did business with lands in the East settled there. The city is built on the water. The Venetians placed massive supports in the sea and built an entire city upon it. The city has no streets or cars. Instead of streets there are canals and bridges. Many bridges. Instead of wheeled vehicles, there are gondolas.

On the Large Canal one can board ship-busses, and there are floating ambulances, police boats, freight boats, and gasoline tankers.

On the banks of the canals are beautiful palaces that were built by wealthy merchants. The narrow alleyways and old buildings contribute an air of charming intimacy.

On Acharon shel Pesach we

went to see how they are mekabel p'nei Moshiach at the Venetian Seudas Moshiach. Walking in a strange city is a unique experience, especially when you live in Eretz Yisroel. It was a half-hour's walk between alleyways and over bridges until we reached the Jewish ghetto.

We passed by the Lubavitch yeshiva, which was open but nobody was there, and from there we passed the Chabad house and continued towards the restaurant that is run by the shliach.

From the alleyway we could already hear the sound of niggunim. It was heartwarming to hear the familiar tunes. I had arrived home. The farbrengen was in full swing. The men sang and the women sat around the table and talked.

The Jewish ghetto in Venice was built 400 years ago. Back then, a few wealthy merchants ruled Venice and they waged wars in Europe. In order to finance the expenses of war, they had to borrow money from the Jewish moneylenders. This is why they allowed the Jews to live in an area surrounded by a wall outside the city and how the Jewish ghetto came to be.

The Jews' movement was limited, for the walls of the city were open only during the day. The

Jews had to wear yellow or red turbans or hats so they could be identified. In its heyday, about 4000 Jews lived in the ghetto in an area of about two streets. It was first in 1797 that the gates were opened and the Jews were allowed to live and move about in the city like other citizens.

Before World War II about 1300 Jews lived in the ghetto. 289 of them were shipped off by the Nazis and only 7 of them returned home.

Today in Venice there is a Jewish community of 400 people. It's a small community and shliach Rami Benin lives and works there.

Rami grew up in Bologna, Italy. When he learned about Venice and its rich Jewish history, he wanted to open a Chabad house there. He dreamed that every Jew who passed through the city would find a place

to feel at home and get what he needed, materially and spiritually.

When Rami wrote to the Rebbe and asked permission to open a Chabad house, the answer was positive. Later on he saw the letter he had written to the Rebbe with the word "Venice" circled.

It needed a lot of daring, vision, and charisma to open a Chabad house, a yeshiva, and a restaurant. The Benin family has brought a lot of chayus to the Jewish ghetto since they arrived. The city finally has a kosher place to eat, hachnasas orchim, and regular minyanim. The presence of Chabad and the Rebbe are strongly felt in the alleyways of the ghetto of Venice. Many tourists who come to visit the ghetto are there thanks to the work of the shluchim. Out of the 12 million tourists who arrive annually, about 300,000 of them are Jews.

The Chabad house, which is located in the main square of the ghetto, is open to all. Even non-Jews come in order to say "shalom" and to ask questions. On the other side of the square is the Chabad yeshiva of Venice, where a group of bachurim sit and study for smicha.

The yeshiva is eight years old and serves as a shul which has three minyanim daily. The bachurim speak with the tourists, learn a chapter of *Tanya* with them, or a sicha of the Rebbe.

The third side of the "Venetian triangle" is the Gam Gam Restaurant. It's the only kosher restaurant in Venice and has been around for ten years already. Shachar, Rami's wife, says that a year and a half ago they decided to make some major changes in the appearance of the restaurant and the menu. It was important to them



that non-religious Jews come and see that a kosher kitchen could be a bit more creative than chicken soup and schmaltz.

"It's a Kiddush Hashem to enable people to sit in a kosher restaurant and eat a gourmet meal."

The atmosphere in the restaurant is unique. I can tell you that for me it was a great pleasure to sit eat in a restaurant each day of my visit to Venice.

On a daily basis the restaurant is a business. Jews and non-Jews can come, sit on the banks of the canal and enjoy excellent food. The restaurant is listed and recommended in guide books. In addition to the physical nourishment, there is also spiritual nourishment that you can get as you sit and eat.

Many questions are asked of the waiters and the shluchim, Rami and Shachar. On the wall is a picture of the Rebbe MH"M. On Shabbos you can come and eat for free. The meals are actually beautiful Chassidishe farbrengens.

During the week that I spent in the city, I felt that Gam Gam was my second home. The manager of the restaurant, Avichai, came to Venice from Tel Aviv five years ago. He told me that the restaurant seems to be like any other business, but behind the scenes it's only a part of a much larger picture. In addition to providing food for the bachurim in the yeshiva, it also provides catering services for simchas, sends food to sick Jews, and serves as a bustling Jewish center of activity.

The high point of the work of the Chabad House is Shabbos. Even before I went to Venice, I heard about their special Shabbasos. Rami found us an apartment near the Chabad house so we could get to them easily. I arrived at the restaurant at candle lighting time. There were other women and girls who had come to light candles.

The men davened Mincha at the yeshiva and after Maariv they walked back through the alleyways of the ghetto to the restaurant. The guests who filled the restaurant were a "gathering in of the exiles." There were people from all walks of life: young tourists, a chareidi English couple on vacation, two Lubavitcher girls – 16-year-old Chaya and 15-year-old Devorah who came from Pittsburgh to help the Benin family for Pesach, and the Chazan family from Milan with their six children were also there on vacation after an intense Yom Tov. There were some national-religious girls from Raanana who were touring and others. After

"We work primarily with tourists. They usually come to us for only a short time and sometimes, all I have is a few minutes of conversation with them. If they come for a Shabbos meal and we have some luck, they'll stay for the entire Shabbos. So we have to quickly assess what the person we are meeting for so short a time needs, and give him all we've got."

everybody sang "Shalom Aleichem" together, we didn't feel our differences any longer. The bachurim stood arm in arm in the front of the restaurant, moving together from side to side and sang "Eishes Chayil."

Each head of a family made Kiddush separately and then we all washed hands and sat down to the meal. The abundance of great tasting food needed to feed so many people did not diminish the quality of the meal. "On most Shabbasos of the year we have about 150 people at the meal," said Mrs. Benin. During peak tourist season, there can even be 500 guests!

As the evening progresses, the singing and simcha increase. Between courses divrei Torah are said by one of the bachurim. Rabbi Chazan also delivered a wonderful d'var Torah and told stories of the Rebbe.

Picture a summer evening in Venice, the city of gondolas and canals, people strolling about, and then they suddenly hear the sound of niggunim being sung by hundreds of people. Often people stand on the nearby bridges and listen, smile, and clap.

After we said the Birkas HaMazon together, most of the guests went on their way. About twenty people remained. Bachurim spoke with the guests, mostly about Judaism and Chassidus. Some people sit on the banks of the canal and breathe in the k'dusha of Shabbos.

Shabbos. 10:00 in the morning and Shacharis at the



yeshiva. Out the window that overlooks the square you can see groups of Israeli tourists. Rami is focused on his davening or on saying a chapter of T'hilim. As soon as he hears tourists outside he goes out with some bachurim and begins to talk to them. They slowly come in, the women to the ezras nashim, and I learn a sicha of the Rebbe on the parsha with some of them.

After they take a look around Rami gathers them and has one of the men recite Kiddush. Only then do they continue on their way with shining eyes. You can see how the pintele Yid in each one was aroused.

After the davening everybody goes to the restaurant for the lunch meal. We eat together and sing and enjoy Shabbos. I take this opportunity to have a somewhat longer talk with Mrs. Benin. She told me about her shlichus and about Shabbos in Venice:

"The type of work here is

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different than that of most shlichim around the world. We work primarily with tourists. They usually come to us for only a short time and sometimes, all I have is a few minutes of conversation with

them. If they come for a Shabbos meal and we have some luck, they'll stay for the entire Shabbos. So we have to quickly assess what the person we are meeting for so short a time needs, and give him all we've got.

"One day a British couple in their forties came into the Chabad house. The husband was very upset about something that happened during the visit to the Jewish museum nearby. With a little smile I suggested that he put on t'fillin to make him feel better.

"He didn't like that idea and said that many years ago he had a very unpleasant experience with a rabbi. We continued talking and they told me that they were planning on staying in Venice for a week. Of course, I suggested they join us for Shabbos. They politely told me they had better things to do on their vacation.

"I couldn't get them out of mind. I told my husband about them and he consoled me and said that I did the best I could. The next day we went to the hospital to take care of something and I saw the British couple headed our way. I was surprised to see them there since the hospital is an area that is not at all a tourist destination. I jokingly asked whether they were lost and introduced them to my husband. We spoke and I invited them again for Shabbos.

