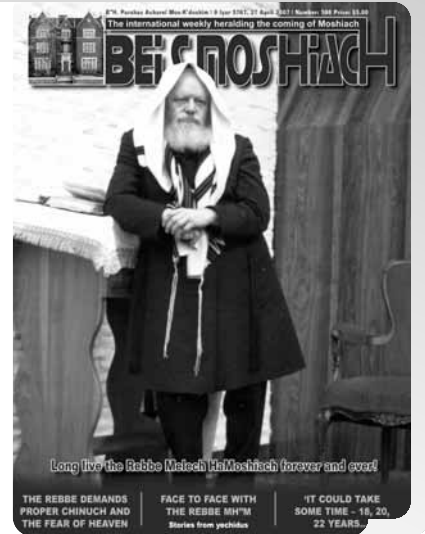


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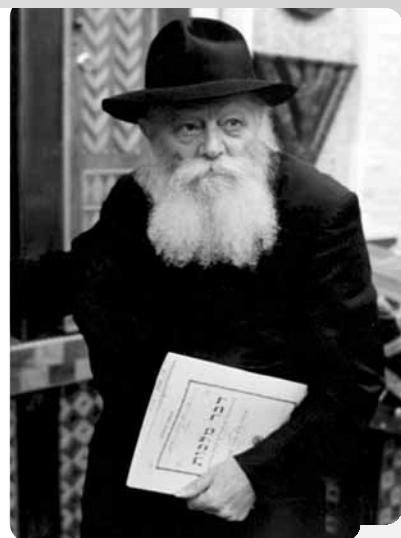
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HOW COULD G-D DEFILE HIMSELF TO SAVE US?

LIKKUTEI SICHOS VOL. 7, PG. 153-157
TRANSLATED BY BORUCH MERKUR



1. There is a well known Midrash¹ that states that all the Mitzvos that G-d commanded the Jewish people to fulfill, He Himself fulfills. Therefore, concerning the prohibition directed to the Kohanim (the priestly class) that they should not become ritually defiled, it is understood that G-d – of Whom it is said, “Your L-rd is a Kohen”² – also withholds Himself from becoming defiled, as it were. To that extent, Tosafos³ offers that it is no quandary that G-d was “permitted” to defile Himself to bury Moshe Rabbeinu, because “The Jewish people are called children of the Omnipresent,” and for the sake of one’s own child, a Kohen may become defiled.

Similarly, it says in Zohar⁴ regarding the future redemption that G-d will then defile Himself, so to speak, by taking the Jewish people out of the Exile of Edom [i.e., the exile imposed upon the Jewish people by the Romans; the current exile] (as the verse says, “Who is this coming from Edom, with soiled garments...and all My clothing I soiled”⁵). For the Jewish people are, as it were, “his (i.e., G-d’s) unmarried sister who is close to him, who had not been with a man.”⁶ Thus, [the Torah instructs us in the continuation of the latter verse], “for her, he [the Kohen] shall defile himself.”

However, the above must be understood in light of the fact that G-d is (not just a regular Kohen but) a Kohen **Gadol** (a **High Priest**),⁷ and a Kohen Gadol may not defile himself for “any dead bodies,”⁸ not even for his own child or for his unmarried sister. Thus, it is still not clear: How could G-d have defiled Himself for Moshe and how will He defile Himself for the sake of [redeeming] the Jewish people?⁹

2. The Maharsha¹⁰ explains that, in truth, the

concept of defilement is entirely inapplicable to the Supernal Realm, “for a spiritual entity is not susceptible to defilement.” The fact that the Gemara says that (following the burial of Moshe Rabbeinu) G-d immersed Himself in fire [to cleanse Himself, as it were], is nothing more than a response **appropriate** to the question and the false mindset of a heretic (*min*) who had presumed that G-d is a being with a physical form [and is, therefore, subject to the laws of ritual defilement].

The explanation of the Maharsha resolves the above difficulty in connection with the answer of the Tosafos, for, **in truth**, the concept of defilement is, for the most part, not applicable Above.

Tosafos’ commentary is only intended to explain how **this heretic**, according to his understanding,¹¹ is not bothered with the problem, “How could He have defiled Himself?” That is, **he** suffices with the answer, “The Jewish people are called children of the Omnipresent,” for he only knows that “Your L-rd is a **Kohen**,” not that He is a Kohen **Gadol**.

But, in addition to the fact that it is difficult to say that the entire discussion of the Gemara is only in accordance with the understanding of a heretic, it is proved from the aforementioned Zohar¹² that also Above the concept of defilement exists.

Thus, the quandary resurfaces: how could G-d, a Kohen Gadol, defile Himself, as it were, for “his child” or for “his unmarried sister”?

3. The explanation of the matter:

The fact that below [in the physical dimension] all

aspects of Creation are established in a given, specific manner is because that is the way they exist Above in their source from which they derive. Their Supernal origin is, of course, incompatibly higher than their [physical] counterparts below, creations that are limited and possess [defining physical] forms. Nevertheless, also (their source) the Supernal Attributes (not being at the level of utter [abstract] simplicity, as is the case with regard to G-d's Infinite Light, which is absolute simplicity [i.e., abstract, non-composite], rather, they) possess a particular limitation and form, be it **Benevolence (Chesed)**, **Severity (G'vura)**, and so on. Thus, they share a particular resemblance to the particular creations below that are created from them¹³ and in which the aspect of the source is manifest in a pronounced and defined manner. For example, water, which possesses the characteristic of descending from **above to below**,¹⁴ is a manifestation of the Attribute of Benevolence (the source for the aspect of water¹⁵), whose concept is expressed in drawing from **above to below**.¹⁶ The same principle applies to the other creations.

Thus, the creations compared to their source of origin are at the level of an "analogy," because through them we can have a certain conception of the "analogue," their Supernal Source.¹⁷

Since it is the Supernal Will that we should have knowledge and comprehension of the levels that exist Above, including G-d's Infinite Light (as in the phrase, "[that] they should recognize His greatness,"¹⁸ and so on – **His** greatness) which is absolute simplicity, He, therefore, also created things that express simplicity (within the context of Creation) in order that we could thereby have a concept, as it were – as one would apply an analogy [to understand what it represents] – of the simplicity of G-d.

[To be continued be"H]

Thus, the quandary resurfaces: how could G-d, a Kohen Gadol, defile Himself, as it were, for "his child" or for "his unmarried sister"?

NOTES:

¹ Shmos Rabba 30:9; Yerushalmi Rosh HaShana 1:3

² Sanhedrin 39a, end

³ Ibid

⁴ Parshas Emor 89a, explained in the discourse entitled, "U'L'Achoso HaB'sula" 5627 and 5629

⁵ Yeshayahu 63:1-3

⁶ VaYikra 21:3

⁷ See Zohar III 17b

⁸ VaYikra 21:11

⁹ See Footnote 7 in the original for two alternative resolutions to the one the Rebbe presents in the text proper.

¹⁰ Sanhedrin ibid. See Footnote 8 for a similar line of reasoning in *Yad Rama*.

¹¹ As the Baalei Tosafos put it, "This is no difficulty **for him**, etc."

¹² as well as other places in Shmos Rabba 15:5. See *Y'fas Toar* there.

¹³ to the extent that the Supernal Attributes are called by the same names as those things that are created from them (*Derech Mitzvosecha* 115a, end, as well as other places. See *Sh'la* 13b, end ff.)

¹⁴ Taanis 7a, end

¹⁵ See also *Shaar HaYichud V'HaEmuna* Ch. 11 (88b). See the lengthy discussion in Footnote 13 of the original text about how light is also created through the Attribute of Benevolence.

¹⁶ *Igeres HaKodesh* Section 8, as well as other places. Also, see *Tanya* Book 1, Ch. 4

¹⁷ See at length the discourse entitled, "Mi Kamocha," 5629; *Hemshech V'Hachrim* 5631 pg. 25, end ff.

¹⁸ *Eitz Chaim*, Shaar HaKlalim, beg.: "When He, may His Name be blessed, had **willed** to create the world in order that...they should recognize His greatness, etc." See also *Hemshech* 5666, beg.

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A DAILY DOSE OF MOSHIACH & GEULA: 9 – 15 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

9 IYAR – 24TH DAY OF THE OMER: THE SIGNS ARE SHOWING THAT IT’S VERY CLOSE

According to all the signs mentioned in Tractate Sota, end of Chapter 9, our time is close to “the end of days.”

The actual fulfillment of all the signs has never been as close as in these days.

...Everything has already been completed, and according to all the signs, we are already holding at the final moments before the Redemption.

(Shabbos Parshas B'Reishis 5752, Shabbos Parshas Shoftim 5751)

10 IYAR – 25TH DAY OF THE OMER: THE TIMES AND SIGNS OF THE REDEMPTION – WE’RE ALREADY AT THE LAST MINUTES OF EREV SHABBOS AFTERNOON

We are now in the sixth millennium (corresponding to Friday, the sixth day), and even at “Erev Shabbos afternoon,” and according to all the signs of the Redemption, we are actually close to the Redemption.

...The time is now to arrange already the actual preparations for “Go out from your land, etc., to the land that I will show you,” immediately, mamash.

