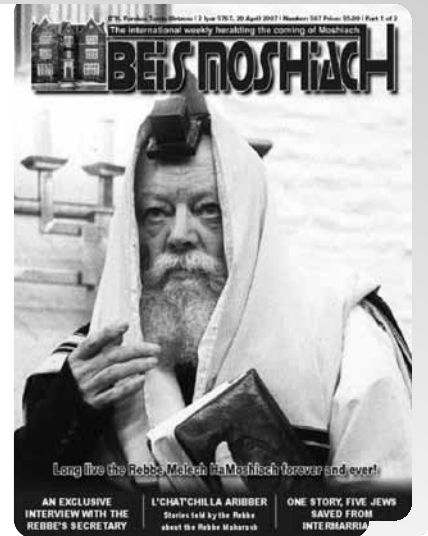


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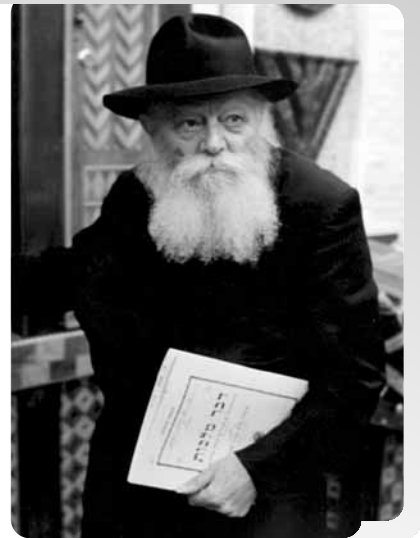
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# IN REFINING THE BODY, ALL JEWS ARE EQUAL

LIKKUTEI SICHOS VOL. 17, PG. 343-346  
TRANSLATED BY BORUCH MERKUR



1. It is a Jewish custom to recite, before every chapter of Pirkei Avos, the Mishna [Sanhedrin Perek Cheilek, beg.], “Every Jew has a portion in the World to Come, as it is said [Yeshayahu 60:21], ‘Your people are all righteous, they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hand that I may be glorified.’” From this it is understood that the subject matter of the Mishna (the reward of every Jew in the Future to Come) is especially relevant as a preface to the study of Tractate Avos (Ethics of the Fathers).

We must understand: The World to Come is the reward for **all** the service of Torah and Mitzvos in every respect; not only for the fulfillment of “the words of the Avos (Fathers).” Why then is this Mishna recited specifically prior to the study of Tractate Avos? [Footnote 4 in the original: Simply speaking, we could say that since the teachings of Avos are matters of piety, there is room to be mistaken that it does not pertain to every single Jew, and therefore, this Mishna serves as a preface, since it speaks about the virtue inherent to “**Every** Jew” (that they all have a portion in the World to Come). From this it is understood that every single Jew has the ability (and indeed it is among his obligations) to fulfill matters of piety. See inside the text, Section 6.]

2. Concerning the teachings of Tractate Avos we find two opposite characterizations:

On the one hand, the content of the tractate is, in the language of Ovadia Bartenura [in the beginning of the tractate], “ethics and morals (*musarim u’midos*)” that are not “of the Mitzvos of the Torah,” to the extent that “gentile sages also authored books...which stemmed from their hearts, regarding the ways of ethics, how a person should conduct himself with his fellow.” The necessity to be forewarned regarding such matters is on account of the coarseness and lowliness of man, which lends itself to evil character traits

and etc. [FN 6: See at length the Maharil’s *Derech Chaim* in the beginning of the tractate, explaining this Mishna.]

On the other hand, the Sages say, “The one who wants to be **pious** should fulfill...the words of the Fathers” [Bava Kama 30a], for the teachings of Tractate Avos are connected to the level of “pious,” one who serves G-d beyond the letter of the law.

[Thus, the conflicting descriptions of Tractate Avos can be summarized as follows: 1) A code of ethics intended to raise the person out of his base, evil tendencies to simply be a mentch, a stage that is hierarchically lower than Mitzva fulfillment; 2) a service that surpasses Mitzva fulfillment, going beyond the letter of the law.]

We find the same two opposing characterizations concerning the **study** of Tractate Avos:

Among the reasons why we study this tractate specifically on the Shabbasos [during the seasonally warm period] between Pesach and Atzeres (Shavuos) is that this is a time when physical desires are aroused. Therefore, [in order to keep those desires in check] we study the tractate that is “full of moral rebuke and it arouses the person to pursue every positive character trait, etc.” [Preface to Midrash Shmuel].

On the other hand, the Jewish custom is that **every Jew** studies Tractate Avos in this period – from the most diminutive, who are holding at the very beginning of the service of G-d, to the greatest of the great, who stand entirely higher than physical desires.

The explanation of these two opposing characterizations and their resolution is derived from the prefatory verse, “Every Jew has a portion in the World to Come,” as will be explained.

3. This can be understood in light of the well-known

explanation of the Mishna [see FN 9]:

“World to Come” means the World of Resurrection [see FN 9\*], bodies in souls [i.e., the stage of the Redemption characterized by the Resurrection of the Dead, when souls will return to their former bodies, resuming life in the physical world]. The innovation of the Mishna is that “Every Jew has a portion in the World to Come.” Namely, the reward of the Garden of Eden, a world of souls [independent of bodies], is not equal for “all Jews” (to the extent that there are those who do not even merit the Garden of Eden). [FN 11: See Chagiga (15b), where it says that were it not for the prayers of Rabbi Meir, Acher would not have gained entry to the Garden of Eden. And see Chagiga (15a): “He took his portion in the Garden of Eden as well as the portion of his (wicked) associate.”] Whereas, the World to Come – the World of Resurrection, when souls will be in bodies – is (for the most part) “equal for all Jews” [see FN 12]: “**Every** Jew has a **portion** in the World to Come.”

The reason for this is as follows: The Garden of Eden, souls without bodies, is (for the most part) the reward for the study of Torah [FN 14: to note that there is the study of Torah in the Garden of Eden (*Tanya* Ch. 41 (58a, end), learned from Gemara and the Zohar; see references in FN 14\*), but not the fulfillment of Mitzvos]. Indeed, Torah study is connected, primarily, with the **soul** (with its power of intellect). The Resurrection of the Dead, on the other hand, is the reward for the fulfillment of Mitzvos, which is specifically done with and through the **body** (for which reason the reward for this is meted out to the soul when it is together with the body [see FN 14\*]).

And since with regard to the **grasp** of Torah there are distinctions between one Jew and another (and so it must be [FN 15: for a complete stature must have a head, etc., and legs]), to the extent of one extreme to the other, therefore, “Every Jew” is not equal with regard to the reward for this service. This [apparent hierarchy] characterizes the Garden of Eden.

The main fulfillment of Mitzvos, however, is within the realm of **action**, which is something that everyone can do. In fact, every Jew **does** do so, (as the Sages said [Chagiga, end]) even Jewish sinners are “full with Mitzvos like a pomegranate [is full of seeds].” And being that the service of Mitzvos is present in all Jews, therefore, “Every Jew has a portion in the World to Come.”

4. We must understand: Since the principal payment of reward is in the time of (following) the Resurrection of the

Dead, it is, therefore, understood that the reward of the Resurrection of the Dead is higher than the reward of the Garden of Eden. Now, how is it appropriate to say that the Garden of Eden is a reward for a higher manner of service (the grasp of Torah), which cannot be equal in every Jew, whereas the reward of the Resurrection of the Dead is for the performance of Mitzvos, a much more “simple” service and which is, therefore, inherent to all Jews? [I.e., why is the greater reward reserved for a lesser – more simplistic – service?]

The explanation of the matter:

Notwithstanding the fact that, superficially, the reason why all Jews are equal with regard to the realm of action is because action is the lowest of all the powers [of the soul] – it is something that does not require the feelings of the heart nor the understanding and comprehension of the brain – nevertheless, the inner reason of the matter is on account of

the **advantage** that is associated with action, as the Mishna in Tractate Avos puts it: “Action is the main thing.”

The inner Supernal Intent [of Creation] is for Jews to make a dwelling for G-d, may He be blessed, in the **lower realms**, in this lowest-of-all worlds, of which there is no lowly realm beneath it [*Tanya* Ch. 36], as the saying goes, “The completion of a deed is first in thought” [“Lecha Dodi,” from the Shabbos prayers]. **This** intent is fulfilled primarily through the service of the performance of Mitzvos, which accomplishes the refinement and purification of the body and earthly pursuits, as discussed at length in *Tanya*.

And since all Jews are, “the branch of my planting, the work of my hand,” [i.e., the hand] of the Holy One Blessed Be He, as expressed in Scripture (the proof cited in our Mishna), **every** Jew is aware of the Intent and fulfills it in actuality. With respect to “revelations” there are differences distinguishing one Jew from another (to such an extent that it can be that one is not a vessel for them [i.e., he is not even fit to receive “revelations”]). However, in connection with the Intent of G-d’s Essence [which is beyond Divine “revelations”], “to make for Him, may He be blessed, a dwelling in the lower realms,” which is felt in the **essence** of a Jew – in this respect, all Jews are equal. [FN 22: To note from the explanation (in *Torah Or* 14b, beginning with the phrase, “Chachmos BaChutz,” of 5694 (*Seifer HaMaamarim Kuntreisim* Vol. 2), Ch. 2) that the Luminary is revealed [i.e., the Source Itself is revealed], and therefore, the name of Heaven is commonly invoked by all.]

5. This is also the reason why the reward bestowed in the World to Come is specifically to souls in bodies:

With respect to the fact that the Divine Intent is that G-d should have a dwelling in the lower realms, this is also reflected in Jews, who are as one with the Divine Essence, insofar as the choice of the Holy One Blessed Be He in their regard is (not the choosing of their soul, but also) of their **body**. [FN 24: *Tanya* Ch. 49; discussed at length in *Seifer HaSichos Toras Shalom*, beginning on pg. 120.]

(Thus, also the Jewish body is an eternal existent which will never decompose, as is known that the Luz Bone will never decompose and from the Luz Bone the entire body will be reconstructed in the Resurrection of the Dead. [FN: B'Reishis Rabba 28:3 and there it is elucidated; Zohar II 28b amongst others; Tosafos, words beginning with, "V'Hu" (Bava Kama 16b).])

Therefore, at the time when the service of refining and purifying the world is completed and the world will become a dwelling for G-d, may He be blessed, it will also be apparent how the Jewish people are the chosen ones of the Holy One Blessed Be He (also) with respect to their body, for which reason the eternal life of the World to Come pertains (also) to the body.

6. Accordingly it is understood why we preface this Mishna ("Every Jew") to the study of Tractate Avos:

In order to bring out how the fulfillment and the study of Tractate Avos, which brings about the refinement and purification of the coarseness of the body, is relevant to **every** Jew, we begin with, "Every Jew has a portion in the World to Come" (the World of Resurrection, souls in bodies), on account of the fact that (also) the **body** of "every Jew" is "the

work of my hand," [the hand] of the Holy One Blessed Be He. In fact, specifically in the "**the work of my hand**" is the "**that I may be glorified**," because it is specifically "the completion of a deed" that is "first in thought."

Therefore, no Jew may neglect it, [i.e.] not fulfilling the words of the Fathers. This is a concept that is reflected in terms of both perspectives:

There is no body that **cannot** be refined. That is, since the body of **every** Jew is the work of the hand of the Holy One Blessed Be He, it is not **possible** that one cannot be refined. [With the exception of those "who have no portion in the World to Come" (Sanhedrin, Perek Cheilek, beg.), whose bodies perish. See FN 28.] Moreover, being the work of the hands of the Holy One Blessed Be He, it is certain that "He will not repel from Him any of the banished" [FN 29: Similarly, see *Toras Shalom* pg. 135 and see ibid pg. 11.]; it **will** surely be refined in the end.

On the other hand, this service is not too lowly for any Jew. On the contrary, the true expression of "matters of piety" is in the service of refining and purifying the body [FN 30: See also pg. 417, later in the text. To note from the letter of his honor, the Rebbe Rashab, whose soul is in Heaven (published in *Kuntres U'Maayan* pg. 17; *HaYom Yom*,

beg.): To draw the aspect of the depth and **inner dimension** of the Torah of G-d...to divorce ourselves from every evil and despicable character trait from among the natural characteristics, etc. (elucidated in the address of Shabbos Parshas VaYeishev, 5721).] It is specifically in "the work of my hand that I may be glorified," and as mentioned above, "The completion of a deed is first in thought."

(From the discourse and the address of Shabbos Parshas Acharei, 5733)

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# A DAILY DOSE OF MOSHIACH & GEULA: 25 NISSAN – 8 IYAR

*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

## **25 NISSAN – 10TH DAY OF THE OMER: THOSE WHO DIED IN CHUTZ LA'ARETZ WILL COME TO ERETZ YISROEL IN THE FUTURE TO COME**

How will the bodies from the Diaspora arrive in Eretz Yisroel?

The angel Gavriel brings the bodies of those who died in the Diaspora to Eretz Yisroel, and G-d will make special tunnels through which the tzaddikim will pass, in order to prevent them from enduring any pain when their bones undergo reincarnation.

The soul will enter the body only after their arrival in Eretz Yisroel.

*(Igros Kodesh, Vol. 2, p. 65)*

## **26 NISSAN – 11TH DAY OF THE OMER: STUDYING PIRKEI AVOS AND INFLUENCING OTHERS BRINGS THE REDEMPTION**

Adding in Torah and mitzvos, including specifically the matter at hand – fulfillment of the custom (as the Alter Rebbe writes in his siddur) to say and learn Pirkei Avos (after Mincha) on Shabbos between Pesach and Shavuot, and on every Shabbos during the summer.

And in addition to oneself, he must also influence others to add this custom (particularly if he [the mashpia] is lacking something in the complete fulfillment of his avoda, he should increase in this matter with a double measure of resources, including influencing others), and in the overall avoda of spreading Torah and Yiddishkeit

and spreading the wellsprings outward, which specifically brings “the coming of the Master” – Malka M’shichei.

*(Shabbos Parshas Shmini 5751)*

## **27 NISSAN – 12TH DAY OF THE OMER: A MITZVA OF SPECIAL VIRTUE IN BRINGING THE REDEMPTION**

The mitzva that has a special virtue to hasten the Redemption is the mitzva of tz’daka – “Great is charity, which hastens the Redemption.”