"The next day, Wednesday, I was walking quickly down a busy street. There were so many people, yet in the crowd I noticed the British couple! Divine providence was so obvious and we laughed at meeting each other yet again.

"On Friday, as I prepared the restaurant for the Kiddush and the meal, I didn't stop thinking of them. I knew that although they

weren't with us for Shabbos, they were certainly thinking of us.

"Everybody gathered and we began with 'Sholom Aleichem' and 'Eishes Chayil.' We made Kiddush and washed and as the first course was being served, the door opened and the British couple walked in. We were so happy to see them that we hugged as though we were family.

"Between the first and second course, my husband and bachurim from the yeshiva got up and began to dance. They went among the diners and drew them into the dancing. It was a very cold day and on days like that we usually don't go outside, but that Friday night there was such energy and chayus that everybody went outdoors and began singing and dancing on the banks of the canal.

"The women followed to watch and join in by clapping. While I was preoccupied with getting the next course ready, I noticed that aside from me there was only the British woman in the restaurant. I knew it was an opportune time to speak with her a little about Judaism. I didn't know what to speak about, whether about Shabbos or kashrus and then it struck me.

"It was just the two of us there in the restaurant. They would continue dancing outside for at least another ten minutes. I would gently present the mitzva of family purity to her. I had nothing to lose.

"I went over to her and began to talk and the more I said the more she asked. It was unbelievable how Hashem created this situation so she would listen to this. Who would have thought, at the beginning of the week, when I met them at the Chabad house for the first time, that we would be able to

speak so openly together?

"The men stayed outside for half an hour as though Hashem ensured we would have ample time for a deep conversation. She seemed to really take to the idea.

"At the end of our conversation she committed to family purity but said she would do so only with me and so she would wait three months until they returned to Venice. On the one hand I didn't want to push her, but I was afraid she would cool off in the interim. I

tried to tell her that there were lovely women in the area where she lived whom I could connect her with who could help her. She insisted and I let it go.

"On Sunday we were surprised yet again when her husband showed up to put on t'fillin. Before we said goodbye we exchanged e-mail addresses. Her husband had a website and we decided to keep in touch via computer. For two months we corresponded and then suddenly we didn't hear from them.



I hoped it was only a temporary problem with their service, but no, that was it.

“Three months passed, four, five, and they didn’t come to visit. It seemed the story had ended there, yet I felt I had achieved something.

“A few days later I received a letter in the mail from her. She apologized for not corresponding and said that for various reasons they could not return to Venice, but she said she had followed through on her commitment where she lived. As I read her letter I was reminded of the conversation we had had and her initial reaction to what I had explained about family purity. She had said, ‘But we have a happy marriage.’ I told her it could always be better. She mentioned in her letter that there was a fundamental change in her family because of her commitment.”

* * *

Shabbos afternoon: The men farbrenged in yeshiva while the women were in the restaurant for a Pirkei Avos shiur with Mrs. Chazan. Mrs. Chazan is the daughter of Rabbi Gershon Mendel Garelik of

Milan. Between Mishnayos we heard stories of great Chassidim who passed through her house in her childhood.

She told us stories that she heard from R’ Mendel Futerfas as she sat on his lap. Even in Eretz Yisroel I don’t have shiurim like this with such a strong Lubavitch flavor.

By the end of the shiur there were three stars in the sky and the men returned from shul. We made Havdala on the banks of the river. A magical ending to a magical Shabbos. Mrs. Benin passed by as she removed tablecloths and asked me if I was staying for Melaveh Malka. “I’m making pasta,” she said.

As I said goodbye, she asked me to send her blessings to all shluchos, their husbands and families, that Hashem grant them success in their work and that we merit meeting the Rebbe face to face in Yerushalayim, now.



Rabbi Rachamim Benin

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

AGAINST THE CURRENT

BY RABBI SHIMON WEIZHANDLER

TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY

*Our youth react in a healthy way, as would be expected from young people. So why are you frightened? Look at the child: He sees that Moshiach is about as “against the current” as you can get, and he walks proudly, saying, “I’m with Moshiach.” “I’m going against the current.” * Excerpts from the Melaveh Malka following the “Shabbos Chinuch,” Motzaei Zos Chanukah in Kfar Chabad.*

On numerous occasions, the Rebbe explained the sayings of our Sages, of blessed memory, that “Torah brings healing to the world,” “one who feels [pain] in his head should be involved in Torah,” etc. Yet, we see clearly that even after Torah study, we still have the headache, and the medicine doesn’t seem to be working.

The Rebbe explains that just as a person has a “head,” a heart,” and a “leg,” so does Torah. When he finds the head within Torah and learns it, this helps him to deal with his headache, and similarly we find in connection with all the other limbs. In other words, when we deal with a matter of education out of a desire to increase and improve, it’s quite clear that the very study of the Rebbe’s teachings, which elicits all the spiritual influences, is what already brings us

the entire bracha in the matter at hand.

We will now attempt to learn from the Rebbe’s teachings on the subject of educating young people, with a primary emphasis on the fact that we are not talking about educating someone else’s youngsters but ourselves and our own children.

When Mr. Bentzion Dal, then-director general of the Israeli Ministry of Education, came to the Rebbe for Sunday dollars, the Rebbe gave him a bracha: “May it be G-d’s will that the people at the Ministry of Education start dealing with their own education. It could be when they were young, they missed something, but we’re now coming from Pesach Sheini, “*nishta kein farfalen*” (it’s never too late).” The Rebbe then again said: “The people at the Ministry of Education should start dealing with their own education.

Otherwise, it’s not possible to educate.”

In *Klalei HaChinuch V’HaHadracha* (Principles of Education and Guidance), the Rebbe Rayatz emphasizes that the educator must work with a strong sense of self-assessment, without which things simply won’t work. This is not similar to an artist who paints something and then shows it to others, rather he must demonstrate how he personally sets a living example. What follows deals primarily with ourselves.

The Rebbe’s approach always remain positive, as he looks at everything literally from a G-dly perspective. It is incumbent upon us to see how the Rebbe looks upon the young. It is recommended that we bring a point brought in many maamarim, where the Rebbe explains about the two instances in Torah when it is written, “The nature of the heart of man is evil” – once before and once after the Flood. Note the interesting comparison: The first time it says that man’s heart is inherently evil, G-d brings the Flood and restores life to the world, while the second time (Parshas Noach), it is the very reason why G-d does not wipe out the world. He accepts, as it were, that man is what man will be.

The Rebbe explains that it’s not that the world changed, rather “youth has changed.” In other words, **the same metzius** brought G-d to decide to influence the world. The same conduct of “evil from his youth” can result in

two opposite approaches. Prior to the Flood, He saw the descent and decided that He had to break and crush it. After the Flood, however, G-d said that this fact possesses strength, motivation, and energy – and I'll use it to build the world.

This is how the Rebbe guides the Jewish People as leader of the generation, whose soul includes the souls of all Jews. Who better than him recognizes youth and knows the inner workings of their souls? The real question is: What does one do with such knowledge?

I opened the Tzemach Tzedek's *Seifer HaLikkutim* and looked up the term "*naar*" (youth). While I couldn't seem to find anything that has relevance to the youth of his time or our times, nevertheless, there is what to learn.

Three interpretations of the term "*naar*" appear there that can begin to

bring a semblance of order to this subject.

In the Radak's *Seifer HaShorashim*, the term "*naar*" derives from "*Hisnaari mei'afar*" (shake the dust off yourself), breaking loose from everything, "awaken to leave his mother's womb." He wants independence – "I repudiate."

A second interpretation of the term "*naar*" in the Radak's *Seifer HaShorashim* derives from "*n'ores*" (chaff), something light that quickly flies off, yet something that fire grasps the fastest because it is light and it changes, giving the youth the ability to hold on to the flame.

The third interpretation derives from "*katnus*" (smallness), and the Tzemach Tzedek adds, "*t'mimus*" (integrity). The interpretation continues to state that the youth is also a "*m'shars*," i.e., since he is young, he "serves" those who are older.

During Ms. Geula Cohen's yechidus with the Rebbe thirty-five years ago, the entire conversation centered on the youth in Eretz HaKodesh: Why is he in such a state of decline, wasting his time in coffee houses (that was the main pastime in those days)? The Rebbe detailed numerous marvelous ways how we can learn to look upon our youth and the need to sharpen them.