(Shabbos Parshas Pinchas 5751, Shabbos Parshas Lech Lecha 5752)

11 IYAR – 26TH DAY OF THE OMER: THE ULTIMATE PERFECTION IN THE HOLINESS OF THE NAZIRITE IN THE FUTURE TO COME

The ultimate perfection in the holiness of *nezirus* (becoming a Nazirite) will be in the Future to Come,

when all Jews will be “free for Torah and its wisdom...and the whole world will have no involvement other than the knowledge of G-d alone” (Rambam).

In other words, there will be no need to abstain from worldly desires, because every Jew will be “holy to G-d.”

(Likkutei Sichos, Parshas Naso 5751)

12 IYAR – 27TH DAY OF THE OMER: EVERYONE WILL BE ON THE LEVEL OF A KOHEN GADOL IN THE FUTURE TO COME

In the era of the Beis HaMikdash, only the Kohen Gadol on Yom Kippur could enter *Kodesh HaKadashim* (the Holy of Holies).

In the Future to Come, not only will the Kohen Gadol enter *Kodesh HaKadashim*, but every Jew that will be on the level of a Kohen Gadol (a kingdom of [high] priests) will enter *Kodesh HaKadashim*.

Not only on Yom Kippur, but even on any occasion that he wants to enter.

(Shabbos Parshas Tazria-Metzora 5751)

13 IYAR – 28TH DAY OF THE OMER: DARKNESS IN THE FUTURE TO COME

“He made an end to darkness,” and the Midrash teaches,” “He gave time to the world, how many years it will be made in darkness.”

The Tzemach Tzedek explains further that this is in accordance with what is written in Zohar on the verse,

"Everything has an appointed season, and there is a time for every matter," that there is a allotted time to the darkness of the exile.

...(Furthermore, the matter is that) in general, the light repels the darkness (to the point that even a little light repels much darkness), and the concept of "He made an end to darkness" means that after there will be the end of darkness, the concept of darkness will have absolutely no relevance.

And the fact that the Future Redemption will be an eternal redemption with no exile to follow it means that then there will be no relevance to the darkness of the exile.

(Kuntres Chamisha-Asar B'Av 5751)

14 IYAR – 29TH DAY OF THE OMER: THE LESSON FROM PESACH SHEINI

There are those who ask: Why do we have to "shake up worlds" and speak constantly about the coming of Moshiach? We have to rely upon G-d to bring the Redeemer when He deems it appropriate. We can learn the answer to this from Pesach Sheini.

This mitzva was not given by G-d at the outset. Rather, there were those who for various reasons could not offer the Pesach sacrifice, yet they stubbornly demanded from G-d: "Why should we be deprived?" – that they too

should be allowed to fulfill the mitzva. As a result of their claim, the mitzva of Pesach Sheini came into being.

In the time of the exile, when the Jewish People are "on a distant journey," classified as "unclean from a dead body," they must claim and demand from G-d: "Why should we be deprived of bringing the offering of G-d?"

– we want to receive the True and Complete Redemption and the Beis HaMikdash already!

(sicha, Rebbe shlita)

*In the Future to
Come, not only will
the Kohen Gadol
enter Kodesh
HaKadashim, but
every Jew that will be
on the level of a
Kohen Gadol will
enter Kodesh
HaKadashim.*

15 IYAR – 30TH DAY OF THE OMER: ACTIONS TO BRING THE REDEMPTION MUST BE MADE IN AN ENTIRELY NEW MANNER

In the Future to Come, there will be (the concept of) "a new Torah will come forth from Me" (VaYikra Rabba 13:3). This doesn't mean just an additional elevation, but something totally new, drawing down from this into the world as well, and thus making "the new heavens and the new earth" (Yeshayahu 66:22).

Furthermore, even our actions and our avoda to hasten the Redemption must specifically be in an innovative

manner. We mustn't be satisfied with adding another matter and another matter regarding the avoda of yesterday. Rather, the avoda must be in a completely innovative fashion, on the level of literally "new" (see Rashi, D'varim 26:16).

(Shabbos Parshas Balak 5744 – bilti muga)

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FOR THE LOVE OF G-D

BY RABBI YOSEF KARASIK, DISTRICT RAV BAT CHEFER – EMEK CHEFER

What is true love and how do you attain it? Why is it love for Hashem that motivates our mitzva observance? Can there be love with no intellectual component? This and more in an article all about love.

TWO REASONS FOR LOVE

There are two paths to serving Hashem – love and fear. The holy Zohar says perfection lies in serving Hashem out of love. With love, the bond between Hashem and a Jew is the deepest and most complete.

Generally, when the Torah (D'varim) commands us to love Hashem, it adds a logical reason, "because He is your life and length of your days," "to do good to you," so that "I will give you rain in your land ... and I will give grass," "for your life." In other words, love the Creator because he is good to you and because of your love for Him, he will do even more for you.

In the Krias Shema though, there is another reason for "and you shall love Hashem, your G-d," and that is the famous verse of "Hear Israel, Hashem is our G-d, Hashem is one." Listen and contemplate, Hashem is our G-d, Hashem is one, singular; there is none besides Him. Contemplating this G-dly unity arouses feelings of love, as the Alter Rebbe writes (*Tanya*, Chinuch Katan, introduction to *Shaar HaYichud*

V'Ha'Emuna), "the first thing that arouses this love is pure and loyal belief in Hashem's oneness and unity."

How does the knowledge of Hashem being one and that there is no god but Him arouse love for Him? What is the connection between His being one and our love for Him?

The simple meaning of the words, "Hashem is one," is that there is only one G-d "and there is no other god but Him." (In Kabbala it is explained that this negates the thought that G-d's existence is comprised of many powers (chesed, g'vura, etc.), because Hashem is a singular being, as it were, Who has infinite powers.)

In Chassidus it is explained that "Hashem is one" means **there is no other reality in the world aside from Hashem** (not merely that there is no other god), for He is everything.

In all the seven heavens, earth, and the four directions there is nothing that is not part of Hashem, so to speak. Man himself is not a separate existence from the Creator but is a part of Hashem. Hashem's oneness

encompasses all of existence.

Knowledge that Hashem is everything arouses a powerful longing to cleave to Him, in order to be connected to the only true reality that exists in the world, and by cleaving to Him, the love for Him is aroused and strengthened, as it says, "and his soul cleaved ... and he loved." The cleaving caused the blossoming of the love. Cleaving to Hashem arouses and strengthens the love for Him.

WHAT THE RAMBAM SAYS ABOUT LOVE

This is the advice of the "Great Eagle," the Rambam, about how to attain love (Hilchos T'shuva, chapter 10):

"Love of G-d is not bound in the heart of a man until he is constantly engrossed in it, etc., loving G-d intent on coming to know Him. To the extent of one's knowledge is the love. If it is minimal, then the love is minimal; if it is great, then the love is great. Thus, a person must devote himself to understanding and intellectualizing teachings of wisdom and understanding which inform him about his Master, etc."

In Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah, chapter 2, the Rambam writes:

"What is the path to love Him and fear Him? That one should contemplate His great and wondrous deeds and creations and see in them His incomparable and infinite wisdom.

Immediately he loves, etc., to know the great G-d, etc., and he will fear, etc. In accordance with these matters, I elucidate great principles of the acts of the Master of the Worlds, in order that they should be an entranceway for the understanding individual to love G-d, as the Sages said regarding love – that from this you come to recognize the One Who said and the world came into being.”

Many people have a false conception – that in order to love you don't have to know the object of your love, and you certainly don't need a deep knowledge; there can be a fiery love with deep emotions even if there is no intellectual connection, the main thing being an emotional connection. But the Rambam tells us that this is wrong. He presents a rule regarding love which is, “To the extent of one's knowledge is the love.”

There cannot be genuine love without knowledge of the beloved. The more you learn about their personality, their strengths, their abilities, etc., the more the love increases. Therefore, we must study G-d's greatness, “His wondrous deeds and creations,” and delve into Kabbala, which explains the greatness of the Creator, because this is the only way we will truly fulfill the mitzva of love of Hashem. Knowledge of the ways of Hashem and His greatness is the way a Jew cleaves to Him, and through cleaving to Hashem, his love is strengthened.

The Rambam's words, however, require an explanation. Why does he say that we need to contemplate Hashem's ways in order to arouse love for Him, yet he doesn't bring the simple concept expressed in the verses, “to love Hashem because He is your life,” to think about Hashem's

kindnesses to us – that He gives us a neshama, life, a livelihood, etc.?

THE ESSENCE OF LOVE

The mitzva to love Hashem is surprising, for how can we be commanded to have a particular emotion. Can man rule his emotions and love something he is not necessarily drawn to? A person can force himself to fulfill a mitzva that requires action – like to put on t'fillin, keep Shabbos, etc. – but forcing one's yetzer to love Hashem is impossible. A person doesn't always rule his emotions, so how can every Jew be commanded to love Hashem?

The Alter Rebbe explains that when a person thinks about Hashem being “our life,” that He gives us life, this spontaneously arouses a strong love for Hashem. When a Jew recalls the miracles He did for us, feelings of love

Painting: Zalman Kleinman



for Hashem naturally arise in his heart.