We understand from this that we should increase even more...and the sooner the better ... Especially since, “no one, etc., among us knows how much”; it’s possible that what’s lacking to bring the Redemption is merely the giving of a few coins to tz’daka.

In the words of the Rambam’s halachic ruling, “every person must see himself...and the whole world as half worthy and half guilty...do one mitzva and determine the fate of the whole world...causing rescue and salvation to him and to them.”

*(sicha, 1st night of Chanuka 5752)*

## **28 NISSAN – 13TH DAY OF THE OMER: TEN STUBBORN PEOPLE TO BRING THE REDEMPTION**

May it be G-d’s will that ten Jews will finally be found who are “stubborn” enough to have an effect On High, as is written, “Because it is a stiff-necked people (in a positive sense, and therefore) and You shall forgive our wrongdoings and our sins, and take us as Your

inheritance” – to bring the True and Complete Redemption immediately in actual deed.

And in order to hasten and speed up the Redemption even more through my actions, I will increase and give to each and every one of you a shlichus in the mitzva of giving tz’daka. Indeed, “Great is charity, which hastens the Redemption.”

I have done my part, and from now on, do everything in your power.

(sicha, Nissan 28, 5751)

## **29 NISSAN – 14TH DAY OF THE OMER: G-D DESIRES FOR JEWS TO REQUEST AND DEMAND THE REDEMPTION**

Every Jew must learn from the conduct of Yaakov Avinu (who asked to dwell in tranquility) that as long as Moshiach has not yet come, every single Jew must request and even demand that Moshiach Tzidkeinu should come, in the language of our Sages, of blessed memory (Midrash T’hillim 17): “Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai has taught...all those thousands who fell during the war in the days of Dovid fell only because they didn’t demand the building of the Beis HaMikdash...and if this is true with regard to them...with us...all the more so. Therefore, the pious ones from the former times established that they would pray...each day...‘Return Your Sh’china to Tzion and the order of avoda to Yerushalayim,’ and established ‘He who rebuilds Yerushalayim’ as a separate bracha in davening and in Birkas HaMazon.”

Furthermore, it is (also) brought in halacha (*Beis Yosef L’Tur Orach Chaim* 188): “The reason that we have to mention the kingdom of Beis Dovid in this bracha (‘He who rebuilds Yerushalayim’) ...since we need to mention the Kingdom of Heaven, the kingdom of Beis Dovid, and the Beis HaMikdash...and (the Jewish People) are not redeemed until they plead and demand the three of them.”

(Likkutei Sichos, Vol. 30, p. 176)

## **30 NISSAN – ROSH CHODESH IYAR – 15TH DAY OF THE OMER: THE TIMES AND SIGNS OF THE REDEMPTION – THE END OF DAYS**

Literally in our times (with the conclusion of the month of Nissan in “the year of ‘I will show you wonders’”), “all the appointed times have been finished” (“the end of days”) in its simplest sense, and surely Moshiach Tzidkeinu will come immediately, and everyone will show with his finger and say, “Here comes [Moshiach].”

(Shabbos Parshas Tazria-Metzora 5751)

## **1 IYAR – ROSH CHODESH – 16TH DAY OF THE OMER: PILGRIMAGE TO YERUSHALAYIM IN THE FUTURE TO COME** “And it shall be from new moon to new moon and from

Shabbos to Shabbos that all flesh shall come to prostrate themselves before Me, says G-d.” (Yeshayahu 66:23)

“G-d said to them: My children, you would go up [to Yerushalayim] in this world three times a year, when the appointed time arrives in the future, you will go there every month...and how will they come on Rosh Chodesh and on Shabbos from the other end of the earth? The clouds come and carry them to Yerushalayim, and they pray there in the morning.” (Yalkut Shimoni, Yeshayahu #550)

This means that the clouds will bring the Jewish People on weekdays before the onset of Shabbos, and those who say that they come on Shabbos morning, according to their line of thinking, they have many new and complicated halachos on this matter – regarding the differing times for the onset of Shabbos in the place where they were, in relation to what followed.

(sicha of the Rebbe shlita)

## **2 IYAR – 17TH DAY OF THE OMER – BIRTHDAY OF THE REBBE MAHARASH – “L’CHAT’CHILLA ARIBBER”: THE ORDER OF THE AVODA ON THE HEELS OF MOSHIACH**

Among the primary concepts in the unique avoda of the Rebbe Maharash is the well-known saying that “the world says when it’s impossible to go under, you have to go over, and I say ‘M’darf l’chat’chilla aribber’ (from the outset, one has to go over).”

Furthermore, there is the well-known instruction of the Rebbe Rashab, *nishmaso Eden* – the son of the *baal ha’hilula* – that “the entire conduct now is not in order and progression...since now is the time for the final spiritual elevations of the era of the Heels of Moshiach...there is no order and progression in the manner of elevation and correction, etc.”

In other words, there is no need to be precise about the order of the avoda, rather one must grab anything good that comes his way – even if from the point of view of the order of the avoda, there is (seemingly) no relevance to this matter, and in the stated approach: “L’chat’chilla aribber.”

(Seifer Hisvaaduyos 5746, p. 291)

## **3 IYAR – 18TH DAY OF THE OMER: THE MITZVA OF THE CITIES OF REFUGE IN THE FUTURE TO COME**

In connection with the concept of the cities of refuge in the Future to Come, the Rambam explains in his seifer *Mishneh Torah*:

“Even regarding the cities of refuge, he says, ‘If G-d will expand your border, and He will add another three cities, etc.,’ and no such thing ever happened (the

adding of three cities of refuge within the territory of Eretz Yisroel), and G-d does not issue a command for naught.”

We, therefore, must say that this commandment will be fulfilled in the days of Moshiach, when the mitzva of the cities of refuge will attain its increase (and ultimate completion).

(kuntres “Torah Chadasha M’liti Teitzei” 5751)

#### **4 IYAR – 19TH DAY OF THE OMER: ALL JEWS FROM ALL GENERATIONS, INCLUDING THE TEN (LOST) TRIBES, WILL BE IN ERETZ YISROEL IN THE FUTURE TO COME**

Even after the conquest of the land (in the times of Yehoshua, etc.), a situation of “all her inhabitants upon it” did not exist at all times. However, in the Future to Come, there will be “all her inhabitants upon it,” in addition to the Ten Tribes that were exiled beyond the river Sambatyon (BaMidbar Rabba 16:15), including all Jews from all generations, and there will be the culmination of “upon it” – all ten lands, including the lands of the Kenite, Kenizite, and Kadmonite – and then there will be the ultimate completion of “all her inhabitants upon it” – literally “all.”

(Shabbos Parshas Lech Lecha 5752)

#### **5 IYAR – 20TH DAY OF THE OMER: THE MAIN POINT IN OUR LIVES**

The main point in the life of every Jew is “all the days of your life to bring the days of Moshiach.”

This means that one’s vitality (at every single moment) is in bringing the days of Moshiach, thereby leading to a state and situation of the days of Moshiach.

Furthermore, the very fact that it says “the days of Moshiach” (in plural) alludes to two general time periods that will be then, and also alludes to all the many spiritual elevations that will be in the days of Moshiach.

(Erev Rosh HaShana 5752)

#### **6 IYAR – 21ST DAY OF THE OMER: THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD WILL HAND OVER THE THREE LANDS**

Eretz Yisroel in its most complete state is a country of ten lands, bequeathed to the Jewish People as an eternal heritage and inheritance from our forefathers since the Covenant Between The Pieces.

The innovation will be how the Jewish People will receive all three lands in addition to the seven they have now (Kenite, Kenizite, Kadmonite) in the ways of pleasantness and the ways of peace, since in those times there will be no hunger and no war, etc.

The nations of the world will hand them over to the Jewish People out of goodwill.

(Shabbos Parshas Lech Lecha 5752)

#### **7 IYAR – 22ND DAY OF THE OMER: THE THREEFOLD CULMINATION IN THE TIME OF THE REDEMPTION**

The entry of the Jewish People into the Land of Israel at the Future Redemption will be complete on all three dimensions: “time,” “place,” and “man.”

“Time”: The settlement will be immediate without any delay, not as it was at the time of the entry of the generation of the wilderness into the Land, when they waited fourteen years until the conclusion of the conquest of the Land and its division.

“Place”: The boundaries of the Land will be extended and set up on a larger area. Even the lands of the “Kenite,” “Kenizite,” and “Kadmonite” will be included in the territory of Eretz Yisroel.

“Man”: The entire Jewish People will emigrate to Eretz Yisroel, since even the Jews who lived in the previous generations will arise at the Resurrection of the Dead and settle in the Land.

(Shabbos Parshas Pinchas 5751)

#### **8 IYAR – 23RD DAY OF THE OMER: THE TIMES AND SIGNS OF THE REDEMPTION – THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD DEVOTE THEMSELVES TO ACTS OF GOODNESS**

We have recently seen how the nations of the world themselves are doing acts of goodness and kindness, thus revealing even more that “there is a Master to this bira” (fort, group of buildings, or capital city), as a preparation to the appointed destiny of “And kingship will be G-d’s” (Ovadia 1:21) at the Future Redemption.

Furthermore, we literally see in these times how the nations of the world are preparing and assisting the way towards the Redemption – through charity and education (as the basis for these activities is the recognition that there is a Master to this bira).

(Shabbos Parshas Acharei-K’doshim 5751)

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*There is no need to be precise about the order of the avoda, rather one must grab anything good that comes his way – in a manner of “L’chat’chilla aribber.”*

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# METHOD & MADNESS: REALIZING ELEGANCE IN A CHAOTIC WORLD

BY ARYEH GOTFRYD

*If G-d does play dice, what's the point? And what does that do to Divine Justice? What of Intelligent Design? And Divine Providence? What about responding to prayer? Where does the individual fit in to the grand scheme of things? Introducing chance would water down all of these notions or even negate them entirely. Or would it?*

Chaos. The very word conjures up disconcerting images and feelings. But in the past 30 years, the term chaos has undergone a transformation. Instead of implying randomness and disorder, Chaos now refers to a new science that reveals a hidden and magnificent world of intricate beauty underlying the apparently meaningless “noise” common to all sorts of variation, from the shapes of clouds to the dips and blips on the stock market.

For centuries, scientists believed that if we only knew the positions of all the particles and the forces acting upon them, we would be able to calculate everything that

would occur in the future until the end of time. The good news is that we finally have a rational expectation when this crowning achievement of classical science will finally be achieved. The bad news is that the projected date is... never. It turns out that nature is just not predictable, even in the short run.

For this fundamental assault on the old deterministic worldview formerly favored by science, blame meteorologist Konrad Lorentz, whose discovery of the “Butterfly Effect” over 40 years ago launched the new science of Chaos. Initially, Lorentz labeled his finding “Sensitive Dependence on Initial

Conditions,” but that was too cumbersome to catch on. It was actually mathematician James Yorke who, in 1975, first applied the phrase “Chaos Theory” to the math behind the meanderings of nature.

One might expect that a mightily complex math would be needed to model the infinitely variable details of everything from heart rhythms to thunderclaps. The surprising fact is, however, that simple algebraic expressions, called non-linear equations, can generate infinitely variable patterns that precisely mimic the capriciousness of all those nearly-but-never predictable systems.

Mathematically, the non-linear concept is deceptively simple. A few variables interact in such a way that the behavior of each depends on the other. The discovery of neat mathematical means to model random processes gave further credence to the notion that statistical processes are not merely accidental but integral to the workings of nature as a whole.

Einstein, for one, was not too happy about the emerging centrality of randomness in science. Indeed he argued to quantum physicist Niels Bohr that “G-d does



not play dice with the universe,” to which Bohr retorted, “Don’t tell G-d what to do.” In the decades that followed, it is Bohr’s view that has been vindicated by experiment.

But if G-d does play dice, what’s the point? And what does that do to Divine Justice? What of Intelligent Design? And Divine Providence? What about responding to prayer? Where does the individual fit in to the grand scheme of things? Introducing chance would water down all of these notions or even negate them entirely. Or would it?

On closer look, instead of challenging these concepts, the science of Chaos actually clarifies them.

Why embed randomness into the world? Well, for one thing, G-d does not want robots. Rather, faith requires that mankind have free choice to do good in the world. Now if we always saw the Divine hand guiding nature, would he have the chutzpa to rebel? On what basis could there be reward, etc.? The analog of Chaos’ underlying order is the notion that randomness is a Divine mask to conceal the Divine presence, thus granting us freedom to ignore or relate to Him.

Also, Chaos is an antidote to the old materialistic notion that there is no room for Divine will, because everything is ultimately predictable. The very fact that capriciousness is embedded into nature, provides a simple mechanism by which G-d can have His way and man will be none the wiser. Not only does the Divine mask hide G-d’s face, it hides His hand as well.

## FRACTALS

The new science of Chaos is a new way of modeling reality with profound philosophical implications. Nonetheless practical implications abound. There are

over 600 books on the market that will teach you how to use Chaos theory to manage everything from your machinery to your money and even your marriage. The concept has even spawned a film genre, including titles like *Jurassic Park*, *Pi*, and *The Science of Sleep*.

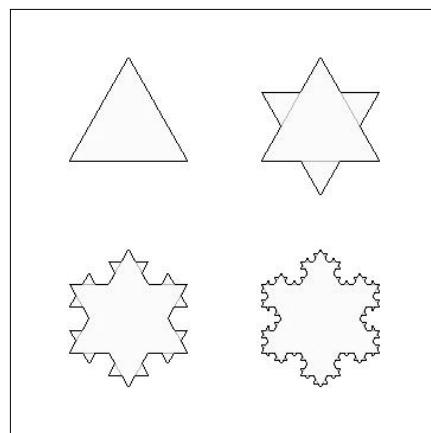
Nor is film the only art form inspired by the new science of Chaos. Computer graphics can now express the elegant intricacy of the new math in a geometric form called fractals. These compellingly beautiful designs emerge from a class of equations called Mandelbrot Sets, after the French mathematician by the same name.

An easy example of a fractal pattern in nature, and there are many, is the branching of a tree.