The first point the Rebbe brought was how young people want someone to give them orders to go out against the current. The Rebbe even had to explain, "I don't mean 'against the law,' rather 'against the current.' The youth have powerful strength, and if we chain them to the current (the Rebbe's own words), they'll go and drink coffee, and they won't even do ordinary things if we won't let them go against the current."

This statement is most appropriate



for the first two interpretations of the word “*naar*”: a) “Breaking loose.” “I’m not going along your path.” “Awaken to leave his mother’s womb.” “I’m moving on.” b) Youth have a spark of fire that must be directed and ignited.

I don’t care, the Rebbe said, how they invest this fire, as long as they invest it. The Rebbe then added: I’m referring to those who throw rocks at cars traveling on Shabbos. This represents the fire, the power, and the pioneer spirit of youth. I don’t *ch”v* agree with this, but it’s fire nevertheless.

Those of us old enough to remember can imagine what a chillul Hashem these rock-throwers caused in Yerushalayim four decades ago. This was a chillul Hashem and an utterly disgraceful mode of conduct, and the Rebbe said to Geula Cohen, the Zionist (against whom these people were essentially throwing their rocks), these rock-throwers have the fire. I don’t agree with them, but I won’t speak out against this, rather I’ll direct it towards more positive things.

The Rebbe says the same thing regarding those who travel the world for the purpose of climbing high mountains – they too have the fire. They’re looking for something to express going out of one’s boundaries and limitations, and they’re prepared to have complete self-sacrifice. So if you have such abilities, why don’t you use them? Because they don’t have anyone to give the call and the command, and therefore, they go to the coffee houses.

This means that young people are characteristically prepared to change, and to go the limit as “fire in the chaff.”

As the yechidus continued, the Rebbe came to the third interpretation: “smallness and integrity.” The Rebbe emphasizes that this must be “without compromise.”

In one of the issues of *Beis Chayeinu*, there was printed a yechidus with an educator. The Rebbe spoke with him about the fact that “youth

simply can’t tolerate anything fifty-fifty.” Throughout *Igros Kodesh*, the Rebbe frequently writes that “young people absolutely can’t stand, and push away, all matters of compromise and half-truth.”

(It should be noted that in Musar s’farim, it is emphasized that Yosef was a “*naar*.” In contrast, the Rebbe Rayatz explains in his maamarim that Yosef’s brothers were shepherds, because they simply couldn’t tolerate worldly presumptions nor could they understand how Yosef can be a tzaddik while living his daily life and curling his hair. They were suspicious of him and said to themselves, “Let’s see how this revolutionary hero survives in the real world: Go to Egypt and let’s see you succeed there.” In fact, that’s how they saw things at face value. This is the way of a “*naar*.” Revolution. We bring this parenthetically without *ch”v* attempting to comprehend the matter according to its simple interpretation, however, it seems that we can derive our obligation from here.)

In summation, the Rebbe sees that youth possess the level of “smallness” and want to be “servants,” however, together with this, there is the aspect of “*ninar*” (breaking loose) – the desire to go out against the current – not along the accepted path.

We will now try to bring this concept down and connect it to us:

The youth want to go against the current. Period. There’s nothing you can do about it. The youth do it with “*koch*” and enthusiasm – “*faifen oif der velt*.” The youth are not embarrassed about what the neighbors will say, as we are. They embarrass us, “lights of Tohu.” The Rebbe says that if we don’t give them something against the current (we’ll soon explain about the need to provide direction), and especially if we use suppression, other things will also start to deteriorate! This is their nature – “Break loose” and with fire – “*kahcht zich*.” The fact is if we don’t provide them with an aspect of holiness, they’ll immediately go elsewhere. That’s what a *naar* is, and

that’s what he’s called in *Lashon HaKodesh*. He does things simply and innocently, and if he believes in something, he’s for it all the way. *Lhavdil*, even in its simplest sense, the Tzemach Tzedek that a *naar* is also a “*nar*” (Yiddish for “fool”), yet “and He loves him,” he is also a child.

How it is possible to go between the raindrops? This is a problem! But the Rebbe taught us many concepts on how to perceive such things: The Rebbe’s private discussions from thirty and forty years ago are valid even in 5767!

During the first years when bachurim traveled from Eretz Yisroel to 770, until the Rebbe arranged for them to come for a whole year, the T’mimim would stay from Pesach for a few months. The bachurim who came wrote to the Rebbe that there were not enough printed sichos in *Lashon HaKodesh*, and they asked if they could translate them (a most revolutionary proposal, considering the difficulty involved in getting the Rebbe to agree to the printing of selected sichos in Yiddish). No one even wanted to submit the suggestion to the Rebbe.

Yet, there were two bachurim from Eretz Yisroel who said that they wanted to handle this project. They submitted a request, and the Rebbe responded: “Very appropriate and correct – this is a very good thing, but *ch”v* not you, because someone goes out from Eretz Yisroel to Chutz LaAretz only on certain conditions – Torah study, etc.”

Let’s analyze what happened here: The “*no’ar*” come with a request to translate against all realistic chances. The Rebbe agrees on the matter, and even gives tremendous encouragement – “Very appropriate and correct” (but he didn’t want them to do it at this stage).

In our generation, youth is influenced more by friends than by parents. This matter appears in many of the Rebbe’s answers, when the Rebbe instructs parents to find friends who can speak to the heart of their

youngsters. The Rebbe explains why this is so.

Due to a person's natural closeness to himself, parents who see their child's deficiencies can not encourage him as is fitting. It would seem, in fact, that it should be the opposite, for who is closer to the soul of a child than his parent? However, if we look into the matter correctly, we see that the parent is really subjective. He knows his child, claiming, "They'll make minced meat out of you," "You won't succeed," "We've known you since you were born," as they really don't believe in him or his success. The very person who can encourage him the most is someone from the outside.

The concept of education is essentially setting a living example, and sometimes the parent is not a proper example. (Someone once asked: How can the Alter Rebbe say that *Tanya* contains the answers to all the questions that Anash ask, when it doesn't have any chapters on the subject of education, besides the opening summary of "*Chanoch LaNaar*"? The answer: If you act like a "beinoni" should, you son will automatically act that way as well.)

The problem of many parents is that they want to act as they do, while the child has to act properly educated.

There are families that understand the essence of the matter and they encourage the children to establish a connection with someone upon whom they rely. Similarly, they ask yeshivos (even for a fee) to arrange for someone to be an example for their sons who learn there.

This gathering also has another objective, and the most important of all: education for Moshiach and the Redemption.

When we think really think about it, what can we possibly choose that is "against the current," "precious," and also "the height of innocence" more than "Moshiach"?

The Rebbe hasn't given us "the Moshiach problem" but a gift from the

"hidden treasures." "*Koch zich* (Get excited) *in Moshiach*" – the perfect gift for us. This is a gift from which we can also profit. You're given a gift, think about how to produce from it the maximum educational value.

Our youth react in a healthy way, as would be expected from young people. So why are you frightened? Look at the child: He sees that Moshiach is about as "against the current" as you can get, and he walks proudly, saying, "I'm with Moshiach."

The Rebbe says the same thing regarding those who travel the world for the purpose of climbing high mountains – they too have the fire. They're looking for something to express going out of one's boundaries and limitations, and they're prepared to have complete self-sacrifice.

"I'm going against the current."

After he looks into the matter, he'll say that this is "infantile," "childish," but also "breaking loose – leaving the mother's womb." "Children embarrass the elders." The Rebbe frequently mentions how the child goes in a different direction than the parents. The Rebbe explained many times that this is one of the signs of the Exile. The mother tells her son, "Sit quietly and study. Why do I have to hear that you went out and put up posters?"

The Rebbe says that "Children embarrass the elders" is one of the signs of the footsteps of Moshiach, as is "We have no one upon whom we can rely."

This is going against the current – and with "*fairkait*" (with fire), but it must be a holy fire, since fire can't be crushed. Youth can't stand anything fifty-fifty. "Youth has absolutely no tolerance for **half-truth**." There are those who use concepts of "half-truth" – and the Rebbe says that this causes failure.

The Rebbe often said that one of the main concerns the Rebbeim were involved in is the field of education. It's permissible to break one's head a little bit and do something to make education the very best that it can be.

In a sicha from Shabbos Parshas Tazria-Metzora 5751, the Rebbe says that leprosy (*tzaraas*) stems from holiness. The point here is that the power of desire essentially belonged to the realm of holiness, but the klipa stole these sparks from there. The Rebbe states that if this strength is directed towards the concept of Moshiach, it returns the strength to holiness, since as is known, Moshiach is called a "leper." Moshiach has the special "*koch*" of the lights of Tohu, since it is connected to this power of desire.