Shlomo HaMelech says, “As waters reflect a face, so does one man’s heart to another.” Just as when you look into water (or a mirror) you see an exact reflection of your face – if you smile you will see a smiling face in your reflection, and if you look sad, you will see a sad face – so too with love between people. Love for another is reflected back. And the same holds true with love for Hashem. When we think about and see how Hashem “smiles” at us and gives us an abundance of good, this naturally arouses love in our hearts for Him.

The Alter Rebbe puts it like this:

Every person can acquire love for Hashem when he contemplates well how Hashem is literally our lives, and just as a person loves his soul and his life, so too he loves Hashem, for Hashem is his true soul and is literally his life. Afterwards, he contemplates Hashem’s great and wondrous love for us. Namely, that He descended into Egypt and extricated our souls from the iron furnace to draw us close to Him. He lifted us up from utter degradation and impurity to the ultimate in holiness. Then, as waters reflect a face, a strong love will be aroused for Hashem, to cleave to Him heart and soul. Regarding this [approach to] love, the word “mitzva” and “commandment” are apt. That is, to focus one’s heart and mind on those things that arouse the love.

When you don’t relate to Hashem as something foreign and distant, but as the essence of who you are, that He is “our lives,” then love for Hashem will be aroused even in the heart of an egotistic person, knowing that his essence and his true strengths are from Hashem. Now we can understand how we can be commanded to love, because the mitzva is not to love per se, but to contemplate those things that arouse love, like Hashem’s kindness, etc.

LOVE FOR ANOTHER OR SELF-LOVE?

All love is based on the benefits that the one who loves receives from the one whom he loves. This can be a tangible benefit, like the person supporting and helping him or an emotional benefit – that the object of one’s love is worthy of loving, having a wonderful personality and character traits. Being close with such a person is enjoyable. So it turns out that in loving someone else there is actually self-love involved.

Even love and admiration for a leader or a famous person is motivated by egoism. It’s because of one’s admiration that a person wants to be connected to him.

It’s like the love for money, which is not really a love for money but self-love. What he wants is for the money to be in his pocket and not that it exist somewhere else, because a person loves himself, not money. The fisherman doesn’t love fish but himself, which is why he catches fish from the water and doesn’t let them remain there. The same is true for virtually all love – at the core it is really self-love.

That is why a person who loathes himself and gives up on life eschews all other loves, even natural loves, like love of one’s family. The source of all love is self-love and when this ceases, it all ceases.

LOVE OF THE G-DLY SOUL

Deep in the heart of a Jew, however, there is a spark of love for Hashem that does not come from self-love but from the genuine love for Hashem. This love is aroused in the neshama, which longs to cleave with Hashem and totally negate itself in G-dliness, not because of the kindness He does for us but out of yearning to be nullified out of existence in cleaving to Him.

A parent’s love for his child is comparable for it is not conditional on any benefits received. It is not necessary to convince parents and

...The same is true for virtually all love – at the core it is really self-love.

children to love one another, because the love is there naturally and is not a result of receiving anything. Even children who were not raised by their parents and who received nothing from their parents, have a strong love for their parents regardless. The same is true of the neshama. It has an unconditional, essential love for Hashem.

(The usual love which is predicated on benefits received is called “conditional love” by Chazal, while the higher level of love is called “unconditional love.” In Chassidus it is explained that when there is an only child, there is greater love than when there are many children and since the Jewish people are Hashem’s “only children,” the love is greater.)

In *Tanya* chapter 19 it says:

The candle of Hashem is man’s neshama, i.e., the Jewish people, who are called “man.” Their soul is compared to the light of a candle, which constantly moves upward by its very nature, because the light of the fire naturally desires to separate from the wick and cleave to its source up above in the element of fire, even though by doing so it will be

Deep in the heart of a Jew, however, there is a spark of love for Hashem that does not come from self-love but from the genuine love for Hashem.

extinguished and will not shine. So too, man's neshama yearns and longs by its very nature to separate and leave the body and cleave to its source and origin in Hashem even though by doing so it will be nothing and will be nullified there completely and nothing will remain of it of its original essence and being. Nevertheless, this is what it wants and desires by its very nature. This desire is not understood rationally but is above understanding and intellectual grasp.

THE ANSWER TO THE QUESTIONS

Now we can understand the question that we asked on the Rambam (why he writes about examining nature to arouse love for Hashem and he doesn't say to meditate on Hashem's kindness to us):

As said earlier, a Jew has two kinds of love for Hashem: 1) his physical body and vitalizing soul love Hashem because "He is our life" and He protects us and does miracles for us, 2) the holy soul of a Jew loves and yearns for Hashem not because of any benefits received but because of bittul and the desire to approach Hashem, i.e., true love.

These two types of love are referred to in the verses quoted at the beginning of this article: 1) the verses that speak of love for Hashem because He is our life speak about a Jew's body and animal soul, about arousing love for Hashem within them even though this is a lower level of love, a love that is really self-love, because the main thing is that there should be the love of Hashem.

2) The verse that speaks of love of Hashem because "Hashem is one" and there is no other existence, speaks of the love of the G-dly soul, which is absolute love that comes from the recognition that Hashem is one and

there is no other reality. In this way, the neshama is utterly batul before Hashem without any personal calculations.

The Rambam in his writing about love for Hashem alludes to the higher love that the neshama has, and therefore, he says that a person needs "to know the great G-d" from contemplating "His great and wondrous deeds and creations and see in them His incomparable and infinite wisdom," and not about His kindness to us with the miracles and wonders

happily. Therefore, an indication that one's love for Hashem is complete is when it inspires one to fulfill His commandments.

When you truly and deeply love someone, you think about that person and you don't forget about him even for a moment. Love for Hashem ought to generate constant thoughts about Him and the fulfillment of His mitzvos in order to preserve the love so that it never cease.

Also, just as a person looks away from the negative things he sees in his beloved, so too Hashem looks away at the negative within us.

LOVE AND GREAT YEARNING FOR MOSHIACH

We can apply these same ideas to the subject of Moshiach. When we truly yearn for Moshiach, it's real to us at all times. A person who longs for Moshiach is noticeable because everything he does is to hasten Moshiach's coming, as it says in the Mishna the Rebbe quotes, "all your days to bring about the Era of Moshiach."

Here too, there are two levels: 1) on the part of the body there ought to be a love and anticipation of the good times that will be when we have the true and complete Redemption, as the Rambam writes, "at that

time there will be no hunger and no war, no jealousy and competition, because good will be abundant and all delicacies will be as common as dust," and 2) on the part of the G-dly soul there needs to be a yearning for Moshiach not for material reasons and not for spiritual reasons either, but a powerful yearning for Moshiach himself, who will come and redeem us speedily in our days.

(sources: Tanya, Chinuch Katan, Hakdama l'Shaar Ha'Yichud, Seifer HaErchim Chabad, erchei ahava. Maayonot issue 8, Rabbi Altein)



"Beis HaMikdash From Heaven" by Baruch Nachshon

He did for us, because we need to love G-d not because He does things for us but simply because He is Hashem.

* * *

Love provides the push and inspiration for the fulfillment of mitzvos:

The nature of love is that when you love someone you enjoy doing as he wishes because you want to get close to your beloved, and this is accomplished by fulfilling their desires speedily and

FROM SEA TO SEA

BY NOSSON AVROHOM

*Roni Pellou spent most of his life in Eilat, where everybody knew him. His struggles and differences as well as his unusual talent, set him apart. Today he is a Lubavitcher Chassid who spends his time learning Chassidus and painting artwork with Jewish themes. * The fascinating story of Roni Pellou, who went from surfing the sea in Eilat to delving into the sea of Torah.*

I was recently in Eilat for a while in order to help out on mitvtzaim at the Chabad house and that is when I got to know one of the most interesting people I've ever met in my life, Roni Pellou.

Roni is a professional athlete, an incredible artist, and a wonderful musician. These days he earns a living from painting, while devoting many hours to learning Nigleh and Chassidus. "If only I can make up for lost time," he sighs with a smile. In his past life, Roni was one of the key figures who shaped bohemian life in Eilat.

Roni and his brother Gadi were born in Dimona into a complicated situation which put them in the limelight from childhood on. Their mother was married to a gentile, a black man, who was from British Guiana in northern South America, now the independent country of

Guyana.

A permissive atmosphere had begun to prevail in Eretz Yisroel and the Pellou family fell into that lifestyle. The family moved from north to south because of the father's work. When Roni was only three years old, his parents divorced, and his mother took the children and moved to Eilat. His mother is a talented and well-known painter. At the Maccabia competition in 1990, she won first prize for a menora she designed.

Their mother took them on nature trips. "We lived and breathed nature," says Roni.

The boys suffered from discrimination because of their appearance for in those days the Ethiopians had not yet immigrated to Israel.

The family participated in festivals that took place in Nuiba in the Sinai

and they lived there for an extended period of time in a house made of bottles! Then one day, they returned to Eilat. They didn't really have a place to return to, and for many months they lived in the mountains in sheet-metal homes with people from Thailand, nomads, and other wayfarers. They lived a life of extreme poverty.

"Although there was no money and we lived a nomadic life, we were never hungry. We always made do with what we had and we had ambition to succeed. We were raised with values of morality and justice," says Roni.

Every so often Roni and his brother visited various artists and learned their skills, particularly in the field of music. For first grade, Roni and his brother were in a dormitory in Pardes Chana. Social life was difficult because of their appearance. Three years later they returned to Eilat, where they were not accepted socially either.