From the trunk, you might get three main branches, each of which may have three smaller branches, and then three twigs off those, and so on. Once you know the typical angles and distances between the branches, you will have defined the characteristic look of that species of tree. Peg all that down mathematically in a non-linear equation, and you have a mathematical model that can generate an endless number of non-identical “trees” of the same type.

Here you can see a computer-generated snowflake that works the



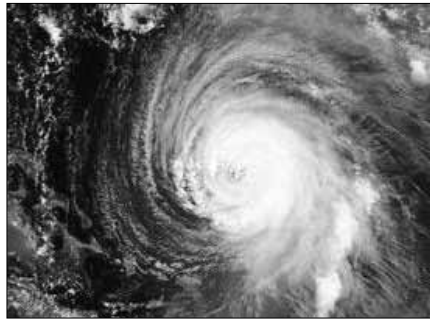
same way. Its equation calls for a simple triangle, where each line segment gets replaced with a 4-line triangular bump, and each of those segments also get replaced with a 4-line triangular bump. The equation calls for the process to go on recursively forever, so we wind up with a snowflake-type shape with an infinitely long and intricate edge, but a fixed overall size.

And here is a computer-generated, fractal fern frond.



Fractal patterns don’t stop at the scale of a single snowflake or tree. Spirals, for example, have precise mathematical descriptions that work equally well for electrons, sunflowers, snail shells, hurricanes, and galaxies.

Advocates of “Intelligent Design” (ID) believe that the pervasive presence of order throughout the cosmos could only result from an orderly creative being, i.e., G-d. They see the geometric patterns in



nature as evidence of a Divine geometer if you will.

Detractors of the notion have traditionally argued that order in nature is merely due to chance fluctuations on the local scale. At the larger scales, they claim, the universe really is a random affair and the distribution of stuff within it is ultimately homogeneous.

This latter belief was Einstein's view and it came to be known as "the cosmological principle," an idea that stands at the center of his Theory of General Relativity and is a firm prerequisite for the Big Bang Theory.

Now, suddenly, the standard model of cosmology is under attack by a rapidly growing collective of astrophysicists, armed with masses of data from the biggest galactic survey ever. And it seems that fractal geometry is at the heart of the controversy.

According to statistical physicist Luciano Pietronero of the University of Rome and the Institute of Complex Systems, Italy, the pattern of clumps and spaces in the distribution of galaxies persists at ever greater distances, even up to hundreds of millions of light years. In other words, the universe is not homogeneous – it's fractal.

Without the central pillar of cosmology in place, the whole structure is shaky to say the least. But besides the threats to General Relativity and the Big Bang, there is another outcome, namely that the

primary argument against ID has itself been refuted. That leaves even the staunchest of skeptics with a need to explain why it is that the cosmos is fundamentally orderly at even the largest scales.

Let the intelligent design their responses.

### SIMPLICITY

Sometimes it is the simple things that are the hardest to digest. Not because they are trivial, and not because they are normally wrong. Simplicity is neither foolish

*When reason is built upon faith, the picture is consistent, simple, and elegantly integrated.*

nor false. On the contrary. In science, as in life generally, simplicity is a classic indicator that a great truth is at hand.

It is the nature of people to be innovative. Indeed we could become so enamored with our own creative concoctions, we might sidestep obvious facts while constructing a clever case. But does more clever mean more correct? Not necessarily. Occam's Razor, the principle of simplicity in science, says that all things being equal, it is

in fact the simpler of two explanations that is the best. Yet for some otherwise rational people, the idea that design implies a designer is just too easy.

For most of us, however, it is not belief in a Creator that confounds us. Rather, it's accepting at face value the possibility of Divine interventions like the ones led by Moshe Rabbeinu and Moshiach. We may want to write them off to legend, to metaphor, or to wishful thinking. But let's not drop Occam's razor when it comes to shaving off our own inner conflicts and complexes.

If our faith is predicated on our intellect we get one set of answers, ingenious answers, substantial answers that may sound great. But are they right? If our theories beg more questions and yield less answers we just may have to rethink them.

On the other hand, when reason is built upon faith, the picture is consistent, simple, and elegantly integrated. And that just may be the hallmark of truth. It works in science. It works in Judaism. It works in daily life. One G-d, one faith, one world. It's that simple.

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# KADIMA TO MYRTLE BEACH

BY CHANI NUSSBAUM

*When the Aizenmans asked the Rebbe about shlichus to Myrtle Beach, the answer was positive. Based on a previous answer from the Rebbe, “Kadima (onward) to a place without shluchim,” they adopted the slogan, “Kadima to Myrtle Beach.”*

“It wasn’t only we who became religious through them,” said one of the mekuravos of the Aizenman family. “My husband’s friend, who lives here wasn’t religious and he married a non-Jew. They divorced after she gave birth to a girl. Since he was alone, he decided to go to shul, and that’s where he found Rav Doron.

“He decided to close his businesses on Shabbos, but they remained open on the holidays. A year and a half went by and he decided to close his businesses on holidays too. More recently, two weeks before Pesach last year, he decided to completely close his businesses and to open a kosher grocery store without partners and without any problems with observing Shabbos and holidays. He is much more relaxed and getting more involved with Judaism.

“This is all thanks to Doron and Leah Aizenman, who, with the Rebbe’s kochos, inspire us here. They’re great people. Their home is always open and they are always ready to listen to and

help every Jew. They don’t talk about their own difficulties, even if you ask...”

Indeed, in the course of our interview with the Aizenmans I inquired but received no answers to questions about hardships. I heard about their shlichus, though, in our trans-Atlantic conversation, and that is what this article is about.

**When did you arrive in Myrtle Beach?**

About 20 years ago.

Myrtle Beach is a scenic city on the Atlantic Ocean near Florida.

**How did you end up there?**

Before we came here, we wrote to the Rebbe about ten shlichus offers we had gotten, including Eretz Yisroel, Caracas, Vienna, remaining in New York (before we married my husband worked in New York with people who speak Ivrit), etc. The Rebbe did not respond to any of these suggestions and we thought we would not be

leaving New York.

One of the times we asked, we were told, “*Kadima l’makom sh’ein bo shluchim*” (onward, to a place that has no shluchim).

At that time, Rabbi Yosef Groner, shliach in North Carolina, offered us a shlichus in Myrtle Beach. There were some Israeli families living here who wanted a Chabad shliach. He himself was skeptical as to the interest of these families, but he suggested that we meet with them. We did so and both they and we were enthusiastic about the idea.

We asked the Rebbe about it and we immediately received the Rebbe’s positive answer. That’s how we decided, “*kadima l’Myrtle Beach*” (onward to Myrtle Beach).

We arrived here for Tishrei, in order to lead the t’fillos, and then we returned to New York. On Chanuka, the Rebbe spoke about the importance of Mivtza Chanuka in places where there was no Chabad presence of yet. We went to Myrtle Beach that Chanuka and organized a public Menora lighting. The picture went into the first album of public Menora lightings that was published in English.

We moved here on 5 Shvat. On 10 Shvat we went to the municipal offices to seek a suitable place for a Chabad house. We didn’t believe that things would work out so well so fast. The miracles just kept happening. As we sat and waited our turn, we saw an old

magazine with a picture of the Rebbe sitting at a farbrengen. From that moment we knew that the Rebbe was with us wherever we went and our job was to do the work and with Hashem's help, we would be successful.

We opened a Talmud Torah before Purim and for Purim we organized a party with a nice performance that was very successful. By Shavuot, forty children were attending the Talmud Torah. These were Israeli families who wanted to give their children a Jewish education.

In the summer we ran a day camp and we opened a preschool in addition to the school the following school year. Baruch Hashem, we felt that the Rebbe was with us. We had nine children in the preschool at first and by now, the schools and the shul are flourishing.

**What was it like when you first arrived?**

We found a splintered community. Most people were in business and preoccupied with their work.

Today, baruch Hashem, we can say

that the community is outstandingly united and solid. We are all one family! 21 years after arriving here it's heartwarming to see about 100 people davening and sitting together for shiurim in shul.

There are some bachurim from the community who chose to attend Tomchei T'mimim and then moved to places with a larger Chabad community. There are also families that have become committed to kashrus and Shabbos, who are still here because of their businesses.

Since the community here is relatively small, the outreach is intensive. This is the key to success. We are grateful that most Jews living here feel very favorably disposed towards Chabad.

**Please tell us about some mekuravim.**

An American family that we helped come close to Judaism told me that their children are shluchim, one in California and one in Virginia. Last Pesach (5766) they went to their

daughter, who had a seider for 100 people. That's real nachas for the parents and the Rebbe.

Their story is that their son became involved in Judaism and went away to study in yeshiva, and when he returned home on vacation he told his sister about a summer program for girls at Machon Chana. She attended it and returned with modest clothing. Today she is a Lubavitcher. Both of them, the son and daughter, are married and shluchim. I myself am amazed.

\* \* \*

In our first years here, we made a public seider. A young woman named Rochel Yishai became friendly with us and came to help me, knowing how much help I needed Pesach time, especially when my husband went with all the shluchim to Washington and then to New York for Yud-Alef Nissan. He would be returning shortly before Yom Tov.

One year, when I went shopping I noticed a Hebrew-speaking girl. I



figured she had nowhere to spend Pesach, so I invited her and she came and stayed with us. The impact was so great that on Chol HaMoed she decided to go to Machon Chana to study.

Two months later a boy came here who enjoyed our programs and the community. We thought he would be perfect for her and indeed, they got engaged and married. They have a beautiful Lubavitcher family.

Unfortunately, Rochel Yishai passed away after an illness. We remember all her incredible giving and help, may her memory be a blessing.

\* \* \*

**Tell us more about your schools and shul.**

We do everything according to answers from the Rebbe and we've seen open miracles. Things have moved so quickly whether with the preschool, the school, expanding the minyan at the shul and the classes there. I must point out that this is not what we expected. Myrtle Beach is small, but the Jews here are thirsty for more spirituality and weren't satisfied with what they had.

We started with a school and two years later we needed another building because we had so many children. Ten years later we had to find yet another building. The existing building could no longer contain all the students. When the school grew even more, we tried to expand the building in various ways but it reached a point where we had to do additional construction.

We thought the simplest thing, as far as permits were concerned, was to add a floor on the roof, but this plan was nixed by the committee that dispenses permits. This was on 12 Tamuz. We felt a bit down by this and hoped the parent body would take the initiative and help us get building permits. The school is really important to everyone, but the parents relied on us to take care of everything and did

***“For us, Chabad is everything. If not for Chabad, we would not be what we are today.”***

not take part in this stage that was critical for the school's continued development and existence.

We opened the *Igros Kodesh* and opened to a letter dated 12 Tamuz, which was written to Yeshivas Achei T'mimim. The Rebbe wrote: **How can you be despondent? You must be [in the spirit of], “she girded her loins with strength,”** and the Rebbe concluded the letter by saying that no matter what, the yeshiva had to exist.

This answer left no room for doubts. Without delay we submitted another request and this time it was all

approved within a short time and we immediately began constructing a third building near the existing school building, with two floors. We took many loans to fund this enterprise and many fine people helped us with the payments.

Another ten years went by and the preschool had grown. Since we had already built on two sides of our building, the children did not have a nice place to play outdoors. We obtained permission to use an empty lot near the school. Two years ago, the owners of the lot wanted to sell it along with the attached home. They agreed to sell us part of it, but then suddenly, they had second thoughts and said, “You took out so many loans, how will you be able to pay for this?”

I told them, “You see for yourselves that everything is working out successfully and growing, so how can we stifle it all? If we don't provide enough room for the children to play

### **A UNIVERSAL IMPACT FELT IN MYRTLE BEACH**

Rabbi Yaakov Biederman, shliach in Vienna, tells about his sister, Leah and his brother-in-law Doron, the shluchim in Myrtle Beach:

I visited them on Pesach and was amazed by the harmony and inspiration of their community. Life there is comfortable and the Israelis who live there, mostly of Sephardic background, opened businesses on the coast. Everything revolves around the Chabad center, which contains the mikva, the shul, the school, and kashrus.

It's uplifting to see the unity of the community. Shabbos afternoon the community sits down to farbreng and they sing both Sephardic songs as well as Chabad niggunim. Customs are observed here in wonderful accord. It's amazing.

I was very touched to see the many young people with tzitzis out, playing outside. That's only because of the Rebbe's kochos.

Apparently the character of the place and the unique climate impacts on all who live there, without exception. As I walked to shul on Shabbos, one of the gentiles stopped mowing his lawn and said to me, “Hi Rabbi, how are you?”

No wonder that the Jews love living there and even after getting involved in a Jewish way of life, they remain there. They don't lack materially and the Chabad house provides for their spiritual needs in abundance.



The Chabad school's playground



Chabad house programming for children

and for the parents to be involved then we will “strangle” everything. Despite my heartfelt words, the skeptics among the members of the administration did not approve of our buying the lot.

We tried again to obtain the lot with the building. We were feeling down, also because a child in the day camp had been injured that day. We were not getting enough help from the community and if that wasn't enough, one of the members of the administration who was trying to help, said to my husband, “If the community doesn't value your work enough and doesn't get involved to help you, don't take additional loans.”

The next day, 13 Tamuz, my husband said to me, “Please write to the Rebbe.” I wrote and in the letter I opened to the Rebbe wrote: **I was happy to hear about the purchase of the lot. The Rebbe went on to say: a shul is like a business. You must buy the lot, just like a store owner does not sit at home waiting for customers.**

Naturally, this letter greatly encouraged us and it got us moving again. We went back to the person who had always helped us and showed him the Rebbe's answer. On the spot he changed his tune (since most of the Jews here are warm and are believers). He was simply stunned, and he decided we had to buy the lot and that's what we did.

\* \* \*

“In Myrtle Beach we move onward, as the Rebbe told us to do,” said Leah Aizenman. The thread running through their shlichus is progress, breaking through the obstacles, time after time, until they disappear.

“We move onward and we wait for more miracles. We have seen many people and many families get involved in a life of Torah and Chassidus. Most of the community keeps kosher and come to shul on Shabbos. Of course, we always want more, constantly wanting to provide more nachas for the Rebbe.”