We have to take a seifer and learn it. The energy and fire are essentially joined to Moshiach, however, we have to place them into vessels in order that they will connected to Moshiach, and not something else. The job of the youth is to be "fire" – "against the current," and the job of parents is to direct and navigate in order that this power of desire can take proper expression through the study of Moshiach and the Redemption.

"*L'Chaim, L'Chaim!*" The very fact that we are sitting together at a "*chassidische Melaveh Malka*" will hasten the moment when our young people will "shake the dust off" our physical eyes and the eyes of the world.

R' ZALMAN KLEIN A"H

BY SHNEUR ZALMAN BERGER

He was born to a life of mesirus nefesh, was raised this way, and then founded his own Chassidishe home with real mesirus nefesh. That was the life of Rabbi Zalman Klein, who recently passed away.

"He was happy and made others happy," "an ohev Yisroel," "a baal mesirus nefesh" – these are some of the descriptions of R' Zalman Klein who passed away on 12 Teives. The residents of Nachalat Har Chabad, his friends and acquaintances, find it hard to digest the fact that this Chassid – who infused simcha within everyone, always greeted others first, and devoted his time to t'filla and Torah study – has now passed on.

Monday night, the 12th of Teives, after saying the bedtime Shma, R' Zalman didn't feel well and an ambulance was called. The paramedics began to treat him and R' Zalman asked for a cup of water. He said the blessing loudly and with chayus, as usual, and a few minutes later he had a heart attack and lost consciousness.

After he was stabilized, he was taken to Barzilai hospital in Ashkelon. He passed away the next afternoon, with his family around his bed, at the age of 81. Hundreds of people attended his funeral from Nachalat Har Chabad and friends and family came from near and far. The funeral passed the main shul

where his good friend, Rabbi Levi Pressman said parting words about R' Zalman's mesirus nefesh for shmiras Shabbos under the communists.

PERSECUTION

R' Shneur Zalman Klein was born to R' Shmuel Menachem and Miriam on Erev Shavuos 5685 (1925) in Poltava. His bris was done secretly and the sandek was his great-grandfather, R' Shaul Moshe Chosidov. He was named Shneur Zalman for his grandfather, R' Shneur Zalman Chosidov, who had died three years earlier.

His family moved when he was about five years old to Pushkina, a suburb of Leningrad, where there was a small Chabad community. His parents' home was open and their incredible Hachnasas Orchim was done despite the fact that they had only one room. The Klein home also hosted a secret minyan three times a day, as well as many farbrengens.

R' Zalman did not speak much about this time in his life and he especially avoided talking about the persecution his father experienced.

The communists knew that his father worked on producing goods so as to avoid Shabbos and he made sure his sons learned Torah, and so they constantly harassed him.

R' Shmuel Menachem's frequent interrogations were extremely difficult for R' Zalman. Even decades later, when he moved to Eretz Yisroel and was a storyteller who enjoyed relating Chassidishe stories that he saw and heard firsthand, he did not talk about his family.

Whenever I met him I tried to draw out some stories of mesirus nefesh from him that he was witness to, especially about his family. It was only after I begged him a lot that he agreed to tell me that his father had been interrogated many times and he even told me a little about one of the interrogations and about the attempt to plant a KGB agent in the minyan at his father's house.

On another occasion he told me of the tremendous fear of the KGB:

"Fear of the KGB and interrogations cannot be explained to those who weren't there. I tell these stories just as examples, while emphasizing that they cannot describe the situation as it was. Every knock on the door at an unreasonable time, made the heart race. Every time a car stopped on the street, we thought it was the end, and that they had come to conduct a search, to arrest us, and

who knew how it would end.

“Even after we emigrated to Eretz Yisroel, the fear continued and the trauma did not end. Many years after we arrived, when there were knocks or noise at the door, I would wake up in a fright and think the KGB had come. A long moment would pass before I would realize where I was, baruch Hashem, in the holy land, and not in Tashkent.”

R' Zalman loved waxing nostalgic over his childhood memories. He would often become emotional and bemoan the current situation as his eyes filled with tears and his voice would break as he said, “The young people cannot understand what we went through back then,” and he would tell about Chassidim, baalei mesirus nefesh.

During the Holocaust his family escaped eastward with a group of Chassidim and for the next two years they stayed on a kolkhoz called Bortyok about 100 kilometers from the city of Opa. After two years of living under harsh conditions, they moved to Tashkent.

BREAKING INTO THE SHUL WITH MESIRUS NEFESH

In Tashkent, the Klein family continued to work on behalf of the community. The family members helped the many war refugees who streamed into Tashkent. Their home was the address for a short or a long stay as well as weddings, brissin, and numerous farbrengens, despite the danger involved.

Their home had a Torah scroll

which was taken, with mesirus nefesh, from the shul that was closed by the cursed KGB. After they heard about the shul being closed, R' Zalman and his brother R' Shaul Moshe decided to take the Torah out of the shul. They broke in to the shul through a window, and took the Torah straight home. From then on, the Klein family had a Chabad minyan.

At the many farbrengens that took place at their house, R' Zalman would listen closely to the stories that were told. Many years later, he still remembered the details of these stories and transmitted them to the next generation.

The KGB began to inquire about what was going on at the Klein house and even tried to plant a secret agent in their secret minyan, as R' Zalman relates:

“One morning I went to work and noticed that my partner was upset and pacing back and forth, looking pale and frightened. He could not be calmed down. I thought he might be worried about a personal problem and would calm down shortly but even after a long time he continued to pace about the store in an obvious turmoil.

“Suddenly he stopped, came over to me and whispered, ‘Listen my friend, I want to talk to you about something secret and important but we cannot talk here because of possible wiretaps. Go out to the street, take a taxi, and go to this address,’ and he gave me an address in a distant neighborhood. ‘I’ll come soon after and we will talk.’ This partner was a non-observant Jew and we were good friends. I was very frightened by all this.

“I left the store and went to the place he had told me to go. A few minutes later he appeared, still as tense as before. As soon as the taxi



R' Zalman on Mivtza T'fillin

drove away he began to whisper, 'When I left my house last night I saw a KGB car parked on the street near my house. After I walked a few steps, a KGB agent got out of the car and told me to enter the car. He took me to the KGB station to interrogate me.'

"My partner didn't know why he had been taken when he hadn't broken any law nor committed any harm to anyone. The KGB questioned him about various things: whether all his business at the store was legal, whether his books were in order, etc. Only after a protracted interrogation did they get to the point. 'They wanted me to do t'shuva, to appear like a religious Jew and gain people's trust, and then to ask to daven in the minyan of the Klein family and to report to them about everything that went on there. They told me openly that they needed an agent to report to them from the inside about what was going on in the house.'

"At the end of the interrogation, my friend continued to tell me, 'They told me to sign the protocol of the interrogation and about my obligation not to tell anyone what it said, and also on another document which said that I knew that the interrogation was a national secret and the punishment for one who revealed it was twenty years in jail. Now do you understand why I came to work in such a state? I promise you that I will not fulfill their request!'

"When I heard his story, I was very shaken. I was amazed by his courage for just the night before he had signed on this top-secret matter and if he told anyone and they found out, that meant twenty years in jail. Yet he had endangered himself and had warned me about the threat to our secret minyan."

Because the KGB closely

***Every knock on the
door at an
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made the heart race.***

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and who knew how it
would end...***

followed their movements, the minyan wandered from place to place. After R' Zalman married, he also hosted the minyan in his house, and this entailed much courage and real mesirus nefesh.

CHINUCH FOR MESIRUS NEFESH

R' Zalman married Perla

Felsenstein in 1950. The wedding took place in the yard of the Klein family with just a minyan of men.

R' Zalman founded his home on mesirus nefesh, which was a way of life in a Chassidishe home under the communist regime. He raised his four sons to mesirus nefesh. R' Zalman didn't suffice with the Chassidishe chinuch he implanted in his sons but also brought melamdin to teach his children as well as other Lubavitcher children.

All his children followed in his ways of Torah and Chassidus, and when R' Zalman passed away, everybody said "mitaso shleima" for all his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren are following in the ways of Lubavitch.

R' Zalman went to work but he kept Shabbos despite the danger. Keeping Shabbos was a big problem for him. The law was that every citizen must work all week aside from Sunday which was a day off. When a Jew tried to avoid work on Shabbos they immediately knew that he was religious. Lubavitcher Chassidim found creative solutions to this problem.