Roni decided to take the initiative. It was at the end of the school day on a Sunday when he noticed dozens of boys waiting to beat him up near the entrance to the school. Roni grabbed one of them and threatened them saying, together you'll win against me but I'll grab each of you, one at a time, and you'll get it from me then!

It was this show of strength that won Roni entry into the school's social life. His talents were also a help. Since he was artistic, he decorated his friends' notebooks and all were

amazed by his work. Roni was also tops in sports and athletics. The music teacher quickly noticed his talent and after a few minutes of auditioning, Roni became the school's singer and sang solos on different occasions.

For a period of time, Roni and his brother attended the Dovid Raziel Youth Village in Hertzliya and then they returned to Eilat. Roni's relationship with his mother was very strong. When his tenth grade literature teacher asked the students to write about a person they admired, Roni chose his mother. The teacher

was very impressed by his work and his essay won first prize.

Roni never avoided dealing with life nor with the existential questions that preoccupied him. He wanted to understand everything. In his early youth he would sit up late at night with his mother and discuss the meaning of life.

At the end of tenth grade Roni began learning how to surf. "Since I had no money, I would go to the ocean and watch the surfers for hours and learned the theory behind the art of surfing. During vacation I worked

hard and used my money to learn surfing."

Even now, Roni still breathes the sea. When he hears storm winds he runs out to the pier with his surf board. "My brother Gadi is also a surfing addict and we go out to surf together."

In those days, Roni and Gadi became known for their hobbies. The people who lived in Eilat knew them and admired them. Many people went to the beach to watch their antics.

"From when I was a child I had the urge to compete, even against myself. Whenever I decided to learn something, I put everything I had into it so I would be the best. Baruch Hashem, in hindsight I see that I had tremendous *siyata d'Shmaya* (help from Above)."

When Roni took a liking to skateboarding, he bought one and began practicing intensively. He quickly became the city's champion. With a shy smile Roni tells how all the kids in Eilat would follow behind him and his brother and ask them to teach them how to do it.

As opposed to his early childhood experiences, his peers began to respect the Pellou brothers because of their talents. When Roni finished school, he became a surfing instructor and was drafted into the army, where he served as a medic.

When he finished his army service, Roni began working at his mother's jewelry stall on the Eilat boardwalk. "I sold jewelry at my mother's stall. Later, my brother had the idea of producing illustrated T-shirts. I would draw on tourist's shirts, upon request.

Later on, Roni and his brother were partners in a pub they opened. Roni created the décor and his brother was the DJ. His musical talents did not disappoint and the pub was successful.



Until that point, Roni knew nothing about Judaism, except for Pesach. “That was thanks to our traditional relatives who were our guests. On Shabbos we did everything, but we respected those who were observant. The music was on low. In my subconscious I knew there was a Creator, but I didn’t delve into it. Life was good and I had no reason to change my way of life.”

Then Roni’s mother began to return to her roots. “One day, one of her friends said to her that we were causing many other people to sin. She was very disturbed by this because it was important to us not to interfere with other people’s beliefs. In those days I was partners with another person at the pub and my mother asked me to leave the partnership. I thought about it a lot and finally left the partnership.”

Roni spent days looking around Eilat for a suitable place to open his own pub. When he didn’t find one, he looked in Tel Aviv and Chaifa. “The fact that I listened to my mother helped me,” he says. “My former partner got into money trouble and then had legal problems. Fortunately, I had left in time. I had a strong feeling that G-d had looked out for me and that this wasn’t a coincidence.”

As his mother became more involved in Judaism, Roni also began to take an interest in it. He had read philosophy in the past and had enjoyed it. At this point he sought something deeper. “My mother had searched over the years in various philosophies and nothing satisfied her until she returned to Torah.

“At this time I opened a new pub and my mother asked me to close it on Shabbos. I was not Shabbos observant and Shabbos was the day that I earned the most money. I was in a quandary over her request, but I finally acceded to it.

“I thought it could serve as a

gimmick. People were surprised since I personally did not keep Shabbos. I decided that it was a really good idea to have a day of rest for myself, my employees, and for the business in general. I couldn’t believe the results. On Motzaei Shabbos the pub was packed, more than ever before. The profits seemed to flow with keeping Shabbos and we even earned more than usual. This wasn’t a feeling but absolute knowledge that I had been blessed because of Shabbos.”

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Roni decided to go to shul on Yom Kippur. He did not fast, because he did not understand the significance of the day, but then merely going to shul was new for him since he had typically gone surfing on this day in the past.

“I wanted to have this spiritual experience. I have no explanation for this desire. Maybe because my mother did t’shuva or some subconscious

desire drew me there. I didn’t feel part of this desire but went because I was simply drawn to go.

“In shul I met a former classmate. He fervently sang the prayers and songs and I looked at him in amazement. He had been a weak student but he was proficient in all the prayers and I felt ashamed of myself. I didn’t know anything. I said to myself, ‘It’s one thing if I don’t know, but what will be with my children? They will also be this ignorant?’ I still wasn’t thinking in terms of t’shuva but something inside me shook me up. The next day I decided to study Judaism.

“Like everything else I undertook, when I decided to do this, I threw myself into it. I studied the first chapter of Psalms on my own. From Zohar Guri, a guy I knew, I heard about the mitzva of t’fillin for the first time.

“At first I would pray in a corner of the pub in the morning, choosing the portions I wanted to say. One day a guy named Micha came in and he showed me what I was supposed to say. Days went by and instead of praying in the pub, I began praying in a shul. A short while later, a friend told me about mikva. Every morning, after a hard night’s work, I would go to the mikva and from there to shul.

“I still didn’t wear a kippa. My entire t’shuva process was like someone was leading me without my asking for it. That was my feeling. In Elul I became more involved and I went to say Slichos each night. At some point I cut off my dreadlocks, which got in the way of my t’fillin. I was still not Shabbos-observant.

“What led me to keep Shabbos is connected with an amazing story. One Shabbos as I drove to the ocean, I had a flat tire. The next Shabbos I used a friend’s car and also got a flat tire. The third Shabbos both cars got flat tires. I was shocked. It was clear to me that I



Roni Pellou with some of his paintings



was being directed from Above. On subsequent Shabbosos I walked with my surfboard to the beach and one of my friends took me home after Shabbos.

“When I found out that surfing is forbidden on Shabbos, I began to spend Shabbos in other ways. This was the point when I made significant changes in my life. I wore tzitzis, started poring over holy books and more. Friends from my past could not believe what was happening to me. I was the DJ at the pub with tzitzis and a kippa and was beginning to grow a beard. I’ll never forget the looks on their faces.”

“Roni,” said his friends, “you’re the last one we thought would do t’shuva.” Anash in Eilat who knew Roni before his transformation confirmed in a conversation with me that Roni shocked many people in Eilat.

Gadi also began a long search which he conducted in India and the Far East, where he became involved with Chabad. Roni went to a

Sephardic shul. When one Yom Kippur he went to a Chabad shul, he couldn’t follow the order of the davening.

“Despite that, I began to go to the Chabad house every morning for davening. Afterwards there was a Chumash class given by Rabbi Mendy Klein. (Smiling) I remember that when I first started going to the Chabad house, I couldn’t understand how people could spit in shul, in a holy place which deserves great honor. Later on I found out why this is done and I began internalizing it. I realized that Chabad has something deeper than the rest.

“I remained at the Chabad house for a long time and joined the classes and farbrengens until I decided it was time to quit playing around and make the switch. I faced a dilemma since I had a pub and didn’t know what to do with it. I set a price for it so that I wouldn’t have any obstacles and I said to myself that Hashem would help me. Relatively quickly, someone bought it from me.

“The one who was the catalyst for the major change in my life was Rabbi Yechiel Kotzer, who gave a class in *Torah Ohr* before Shacharis. His shiurim blew me away. The bits of secular philosophy that I still retained, dissipated. For a long time, Rabbi Kotzer gave a shiur at the pub to a large crowd.

“On Chanuka I went to the yeshiva in Tzfas, where I spent a week, and then I went to Ramat Aviv. I’ll never forget that day I arrived in B’nei Brak in order to go on from there to Ramat Aviv. I wasn’t used to seeing so many religious Jews! I felt like I was dreaming. The yeshiva in Ramat Aviv and Rabbi Yossi Ginsburgh gave me the final push towards a Chassidic life. After two months there, I got married and settled in Eilat.”

These days, Roni paints. He sees it as his shlichus. His remarkable paintings decorate many walls of the city. He puts the letters *Beis*, *Samech*, *Dalet* (which represent the words “B’Siyata D’Shtaya,” “with the help of G-d”), on every painting and his work contains Jewish motifs.

“One day a religious Jew stopped and said to me, ‘I organize programs at the cultural center, and since I had written *Beis, Samech, Dalet* on the papers, the entire administration made remarks about it. Today, thanks to you, it has become legitimate...’”

Roni's pride and joy is a drawing of the Rebbe, the original of which is on display in Rabbi Kotzer's home. “It was a gift for him. When he gave shiurim at my place and I wanted to pay him, he refused. I was amazed that someone would give up his personal time for others, with no remuneration. After I became a Chassid I decided that for that and for all the help he gave me, I would draw the portrait.”