As I spoke with Leah, she had two mekuravos there with her and she asked them to tell me about the community from their perspective. Leah's suggestion impressed me, for despite her many accomplishments, she is modest.

“Myrtle Beach attracts Israelis,” said Nina, “because of its beauty and peacefulness. It's really beautiful here on the coast and we are free of the tensions that are prevalent elsewhere. Many Israelis emigrated here, including myself. Thanks to Chabad I have become a baalat t'shuva. I feel comfortable with them because they give everything in a gentle way and walked alongside me step after step.

“I've been living here for 24 years. I

was 39 when I married my husband. We wanted a child, but it didn't happen. I contacted Leah and she suggested that we observe the laws of Family Purity and was absolutely confident that this would help. At first we lived far away and it wasn't easy handling the challenges but I didn't give up.

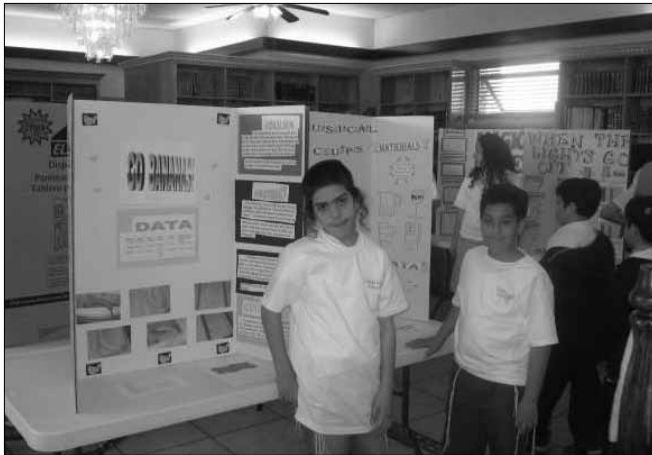
“This led to Shabbos candles, Kiddush, Kashrut, etc. One mitzva led to another. Shortly after beginning to observe halacha, I found the right doctor with the right solution and we have a son named Netanel.

“Our connection with Judaism and Chabad strengthened and today we observe everything. We admire the Rebbe and his shluchim.”

Jeneane had this to say:

“We've been here 11 years now. We came with two children and we had another two children here. I must tell you, for us, Chabad is everything. If not for Chabad, we would not be what we are today.

“We got involved through our children. They attend the Chabad school. Our oldest son graduated the school here, and because of his juvenile diabetes we couldn't send him away to yeshiva. He remained here, attending college half a day. The other half of his day, which usually extends until midnight, is devoted to studying



Visiting an exhibit at the Chabad house



Purim costumes

at the Chabad house and helping out. On Shabbos, when he has more time, he doesn't relax at home but sits and learns with Rav Doron. Rav Doron sees more of him on Shabbos than I do!

"Every week, when the Shabbos meal ends, he gets up and says, 'Shabbat Shalom, I'm going over to Rav Doron.' It's gratifying.

"My three younger children are still learning in Chabad. We have real nachas from them. Everybody here is like one family. Each person relates to each child as though it's his child. It's so nice, and touching as well. Since we live near the Aizenmans, our children are greatly influenced by their children. For us, of course, this is a special blessing.

"The shluchim are the force which we all connect to. To illustrate this, every Monday we have a class for women here. The women find it hard to leave when it's over and remain to farbreng, sometimes until one in the morning!

"Rav Doron never pushes anyone. When someone starts heading in the right direction, he is there to support them."

As though to confirm what she said, Jeneane refers to facts that speak for themselves. "When we came here, we barely had a minyan in the middle of the week. Now, we have a daily

minyan and on Sunday we have two minyanim, one for adults at eight o'clock and for young people at eleven. There are several minyanim on Shabbos too. One pot of chulent used to be enough for Kiddush in shul, and now we need three!

"Furthermore, the Aizenmans always provide help no matter the situation. They never let on to their personal difficulties which they have to deal with themselves."

***We want to work  
within a large  
community to hasten  
the Geula, so kadima!  
Kadima to Myrtle  
Beach!***

Jeneane provided an example of the Aizenmans' devotion:

"One Shabbos, Leah did not come to shul and an unfamiliar American woman came in. Leah's thirteen-year-old daughter went over to her and offered her a chair and an English siddur. She took responsibility for this stranger. I watched this as it happened and I saw that despite her young age, the apple doesn't fall far

from the tree."

\* \* \*

I said goodbye to the mekuravos and then urged Leah to conclude our conversation with some personal details to round out the picture. When I asked her about her daily schedule she said, "Yes, it's hard. I am principal of the school and it's a lot of work. I must mention the wonderful shluchim who help us in our work in the preschool and school: R' Yosef Yitzchok Naparstek and Chanie and their family, Sarah and Yaakov Gansburg, and the Elbaz family. Without the shluchim, we could not continue with our work."

As for chinuch, Leah says, "The little ones are still here and we sent the five big ones away from home."

As for kosher food, "We have a kosher grocery that was opened because of the growing demand for kosher products. We have a kosher restaurant that has been operating for years now."

Leah concludes with a request, "We invite young families to join us. The quality of life here is superb. It's quiet, relaxing and the cost of living is low. We offer a lot spiritually, with the strength of the Rebbe. We want to work within a large community to hasten the Geula, so kadima! Kadima to Myrtle Beach!

# ONE STORY, FIVE JEWS SAVED FROM INTERMARRIAGE

BY AVRAHAM BER

*Beis Moshiach printed a story in issue 515 about someone who wanted to marry his non-Jewish girlfriend. A few words from the Rebbe changed his mind. But that's not the end of the story.*

One of the regular visitors at our Chabad house is a Jewish man whom we will call John. John has been coming to us for seven years and he davens regularly at the Chabad house and has the Shabbos meals at our home.

John got more and more involved in religious observance and began to keep Shabbos, eat kosher, and to put on t'fillin daily. His parents are also regular guests of ours and they didn't stop John from furthering his religious commitment. Unfortunately though, they insisted that John attend a secular school.

John exhibited Jewish pride at this school. He had no problem displaying his Judaism and the fact that he was religious.

One day, the bitter truth emerged. John knew a girl for years

and he wanted to marry her. There was one problem. She wasn't Jewish!



Rabbi Heschel Greenberg

Whenever I tried talking to John about this, I came to the same sad conclusion. The test was too much for him.

John's parents also opposed his marrying this girl, but John insisted.

As I said, the family was our regular guests. One Shabbos, in the middle of the meal, I decided to tell them a story in *Beis Moshiach* ("I Am Jealous of You," issue 515, pg. 28-29). I rarely manage to find time to read *Beis Moshiach* before Shabbos, and that week was no exception. As I told our guests the story it was the first time I was reading it.

This was amazing Hashgacha Pratis, because if I had read it for myself first, I would not have chosen to read it out loud because of the sensitive nature of the story. At the very least, I would have omitted the name of the non-Jewish woman so John wouldn't think I had read the story because of him.

The story in short is that Rabbi Yitzchok Gershowitz stayed in the Chabad house in Prague on Rosh HaShana 5765 and led the Yom Tov meal. During the meal he said that a few years earlier, while on Mivtza



T'fillin in Natzeret, when he asked a Jew if he would put on t'fillin the person asked him for a story.

Rabbi Gershowitz began to tell him a story that popped into his head, about a Jew from Belgium who wanted to marry a non-Jew, and after the attempts of several rabbanim to dissuade him failed, he went to the shliach in Belgium, Rabbi Shabtai Slavaticki.

Rabbi Slavaticki also tried to dissuade him, and after a few hours, when he saw that the fellow was a tough nut to crack, he suggested that he consult with the Rebbe.

The young man went to 770 for dollars, nervous with anticipation. The line slowly inched its way forward and when he finally stood before the Rebbe he was very moved. In a voice choked with emotion he asked the Rebbe for advice. The Rebbe smiled broadly and said, "I envy you!"

Before the man could say a word, the Rebbe explained, "Whenever a Jew faces a test and he is successful, the test becomes a ladder by means of which he climbs higher. I did not have a test like this. A test like this is certainly difficult but it is worth seizing the moment and climbing," concluded the Rebbe encouragingly.

He heard the words "blessing and success" and then found himself outside in confusion, trying to understand the significance of his first encounter with the Rebbe. The man who had so impressed him had endowed him with courage and strength. He felt that the Rebbe had found the words which he had sorely lacked. After a brief period of time he resolved to leave his non-Jewish girlfriend once and for all!

When R' Gershowitz finished telling this story, the man in Natzeret asked him, "Did someone send you here? How did you know to tell me this story? It's precisely my situation, the problem I'm dealing with right now! I feel the power of the Rebbe's words so strongly, because I too am struggling with the decision of leaving my gentile girlfriend. Now I've decided to leave her once and for all, thanks to the Lubavitcher Rebbe!"

***"Whenever a Jew faces a test and he is successful, the test becomes a ladder by means of which he climbs higher. I did not have a test like this. A test like this is certainly difficult but it is worth seizing the moment and climbing," concluded the Rebbe.***

R' Gershowitz finished the double story and said, "I kept in touch with that man and he did indeed leave his girlfriend and nearly a year later he married a Jewish girl."

The people sitting and listening to this story in Prague were amazed to discover that the story wasn't over yet. There was an Israeli at this Chabad house who had also gotten involved with a non-Jewish

woman whose name was Christina. All attempts to convince him that he must leave her proved to be fruitless. When R' Gershowitz finished his story, this Israeli looked lost in thought.

The next day, the Torah portion about the Akeidas Yitzchok was read, about how Avrohom willingly and happily went to fulfill Hashem's command to sacrifice his son. The Israeli went over to one of the shluchim and said emotionally, "I will also bring a sacrifice...I will sacrifice Christina."

When I finished reading this story from *Beis Moshiach*, I looked over at John. He looked incredulous. I had thought he would be moved but I didn't imagine that it would be to this extent.

I whispered to his mother, "What is John's girlfriend's name?"

His mother answered, "Yes, it is Christina."

"Believe me," I told his mother, "I didn't know that this was her name, and I hope John understands that I did not prepare this story for him. It was Divine Providence."

I was later assured by his mother that John understood that it was a message for him from the Rebbe.

The fact that I had related a true and current story and the name of the girl being identical to his girlfriend, shook him up and he was lost in thought. John's mother who sat near him looked at me gratefully. She realized the upheaval her son was experiencing.

After a few months John told his mother that he had left his girlfriend. He said the Rebbe saved him and that he couldn't understand how people could say

the Rebbe is not Moshiach and that he is not with us when, “the Rebbe spoke directly to me and saved me!”

\* \* \*

Like many Chabad houses in the US, the Chabad house in Buffalo occasionally has groups of students who come for a Shabbaton. For many of them, this is a rare occasion to experience Judaism. Naturally, we do all we can to make it an unforgettable, enjoyable event (so they will want to come again) yet our real goal is to expose them to as much Judaism as possible.

About a month ago we had a group of students from Brazil at our Chabad house. It was a joyous Shabbos with song and dance. The meals were uplifting and baruch Hashem, they all enjoyed it. At every meal there are divrei Torah and stories in which I try to convey important messages.

At one of these Shabbos meals I told the story from *Beis Moshiah* with a little addition of my own: John's story. The crowd was awed and I could see that they identified with the heroes and were touched by the happy endings.

One of the students said to the

shliach who brought her: “Rabbi, this is the second time I’m hearing this story during this Shabbaton. Is someone trying to tell me something?”

A week later I had to be in New York for a simcha. Someone came over to me and informed of the good news: "The girl that spent Shabbos with you has left her non-Jewish boyfriend."

One story with the Rebbe. One line that the Rebbe said. We have no idea what it can accomplish. See for yourselves. One story that prevented five intermarriages.

## בדידי הוזה עובדא

**שלושה יהודים**  
**שלושה קרבנות**

אני מקנא בך! אמר לו הרבי. לפני שהספיק לפצות פיו. פתר לו הרבי את פשר דבריו: "כל יהודי שיש לו ניסיון והוא עומד בו, נעשה לו הניסיון כסולם לספס לדרגות גבוהות! לי לא היה ניסיון שכזה. ניסיון כזה בוודאי הוא קשה, אך כדאי וחשוב לבצל את הרגע ולספס". סיים הרבי בעידוד. הוא עוד הספיק לשמוע את המילים "ברכה והצלחה" ומצא עצמו מחוץ לבני בוהה ותוהה

X

בשבת קודש מרוב מבדר גישו יתר  
מאלו הקלידים את נכר רבי' שלחמסו על  
מט התרחקו וטובת החלטות בהצבת בערות  
ההאלה. שכן שבתה ישרה

במלך השנה יסוף  
בהתוודעות קבוצתית שערכו במרכז  
מקומות. באת שרון גם הייתי, ועם מספר  
אם היסתר באחד מהי' שיצאד ולמן אחרן  
שירה

בקיץ שבע', מה שיצאד אחרן את  
סיפורי דהיינ' בשליחות ומעת במרא.  
מקום השליחות הניעו גם יא איצור  
נירובי ודעינ', ששדח היה להתנות את  
אדעת המהקטיס' על ידי מלך רבי'.

את שדדות ראש השנה הנהר יא איצור  
בכשור. ב עורו שסד סיפורים מחבר  
המקוה על הידועה, חסידות, וכמוהו על

הרבי מלך המשיח. אחד הסיפורים שסיפר  
היה מרנש בהחלט, ובעיקר נוכח סומו הבלתי  
שגור:

1

“למי שלים מספר”, מתח את סיפורו, “למדתי ביישובת חידו בצפת. במסגרת הסיבוצים שערכנו, הייתי מגיע מידיו שיש למגרש מכוניות בצורת, שם הייתי מניה תמלול לעוברים ושבים, לעובדים וכמוכן שלא נסחתי על בעלי המקום. באחת הפעמים עברתי בין המסכות המוצעות למכירה.

יהודי" מיתי ליהודי שנמד בסמוך  
לאחד הרכבים, "הנחת כבר תפילין היום?"  
במקום להשיב ממין השאלה, ענה לי  
בבקשה: "סער לי איזה סיפור יפה".

"אין בעיה" אמרתי, ומיד מתחתי בסיפור  
 זמין. שמינין: עוד לא תיארתי לעצמי כמה  
 זמין ומרתק הוא יהיה.