One time, after much nudging

ON A PERSONAL NOTE

R' Zalman was my uncle, my father-in-law, R' Lipa's brother. When I was first married, I was R' Zalman's neighbor and I spoke to him often and tried to get him to tell me about the past. It was only natural to expect this storyteller to be willing to tell me, but to my surprise, he refused.

He knew a lot about the history of Chassidim and I owe him my gratitude for helping me in my work in writing about Chassidim for this magazine and other places. He helped me as long as the information I wanted had nothing to do with his parents or him personally. Throughout his life, he still lived in fear because of what he experienced back in Russia. He even found it hard to say the name of the street where the KGB building in Tashkent was located, a city he lived in for thirty years.

I will always remember this special Chassid, who gave so much, to so many.

on my part, R' Zalman told me about his difficulties in keeping Shabbos:

"I worked in a government store in the main market of Tashkent that was called Halyeski. Since I kept Shabbos, I arranged with the manager that I would make up the hours I missed on Shabbos, during the week.

"This arrangement worked for a long time in relative peace until the higher-ups caught on. One day the administration called all the workers to an urgent meeting. The manager of the store began the meeting by saying that he had heard that one of the employees was a Jew who did not work on Shabbos. 'I thought,' said the manager, 'this was an old Jew who still kept the laws of his religion, and I said to myself that I would let him be because of his age. But recently I heard that he's a young man.'

"At this point, the manager threw a fit and cursed Jews and verbally attacked me. He finally announced that he would force me to work on Shabbos, come what may.

"I wasn't present at this meeting and I heard about it only the next day when one of the members of the administration who was a communist Jew came over to me. He told me about the meeting the day before and tried to convince me to work on Shabbos.

"Of course, I told him he was wasting his time and at the end of the conversation he said to me, 'I didn't know you were one of the Lamed-Vav'niks.'

"Despite the tzaros they caused me, I continued to avoid working on Shabbos even though this entailed danger to my life."

In later years, R' Zalman worked in a factory that produced signs



R' Zalman with his brothers following his aliya.
From right to left: Lipa Klein, Zalman, his son Hershel, Shaul Moshe Klein



Winter 5701, the Klein family. From right to left: Shaul Moshe, Lipa, Zalman and their father R' Shmuel Menachem

containing instructions for factories. It was a small factory and the employees were mostly Shabbos observant. On Shabbos the factory

was closed without the authorities knowing this. One Shabbos they found out that a senior supervisor was going to come and see what

was going on.

All the workers went to work. They wore their work clothes but did not do any actual work. They poured material with a suffocating odor and when the supervisor arrived he looked around and saw a work atmosphere. The terrible smell convinced him to leave posthaste.

A PERSONAL CHAG HA'GEULA ON YUD-TES KISLEV

At the beginning of Sivan 5731 (1971), R' Zalman's brother Lipa left Russia for Eretz Yisroel. He went to the Rebbe for Tishrei and in yechidus he asked the Rebbe, on behalf of his two brothers in Tashkent, whether Anash should offer bribes in order to get the documents they needed to leave the country. The Rebbe said they should not give bribes and things would work out.

Indeed, a few months later, R' Zalman and R' Shaul Moshe and their families received exit visas. R' Zalman left the Soviet Union by train for Poland and he crossed the border on Yud-Tes Kislev 5732. This was his personal Chag HaGeula. Upon his arrival in Eretz Yisroel he settled in Nachalat Har Chabad in Kiryat Malachi, where he fit right in.

He was known as a Chassid with a heart of gold, with many, many stories of Chassidim. He brought joy wherever he went, to old and young, Chassidim and guests.

Since 1980, when he took early retirement, he began participating regularly in shiurim, morning and night. Every morning he left his house at five o'clock. He would daven slowly after learning Chassidus. After Shacharis he sat down for shiurim in Nigleh and

'They wanted me to do t'shuva, to appear like a religious Jew and gain people's trust, and then to ask to daven in the minyan of the Klein family and to report to them about everything that went on there. They told me openly that they needed an agent to report to them from the inside about what was going on in the house.'

Halacha.

R' Zalman was a happy man by nature and brought a joyous atmosphere wherever he went. He would tell stories of Chassidim at farbrengens as the people sitting there sat in rapt attention.

"This was a great loss for all residents of Nachalas Har Chabad," said Rabbi Michael Mishulavin, mashpia of the community in Nachalas Har Chabad about R' Zalman's passing. "His smile for one and all will be missed by all. Whoever davened in the shul in Nachala saw R' Zalman's tremendous chayus, a chayus that was contagious. He greeted everyone graciously and always offered a seat, a siddur, and at the end of every conversation would say, 'to bring good news.' He wanted people to speak positively and say that there would be only good. It's hard to imagine how Nachala will look without R' Zalman."

His passing is a great loss for his family, acquaintances, and the residents of Nachalat Har Chabad.



R' Zalman receiving an award for excellence at his place of employment at Co-Op Rechovot

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THE TRUTH IS THERE IS NO MACHLOKES

BY RABBI YAAKOV SHMUELEVITZ, MENAHEL OF THE CHABAD HOUSE IN BEIT SHAAN

My goal in writing “Stories from my Chabad House” is so that my fellow shluchim and the rest of Anash can use these tips and ideas in their own shlichus. The Rebbe said, after all, that every man and woman is “a shliach of (my father-in-law) the Rebbe, Nasi Doreinu,” in spreading Judaism and the Besuras HaGeula.



This series of stories and articles are a tapestry of hashgacha pratis, siyata d'Shmaya, as well as some creative ideas for how to deal with problems that arise on shlichus, dilemmas, and even hardships, various opponents, etc.

Whenever we encounter a problem that interferes with our shlichus, we know that we were promised that “the hand of Chassidim will come out on top.” Yet, we need Heavenly assistance in order to decide to find the right

approach to solve our problem and maybe even transform it into something positive.

* * *

AVOID DEBATES

Before I went to “cheider” (Yeshivas Chabad in Tzfas) and even before that (the yeshiva in Kfar Chabad and a Litvishe yeshiva), I began to develop a way of thinking that, along with my experience, proved that there is no point in arguing with Misnagdim. In these debates, each side digs in his heels and one-upmanship is the name of the game. It doesn't convince anyone and doesn't help.

What does convince them is when you listen to them. You let him say his piece, being strong enough in your beliefs and path, being ready to hear the garbage too. After he finishes airing his views and complaints, he calms down. Now, in a composed and orderly way, try to get him to hear what he needs to hear.

He might burst out with more accusations. It doesn't matter. Listen to him, and then let him hear what he needs to hear in a composed, orderly way.

It helps and this is a proven method.

When I learned in Tzfas, there was a Litvishe yeshiva there too. We would often encounter bachurim

from that yeshiva and sometimes we got into conversations with them that occasionally erupted into arguments.

There lived a young man in Tzfas who was an expert at getting into debates with these bachurim. He was also very pleased that he was successful in getting through to them by screaming, and had nearly convinced them that they were heretics, etc. The truth is, they weren't convinced at all. They also yelled and argued.

I took a different approach. When I met these bachurim, I tried to have a friendly conversation with them, to inquire about their wellbeing. "What are you learning? How's yeshiva? Do you learn Musar regularly? Would you like to learn Chassidus?" No debates and no yelling. Here and there they heard a story about the Rebbe and about a *Tanya* shiur they could attend.

One day we met and I told them that in the evening, at ten o'clock, there would be a live broadcast of the Lubavitcher Rebbe. It was a fast day and the Rebbe would say a sicha after Mincha (3:15 New York time), and they were invited (after the s'darim) to come and hear the Rebbe.

They came, as they were curious.

They didn't consider me the enemy but a friend to schmooze with now and then, and they came and listened to the Rebbe speak.

The argumentative young man walked in and saw them there and was shocked. You?! You're always against Chabad! Against the Rebbe!

The truth is that they weren't against anything. If we treat them with respect and listen and converse, we can be mekarev every Jew to the Rebbe and Chassidus.

I think today of those bachurim who heard the Rebbe's voice 22 years ago. I think of how many bachurim we could have been mekarev to the light of Torah and Chassidus if we all took the approach of "loving the creatures and drawing them close to Torah."

TO BE INSULTED AND NOT TO RESPOND IN KIND

One time, when I had first started out as a shliach in Beit Shaan 20 years ago, I went to one of the neighborhoods of Beit Shaan for "Mivtza Fundraising." I went from apartment to apartment, door to door, introduced myself, said who I represented, told about my work and asked for support.