Roni also works as the musical director of “Voice of the Red Sea,” which broadcasts in Eilat and the surrounding area. In recent months he has been hosting a special program in which the weekly parsha is discussed and people are interviewed on various topics, with the common denominator being, “living with the weekly parsha.” The program is broadcast between seven and eight in the evening every Wednesday and has high ratings.

As in his youth, Roni continues to push himself to the extreme, but now it is channeled into positive activities as he surfs the “sea of the Torah.”

HASHEM OPENED MY EYES

A few months after Roni realized that his place is in Chabad, he met his wife, who was going through a similar process as he was. They decided to marry but first wanted to experience learning in a yeshiva and school for women.

It was at this point that Roni sold his pub. Before signing the contract, Roni realized he would need another 20,000 shekels in order to start with a clean slate. This was because of debts he incurred from the months he didn't invest time in the pub.

“In a corner of the building I would hide bundles of money in the summer for the winter months, when there are fewer tourists, but I had already taken out all the money. However, I had the feeling that something still remained. I checked it three times but didn't find anything. The fourth time I decided to turn the place over while using a flashlight and I found a bundle of cash! When I opened it and counted it I was dumbfounded. There were 20,000 shekels. I considered this encouragement from Heaven that my newly chosen path was correct.”

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‘IT COULD TAKE SOME TIME – 18, 20, 22 YEARS...’

BY RABBI SHOLOM YAAKOV CHAZAN

TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY

*“For several weeks now,’ he said, ‘I have not been stringent about eating kosher; I eat my meals in the university’s regular dining hall, together with all of my friends.’ I was in total shock.” * An amazing miracle story with a lesson on the precision of the Rebbe’s words.*

I heard the following story from Rabbi **Mordechai Berkowitz**, baal t’filla in the Rebbe MH”M’s beis

midrash:

A few months ago, during a visit to the countryside, I led the Shabbos

prayers in a non-Chabad local community synagogue. Before davening, the gabbaim approached me and asked me to deliver a Shabbos drasha. I saw their request as an excellent opportunity to spread the wellsprings of chassidus and the announcement of the Redemption, so I agreed.

While I spoke in my d’var Torah about the weekly Torah portion and the relevant instructions for our times, I primarily talked about the Rebbe, his tremendous avoda in spreading Torah and Yiddishkait, and



the main objective of all his activities – bringing the days of Moshiach.

After davening, a member of the congregation, an elderly Jew, came up and asked to speak to me. “When you spoke in your drasha about the Lubavitcher Rebbe, you aroused some very special memories within me,” he said with much emotion. “If you are free for a few minutes, I’d like to tell you a story about the Rebbe that I personally experienced.”

Of course, I had all the time in the world when it came to hearing a story about the Rebbe, so I soon found myself sitting down next to this gentleman, listening to his story most attentively:

“About thirty years ago, I was living in Boston, actively involved with the local Jewish community and the Young Israel Organization. I sent my children to Jewish day school, and when they reached college age, I sent them to acquire higher education at the well-known Boston University. In those days, many Jews from observant homes learned at Boston University, and the campus provided a kosher kitchen that offered board with meals for Torah observant students who wanted to eat at school.

“Naturally, when I sent my son to college, I not only paid the high cost of tuition, but also the special cost for the kosher meal program. After a few months, I received a surprising telephone call from my son. He told me he wanted to be honest with me, and since he didn’t want me to waste my money for nothing, he asked that I stop paying for the kosher meals. ‘For several weeks now,’ he said, ‘I have not been stringent about eating kosher; I eat my meals in the university’s regular dining hall, together with all of my friends.’

“I was in total shock. I never imagined how powerful the winds of heresy were blowing at the university. But the reality was far stronger than

anything, and I slowly realized that I had made a serious mistake by sending my son to a place of spiritual danger. However, it was too late. My son had completely shaken off all observance of Torah and mitzvos, and I was absolutely beside myself.

“Until that moment, I was a very active individual, one of the more prominent businessmen in the Jewish community. But as soon as I received my son’s telephone call, I turned into a broken vessel.

“One day, I met one of my acquaintances in the street. He saw on my face that something was

“You know that I’m not a Lubavitcher chassid, nor even close to them, but I’m telling you right now with absolute certainty that the Lubavitcher Rebbe can help you.”

wrong, and he asked if he could do something to help. I tried to dissuade him, but he was truly a good friend who wanted to help, and he insisted that I tell him what was bothering me lately. Eventually, I gave in and told him with great anguish about the bad news I had received from my son. I discussed my conversations with him, in which I attempted to convince him to return to the right path, only to find that it was no longer possible for me to change his mind.

“I know someone who can help you,” my friend told me, after I had finished pouring my heart out. ‘You

know that I’m not a Lubavitcher chassid, nor even close to them, but I’m telling you right now with absolute certainty that the Lubavitcher Rebbe can help you.’

“I refused to believe that after all my efforts to bring my son back to his heritage, the Lubavitcher Rebbe from New York, who had neither seen nor knew my son, could succeed where I had failed. But after my friend told me a number of miracle stories about the Rebbe, I reached the conclusion that it was worth a try. Even if it wouldn’t help, it certainly couldn’t hurt.

“I called the Rebbe’s secretary, made an appointment for ‘yechidus,’ and traveled to New York on the appointed day.

“I arrived at the Lubavitch World Headquarters late in the evening. I went into the secretaries’ office, and after receiving an explanation on the procedure of yechidus with the Rebbe, I went out into the entranceway leading to the Rebbe’s room. The people in line ahead of me for yechidus were standing quietly and saying T’hilim. The tranquil atmosphere that prevailed there calmed ever so slightly the storm my soul was enduring.

“My turn came. I entered the Rebbe’s room with much excitement, and after introducing myself, I proceeded to give all the details of the sad affair with my son that had brought me to the Rebbe.

“The Rebbe listened to what I had to say, and after I finished, he said: You must be careful not to sever your connection with your son. Maintain good relations with him, and in the meantime, accept him as he is. However, in the end, he will come back.

“Then, the Rebbe added the following sentence: This could take some time – eighteen years, twenty years, twenty-two years – but he will

eventually come back.

"Despite the fact that I am not a Lubavitcher chassid, the Rebbe's unique tone and look as he responded to my story gave me a feeling of calm and serenity, as I left the Rebbe's room at the conclusion of the yechidus. I was certain that my son would eventually return to his family and his Torah.

"During the next eighteen years, we always kept the channel of communication open between us, despite the fact that it was a little one-sided, since my son didn't want to come home. This was possibly because he didn't want to upset us too much.

"Then, in the eighteenth year, just before Rosh HaShana, he called and asked if he could come to us for Yom tov. We told him that his room was waiting for him, and that he should just come...

"I became very excited as I remembered the Rebbe's words, and I saw how they were starting to be fulfilled in the most amazingly precise manner. My son came for

Rosh HaShana, went with me to shul, ate the festive holiday meals with us, and the atmosphere was wonderful.

"Apparently, however, the time had not yet come for him to return completely, and after Rosh HaShana, he left in peace and went back to his business affairs.

"Two years passed. Twenty years since the yechidus with the Rebbe, and again I received a phone call from my son. This time it was just before Pesach, and my son asked to come and spend the holiday with us. He actively participated in the seider, and we spent a whole week together. Faithful to the Rebbe's instructions, I didn't try to pressure him regarding Torah and mitzvos. For his part, he also didn't raise the subject.

"From my conversations with my son, I understood that he had made tremendous advances in his public career. He had been appointed to the limited staff of advisors to then-President of the United States Bill Clinton, a post that naturally obligated him to live in the nation's capital, Washington, D.C.

"Another two years passed, and the Rebbe's words from the yechidus began to ring in my mind – 'This could take some time – eighteen years, twenty years, twenty-two years – but he will eventually come back...'

"I had waited twenty-two years for this moment, and it had come at last. One day, my son called me with a request. He wanted to see us again, but this time he wanted us to come to his house. Before I had to chance to think about how I could stay in my son's home when he didn't keep kosher, etc., he updated me with some recent developments.

"He had recently become acquainted with the Rebbe's shliach in Washington, Rabbi Levi Shemtov, and had begun to get closer to Yiddishkait. He remembered the *trahp* that he had learned for his bar-mitzva, and after refreshing his memory a bit, he became the '*baal koreh*' for the Chabad House. 'A short while ago,' my son concluded, 'I had the kitchen in my house kashered, and now you can come to me without any worries...'

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WHERE DID WE COME FROM? WHERE ARE WE GOING?

BY RABBI SHNEUR ZALMAN CHANIN

The Chassidim had succeeded in the first and most dangerous step, getting out, but they still hadn't arrived on safe shores. Poland was also beginning to burn under their feet. They used their brief stay there to prepare, spiritually, for their trip west.



CRACOW

Cracow is in the southwest of Poland, on the banks of the Visla River. Before the war it had been a great Jewish city, but the Nazis emptied the city of its Jews with the liquidation of the Jewish ghetto in 1943.

Immediately after the liberation of Cracow by the Allies, many survivors of the death camps and those who had hidden began to return there. Later on, because of its proximity to the border, thousands of Jews returned to Poland under the repatriation law from the Soviet Union.