"באחת הערים בגלות, הופיע יום אחד  
וראלי טיפוסי, שעל פי 'המסורת  
שיראלית' נסס את הארץ והמליך למחנות

חוקים כדי להרוויח כסף, לעשות חיים  
אחרים. הניח לנו מהחיים ההומים  
אין, שם, הרחק מהווי וממורו,  
התשובות להם על שאלות לא הניחו דעתו,  
סה למלא את החלל שבנו.  
למרב הצער, אותו בחור, שהשתו  
היהדות הסתכמה כמעט בזהות היהודית  
לבד, הכיר לצי טוריה מקומית והקשר  
היהם הנוצחית הסתכמה.

אחר שלוש שנים של היכרות, החליטו  
ג'י הוג להתחתן רחיל אולם, הבחור ביקש  
וחברתו הנכריה, כי מאחר והוא מבין שהוא  
ולד לקראת צעד משמעותי בחייו, הוא היה

הנה להחיות קודם לכן ער החי-  
ביות אשר היתה להם את ארץ הספר  
המזרחי הסבה  
הבחרו בה דבר מסתם וקטן ודבר  
הקטן את חפציה ודבר המלא סוד  
שקברו בו את הרוחם כשם שהם  
המקור והמקור והמקור והמקור  
של פל  
זכר  
לפניהם  
ומן  
הבחינה  
שה  
היה  
הוא  
הוא  
לפניהם  
הוא

[illegible]

# THE REBBE'S SECRETARY RELATES

INTERVIEW BY RABBI SHOLOM YAAKOV CHAZAN



## SPECIAL CONNECTION WITH BEIS REBBE

### When did your family's special connection with Beis Rebbe begin?

When the Rebbe Rayatz arrived in New York in 1929, he stayed in Boro Park in my father's home, R' Eliyahu Simpson a"h, whom he knew as a Tamim and chozer in Lubavitch.

*V'HaK'dusha.*

Every night of yechidus, my father would sit in the room on the left at the end of the hall on the first floor of 770, in the room which is used today as the yichud room. The hall had a long bench where people sat and waited for yechidus. Before they went in, they went to my father so he could help them formulate their requests to the

*We are proud to present an exclusive interview with the Rebbe's secretary, Rabbi Sholom Mendel Simpson. \* Rabbi Simpson was one of the Rebbe's first secretaries as soon as the Rebbe accepted the Chabad leadership. The Rebbe later granted him the privilege to sign the Rebbe's correspondence, appointed him over his personal archives and as a member of the administration of Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch. \* Rabbi Simpson is also the rav of a shul in Brighton Beach, Brooklyn, on the Rebbe's shlichus. \* In this interview we focused on Rabbi Simpson's role as the Rebbe's secretary. Although Rabbi Simpson conceals more than he reveals, we managed to extract much interesting material and exclusive information.*

In 1940, my father was one of the people who worked feverishly to extricate the Rebbe Rayatz from the inferno of Europe. After the Rebbe Rayatz arrived on safe shores in the US, he asked my father to be the gabbai for yechidus. Later, the Rebbe appointed him to the committee for the Seifer Torah of Moshiach and he was also involved in publishing the monthly publication *HaKria*

Rebbe.

Since in those days, most of the Chassidim were unable to understand the Rebbe because of his health, and my father was one of the few who understood him, most of the people wanted my father to come in to the yechidus with them. This way, he could repeat what the Rebbe had said to them.

My father didn't take a salary for

any of the work he did for the Rebbe. He said that since his financial state did not allow him to give the Rebbe *maamud* properly, he paid his *maamud* by working for the Rebbe.

### How many times did you have yechidus with the Rebbe Rayatz?

I had yechidus for my bar mitzva. I stood very close to the Rebbe, and baruch Hashem, I was able to hear and understand the Rebbe's bracha. Other than that, my father was of the opinion that a bachur doesn't need to take up the Rebbe's precious time.

When I had questions, my father told me to write them. He brought my questions to the Rebbe and I received written responses. One of the questions was particularly interesting. In those days, a track for Limudei Kodesh only had been established in Tomchei T'mimim in New York. I learned in this track, but my mother really wanted me to at least learn proper English.

I asked the Rebbe and the answer was: In response to your question – study secular studies too and use it afterwards to be mekarev Jews to Yiddishkeit. Of course, this was a personal answer and cannot be applied to others.

## MEMORIES OF FARBRENGENS WITH THE REBBE RAYATZ

### Did you participate in farbrengens of the Rebbe Rayatz?

Yes, and it was a special *z'chus* because not everybody was allowed to enter. The Rebbe Rayatz's farbrengens took place in the dining room of his apartment on the second floor of 770, and since it was small, it wasn't possible for everyone to attend. Only select Chassidim went in and the doors were closed behind them.

(There was someone who came from Brownsville every time the Rebbe farbrenged. He went up the steps to the Rebbe's apartment, and since he wasn't allowed to enter, he stayed on the stairs. That's what happened, time

after time. I once asked him why he kept coming when he wasn't able to get in. He said: Regarding Moshe Rabbeinu it says, "whoever sought G-d went to the Tent of Meeting," and Rashi says, "From here [we learn] that one who seeks out the countenance of a wise man it's like greeting the Divine Presence." I fulfill this just by coming here, even if I don't have the privilege of seeing the Rebbe.)

Chassidim as well as talmidim from the yeshiva, who were unable to enter, stood near the doors in the hope that the doors would open for a moment and they would be able to sneak in. The Rebbe Rayatz's son-in-law, later to be the Rebbe, wanted as many Chassidim as possible to participate in the farbrengen, and every so often he stood near the door and opened the doors with a smile, motioning to the Chassidim who waited near the door, to quickly slip in.

I had *protektzia* since I was a *ben-bayis* in the Rebbe's house. My mother, Rebbetzin Fruma Itta a"h, baked the challos for Shabbos for the Rebbe's household, and I brought them to the Rebbe's house. In those days, there was no store in Crown Heights that sold kosher products, and I would go to the East Side of Manhattan and bring kosher dairy products. I would also bring meat to the Rebbe's house. These errands gave me the position of *ben-bayis* and I was present at some of the Rebbe Rayatz's farbrengens at the end of his life.

I remember that at a Shavuot farbrengen, Rabbi Dovid Stockhammer a"h (the father-in-law of Rabbis Mordechai Mentlick and Moshe Pinchas Katz a"h) was present. He began to sing, "*Lama yomru ha'goyim*, etc.," and when he sang the part about the gentile's idols, "it has a nose and does not smell, it has eyes and does not see ... their gods are blind, their gods are deaf..." the Rebbe enjoyed it very much and laughed out loud.

## STARTING OUT AT MERKOS L'INYONEI CHINUCH

**When did you begin working at Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch?**

I was still a bachur and was towards the end of completing my *smicha*. I worked a little bit in chinuch at the Talmud Torah in the shul where my brother-in-law, R' Mendel Feldman, was the rabbi. One day, Rabbi Chadakov a"h called me to his office and asked whether I could help out with the office work in Merkos' office.

I worked in the office on many things like shipping out *Talks and Tales* and other pamphlets, and selling and disseminating the s'farim published by Kehos and Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch. The Rebbe worked alone in his room, but from time to time he would come to our office to take the mail that had come for him, or the like. The secretary, Rabbi Kwint, took these opportunities to repeat an interesting d'var Torah he had heard to the Rebbe.

**At the end of the S'dei Chemed series your name appears as one of the people involved in editing the indexes. Was this according to the Rebbe's instruction?**

Yes. When the Rebbe arranged the series of s'farim *S'dei Chemed* to be printed by Kehos, he asked me to make an index for the s'farim. I worked on it with R' Yitzchok Posner a"h. Since the material was extensive, the work took nearly a year.

**Since you had a connection with publishing the s'farim, perhaps you can tell us about the display of Kehos s'farim in the entranceway to 770?**

The display case was placed in the entrance to 770 back in the 50's and I had the job of replacing the s'farim in it. Every few months I changed the display and put in the new books that had been published by Kehos. The Rebbe liked this very much and once in a while he would stand and look at the new s'farim that were on display.

## THE REBBE APPOINTED HIM AS SECRETARY

**When did you begin working as the Rebbe's secretary?**

At the beginning of 5712/1952, two years before I got married, after I had already been working for Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch, the Rebbe asked me to work as his secretary.

"Your father is a *baal sod* (one who can keep things confidential)," and the Rebbe added with a smile, "and certainly you too will be a *baal sod*." I was very happy about this incredible privilege, and began to work with the Rebbe.

**Where did you work?**

The first year, I worked in the Rebbe's room with the Rebbe working at the yechidus desk while I worked in the left corner near the window, opposite the door, where I had a small desk. I also used some of the shelves on the wall for my work.

I went to the Rebbe's room nearly every day for two or three hours. I tried to be immersed in my work and not disturb the Rebbe with my presence. I heard, when my father was *gabbai* for the Rebbe Rayatz, that when he went with a group of people to yechidus in order to explain to them afterwards what the Rebbe said, he never looked at the Rebbe's desk so as not to see what he did not need to see. "My job was to listen to the Rebbe and to convey this afterwards, that's all," he said. I tried to copy my father and to concentrate only on the work that I had to do.

One time, I couldn't restrain myself and I glanced over at the Rebbe. The Rebbe was going through his correspondence and the sight that I beheld was amazing. The Rebbe took a letter in one hand and with his other hand he held a pencil and moved it incredibly quickly down the page. He then placed the letter in a pile of letters that he had read and went on to the next letter. I couldn't believe how

quickly the Rebbe read.

Suddenly, the Rebbe looked up and when he saw me watching him he said, "Sholom Mendel, you do your work."

The first year, as I said, I worked in the yechidus room. The Rebbe didn't want the letters to leave his room and he preferred having all the work done there. Although these were the first years of the Rebbe's leadership, there were many letters every day. When the number grew, there was no choice but to move my work to the main office.

The work grew as the years passed. The phone didn't stop ringing and people were in and out at all hours of

in his room until midnight and when he went home he took piles of letters and sichos for editing, which he worked on during the night. When the Rebbe returned in the morning, he brought responses to those letters.

Rabbi Kwint once asked the Rebbe why he didn't go on vacation. The Rebbe answered with a smile: If you find me someone to take over while I'm on vacation, I'll be able to go.

## WRITING RESPONSES TO THE LETTERS

**Some of your work entailed typing the Rebbe's responses. Tell us about that.**



**The secretaries receiving the Dalet minim from the Rebbe, Erev Sukkos 5748**

the day. The commotion in the secretaries' office did not enable me to concentrate on my work. I moved some of my work to the small archives room near the small zal in 770.

Later on I moved to a more spacious office on the third floor of 748 Eastern Parkway and things were more organized.

As the years passed, the Rebbe's impact on large groups in the Jewish world and l'havdil, the non-Jewish world, grew and the number of letters grew accordingly. The Rebbe worked

The Rebbe personally opened every letter he received. After the Rebbe wrote a response to each one, he gave me some of the responses for me to type. After I finished typing, I gave the Rebbe the letters and the Rebbe reviewed them, added to them and made corrections. He often gave me the letter to retype and when the letter was ready, the Rebbe signed it.

The letters the Rebbe dictated to the secretaries Rabbi Moshe Leib Rodstein and Rabbi Nissan Mindel a"h, were typed by them and then the

Rebbe reviewed those letters. Often the Rebbe added handwritten additions to these typed letters and when there were many additions, the letter was retyped and then given back to the Rebbe for his signature.

The letters were usually typed in triplicate with the original letter and copies given to the Rebbe. The original was sent to the correspondent and one copy was for the archives of the Rebbe's letters. If the Rebbe added a handwritten note, he would mark the additions on the copy in the archives too. When the corrections were made, the Rebbe gave two copies – one to be sent to the correspondent, the second to be put in the archives. The third copy, which did not have the Rebbe's additions and corrections, remained with the secretaries.

## SPECIAL KIRUVIM FROM THE REBBE

**Describe the Rebbe's relationship with the secretaries.**

The Rebbe always inquired about personal matters, such as the welfare of the family and the children, etc. Along with the kiruv, he required that we be punctual and that everything be organized and efficient.

**You mentioned that you began working for the Rebbe as a bachur. Did you have special instructions for your wedding?**

Between my engagement and my wedding the Rebbe spoke to me on several occasions about the preparations for the wedding and even gave me specific instructions. But since the Rebbe did not indicate that these instructions were for public consumption, I don't think I should publicize them.

When I was engaged, the parents of my kalla went to Eretz Yisroel and my kalla remained alone in Crown Heights. The Rebbe met her on the street and stopped to say hello. The Rebbe asked her whether she missed her parents. This conveyed a

tremendous feeling of closeness, like a father inquiring about his children.

**Did this feeling of closeness interfere with your hiskashrus to the Rebbe?**

Whenever I had to enter the Rebbe's room, just knowing that shortly I would be standing in the presence of a man of G-d, was enough to set me trembling.

Entering the Rebbe's room for my work never became routine; each time it was special. I always felt that despite the kiruvim, the Rebbe is the Rebbe and the distance between Chassid and Rebbe is infinite. In fact, the closer you are to the Rebbe, and see his greatness up close – and I saw awesome and amazing things which are impossible to describe – one's hiskashrus and bittul grow.

My father was a role model in this. I merely had to recall how he would act with the Rebbe Rayatz. My father's hiskashrus, being a Chassid of three Rebbeim, was with every fiber of his soul. He educated us not to make a move in life without first asking the Rebbe.

On yechidus nights, although my father went in to the Rebbe's room several times with people, he stood in fear and awe before entering each time and put on his gartel and entered as though it was the first time in his life. Whoever saw him standing behind the Rebbe as the Rebbe said a maamer, saw what hiskashrus and bittul he had. It was an amazingly lofty model of hiskashrus.

## **RESPONSIBLE FOR THE REBBE'S PERSONAL ARCHIVES**

**You referred to the archive of the Rebbe's letters. Who is responsible for it?**

Since the early years of the Rebbe's nesius, I have had the privilege of taking care of the Rebbe's personal archive. After the Rebbe's letters were sent, I would put a copy in the archive.