At one home I met the balabus

who was sitting with two guests. When I finished introducing myself and explaining why I had come, one of the guests laced into me. "Who needs you in Beit Shaan altogether? We don't need chareidim, 'blacks' in our city. Why do you think we'll give you any money at all?"

Hashem helped me and put the right words into my mouth. I said, "I would like to thank you very much. You enabled me to do a big mitzva."

The man was taken aback. Why was I thanking him when he had insulted me? I told him that it says in the Gemara "those who are insulted but do not insult – the verse says about them, 'His beloved ones are like the sun that goes forth in its might.'" In short, I explained, you enabled me to achieve a very high level and I thank you for that.

The man was suddenly a bit ashamed and he apologized, but that's not the main part of my story.

The next day, as I walked down the street, I met the other guest who was at that house. This other guest protested the way I had been treated and commended me for not attacking him in turn.

We got to talking and he told me he was married several years and did not have children yet. I told him that I would come to his store soon and we would write to the Lubavitcher Rebbe together. He was happy about that and later we wrote to the Rebbe.

A few weeks later we met again and he told me a secret that the bracha was being realized already. He ended up having a son and daughter.

Back to my point – because I refrained from arguing, despite the abuse heaped on me, they all apologized, we became good friends and a family received the Rebbe's bracha.



BY US, THE REBBE SAYS AND WE DO

In 5749, the Rebbe announced that we should help in the Israeli elections, supporting the Agudas Yisroel list whose letter was "Gimmel." This was a shocking unprecedented case in which the Rebbe ordered his followers to get involved in Israeli politics. Those of you who are the right age will remember how we all enlisted to carry out this mitvta.

I remember how the mashpiim were unsure as to whether it was better to daven Shacharis first or to vote first. We definitely all toiveled in the mikva, put on our gartels, and went to vote Gimmel.

At that time, a group of askanim in Beit Shaan got together to support the Degel HaTorah party which was the frum party that was formed to fight Gimmel and the Rebbe. They caused me lots of problems. Wherever we organized a parlor meeting for Gimmel, they came and besmirched us. They spoke against the Rebbe, against the shliach, and not necessarily in the most refined way either.

I remember an encounter in which one of the misnagdim tried to express his disdain for the Rebbe and our derech and said, "You Lubavitchers, you should tell your Rebbe that he'd be better off not mixing into politics."

You let him say his piece, being strong enough in your beliefs and path, being ready to hear the garbage too. After he finishes airing his views and complaints, he calms down. Now, in a composed and orderly way, try to get him to hear what he needs to hear.

I answered, "Maybe you come from a place where you tell your rabbanim what to do. By us, it doesn't work that way. By us, the Rebbe tells us what to do and we do it."

Whoever was sitting there at the table applauded at my answer that was stated simply though firmly. They all knew that this was the truth and this was the right approach.

In any case, the battle raged on (mostly as a covert battle) until the elections and afterwards too, but we

were careful not to attack and besmirch. We continued spreading the light of Chassidus and being mekarev whoever we could.

Years later, the Degel HaTorah party disappeared from the political map and from Beit Shaan too. Some of those askanim though, continued their feud with me. I would greet them and they would be hard pressed to answer, but that didn't stop me from saying hello, from visiting their shul, from sending mishloach manos and shana tova cards, from speaking respectfully in front of others too, as though there was no machlokes. Because the truth is, there was no machlokes.

The years passed and lo and behold, of those three men who led that party, one has a son who became a Lubavitcher and lives in Tzfas. Another one is a good person who independently spreads Torah and when he hears about someone who wants chizuk or a pair of t'fillin, he refers them to the Chabad house. The third one's daughter was a counselor who helped the Chabad camp two years ago.

I offer my advice, free of charge, to all shluchim: take the high road of no arguing. It's the best way to increase ahavas and achdus Yisroel and to bring the light of Chassidus to all groups within the Jewish people.



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HISKASHRUS WORKS BOTH WAYS

A FEW SHORT STORIES ABOUT THE REBBE MH" M

HE WANTED A FOUR-YEAR BREAK FROM BEING A CHASSID

Rabbi Menachem Mendel Groner relates:

There was a Jewish student from

a Lubavitch background who wanted to attend a university in the US. At that time, the Rebbe was speaking strongly against various things going on at American universities. The student was in a dilemma, since, as a Chassid of the

Rebbe, he couldn't go against the Rebbe's wishes and attend the university he so much wanted to attend.

He came up with an original idea. For just the next four years, he wouldn't be a Chassid of the



Rebbe and that would solve the problem!

The Rebbe responded: "If the *hiskashrus* between Rebbe and Chassid was one-sided, then your idea would be a good one. But since the *hiskashrus* between Rebbe and Chassid works both ways, even if you disconnect yourself from the Rebbe, the Rebbe will not disconnect you from him."

CLOSING A CIRCLE

Rabbi Yisroel Brod related this at a *farbrengen* on 20 Cheshvan:

A Tamim who traveled by train from Montreal to Toronto walked among the passengers and offered *t'fillin* to those whom he identified as Jewish. A man was sitting there whom he wasn't sure whether he was Jewish or not, and so he skipped him.

When he returned after visiting all the compartments, he debated whether to try to find out whether the man was Jewish. He finally asked the man who said he was Jewish. The man was polite and friendly and readily agreed to put on *t'fillin*.

He wound the strap around his arm and said the *t'filla* with much emotion. When he took off the *t'fillin* he said to the *bachur*, "You are probably wondering why I was so emotional." The *bachur* nodded and the man said:

"Since the *hiskashrus* between Rebbe and Chassid works both ways, even if you disconnect yourself from the Rebbe, the Rebbe will not disconnect you from him."

"When I was a boy I lived in Crown Heights. We were a religious family, and when many people began leaving the neighborhood, we also left. My father, although he wasn't a Chabad Chassid, greatly admired the Lubavitcher Rebbe and before he left we all had a *yeichidus* and my father asked for a *bracha*.

"I was only seven years old, so I don't remember much of the conversation. I just remember that at the end of the *yeichidus*, the Rebbe suddenly turned to me and said that in the future, if ever asked to put on *t'fillin*, I should not refuse. I promised.

"Many years have passed since then. I dropped religious

observance and even married a non-Jew and had children with her. Now here you are and when I saw you walking around and offering *t'fillin*, I recalled that encounter with the Rebbe. The Rebbe's prophetic words have been realized," concluded the man, wiping away his tears.

COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

The *mashpia* Rabbi Avrohom Meizlich relates:

In 5712, Rabbi Yitzchok Meir Levin went to the US and visited the Rebbe. The Rebbe asked him whether it was true that the Israeli government distributed money to churches and mosques. When Rabbi Levin said yes, the Rebbe asked him, "How do you agree to that?"

Rabbi Levin said, "I am the Minister of Welfare and have no connection with that."

"It is everyone's collective responsibility!" exclaimed the Rebbe. "You need to bang on the table and show that this bothers you."

"Do I need to leave my position?"

Answered the Rebbe, "You didn't ask me and I didn't answer you about whether to take the job in the first place."

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DIFFICULT TO BREATHE DUE TO ALL THE CORRUPTION

BY SHAI GEFEN

"DIFFICULT TO BREATHE"

It's hard to find a more accurate description of the current state of affairs than that expressed recently by former Israeli Supreme Court Justice, Mishael Cheshin, who said, "It's difficult to breathe due to all the corruption." He went on to say, "Israel is going through a great and difficult earthquake. The ground is trembling before the volcano erupts, and if it spreads any further, we will be destroyed as a nation and a society."

What used to be the feeling of a minority in the religious community, and became even stronger under Sharon in the days leading up to the Disengagement, has reached insufferable proportions. Now, the entire country feels the suffocation in the face of the waves of corruption pouring forth from every direction. Each day seems to bring new sinister revelations.

Cheshin, understandably, is concerned about the corruption issue as is any sane person in Israel. He has finally begun to realize that political decisions made by the Prime Minister or his ministers are not necessarily connected to security, peace or economic concerns, but are driven by decidedly extraneous motives. What was only recently seen as speculation and conspiratorial thinking is now manifestly clear to all, and the so-

called leaders have been exposed in their treachery.

The writing is on the wall. Cheshin is worried about the societal impact and the damage caused to the atmosphere of lawfulness in the country. However, we need to also see the positive side of what is unfolding before our eyes. If in the past, the leadership represented a vision for the future and security, and people were willing to follow them blindly, now, as a result of the spreading cancer of corruption, their trustworthiness in the eyes of the public is close to nil.