The group of Chassidim that left Russia, which included my parents and rest of the family and those Lubavitchers who traveled with them on the train, arrived in Cracow at the beginning of Av 1946, as soon as they crossed the Russian-Polish border.

In Cracow, my parents and the other Chassidim found many hundreds and thousands of Jews, war survivors, and became aware of the horrors of the Holocaust. Jewish organizations like the Joint, Vaad Hatzala of the Jewish Agency, Agudath Israel, Mizrahi, and the Bricha provided clothing, medication, doctors, and set up makeshift hostels, soup kitchens, and shuls. The most important aid they provided was arranging the papers so they could continue traveling.

Some seasoned Jewish activists learned how to deal with the locals and with local and district government officials, as well as with key figures in government offices, to enable refugees to continue westward.

FRENZIED WARNING

However, since Russia was the one who pushed the Nazi enemy out of

Poland, Poland remained a communist satellite. It was an independent country at that time, but Russia made all its internal decisions in all areas of life and basically dictated its economic, social, and political policies.

On the one hand, the fear of the NKVD and Stalin had diminished. The Chassidim, who had just left Russia, allowed themselves to relax a bit from the pressure, to walk about openly and even to participate in shiurim, yet they knew they had to flee for their lives as soon as possible.

The first reason for this was that a day or two after the Chassidim arrived in Poland, some of the leaders of the Jewish community were called to the government offices. They were told that they knew that a large group of Soviet citizens had just arrived from Lvov on a special train with forged

papers as Polish citizens.

These Jews later told the members of this refugee group that G-d had given them the strength and nerve to respond, without blinking an eye, that to the best of their knowledge the accusation was false. Everybody knew, they said, that the Russian police was the toughest and most efficient in the world. Even a bird couldn't fly out of there without permission! So how could an entire train of Russian citizens manage to fool the police and cross the border?

Thank G-d, this response, which stoked the egos of the communists, was the perfect response and was miraculously accepted. Still, Anash was advised to leave Poland quickly because who knew what the Soviets would do?

The lack of communication between the NKVD offices in Poland and Lvov was one of the miracles that took place. Chaos reigned in all offices following the war, so until information got from one office to another, Anash were able to run somewhere else, from city to city and from country to country. The NKVD in Cracow got orders from Lvov to follow those who had fled, but the answer of the Jewish activists had confused them and they thought that perhaps a mistake had indeed been made. They conveyed the activists' answer to Lvov and when they received a response in Cracow it was already too late because the group had managed to move on.

WHAT DO CHASSIDIM DO?

The second reason was the fear of anti-Semitism in Poland, which had increased since the pogrom in Kielce that took place on July 1, 1946, a few weeks after the group arrived in Cracow (see sidebar).

Shabbos, Parshas D'varim (Shabbos Chazon) was the group's first Shabbos in Cracow. What do Chassidim do when they need to make Shabbos between one flight and another, to

forget for one day all the tension and suffering, and to fulfill "and call Shabbos a delight?" What is Shabbos delight if not a grand farbrengen of all the Chabad Chassidim? What could be sweeter than a farbrengen to warm their hearts and give them strength to carry on?

The farbrengen was attended by R' Avrohom Elya Plotkin, R' Peretz Mochkin, and other great Chassidim of that time. First, they thanked G-d for the miracle that they crossed the Polish border, and second, they asked that in

"So you know what I heard? I heard that in free countries, not only can you learn Torah as you wish, but for Torah study they give you honor and even money over there... This is just what I mean when I say it's a world of falsehood."

the future, G-d would be with them and help them cross future borders successfully and in peace, without aggravation. As always, R' Nissan Nemenov was the main speaker and the crowd took a bit of mashke.

My father thought R' Nissan would encourage the Chassidim who were still in a communist country, and speak to them about trust and faith in Hashem, about Ahavas Yisroel, about not being fazed by obstacles and the dangers. After all, right after Shabbos they would have to continue

wandering and face additional danger, but R' Nissan thought otherwise. Even in their uncertain and tense situation, R' Nissan demanded avoda of the heart and self-nullification of his pupils, as he demanded of himself.

BE WARY OF NEW DANGERS

I often heard my father repeat what R' Nissan said at that time:

"Dear Chassidim and students of Tomchei T'mimim! Know from where we came and to where we are going ... Where did we come from? We came from the world of truth. Where are we going? We are going to a world of falsehood. You will ask me then: Why did you flee the world of truth for a world of falsehood with such self-sacrifice? Why did you endanger yourselves and your families?"

"I will explain what I mean. In Russia we truly kept the Torah and mitzvos. We even kept the instructions that we got from the Rebbe in truth. If one of us was caught learning Torah in Russia, he was likely to get five years in jail; if one of us was caught teaching Torah to a child, he was likely to get 20 years in Siberia; for observing Shabbos we could be sentenced to jail for five years; if the observance of Shabbos entailed absence from work, 10 years in jail.

"To send children to yeshiva or not send them to the government school meant 10 years in Siberia. To get a bullet in the head (without a trial, even a troika) it was enough to write a letter to the Rebbe abroad.

"Nevertheless, we did it all in truth – we did not work on Shabbos, we kept Shabbos, we learned and taught Torah publicly, we didn't send our children to their schools and instead, we established chadarim for them. We carried on with the Rebbe's work and we wrote him letters, and we were truly ready to jump into the fire for Judaism.

"What now? Now we are about to travel to free countries in which it is

permissible to openly observe Torah and mitzvos. It will be permissible for us to keep Shabbos with no interference, we will be able to write to the Rebbe without difficulty, and we will even be able to receive a response. We will not be afraid to send our children to yeshiva and we will not fear learning and teaching Torah in

public.

“Furthermore, do you know what I heard? I heard that in free countries, not only can you learn Torah as you wish, but for Torah study they give you honor and even money over there...”

“This is just what I mean when I say it’s a world of falsehood. May we merit special protection so that we do

not fall, Heaven forbid, into the hands of the Evil Inclination, and we continue to hold on to the truth.”

When my father repeated what R’ Nissan said, he always repeated this lesson: See my son, that was R’ Nissan, someone who was called, and not for naught, a “*Chassid, Oved Elokim*” (a Chassid and servant of G-d).

POGROM IN KIELCE

By the end of World War II, there were a few Jewish survivors who managed to remain alive despite the program to exterminate them all. These were men, women, and children who remained without family, without a home, without anything to call their own. They were broken in body and spirit.

Many of them began wandering the streets of Poland in order to seek possible surviving family members and friends. Some of them decided to return to their hometowns in order to reclaim at least some of their property. However the Polish populace, who had stolen the Jews’ property, did not want to give it up and many of them attacked the Jews who returned to their cities and villages.

A Pole who resided in Kielce, who had appropriated much Jewish property, was afraid that the Jewish owners would come back and demand its return. He decided to accuse the Jews of a blood libel, thus warding the Jews off before they made any demands.

He testified at the police station that his seven-year-old son had disappeared for three days, in the course of which he had been held against his will in the cellar of a building which housed the Jewish Committee of Kielce and which provided temporary dwellings for dozens of refugees. The boy said he saw other Polish children in the cellar and that some had died, but he had managed to escape. The boy showed the police the house and pointed at a Jew walking down the street and claimed the man had kidnapped him.

The militia unit that prepared to break into the house and search the cellar, soon realized that the house had no cellar. However, in the meantime, rumors had spread and ruffians began to gather who wanted to take over the building and take revenge on the Jews. Before the mob

could enter, the head of the Jewish Committee called the district administrator and the police station and asked for help, but no help was forthcoming.

Outside, there were cries of “death to the Jews,” “death to the murderers of our children,” “we will finish off Hitler’s work.” Inside, the terrified Jews waited behind bolted doors as they planned to defend their lives with the few weapons they had.

A contingent of policemen and soldiers arrived in the afternoon. They had been sent to disperse the crowd. They told the Jews to open the door and to allow them to enter.

The Jews breathed a sigh of relief for they were sure that the long-awaited help had arrived, but to their shock and disappointment, the police asked them to turn over their weapons and to go outside. The Jews remained helpless in the face of the mob which surged forward and joined the soldiers in killing and looting.

After a lull, another 600 men came from a nearby factory and the violence broke out anew. It was only

after an entire day of rioting in which 42 Jews were murdered, including pregnant women and children, that soldiers came and put an end to the pogrom.

The mayhem spread, first to the streets of the city and then within hours to the entire area. Rumors about the events spread quickly and the trains that left and arrived in Kielce also became scenes of violence as Jews were thrown out of train windows, beaten to death, shot, and brutally murdered. Another 40 Jews were killed.

The remnant of the remnant of the Jews who survived saw that Poland could not be their home. About 60,000 people, with the help of the Bricha movement, began a huge surge westward to refugee centers in Germany and Austria, to the areas liberated by the Americans.



**Jews wounded in the pogrom in Kielce
in the hospital**

THE REBBE DEMANDS PROPER CHINUCH AND THE FEAR OF HEAVEN

PREPARED FOR PUBLICATION BY NOSSON AVROHOM

When sitting at a farbrengen, we need to think about hiskashrus and how to acquire it. Some think this way and others think that way, but each of us must ask himself how he can increase his learning of the Rebbe's teachings, whether in quality or quantity. What can he do to increase in the Rebbe's mitzvaim, etc.? Then we will be ready for the Rebbe to draw us after him, for the body to be drawn after the head, and the Rebbe is the Head of the Jewish People – *Rosh B'nei Yisroel*.