I made great efforts to see to it that it was all orderly and indexed so that when I needed a certain letter I'd be able to locate it quickly.

Over the years, I put in a lot of work into arranging the archive and whenever I saw how pleased the Rebbe was by how quickly I was able to find a letter that he wanted, it encouraged me to continue maintaining the archives in meticulous order.

**In recent years we have seen volumes of the Rebbe's letters printed that were taken from the archive that**

***After Gimmel Tammuz, the Igros Kodesh came to embody the wondrous connection between the Rebbe and the people of the generation. This is one of the ways that the Rebbe continues to direct and bless all who turn to him.***

**you are in charge of. How did the Rebbe's letters come to be printed?**

In the winter of 5747, R' Zalman Chanin, director of the Vaad LHafotzas Sichos, asked me whether he could have copies of the Rebbe's letters for printing as addenda to *Likkutei Sichos*.

Until then, the members of the Vaad had used private collections, but apparently they had used those up and since it had become customary to include letters related to the parsha in *Likkutei Sichos*, R' Chanin asked me for

letters from the archive.

I told him that I had no permission to remove letters from the archive but I would ask the Rebbe. The Rebbe's answer was: On the contrary, if there is something in the archive, show me what we're talking about.

I went to the archive and took out a file as a sample. It was a file of letters from the year 5718. When I brought it to the Rebbe, the Rebbe was pleased by the orderliness of the archive and since he saw that there was enough material for a series of s'farim, he said the material should be given to R' Sholom Dovber Levin, who had previously published a series of Igros Kodesh of the Rebbeim, so that he could begin printing the Rebbe's letters (at first he edited the series himself, and starting in 5752 he included you [S.Y. Chazan] in the editing).

**Were there special instructions from the Rebbe regarding the letters that could be printed?**

Yes. Before giving the letters to the editors of the series, the Rebbe told me not to publish letters regarding personal matters, and even those that were not about personal matters – to ascertain that printing the letter would definitely not bother anyone. The Rebbe told me to include other people who could keep things confidential, so that the work would progress at the greatest possible speed.

We reviewed the letters in the archive and designated them according to the instructions I had received from the Rebbe. When a pile had accumulated, I gave the letters to the Rebbe for him to examine them and after they were approved, they were given to the editor of the series.

As time went on, I accumulated a pile of letters which I wasn't sure whether to have published. I gave them to the Rebbe and asked what to do with them. When in doubt, don't print them – that was the rule. Although more than 10,000 letters of



the Rebbe have been printed in the series of *Igros Kodesh*, there are many letters that were not printed.

The Rebbe rushed the publishing of the series. Whenever I gave the Rebbe a pile of letters, he thanked me for the speed and asked when I would give him the next pile of letters.

**What was the Rebbe's reaction after the volumes of *Igros Kodesh* were printed?**

The Rebbe once asked "*oib m'kocht zich in di Igros*" (whether people eagerly learned the letters). I said that I heard from my son, who learned in the yeshiva in Morristown at that time, that the bachurim had a special study session for *Igros Kodesh*. The Rebbe said, "*Bachurim? Bachurim farshtei ich, ober vos tut zich mit yungelait?*" (Bachurim, I understand, but what about the married men)?

In the Rebbe's teachings in general and in the *Igros Kodesh* in particular, we see that "I have written myself into it and given it," how the Rebbe put his entire essence into his writings. After Gimmel Tammuz, the *Igros Kodesh* came to embody the wondrous connection between the Rebbe and the people of the generation. This is one of the ways that the Rebbe continues to direct and bless all who turn to him.

**28 volumes have been published to date in the *Igros Kodesh* series, which includes the letters written until 5735, all in Yiddish and Lashon HaKodesh. The Rebbe wrote thousands of letters in English. Why aren't they printed in the *Igros Kodesh* series?**

When we began printing the letters, I thought of the idea of printing the thousands of letters that the Rebbe wrote in English as a separate series. These letters are in the Rebbe's archive.

I suggested this to the Rebbe and the Rebbe said to start sorting the letters. We did that and with G-d's help they will be printed in a separate series.

## THE REBBE'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE SMALL DETAILS

**You were made responsible, by the Rebbe, for *Maos Chittim* (providing Pesach needs for the needy). How involved was the Rebbe with this?**

Distributing stipends to needy families in the early years was something done only before Pesach. In later years, the Rebbe said money should be given also before Tishrei. In the early years, the gabbai of the shul, R' Moshe Pinchas Katz a"h was in charge of preparing the list. In later years, I got the job.

Since this was a sensitive matter, I don't want to talk about it. I will only make this general statement: The Rebbe asked for a list of the needy and each time he said to increase the amount over the previous time. The Rebbe repeatedly enquired as to whether there were additional families in need and asked that more families be added to the list.

After I prepared the checks (issued by Machne Israel), on each of which it said, "by order of the Rebbe shlita," I gave all the checks to the Rebbe and then the Rebbe said they could be sent to the recipients.

**You drove the Rebbe to his house and to the Ohel for years. Did you receive special instructions during those trips?**

What was said in the car is not pertinent to the public. I will say, though, that the Rebbe always thanked me, after each trip.

**As the one responsible for the Chalukas HaShas that the Rebbe did at the Yud-Tes Kislev farbrengen, what was your job and did you receive special instructions from the Rebbe?**

As everyone remembers, during the



Yud-Tes Kislev farbrengen, after the Rebbe spoke about dividing Shas, cards were given out to the crowd under the auspices of Machne Israel, upon which everybody wrote their choice of tractate to study. Then, Rav Yolles gave the Rebbe a pen and the Rebbe wrote down which tractate he picked, which was usually Sanhedrin. Some years the Rebbe took a few additional tractates.

After the farbrengen the Rebbe took all the cards and then gave them to me. I would copy the names of the people onto a special chart with all the tractates, and hang it on the wall of 770.

In addition to urging the study of a tractate at the farbrengen, the Rebbe spoke about this with some people in private yechidus, and asked them whether they had taken a tractate in the division of Shas.

In 5752, for Yud-Tes Kislev, Rabbi Simon Jacobson of Vaad Hanochos HaT'mimim prepared a booklet of the Rebbe's sichos, said over the course of several years, about dividing the Shas on Yud-Tes Kislev. After giving me the booklet, I gave the pages to the Rebbe and asked the Rebbe whether he would give us an edited booklet for Yud-Tes Kislev. That is how we got a special kuntres on this topic.

**Did you have jobs in running other Lubavitcher mosdos?**

No. I was once asked to join a Chabad rabbinic organization. When I heard the details of the plan I hesitated, knowing the Rebbe's view that the secretaries had to be careful so that people wouldn't err and think that their opinion on a personal issue represented the Rebbe's view.

I asked the Rebbe whether to take this job. The Rebbe's answer was No.

## SIGNING "IN THE NAME OF THE REBBE SHLITA"

You were one of the only secretaries ordained by the Rebbe to

**sign, "in the name of the Rebbe shlita." When did you sign in the Rebbe's name for the first time and why specifically you?**

I don't have an answer to your second question. It was the Rebbe's decision and I never tried to understand why the Rebbe chose me to sign his name on the letters. Of course, for me it was a great privilege.

As far as the question when did I first begin signing in the Rebbe's name, this began in the early years of the Rebbe's leadership, when before a special date thousands of *pidyon nefesh* would come from Chassidim all over the world. The Rebbe told me to respond to each one of them, acknowledging receipt of their *pa"n*.

It was a large number of *panim*, and as the years went by the number grew to thousands throughout the year.

After a few years, the Rebbe told me to sign "in the name of the Rebbe shlita," on personal letters the Rebbe wrote.

## THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN "CHASHAI" AND "SODI"

Rumor has it that there were letters that said "*sodi*" or "*chashai*" on them. Why were these letters designated as "secret" when every personal letter was meant solely for the person it was written to?

With the Rebbe's guidance, the secretaries were extremely careful about being discreet, especially in sending letters to individuals and to mosdos. However, when it was extremely personal, the Rebbe asked us to be particularly careful regarding the privacy of the letter and then the Rebbe marked the answer with the letter Ches, for the word "chashai."

The word "*sodi*" signified an even higher level of confidentiality, far more than "chashai." When the Rebbe marked a letter "*sodi*," it meant that even the recipient could not keep the letter. In the margin of the letter it said that after reading the letter the original had to be returned to the secretariat!



## PERSONAL LETTERS

**The Rebbe's letters were typed. Did you consider using a computer?**

In the beginning of the 80's, when corporate America began using computers, we raised the idea of computerizing the correspondence. I asked the Rebbe about this and the Rebbe did not like the idea. Apparently it was important to the Rebbe to give each person who received an answer a personal touch and not a letter that was printed on a computer.

By the way, it's important to note that every letter from the Rebbe, whether with the Rebbe's signature or a secretary's signature, and even letters that went out in the name of the secretariat, were not sent out until the Rebbe himself read them first. That means that every letter that anyone received from the Rebbe and the secretaries was seen and approved by the Rebbe.

### AFTER 27 ADAR 5752

**What happened with the Rebbe's correspondence after 27 Adar I 5752?**

The Rebbe instructed the secretaries to continue sending letters wishing mazal tov for the simchos of Chassidim, etc., with the secretary's signature "in the name of the Rebbe shlita."

I would bring a pile of letters requesting a bracha to the Rebbe and after conveying the contents of a letter to the Rebbe, I would ask whether I could send a response in the Rebbe's name. After the Rebbe responded in the affirmative, I would go on to the next letter.

### THE REBBE ANSWERED: I WILL MENTION HIM AGAIN AT THE TZIYUN

**Over the years you certainly had amazing experiences. Can you share some of them with us?**

In general, we saw miracles and wondrous responses. I will give two

examples regarding shidduchim. I once gave the Rebbe a request for a bracha for a shidduch. The Rebbe took the note with both hands and began moving it around from side to side for many seconds. It was an otherworldly sight, illustrating how we cannot fathom what goes into the Rebbe's answers. The Rebbe finally stopped and gave his approval to the shidduch.

On another occasion, when I gave the Rebbe a request for his approval to a shidduch, the Rebbe told me to tell the parents that "the matter has gone out from before G-d."

***When the Rebbe marked a letter "sodi," it meant that even the recipient could not keep the letter. In the margin of the letter it said that after reading the letter the original had to be returned to the secretariat!***

We always saw things that were beyond our understanding. Once, a Lubavitcher called the secretaries and asked me to submit to the Rebbe an urgent request for a bracha for a sick person. It was in the morning and right after I submitted the note, the Rebbe responded with: I will mention it at the gravesite [of the Rebbe Rayatz].

A few hours later, in the afternoon, I got another phone call with a report that the sick person's condition had improved. I submitted another note to the Rebbe and to my surprise I

received the following response: I will mention it again at the gravesite. This was despite the fact that the Rebbe had not left his room since his previous response! It seems the Rebbe does not need to leave his room in order to mention someone for a blessing at the gravesite.

**Can you tell us of a personal miracle that happened to you?**

One time, I was returning to my home in Brighton along with my family when we were attacked by some hoodlums. My wife began to scream and the hoodlums ran off. We knew that they lived in the building across the street, which was a haven for young criminals, and we were afraid of what might happen next.

We wrote about what happened to the Rebbe and asked whether we should move somewhere else in Brighton. We didn't consider leaving the neighborhood, but we thought we would be more relaxed on another street, not across from the building with these delinquents.

The Rebbe's answer was: You know my view on this (i.e., not to leave when threatened). May you relate good news.

Not even two months went by and at three in the morning the neighborhood was woken up by the sirens of fire engines called because that building across the street was on fire. The firemen tried for a long time to extinguish the fire but the fire consumed the building down to the foundation. For twenty years afterwards, the ruined building stood desolate. What a few words from the Rebbe can accomplish...

### INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING INYANEI MOSHIACH

**Were there any specific instructions to the secretaries regarding spreading the Besuras HaGeula and preparing the world for Moshiach?**

I did not receive instructions from the Rebbe about this. The Rebbe conveyed the message clearly in farbrengens and there were answers to individuals as well.

Today everything is publicized and it is clear that the Rebbe wants our main involvement to be in spreading the Besuras HaGeula and preparing the world to greet Moshiach. The Rebbe expressed this in a sicha at the Kinus HaShluchim 5752, Parshas Chayei Sara 5752: In every activity, the point should be how this leads towards greeting Moshiach Tzidkeinu.

## MOSHIACH DOES NOT PUT PEOPLE OFF!

**Some people claim that spreading the Besuras HaGeula pushes people away from Lubavitch. Did you hear anything from the Rebbe regarding this?**

This claim isn't new. There were people who said the same thing when Lubavitch published *HaKria V'HaK'dusha* (which, by the way, my family and I had the privilege of being involved in the publishing) which contained the Rebbe Rayatz's message of "immediately to t'shuva, immediately to Geula." One of the people who made this claim was a big *askan* (communally involved person) who was a great friend of Lubavitch and even helped the Rebbe Rayatz on his first visit to America.

In the beginning of the 50's the Rebbe sent me to that askan in order to clarify his relationship to Lubavitch. After a long conversation with him, he told me that he began to distance himself from Lubavitch after the Rebbe Rayatz began agitating about Geula and Moshiach. "I hold that nobody can know when Moshiach will come," he said, "and therefore I distanced myself."

I wrote to the Rebbe about the meeting with the man and quoted what he said – that he was distanced

because of Moshiach. The Rebbe made an asterisk on the word "distanced" and wrote the following (this was publicized in *Beis Moshiach*):

**Based on this he should be distanced from all those who said a *keitz*: R' Saadya Gaon, Rashi (on his commentary to Daniel 7:25, 8:14), Rambam (*Igeres Teiman*), R' Avrohom Ibn Ezra (Daniel 11:30), the Baalei Tosafos on Torah (*Hadar Z'keinim* beg. Parshas VaYeishev), Ramban (*Seifer HaGeula*), Don Yosef Ibn yichyeh on Megillos ("approximately after 5540 years"), Rav Yitzchok Abarbanel (*Mayanei HaYeshua*) Ohr HaChaim (beg. Tzav), the Gra (commentary to *Safra d'Tzni'usa*) Maaseh Oreg on Mishnayos (Maaser Sheini 5:2) in the name of the Arizal. And much more. See also Sanhedrin 97b and Zohar I 139b.**

It's clear and needs no additional explanation.