Two weeks ago signaled the anniversary of Olmert's reign as Prime Minister, and the half-year anniversary of the second Lebanon War. The poll results published in the media for that occasion didn't surprise anybody. Close to eighty percent of those polled felt that his job performance was poor. An earlier poll disclosed that the public perceives the Prime Minister as an extremely corrupt individual.

Cheshin is correct that it is difficult to breathe due to all the corruption, but the corruption didn't begin recently, it has only now been exposed. The very Supreme Court where Cheshin served, which is supposed to be the most "untainted" institution in a democratic society, is now perceived as one of the most corrupt of all the governmental

institutions. It is that corrupt court which allowed other corrupt people to rule in a dictatorial fashion, as long as they toed the left wing ideological line of the court. We saw this during the Sharon years, as the High Court Justices protected him at all costs, in order to enable him to carry out the Disengagement according to their wishes. Now, we are merely seeing the results of the criminal behavior that the various branches of government practiced throughout the years.

The corruption didn't begin yesterday or even two years ago. This has been a long and ongoing process, however, we have finally now reached the stage of clarification expressed in the verse, "Many will be clarified, purged, and purified."

We can't, however, allow ourselves to be overwhelmed by the situation. To the contrary, it should give us strength to see the entire infrastructure of exile collapse, especially as they themselves are destroying the governing system that they constructed and took pride in.

This process is part of the Geula process of the cleansing of evil, purging and purification, in anticipation of the revelation of Melech HaMoshiach, who will then establish the pure and unsullied kingdom of the Jewish people.

"ONE WHO COMES TO KILL YOU..."

Two weeks ago, the police received a report about a shooting in the area of Chavat Shai (the Shai farmstead) near the yishuv Meitar. Police arriving on the scene found two men, residents of the settlement areas, who were wounded by bullets. Shai Dromi, age 50, the owner of Chavat Shai, explained that was forced to shoot in the direction of the Bedouin suspects when they broke into the farm and threatened his life. After the shooting, he tried to apply first aid to the two. However, one of the men, Chalad al Atresh, known to the police as a repeat offender for many previous break-ins, died.

The media began a relentless attack against the farmer, who now faces a difficult legal situation. A number of Knesset members, who are well aware of the tremendous problem of thievery which the country's farmers suffer from, are organizing to change the laws as a result of this occurrence.

Chaim Dayan, who heads the Association of Israeli Beef Cultivators, says that over the last two years, 4,326 animals have been stolen by Arab thieves. "Cows, heifers, and sheep – about 30 million shekels worth of damage," he said. "Most of the stealing is by the Bedouins, both in the north and the south of the country."

Dromi's brother Amir said, "It is better to pay \$100,000 for a lawyer to defend my brother than \$50 for flowers to put on his grave," Amir said. "He did the best thing he could do to save his life and my mother's life. That is really all I have to say."

Once again, we see the twisted morality of those who don't follow the laws of the Torah, which rules that "One who comes to kill you, kill him first." This is a clear example of the law of "one who comes through a tunnel," who according to the Torah

"his blood is forfeit." The Gemara explains that the Torah knows the ultimate intention of the thief, namely, that if the owner catches him, then the thief will try to kill him. Therefore, the law is that if a thief enters a home stealthily by way of an underground tunnel, one is permitted to kill him, because "one who comes to kill you, kill him first."

In this specific instance, the thieves made their intentions clear and they were actually trying to kill him after being caught, but those practitioners of the moral double standard (S'dom and Amora style) are still deliberating as to how to punish the man who performed this moral act of self defense.

"WHOSE SIDE WILL THE ISRAELI POLICE TAKE?"

The Prime Minister together with the media in his wake, are up in arms over a woman settler from Chevron, who supposedly shouted at some local Arabs. The Defense Minister, who is clueless when it comes to dealing with security problems (even when his own home in Sderot is under fire), and is busy fulltime coming up with new spins in order to survive in the political arena, found himself a choice opportunity to attack this Jewess.

She was filmed in a provocative documentary produced by Shalom Achshav (who the Rebbe called the *meraglim* of our times), for the express purpose of discrediting the Jewish residents of Chevron. The Israeli police, of course, also concluded that the Jews are at fault, and they brought her in for questioning.

How shameful and how despicable is such a display, when at the same time, they all spill crocodile tears to show their mercy for an Arab family that was incarcerated. What a pity. Sadly, this is not the first story of its kind, but is indicative of a long history.



This process is part of the Geula process of the cleansing of evil, purging and purification, in anticipation of the revelation of Melech HaMoshiach, who will then establish the pure and unsullied kingdom of the Jewish people.

It never ceases to amaze, when one rereads the letter of the Rebbe, written almost 40 years ago, explaining why he refrains from sending his Chassidim to settle in Chevron. One can see open and astounding prophecy regarding how the Israeli government will end up treating the settlers. This letter was written to the Chief of the Southern Command, General Ariel Sharon (12 Elul 5728/1967):

If that is the situation regarding Yerushalayim the Holy City, how much more so – just how bad is the situation regarding Chevron, which is inhabited solely by Arabs and was never the place of the Mikdash, etc. Additionally, the Arab community there is well established and developed, and according to reports, they are also organized, which strengthens even more my

aforementioned position.

Despite the above, we have repeatedly looked into the possibilities regarding establishing a yeshiva, etc., and I received a clear response that “I am better off” looking into a yeshiva in Yerushalayim rather than Chevron. It is understood that amongst the settlers there are a number of Chabadniks (some openly and some hidden), and certainly you are aware of the position of the settlers and their conditions there, which is not far removed from that of prisoners, etc., etc.

The explanation given is as mentioned before, based on “justice and righteousness,” and the common basis for all of these phenomena is – what will the “larger” world say, etc., etc., as we spoke during your visit here.

For example, if, “may it not come pass,” there will be an altercation between an Israeli youth and an Arab youth. Being that the Arab youths are the majority there, it is possible, may it not come to pass, that the Israeli youth will suffer blows, etc.; according to your opinion, whose side will the Israeli military police stationed there take? Especially, if the (Arab) mayor (who I think took part in the pogrom in Chevron) will come and raise a hue and cry over the provocations of the Jews, etc., etc.

MORAL DOUBLE STANDARD

The Sunday before last, two events took place. A female Knesset member from “Yisroel Beiteinu” attacked the decision of Amir Peretz to appoint an Arab minister to the government. On that same evening, an Arab Knesset member made an appearance in Ramallah, where he praised the armed insurgency against the “occupation,” and even encouraged the terrorists.

Predictably, the Jewish Knesset member was condemned from the right and the left for her “racist” statement, because how can one speak out against an Arab Moslem who sits

in the government (and reports directly to the enemy about the decisions of the government and about what is discussed behind closed doors); whereas the Knesset member who identifies with those who seek to murder us and our children, acted legitimately, and was even applauded by certain elements, primarily the media.

This is to teach us the values of the moral double standard, which is fraudulent and self-serving. The brainwashing throughout the years by the left in favor of the Arabs has been entirely too effective.

ARAB STUBBORNNESS VERSUS JEWISH DEFEATISM

There is a bizarre phenomenon that repeats itself regularly, but still remains hard to explain. The more we debase ourselves and are prepared to offer them the world, the more the Arabs refuse to accept.

Those familiar with recent history, remember Barak at Camp David offering to give Arafat everything, including Yerushalayim and the Temple Mount, but the arch-murderer refused. Today, Olmert and Livni proclaim repeatedly that they are willing to give away all, as long as the other side shows “flexibility,” but the stubborn Arabs refuse to give in and are unwilling to listen. The government brings us Condoleezza Rice, and tries all sorts of tactics to strengthen the “moderates” and undermine the “extremists,” but nothing seems to work.

The Rebbe already addressed the fact that this is a miraculous phenomenon:

They keep repeating the same mistake they made after the Six-Day War and after the Yom-Kippur War, as well as the mistake they made the first time that they were close to the Suez Canal. With Hashem’s kindness the Jews enjoyed a complete victory and were able to retake many

territories. Despite this, Jews, who were given free will as a gift by HaKadosh Baruch Hu, came and returned all these territories, and now they are repeating the same mistake!

Yehi Ratzon, since “The Keeper of Yisroel does not sleep and does not slumber,” there will certainly be a miracle like the previous times, (even though we now need a greater miracle than that which occurred then, since the mistake and retreat is immeasurably greater), when despite their running after them and pleading that they take back the territories, they refused to take! (The reason given was that they don’t want to take individual territories because they want everything; however, the true reason is due to “the heart of kings and ministers is in the hand of Hashem.”)