THE MAIN THING – FEAR OF HEAVEN

There is something the Rebbe and the Rebbe Rayatz had in common, which we see in many letters that they wrote over the years. This is an important subject that must be spoken about time after time, especially nowadays, and this is the topic of chinuch.

The Rebbe Rayatz writes in several letters to principals of yeshivos that although one of the purposes of a yeshiva is for a student to excel in his learning, the main purpose of a yeshiva is to increase the student's fear of Heaven, and for this to be implemented in yeshiva.

In one of his sichos, the Rebbe once said that in earlier generations



*What is happening to us? Unfortunately, many of us lack the feeling of what is a Jew and what is a Chassid. * How are we mekushar to the Rebbe and how will we be able to look at the Rebbe when he sees what has become of us? * Words from the heart about chinuch that were said at a Chassidishe farbrengen in Kfar Chabad by the Rebbe's secretary, Rabbi Leibel Groner.*



the home contributed its part to chinuch and the yeshiva contributed its share. Unfortunately, said the Rebbe in that sicha, the home today is not what it should be and the son or daughter does not get the necessary chinuch, especially not Chassidishe chinuch. Therefore, continued the Rebbe, he asks the administration of the yeshiva to speak with the male and female teachers, so that they know that school is the only place where the student is able to acquire fear of Heaven.

You can see a 15-year-old boy in shul who doesn't daven a word. No *amen*, or *amen yehei shmei rabba*. He stands and talks with a friend or looks at a siddur, but you can see that he isn't saying anything and is just turning pages. I hear more and more people complaining about these things. It's painful to see those from Chassidishe homes who say just the first and last verse of a paragraph and when they get up to Shmoneh Esrei they don't say any of it.

They're not just any children but bachurim who were educated all their lives in a home with Chassidishe chinuch. The son sees that his father doesn't daven, so he doesn't daven either.

The Rebbe insisted that our boys and girls be permeated with fear of Heaven. Something has to give when it comes to chinuch. You need to talk to the administrations of yeshivos so they make a supreme effort to strengthen this. The children have to be told about the importance of t'filla, the significance of saying amen, etc.

I remember that in my youth, the Chassid Rav Avrohom Eliyahu Axelrod farbrenged with us. He was a student of Tomchei T'mimim in Lubavitch and he was a G-d-fearing Chassid. When he came to 770 (we were 16 or 17), we asked him to farbreng with us. One of the main points he would farbreng about was the importance of answering amen. There is nothing more important than answering amen. Time after time he raised his hands and said, *kinderlach*, there is nothing greater than amen. You don't know what you get when you answer amen. He succeeded in

instilling in us an appreciation of the importance of answering amen.

WE HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO OUR CHILDREN!

A month ago I got a phone call from a Chassid who cried to me, “Leibel, what can I tell you? I have a 14-year-old son and he told me that he doesn’t want to put on t’fillin anymore and he won’t keep Shabbos or eat kosher. Half a year ago he was one of the best boys in yeshiva. He got good marks in Nigleh, Chassidus, behavior, and t’filla.

When he announced this, said the father, we didn’t yell at him. We just asked him what happened. He said: They don’t explain to me why I’m doing this, how it’s good for me. So I came to the conclusion that there’s no logic and truth to it.

There was a 17-year-old bachur who wrote a letter to his parents. He said, “When I was 12, I began to ask questions. I went over to my teacher and he told me, ‘That’s for your father and mother. It’s not for me to discuss.’ I went to Abba and he said, ‘I just got back from work and I’m tired. Go speak with Ima.’ She told me, ‘I didn’t learn enough to be able to explain it to you.’

“I went back to my teacher and said, ‘My father comes home from work tired and my mother didn’t learn enough, so you have to teach me.’ Year after year went by like this. I went to all of them and they just passed me like a ball from one to the next. When I was 15, I said to myself, if my father doesn’t want to deal with me and my mother can’t, and my teacher says he doesn’t want to, I’ll teach myself and don’t come to me with complaints about what I’m doing. Where were you when I needed you? If my father doesn’t have time to deal with me, why did he bring me into the world?”

This is what our children are telling us now: who will deal with

me and who will teach me? This isn’t one instance but many dozens of situations in Eretz Yisroel and abroad. We need to sit and think about what to do in order to stop this epidemic. The next generation is depending on us.

WHAT IS HAPPENING TO US?

I don’t want to say Musar at a farbrengen, but this hurts. That’s the difference between a speech and a farbrengen. A speech is from the intellect; a farbrengen is emotion, from one heart to another. We are

Although one of the purposes of a yeshiva is for a student to excel in his learning, the main purpose of a yeshiva is to increase the student’s fear of Heaven, and for this to be implemented in yeshiva.

assured that words that come from the heart enter the heart.

What is happening to us? A father sits in shul while his son wanders around. The Rebbeim demanded that we instill fear of Heaven in our children. “Educate a child according to his way and when he grows old he won’t depart from it.” Unfortunately, many of us lack the feeling of what is a Jew and what is a Chassid. How are we mekushar to the Rebbe and how will we be able to look at the Rebbe when he sees what has become of us?

THE REBBE IS STANDING OVER US

The Rebbe said that children should recite, among the Twelve P’sukim, the verse, “and behold, Hashem stands over him and the earth is full of His glory, and He looks at him and examines his kidneys and heart.” Since tzaddikim are compared to their Creator, the Rebbe also stands over him and examines him.

There was a story in which the Rebbe revealed to one of the Chassidim that when he sits in his house on President St., he sees what is going on in another country. The wife of this Chassid was very sick and on Erev Shabbos she fell. Her condition was critical. On Motzaei Shabbos he called and asked that the Rebbe be informed of this.

When I went to the Rebbe, the Rebbe asked me to tell him that on Friday night between five and five thirty, her condition was so precarious that the doctors despaired. You think that the doctors’ treatment helped her recover. You should know that I thought about her and this helped!

The Rebbe was sitting at home on Friday night and learning and he saw a woman in another country who was in critical condition. The Rebbe asked me explicitly to tell this to the Chassid, to show him, “you can’t hide from him [the Rebbe].” This was an unusual thing for the Rebbe to say.

The Rebbe Rayatz once said a maamer on a verse, though he did not say it precisely as it is written in T’hillim. The chozrim who went into the Rebbe, decided to say the verse as it is written in T’hillim. Rabbi Wineberg and Rabbi Tenenbaum said they were among the people who entered the Rebbe’s room. The chozer said the verse as it appears in T’hillim and the Rebbe Rayatz raised his hand and said, “What? Did I say

that? I didn't say that! I said it the way I heard it in Gan Eden."

The Rebbe sits in this world and reviews a maamer that he heard in Gan Eden. The Rebbeim revealed wondrous things to us, from supernal worlds. We hardly heard any such things from the Rebbe. There were times that the Rebbe said that he spoke with his father-in-law [the Rebbe Rayatz, who had passed away] and heard such-and-such from him, but this was unusual.

The Rebbe stands over us and sees everything and we need to ask ourselves, how can I do things which are the opposite of what the Rebbe wants? The Rebbe demands chinuch, the Rebbe demands fear of Heaven. Each of us must make a

good commitment regarding himself as far as his children's chinuch. We need to demand it of the parents as well as from the administrations of the boys and girls schools. As the Rebbe said to a menahel, "You need to tell more stories of tzaddikim."

IS HE READY TO PASS BEFORE MOSHIACH?

This is what the Rebbeim demand of us, and I say it in the present tense because the words of tzaddikim are alive and endure forever. We are talking about Chassidim of the next generation and each of those Chassidim depends on us. We are the link between the previous generation and the next generation. Hashem and the

Rebbeim gave us the responsibility. Each of us knows himself and what he is really doing for the next generation.

Hashem will help that the Rebbe will be revealed, and when Moshiach will come we will all have to pass before him and greet him. Each of us must ask himself whether he is ready to pass before Moshiach.

May Hashem help us so that we see where we are holding and what direction we are heading in and Hashem will send us the Rebbe and there will finally be some substantive action that will strengthen the inyan of yiras Shamayim and Chassidishkait in each one of us, especially our children.

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CHASSIDIM SHARE STORIES OF YECHIDUS

BY NOSSON AVROHOM

*It was the moment that every Chassid yearns for, the special moment between Chassid and Rebbe – yechidus! To face the Rebbe alone with the Rebbe's eyes plumbing the depths of the Chassid's soul. The tension beforehand...the awe upon entering...the feeling when inside...and the joy afterwards. That's what yechidus is about and tens of thousands of people experienced it, over decades of the Rebbe's nesius, throughout the long nights and into the morning... * Stories from yechidus. * Part 1*

WHY DID THE REBBE NIX THE KIBBUTZ MEETING?

Rabbi Yekusiel Green lives in Kfar Chabad. He is a talented writer and has written many wonderful books explaining Chassidus. Although he was a

bachur who had just arrived in Lubavitch, he was able to eat at the Rebbe's table on Yom Tov. He had many private encounters with the Rebbe and received numerous responses, directions, and instructions from the Rebbe, some





of which he shares with us here.