In the sicha of Shoftim 5751, the Rebbe said to publicize the

proclamation and prophecy of Geula that "behold, Moshiach is coming," and similarly in other sichos. This means that today we can publicize the Besuras HaGeula without causing people to be distanced from Lubavitch. Obviously, you have to know how to say it, but you need to know that it is indeed possible. When you present things in a pleasant fashion and in a way that people can relate to it, they can accept it.

If you speak with Jews from other groups you see an amazing thing. In the past, the topic of Moshiach was not on their minds and only Lubavitch spoke about it, but today everybody is talking about Moshiach and Geula.

The questions that people have about Mivtza Moshiach have to spur us on to learn more about inyanei Geula and Moshiach in the Rebbe's sichos. The Rebbe told us that this is the "straight path" to bring the revelation of Geula.

## PERSONAL NOTE

Over the years I've interviewed dozens of rabbanim, shluchim, and distinguished public figures for *Beis Moshiach*, and each of them made a certain impression on me. However, this interview with a loyal secretary of the Rebbe, one who was close to royalty for about fifty years, who served in senior positions in Lubavitch mosdos, was altogether different. He made a profound impact on me.

I sat facing a real Chassid, who, despite the closeness and trust that he enjoyed from the Rebbe, and despite his position, remains a modest person who speaks with everyone as an equal.

Rabbi Simpson keeps confidences, and even after he agreed to be interviewed for the first time since he began working for the Rebbe, in order to inspire Anash to strengthen their *hiskashrus* to the Rebbe and prepare the world for Moshiach, he still managed to conceal far more than he revealed.

Throughout the interview it was obvious that Rabbi Simpson was choosing his words carefully with the awareness that the Rebbe would see every word written in his name and being sure that at any moment he will be called in by the Rebbe, to continue his work.

S.Y.C.

# THE REBBE PROMISED, THE REBBE FULFILLED

BY RABBI SHMUEL HURWITZ

TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY

*Up until then he believed that the Rebbe's promise would be completely fulfilled, but now that the Rebbe was no longer here in the physical sense, he began to have a nagging doubt whether his promise would really be carried out...*

In honor of Beis Iyar, the birthday of the Rebbe Maharash, *nishmaso Eden*, I would like to bring a simply miraculous story that I heard from one of the chassidim who heard it directly from the person to whom it happened:

Once at a Seudas Moshiaich farbrengen on Acharon Shel Pesach, the renowned chassid, Rabbi Moshe Binyamin Kaplan, of blessed memory, who studied in his youth in Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim in Kremenchug, Ukraine, told about a most prominent chassid he knew there named R. Chaim Ber Melamed.

Rabbi Kaplan recalled how he always used to see this chassid sobbing and crying during Krias Shma, when he came to the verse, "And you shall love Hashem, your G-d." He once inquired to him why he always cried at this verse, asking if it wouldn't be better to say it joyfully and with gladness of heart?

"We say, 'And you shall love Hashem, your G-d, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might,'" R. Chaim Ber replied. "Do we actually love Him with all our heart, soul, and might? We're lying, *ch"v*! Therefore, I cry and plead before Him that I should truly merit to attain this

level and speak the truth."

Rabbi Kaplan then proceeded to tell an amazing story from this chassid, who experienced the miracle first-hand:

In his youth, R. Chaim Ber was a tall, strong, and healthy young man, and then in 5642, when he reached the age of military conscription and was concerned about how to find a way to avoid the draft, he traveled to Lubavitch to request the holy blessing of the Rebbe Maharash.

The Rebbe Maharash told him, "*Du vest in militer nisht gein*" (you won't go to the army), and R. Chaim Ber left the Rebbe's house happy and joyful over the promise the Rebbe had made him, for "when a tzaddik decrees, G-d fulfills," and he believed with complete faith that it would be fulfilled and he would be exempt from military service.

Regrettably, not long afterwards, on the 13th of Tishrei 5643, the Rebbe Maharash passed away. Even though he had totally believed up until then that the Rebbe's promise would be completely fulfilled, nevertheless, now that the Rebbe was no longer here in the physical sense, he began to have a nagging doubt whether his promise

would really be carried out.

Understandably, he was broken and crushed as he imagined what might happen.

When the day came for him to present himself at the induction center building, he arrived filled with fear and anxiety. The offices were on the top floor, and he began to climb the steps.

As he was walking up the stairs, he thought about whether it would be better to fulfill the verse, "And Yaakov escaped," rather than to go up and enter the lions' den. He was already turning around to descend the stairs and run away, when he suddenly beheld a miraculous vision: he saw the Rebbe Maharash himself in all his glory climbing the stairs toward him. Startled and shaken by this sight, he turned around and continued walking upstairs. After a minute or so, he thought to himself: *I must have just imagined it. After all, the Rebbe is no longer here in this world.* He turned around again to see if it was for real, and sure enough, he saw that it was: there was the Rebbe following him up the stairs to accompany him. Stricken with fear upon seeing the Rebbe, he began to tremble, and he entered the induction offices with every limb in his body shaking.

When the approval committee members saw him in this state, they thought that he was terminally ill, and they yelled at him, "*Fashahl vahn!*" (Get out of here!), a Russian expression used to chase away a dog, and they immediately gave him his military exemption.

# L'CHAT'CHILLA ARIBBER: AN INSTRUCTION AND THE CONFERRING OF THE ABILITY TO ACT THIS WAY

*A compilation of stories told by the Rebbe about the Rebbe Maharash, presented in honor of Beis Iyar, birthday of the Rebbe Maharash.*

## IF YOU REMAIN SILENT...

On one of the trips the Rebbe Maharash made to the capital on communal matters, he met with some activists and presented to them an orderly plan as to how to act. Since the matter entailed extraordinary difficulties, to the point of self-sacrifice, a few of the activists tried to discontinue their involvement.

Seeing this, the Rebbe Maharash said to them: It is written (Megillas Esther), "If you will remain silent at this time, relief and salvation will stand for the Jews from somewhere else, and you and your father's house will be destroyed." The same is true in our situation. I am sure that "relief and salvation will stand for the Jews," and if you don't want to participate then "relief and salvation will come from somewhere else," but then, "you and your father's house will be destroyed." In other words, you will lose the merit that could have been your share.

The Rebbe Maharash did not suffice with his own conduct in communal matters being in a way of *l'chat'chilla aribber* ("the world says that when it's impossible to go under, go over; but I say that **to**

**begin with, you need to go over**"; he demanded this of others – that they too should be involved in communal matters without being fazed by the difficulties involved, in a way of *l'chat'chilla aribber*.

In fact, being involved on someone else's behalf in a way of *l'chat'chilla aribber* is not only good for the other person but good for you too.

What is emphasized in this story is that the welfare of the public could have been secured even without their participation, as the Rebbe Maharash said to them, "relief and salvation would stand by the Jews (even) from somewhere else."

Seemingly, when the activists heard that it would be taken care of in any case, without their participation, they certainly could have gotten out of it and not taken part! Nevertheless, by saying this, the Rebbe Maharash inspired them and **motivated them** to take part and do their share, because acting on behalf of someone else is also a personal benefit to the people involved – good for both their souls and their bodies.

(Hisvaaduyos 5746, vol. 1, p. 145 – bilti muga)

## THE BAAL SHEM TOV'S EXAMPLE

It is well known what was recounted by the Rebbe, my father-in-law, Nasi Doreinu, regarding the Rebbe Maharash's conduct – that it was like that of the Baal Shem Tov ("a Baal Shemske hanhaga"). The Rebbe Maharash's aphorism, which was revealed by the Rebbe, my father-in-law, was: even when the world thinks such and such, he says that the conduct ought to be in a way of **to begin with, you need to go over**.

That means there is no room for the opposite reasoning, necessitating dialectics, etc.; **to begin with** there is no room whatsoever for the opposite position. Furthermore, "the advantage of light" and the "advantage of wisdom" **go over** – they are not done after a preface of the opposite of light and of wisdom (so that only **afterwards** is seen the "advantage of light" and the "advantage of wisdom") but in a way of *l'chat'chilla aribber*. In fact, this matter itself is in a way of *l'chat'chilla* (aribber), leaving no room at all to think otherwise.

In this too is emphasized the joining together of two extremes:

Conducting oneself *l'chat'chilla aribber*, a Baalshemske hanhaga, is something extremely lofty, beyond all measure and limitation. At the same time, it is drawn down and

revealed below, down below, literally in matters of this physical world.

(Hisvaaduyos 5743, p. 30 – bilti muga)

## THE CALL OF OUR GENERATION

There is an instruction and special *nesinas ko'ach* (conferring of ability) from the Rebbe Maharash who said that the world thinks such and such, etc., and **I say** the conduct ought to be in a way of **to begin with, you need to go over**.

This instruction is the “call of our generation” – that the totality of the avoda in spreading Torah and Judaism, etc., needs to be done in a way of l’chat’chilla aribber.

As the Rebbe, my father-in-law, Nasi Doreinu, recounted regarding his own involvement in communal matters, namely, that his work was not limited or constrained according to the amount of money he had in cash, but he was always in debt. He wasn’t afraid of debt. When he paid back earlier debts he took on new debts so he could **expand** the work of spreading Torah and Judaism.

This is unlike those mistaken people who think that in order to have peace of mind and body one should not spend more than one has. Our Rebbeim say we need to act in a way of l’chat’chilla aribber! ... True peace of mind is only when you fulfill the avoda of shlichus in accordance with the instruction of Nasi Doreinu – that when you are involved in disseminating Torah, spreading Judaism and spreading the wellsprings, you don’t fulfill your obligation with activities that are in accordance with the money you have; you need to take on debts so you can do these activities in an expansive manner.

Along with this, you must remember not to act in a way that is consonant with the World of Tohu (i.e., in a chaotic manner) because

then, it is not *aribber* relative to “mountains” and “hills,” but in a way that has nothing to do with the world at all! This was not the Rebbe Maharash’s instruction, and this is not a way of doing things according to Torah.

However, something that was already done in this way (conduct according to the World of Tohu), “may blessing come upon it,” for his seizing the opportunity and doing this (in a way of “grab and eat,” etc.). Nevertheless, from now on, it needs to be in a way of l’chat’chilla aribber **relative** to the ways of the

*This is unlike those mistaken people who think that in order to have peace of mind and body one should not spend more than one has. Our Rebbeim say we need to act in a way of l’chat’chilla aribber!*

world, i.e., above the mountains and hills of the world but at the same time, **relative** to the ways of the world and **within** the ways of the world.

(Hisvaaduyos 5743 vol. 3, p. 1285 – bilti muga)

## LIVE IN THE WORLD OF TIKKUN

The instruction of l’chat’chilla aribber was given to each of us, for it would not have been publicized if it did not pertain to everyone. They did not publicize this instruction in order for the opposite

to be done, Heaven forbid, because then we have the rule, “better they should act inadvertently, etc.” They publicized this instruction so that people would act accordingly in a way of l’chat’chilla aribber, yet this must be done within the World of Tikkun (within the vessels of the natural order, i.e., not departing from the reality of the world).

(Someone came to me complaining why I was limiting him with limitations of the World of Tikkun. What did I care if he did l’chat’chilla aribber as in the World of Tohu – the main thing is it should be l’chat’chilla aribber!

(But I cannot do anything about this. We live according to Torah in the World of Tikkun, and therefore everything, including l’chat’chilla aribber, must be done in the World of Tikkun.)

(Hisvaaduyos 5744, vol. 1, p. 160 – bilti muga)

## SIYUM ON THE HEMSHECH

...Acting in a manner that departs from order is also expressed in the innovation of the Rebbe Maharash in the way he communicated his teachings, namely, as a *hemshech* (serialized), one long subject expounded over the course of many weeks.

There are many *maamarim* of the Alter Rebbe, the Mitteler Rebbe, and the Tzemach Tzedek (before the Rebbe Maharash), but each *maamer* is separate (although there are *maamarim* which were combined into one volume after they were said).

For example, as is known with regard to the *Tanya* of the Alter Rebbe, the first three chapters were said as a separate *drush* and afterwards placed at the beginning of *Tanya*. So too regarding the work in general, as is emphasized in its name *Likkutei Amarim* (a compilation of sayings), and as it says in the introduction – that “they

are all answers to many questions which are asked for advice, etc.,” and then they were combined into one book, the first section of *Tanya*.

So too with the second part, *Shaar Ha'Yichud V'Ha'Emuna*, and the third part, *Igeres HaT'shuva*, and all the more so with the section *Igeres HaKodesh*, which is a compilation of many letters on various topics, each topic appearing separately (but they were combined into one volume).

The same with the Mittler Rebbe, who wrote several books of Chassidus but as far as the saying of *drushim*, sometimes two maamarim were said, one following the other (as is apparent from the continuity of the maamarim) and then the

maamarim were combined into a book or a book based on the maamarim of the Alter Rebbe, as it says in the introduction to his books.

With the Rebbe Maharash, though, we find for the first time, the saying of maamarim in a way of **hemshech**. This was a new form of saying Chassidus, **which is not connected with order**, for perfect order in the saying of Chassidus is when each maamer of Chassidus is connected with the weekly parsha or the holiday when the maamer was said. Consequently, each maamer is separate. However, with the Rebbe Maharash, we find a hemshech of several maamarim which were said over the course of

many weeks, and even a long hemshech – as is known, there is a hemshech called “HaGadol”: *V'kacha HaGadol*.

We know from the Rebbe, my father-in-law, Nasi Doreinu, that when the Rebbe Maharash finished saying the hemshech *V'kacha* (which was later called *V'kacha HaGadol*), he called his son, later to be the Rebbe Rashab, to his room and closed (or locked) the door and took out a bottle of mashke (Arik, as it was called then, or the like), and said that in honor of the conclusion of the hemshech they would make a siyum together with the saying of l'chaim, etc., and apparently they also had a farbrengen.