And so, Yehi Ratzon that in our days also the same miracle should take place, namely that the Arabs will not agree to take the territories; and the entire Eretz Yisroel to all its borders should belong to the Jews, “An eternal inheritance for the eternal nation.” (Perhaps it is possible to find some extenuating excuse for the Jews, i.e. that the reason they agreed to give over territory is because they were relying on a miracle that the Arabs won’t agree to take them.

In truth, that is a very tenuous justification, however, when it comes to Jews, we need to search out even such weak rationalizations). And may they conduct themselves according to the way that Hashem instructed in His Torah, in general, and especially regarding the ruling in *Shulchan Aruch* Hilchos Shabbos that it is prohibited to give an inch from a place that is “on the border.” This is the case, even if they claim that they are only coming over “matter of straw and hay,” as per the reason explained there “that maybe the city will fall and from there, the land will be easy to conquer before them.”

(Sicha 18 Elul 5738/1978)

THE POWER OF A SHIUR

BY L. MAGEN

The local Rebbetzin had tried several times without much success to gather a group of women for a shiur on Shabbos. Each time, the shiur stopped due to lack of participants. How would Esther manage to host a shiur when the Rebbetzin had failed?

In a neighborhood of a big city somewhere in Eretz Yisroel lives a frum family with Lubavitcher relatives. When Esther, the mother of the family, wrote to the Rebbe through the *Igros Kodesh*, she was surprised to read an answer that had to do with shiurim. The answer was clear: she had to arrange a shiur in her home.

Esther doesn't describe herself as a Lubavitcher but as a "friend of Chabad." Hosting a shiur was a difficult undertaking because she lived in a place that was not particularly interested in Torah study. The local Rebbetzin had tried several times without much success to gather a group of women for a shiur on Shabbos. Each time, the shiur stopped due to lack of participants. How would Esther manage to host a shiur when the Rebbetzin had failed?

A horaa is a horaa and Esther

tried to target those who were not yet religious but was unsuccessful. She persevered, however, and slowly gathered a group of women who got together at her home once a month. Esther held the shiurim on Rosh Chodesh and she had a shliach from a nearby neighborhood come and speak.

Esther spread the word about her shiur and announced that her home was open to all on the eve of the shiur. No tickets were necessary and one friend could bring another. All were welcome.

One evening, a few years ago, a mother and daughter showed up. We'll call the daughter Einat for the purposes of this story. She was in her late teens and it was obvious that she was the one who was interested in learning and her mother had merely accompanied her.

Einat's interest grew and she began to speak to the shliach about Judaism after the shiur. In addition to learning, she began doing mitzvos too.

Who was Einat and how did she come to the monthly shiur that the Rebbe wanted Esther to start? As time passed, additional details were forthcoming. Einat was from a family that considered themselves atheists. Both parents had advanced academic degrees. There was no mezuzah in their home, not to mention any other Jewish symbols. Einat was raised without any basic knowledge of Judaism.

When Einat turned 14, her parents moved to the city where Esther lives. They registered Einat at a high school for the gifted, where she studied advanced biology.

One day, when the biology teacher had a hard time providing a satisfactory answer, she said, "It comes from Above."

All the students looked upward and didn't see anything. What did their teacher mean? Nobody knew.

The teacher was saved by the bell and the students went out for recess. Yet the teacher's words didn't evaporate into the air. Some students were greatly affected by what she said. Being young

intellectuals, they decided they had to solve the mystery and understand what their teacher meant by "Above."

One of the students concluded that she must have been referring to G-d. Yes, that fit. So the students, each in their own way, began investigating the Being called G-d.

Einat's parents had many books at home and one of them, an old one, sparked her curiosity. It was a book that Einat's mother had inherited from her father. It was a holy book and the first one that Einat had ever held in her hands.

That's how she ended up attending the shiur. She asked the rabbi many questions and he answered them, but it wasn't enough. Einat wanted to know more and more and then the Rebbetzin recommended Esther's monthly shiur where the shliach, R. D. gave shiurim.

One mitzva leads to another, one shiur to another, and one story to another. The Rebbetzin, the successful shadchan between Einat and her mother and the shiur at Esther's house, looked for a warm family to host Einat on Shabbos. She asked the R. family, a Lubavitcher couple who lives in the neighborhood.

Surprisingly, this was the first Mrs. R. was hearing about a shiur taking place every month at Esther's house in her very own neighborhood. Yes, a Chabad shiur at Esther's house and Esther is not even a Chabad Chassid!

What about Mrs. R. herself? This spurred her on to establish her own shiur which takes place till this day in her house. People come even from far to enjoy a beautiful evening of divrei Torah with a Chassidishe flavor.

Yes, a Chabad shiur at Esther's house and Esther is not even a Chabad Chassid!

Time passed and Einat made progress. She wanted to switch to a religious school but her parents insisted that she finish high school so she did. From there she went to a Chassidishe school and then she married and founded a Chabad house!

Einat is not the only one in her class who was affected by what her teacher said. Other classmates became religious because of that one sentence.

As for Einat's family, it was hard for them at first to reconcile with all the changes. After much persuasion, they agreed to put up one mezuzah, on their daughter's door. After a while, they realized it was worthwhile going with the flow rather than fighting her. When Einat studied at the religious school, her parents shopped in Kfar Chabad in order to buy kosher food for her. When they traveled abroad on sabbatical, they made sure to be located near a Chabad house.

Today, Einat's mother is a proud grandmother who enjoys Chassidishe nachas. Einat and her family can visit her parents since their home is perfectly kosher.

The power of a sentence. The power of a shiur.

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הרב אהרן יעקב שוויי
חבר הבה"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:

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יחי אדוננו מורנו ורבינו מלך המשיח לעולם ועד

JOIN THE WORLD WIDE HOOK UP, YUD SHVAT TO GREET MOSHIACH

On Monday, January 29th Yud Shvat at 8:30 pm, Neshei Chabad Crown Heights will be hosting a telephone hook up for N'shei Chabad World Wide.

Rabbi Shlomo Majeski, dean of Machon Chana will be the guest speaker.

This evening was inspired by a farbrengen for women in Toronto, with Rabbi Gafni, Rosh Yeshiva of Ohr T'mimim Kfar Chabad. He spoke of the grave situation in Israel, how the government of Israel is trying to fulfill their version of "a messianic vision"!

The Prime Minister and his henchmen see themselves as one with the Arab nations. Their fantasy conjures up giving land to the Arabs, and having open borders, with the freedom to travel to Damascus for lunch and then back home to Jerusalem for dinner. Rabbi Gafni pointed out three obstacles blocking their "vision," the first two seemingly removed (according to the Government's short-sighted and myopic vision):

1) The **"settlers"** – those religious Zionists living in the frontiers of Israel. Some of these pioneers the government has managed to

disengage.

2) The **army** – this summer in Lebanon the army's mystique was stripped away! The once invincible IDF became defeatable.

3) The **Chareidim** – the religious Jews of Israel. The government intends to make it so uncomfortable for them in Israel that they will want

*Imagine the power of
women, worldwide,
uniting to accept the
malchus of Melech
HaMoshiach on the
auspicious day of
Yud Shvat.*

to leave. One small example is the proposed ban on Mivtzaim; imagine such an absurdity in the age of "freedom" and in a land of "democracy".

We as Lubavitchers know who is really running the show! We know what the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach's true Messianic vision

is.

We, the Nashim Tzidkanios, dedicated to the mission of the Rebbe MH"m, have to stand strong for shleimus ha'Aretz, shleimus ha'Torah and shleimus ha'Am. According to the teachings of the Rebbe MHM – we have to be Mekabel P'nei Moshiach – this is the main avoda. You can be part of making this a reality.

Imagine the power of women, worldwide, uniting to accept the malchus of Melech HaMoshiach on the auspicious day of Yud Shvat.

*Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu V'Rabbeinu
Melech Ha Moshiach L'olam Va'ed!*

JOIN NESHEI CHABAD WORLD WIDE, it's just a phone call away!

It can be in the comfort of your own home or with a gathering of friends. Dial 1-712-580-0600 and code 979084# (to repeat the speech, dial 1-641-985-5002 and code 979084#)

For more information call N'shei Chabad Crown Heights, 1-718-493-1773 and leave a message, or call Bina Cole, Toronto, 1-905-881-5198.

(N'shei Chabad of Crown Heights has set up a special program of shiurim, beginning Yud Shvat until Chaf Beis Shvat, with a variety of speakers and topics and they can be accessed by using the above telephone numbers. Call for more details.)