(Hisvaaduyos 5750 vol. 1, p. 113-bilti muga)

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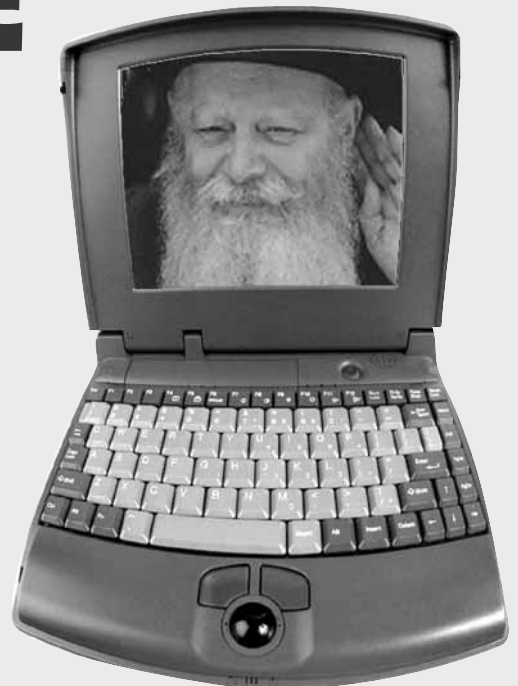
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# IT'S NOT DUE TO OUR ABILITIES AND TALENTS

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

*This is not about complaining or asking for pity, but life on shlichus – the most rewarding sort of life – entails mesirus nefesh and many hardships. \* Part 10 in the series “Stories from the Chabad House”*



## MESIRUS NEFESH

I once heard a summary of what was said at a farbrengen of Rabbi Moshe Sasonkin, shliach in Matula. Rabbi Sasonkin divided the concept of *mesirus nefesh* (self-sacrifice) on shlichus into three categories: 1) physical *mesirus nefesh* – the physical and material hardships a shliach has to contend with, like finances, friends, transportation for the children, kosher food, etc. 2) Spiritual *mesirus nefesh* – no Chabad minyan, being unable to daven at length, not a proper *eiruv*, not having a mikva every morning, etc. 3) “*Mesirus*” from the root meaning “devotion” – being devoted to helping people with their problems, finding them a yeshiva, being available 24-hours-a-day and not just on the cell phone.

I liked his categorization not only because it neatly divided *mesirus nefesh* but mainly because of the exceptional insight into the feelings of every Chassidic young man who goes “out there” on shlichus. On the one hand, a shliach has the strong feeling of “fortunate are we, how good is our portion, and how pleasant is our lot.” A Chassid has no greater pleasure than the knowledge that every moment of the day he is busy with the Rebbe’s shlichus.

Sometimes this happiness reaches even greater heights when a project or campaign is successfully concluded, or when one experiences a miracle of the Rebbe. Yet, along with the joy and the enormous satisfaction, there are moments – and even hours and

weeks – of difficulties, hesitation, and even crises. And it is only the absolute connection to the Rebbe and the close adherence to the Rebbe’s words, which strengthen one’s abilities and leave us sane and even happy as the shlichus continues.

## THE ANGELS THAT HELP SHLUCHIM

Let us take for example the holiday of Purim (and then Pesach). Purim is really nice for religious-chareidi people or families who live in their own community, whether Yerushalayim, B’nei Brak, or Kfar Chabad. The children dress up, they pack *mishloach manos* for relatives and neighbors, and then deliver them. Then they sit down to a family Purim meal, relate



“Purim Torah,” and enjoy a cup of tea with some cake that came in the mishloach manos.

(I will take this opportunity to thank those people whether young or young in spirit, who are not shluchim but come and help out the shluchim. They leave their homes including the celebration with family and take their cars and travel to Beit Shaan or Dimona, Gadera or Kiryat Shmoneh, and help the local shliach distribute mishloach manos to the soldiers or to friends of Chabad.

(I don't know how we would manage without this help – not only on Purim but Chanuka, etc. Thank you and thanks to their wives and children who agree to let them go.)

When you're on shlichus, it's a bit different. A month before Purim it begins to become clear to the shliach, his wife, and the entire family, that in the upcoming days and weeks Abba is not available. Abba is busy on the phone with names of army bases and directors of jails in obtaining entry permits and the numbers of soldiers, old people in senior citizen homes or in finding suitable entertainment for the children's party, a band for the party for new immigrants, etc.

On Purim, after the Megilla is read at the Chabad house, Abba is already busy sending off the bachurim-T'mimim volunteers to army camps or nearby kibbutzim for Megilla readings (or Menora lighting on Chanuka). During the day, Abba welcomes the volunteers and directs each one to where he is supposed to go, advising him on what to do when he gets there.

Usually there are glitches or unexpected things that need to be taken care of that only add to the pressure. When the Purim meal finally rolls around, usually close to

sunset, Abba generally farbrengs with all the mekuravim and is not exactly devoting himself to his family.

Let me be clear: This is not about complaining or asking for pity; the opposite is the case. I am content. But there are also hardships.

A shliach gave me, at the end of

*From my experience,  
I can tell you that  
within a year or two,  
that city will have a  
mikva, a shul (that  
will have to be  
expanded every 3-4  
years), kosher food,  
schools for hundreds  
of children as well as  
Jewish nursery  
schools.*

Purim, a summary of his impressive day. The seuda was mostly excellent. Why just “mostly”? Because at a certain point one of the mekuravim decided that in order to increase the simcha he would somersault on the table, which contained salads and full cups of wine. This made a colorful explosion on everybody's clothes and some people said goodbye and left to change.

Or the shliach who drank a lot and in the Purim spirit he asked one of his mekuravim why he was so busy taking pictures of the seuda instead of listening to the farbrengen. The mekurav was

insulted and drew his wife into it too and the shliach had no choice but to write a thank-you letter, the next day, to the mekurav who did so much for the Chabad house.

## **PESACH AT THE CHABAD HOUSE**

On to Pesach. While in most Jewish homes you see signs of cleaning and getting ready for Yom Tov, at the shliach's house other things are going on too. First, there are matza baking workshops with the children, which go on for two weeks. Then come entire days in which shluchim give out matzos to mekuravim, boxes of food to the needy, kosher utensils and sell chametz.

When Pesach finally arrives and the most natural and logical desire is to relax with the family and tell the story of our going out of Egypt, most shluchim not only leave the house but they take the family, including the smallest children, to the public seider. He wants his children to serve as role models, demonstrating how a Jewish child asks the Four Questions and sits nicely and listens to his father's explanations about Pesach and the future redemption.

In most cases, the public seider, which is usually speeded up, does not allow the shliach to address his family in a way that is appropriate for Chassidishe children. What usually happens is, after the public seider is over, we begin it all over again for our children and we fulfill, “and you shall relate it to your children” between 10 p.m. and 2-3 in the morning.

## **TRYING TO COPY US**

Two young men from Beit Shaan, who participated in a huge gathering in Yerushalayim two years ago, headed by Rabbi Mordechai Elon, told me about it. R' Elon addressed over 1000 youth

to initiate the founding of a movement of shlichus, similar to that of the Rebbe. These young men told me that in his lecture, R' Elon said that he had occasion to visit a small town in a country that used to belong to the Soviet Union.

R' Elon met a young shliach of the Rebbe there. This is the conversation that followed as related at that founding meeting:

R' Elon: How long have you been living here?

The shliach: Half a year.

R' Elon: Do you have children?  
The shliach: two.

R' Elon: Are there Jewish nursery schools or elementary schools here?

The shliach: no.

R' Elon: Do you have a mikva?

The shliach: no.

R' Elon: Do you have a shul with a daily minyan?  
The shliach: no.

R' Elon: Do stores sell kosher food here?

The shliach: no.

R' Elon: So how do you manage?

The shliach: What do you mean? The Rebbe sent me here and with Hashem's help everything will be fine!

R' Elon concluded: From my experience, I can tell you that within a year or two, that city will have a mikva, a shul (that will have to be expanded every 3-4 years),

kosher food, schools for hundreds of children as well as Jewish nursery schools. So let us do this too!

It's only right that I add my personal feeling to this story and I think I speak for all Chassidim. It is not **our** talents that create all these things; it is solely thanks to the Rebbe. It is in the merit of his blessings and in the merit of the abilities that every shliach receives from the Rebbe when he goes out on shlichus, an amazing power that accompanies a shliach every moment on shlichus. It is only because of the Rebbe that a young couple can go out on shlichus to some distant place and declare that there he will remain, with Hashem's help.

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# WHO WAS MISSING FROM YOUR SEIDER TABLE THIS PESACH?

BY RABBI YAAKOV LIEDER

Family conflict is not a new phenomenon. It dates back thousands of years. As a matter of fact, the first family recorded in the Torah, Adam, Chava, and their two sons, Kayin and Hevel, show the destructive nature of family conflict. Kayin, jealous and angry, felt Hevel was gaining more attention from G-d than he was. This led to the first murder recorded in the Bible: a brutal killing in a family of only two sons. This act effectively wiped out one quarter of the then world population!

The story is told to us so that we can learn just how far things can go and just how nasty a family conflict can turn. We should, therefore, do whatever it takes to stop any form of hate and jealousy before they spread like a cancer that totally destroys the family.

In my capacity as Director of the Jewish Family Centre, I come across a variety of family conflict situations, from monetary issues to emotional blackmail. These have led in some cases to situations where fathers and grandfathers have not stood by the side of the grandson, or attended a son's Bar Mitzva or Chuppa... even though in some cases they live in the same country, in the same city or even in the same

suburb. During the time I have spent in conflict resolution each side presents significant reasons and justification for the creation of and maintaining the conflict.

Explanations a mile long express how they have been wronged by the other party for years, and that therefore, they have every right to take a final stand and sustain this sour relationship. Often there is a list of things that have to be accepted, and only when the other

***"It is our anger that gets us into a fight, but it is our ego that keeps us there."***

party has complied, then, and only then, will there be peace in the family.

Such conflicts can last ten years or more, and as time passes, each side feels increasingly more convinced of how right they are. They involve themselves in collecting all possible evidence to justify their position.

In Israel, where more people are killed in car accidents than from

acts of terror, they have recently begun a new campaign aimed at stopping the carnage on the roads caused by road rage. The slogan that was chosen for this campaign and was posted on billboards all around Israel, stated: *"It is better to be smart than to be right."*

That means be patient on the road, give another driver the right of way even if they don't deserve it. Be smart and give up a parking spot that you believe belongs to you for the sake of peace.

"It is our anger that gets us into a fight, but it is our ego that keeps us there," a wise man once said. We all have an ego which at times works in our favour. However, all too often, it also works against us.

I have advised a number of people who have been in family conflicts for years, to appoint themselves a relationship coach. It should be someone who is caring and professional, who will guide them and help them sift through the real issues, but also the not-so-real ones. That coach has to be a person who will tell them what they need to hear and not necessarily what they **want** to hear.

Before Pesach we clean our houses of any chametz and leaven



bread. We also need a cleansing of our emotional leaven and ego. The time has come that we shall burn up our ten "negative charter treaties" and free ourselves from bondage once and for all.

When we prepare our seider guest list we should ask ourselves the question loud and clear WHO ELSE SHOULD BE SITTING WITH US AT OUR SEDER TABLE? Let us have the good will to lift the phone and say, "Let's leave the past slavery mentality behind us and free ourselves from our emotional

bondage this year. Come over my brother, sister, father, mother, son, daughter, let's march out together, let's search for a way of being smart rather than being stuck in the conflict of fighting to establish how to be right."

I remember that in the early 70's, just before Pasach, there was a suggestion made in Israel that in order to express solidarity with Soviet Jewry, we should leave an empty chair at our Pasach Seder table. The Lubavitcher Rebbe issued a call, saying that "A good way to

show our solidarity with Soviet Jewry is that we must ensure that no chair should remain empty. We should go out and look for some one who has no seider to go to, and bring these people into our home." This positive approach is as relevant now as it was then.

Let's make sure that the strength of the Jewish family prevails. By that I mean that we show we are able to sacrifice our egos, settle our conflicts, and show ourselves willing to be "smart rather than right."

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# BEIS MOSHIACH UK CELEBRATE OPENING CEREMONY IN NORTH WEST LONDON

Beis Menachem - Beis Moshiah UK hosted an opening ceremony for the new "Beis Menachem" Chabad Community Centre, 15 Broadwalk Lane, off Golders Green Road, on Thursday evening, Yud-Alef Nisan. After the formal proceedings of affixing the mezuzah by Rabbi Abraham Gubbay, the Chief Rabbi of the London Iraqi Jewish community. They occupy a magnificent synagogue at the same location.



building in Stamford Hill for many years and have pre-bookings close to 100.

Many of the participants will be attending the new location in Golders Green this year as it is more convenient for them.

Chaim Yitzchok Cohen, Menahel of Beis Moshiah UK said: "I am sure the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiah will have much *nachas* from our present to him on the occasion of his Yom

Huledes. May our reward be the immediate hisgalus of the Rebbe MH"M."

A Chassidic farbrengen commenced at the new Centre with inspirational sichos of the Rebbe MH"M, conveyed by Rabbi Binyomin Schlanger and Rabbi Yisroel Cyprys. Rabbi Ephraim Rivkin recited the Rebbe's kapittel T'hilim.

The event was well attended by a wide nucleus of friends and supporters from other circles of Chassidim, and many Israeli supporters and well wishers.

The Beis Moshiah building, which is a birthday present to the Rebbe MH"M, will be fully functioning and the first communal s'darim will be held there in the newly refurbished building, be'H. Close to 200 people have pre-booked to attend.

Beis Moshiah have established an annual communal seider in their main



# READERS *writing*

## HOW WERE THE GENTILE RELATIVES APPROACHED ON SHLICHUS?

The story of successful Kiruv being done in Slovakia by Rabbi and Rebbetzin Myers is inspiring (as these stories usually are). My question is how were the gentiles involved handled? Ms. Nussbaum writes that there was an intermarriage rate of over 95%, so what was done with all these gentile relatives and extended families? Were there special meetings with them? Were they encouraged to convert? Were they encouraged to study and become Noachides? Were they allowed some synagogue participation, to whatever extent halacha allows (as was done in Temple days when righteous gentiles joined synagogues but did not convert because

of fear of adult circumcision)? Or was separation and divorce encouraged? How was the inevitable occasional hostility handled?

These shlichus stories never touch this part of the story, and I think your readers, and future shluchim would find it very interesting and useful.

Respectfully,

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