Rabbi Yekusiel Green relates:

Before telling you about a certain yechidus I had, I'd like to start with an introduction. I grew up with Chabad customs. I was born in Ramat Gan and I absorbed a Chabad atmosphere from early on, especially from my grandfather, Rabbi Chaim Moshe Alperowitz, who was a venerable figure, and from the T'mimim who studied in Lubavitch.

On Yom Tov in general and particularly on Simchas Torah, my family went to the Chabad shul, which was a Chassidic center. In those days there was still no Chabad shul in B'nei Brak and many great Chassidim packed the shul in Ramat Gan.

As the congregation grew, another two shuls opened in Ramat Yitzchok and B'nei Brak. In those days there was still no widespread awareness of "u'faratzta" and "spreading the wellsprings" as there is today. It had just begun and was picking up steam. I'll never forget how Rabbi Yitzchok Yadgar, today the shliach in the Taanachim, would come from the yeshiva in Kfar Chabad to spend Shabbos in Ramat Gan. He stayed with Rabbi Mordechai Gruzman and did tremendous work with the youth of the neighborhood.

In those days, there weren't "pareve" Jews when it came to Torah and mitzvos. The division was clear: religious and anti-religious. Dozens of children from the Boy Scouts would come to R' Grusman's Oneg Shabbos parties and his work with them was incredible. Many of them continued on in the Chabad school in Kfar Saba, which my father, Rabbi Dovid Green, ran in those days. Many of those children today are completely religious. This is the special atmosphere I grew up in.

My first personal connection with the Rebbe began in 5721. I wasn't learning in Chabad at the time; I was trying to "find myself." I was only 17 and I was looking for a serious place to learn. I had checked out some Litvishe and Chassidishe yeshivos in Yerushalayim and B'nei Brak. I sent a letter to the Rebbe describing my uncertainty and asking for his advice. The Rebbe's answer was amazing:

It is explained in several places that the name "Torah," of our Torah, the Torah of Life, is from the root meaning "instruction,"

The Rebbe did not begin eating until the last guest received his portion and the waiter had sat down. I remember that this conduct of the Rebbe amazed and moved me.

applicable in daily life, literally, in this world, as it is detailed in the Torah in general and in *Shulchan Aruch* in particular. A great principle of Torah is "know Him in all your ways," as it is explained in Hilchos Deios of the Rambam and in Tur and *Shulchan Aruch*, siman 231, see there.

I firmly hope that in addition to learning Nigleh of Torah, you also have set times to study Toras HaChassidus. There is nothing that stands in the way of the will.

Instead of telling me where to learn, the Rebbe answered me that

a Jew has to know how to behave properly. Today there are many sichos about the inner significance of the verse, "Know Him in all your ways," but there weren't many explanations then. The Rebbe was telling me, you want to know how to act? This is the formula.

The Rebbe's answer moved me very much. A letter from the Rebbe was cause for great excitement. It was a holiday for me. The letter spurred me on to learn Chassidus.

A year later, on Lag B'Omer, I informed the Rebbe that I had decided to attend Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim in Lud. I received the Rebbe's answer on 24 Iyar 5722. It said:

In response to your letter, on the eve of the special day of Lag B'Omer, in which you write about your attending Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim in Lud – obviously you should learn Nigleh and Chassidus diligently with the appropriate conduct. This will increase the blessings of Hashem in the fulfillment of your heart's requests regarding yourself and the entire family about whom you write.

Surely you know about the well-known three lessons of Chumash, T'hilim, and Tanya, and will at least observe them from now on.

Today, in hindsight, I understand how the Rebbe directed me towards Chassidus. Each word of the Rebbe was on target and helped me progress in this direction. When the Rebbe writes to you, "and surely you know about the three lessons and observe them," at the end of the letter, it can seem routine but without realizing it the Rebbe draws you in to the recitation of the three daily lessons.

In general, we knew back then that when the Rebbe writes to a bachur, "surely you observe the

three lessons,” it meant that he did not observe them and the time had come to start doing so. I was privileged to have the Rebbe direct me.

Since I’m talking about guidance, I must mention the letter I received from the Rebbe for my birthday that year. I had sent a letter to the Rebbe about my birthday and had asked how I should conduct myself. In those days the Rebbe had not yet announced the Birthday Campaign.

I had seen letters that my friends had received from the Rebbe for their birthday and I hadn’t seen any precise instructions as I had received:

In response to your informing me of your birthday, surely you will follow the recent customs of Anash in giving tz’daka on your birthday before Shacharis and Mincha or the day before, when the birthday falls on Shabbos or Yom Tov, an aliya to the Torah on the birthday or the preceding Shabbos. And study the three daily lessons of that day in Chumash, T’hillim, and Tanya on the birthday.

May Hashem grant you a successful year in the study of Torah and the punctilious fulfillment of mitzvos.

Today, these instructions are quoted in the book of Minhagim, but then, they were new. I felt that the Rebbe was leading me, guiding me.

I will tell you of one other special letter. In Tamuz of 5723 there was a raffle for a ticket to 770. Members of the organizing committee led by R’ Folye Kahn ran it. I won, and I immediately wrote to the Rebbe about this. A few days later I received a special response, an entire page with specific instructions about how to prepare for the trip:

In response to your letter of Rosh Chodesh Tamuz, the Month of Geula, in which you write that you won a raffle to travel for the upcoming Tishrei, surely you will prepare yourself properly, both on your own behalf and because you are the emissary of all the participants in the raffle.

As to how to prepare, discuss it

with mashpiim in your environment. We are assured that if you toil you will find, and the merit of the many helps.

We are in the Month of Geula, the redemption of the Rebbe, my father-in-law, Nasi Yisroel, and the body follows the head. At an auspicious time your *pidyon nefesh* in your letter will be read at the holy gravesite of the Rebbe, my father-in-law.

I traveled with the members of the K’vutza of that year, who had been given permission by the military to leave the country, but for only three months. Since I had won the raffle, I enjoyed some very special things. On Rosh HaShana, at the shofar blowing, I was permitted to stand on the platform upon which only a few Chassidim were able to stand. Those were moments I will never forget and every Rosh HaShana I am reminded of them.

The *pidyonos* were placed before the Rebbe and the Rebbe was wrapped in his tallis and crying for ten minutes. You sensed how the Rebbe felt each of the people who



The Rebbe and Rabbi Yekusiel Green

had turned to him and was pleading on behalf of the Jewish people.

The feeling was one of dread and awe. Until this day, each year, at the sounding of the shofar, I am reminded of those majestic moments and feel like a scratch in my heart from the Rebbe's tears.

During *hakafos* I had the privilege of going with the Rebbe for the first and seventh *hakafa*. Another special *kiruv* I had was on Simchas Torah when I ate the Yom Tov meal with the Rebbe in the home of Rebbetzin Nechama Dina. Only ten people were invited, little me included. The chair at the head of the table remained empty for the Rebbe Rayatz. The Rebbe sat on the left and Rashag (the Rebbe's brother-in-law), who was older than the Rebbe, sat on the right.

I sat at the foot of the table on Rashag's side. During the meal, Rashag spoke with the Rebbe. R' Yudel Shmotkin, who sat near me, urged me to hurry up and finish eating so as not to delay the Rebbe. The Rebbe stretched out the time for eating so as to allow the other people to finish eating. The Rebbe did not begin eating until the last guest received his portion and the waiter had sat down.

I remember that this conduct of the Rebbe amazed and moved me. It made an impression on me and I decided that from then on to do the same thing. Sometimes you can see how the lady of the house, who is serving, has still not finished serving and people have finished eating the first course!

After a Tishrei packed with experiences such as these, the entire K'vutza prepared to enter for yechidus. We were allowed to go in one after the other, for a private yechidus, in the middle of the month of Cheshvan.

A few days before my yechidus, I received a letter from R' Dovid Kretz, and before I tell you of my yechidus, I must first tell you about that letter.

A year before my trip, another three bachurim (Yeshaya Hertz, Aryeh Levin, and Dovid Kretz) and I decided to travel to Miron to the gravesite of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai. We planned to go by train until Chaifa and from there to take a few buses until our destination. We left early in the morning and did not manage to daven Shacharis in yeshiva so we took our t'fillin in order to daven on the train. When we finished davening, we still had plenty of time until we arrived in

Instead of just giving us a yes or a no answer, they began asking us questions, such as: Why should we do this if we don't believe?

Chaifa and we walked among the passengers and offered to put t'fillin on with them.

In one of the compartments sat about fifteen guys from Kibbutz Ein Dor in the Jezreel Valley and we asked them to put on t'fillin. They were young in spirit. Instead of just giving us a yes or a no answer, they began asking us questions, such as: Why should we do this if we don't believe?

Pleasantly, clearly, and patiently, I explained what we had learned in yeshiva and answered their questions. As the conversation continued, more and more people

came in from other compartments to watch the unusual scene of Chabad boys conversing with kibbutznikim.

It was interesting that their teacher, Mr. Gazit, who was our toughest opponent, was the first to agree to put on t'fillin. After he removed them, he thanked me for saving him the effort of many lessons in Judaism. Two weeks later I received a letter from Danny Ben Arom, representing the Lahava group, who told me that because of the conversation on the train they had additional questions. He wanted to know whether he could write them and receive answers. Naturally, I agreed.

From then on, every few weeks I received a letter from them with questions and after consulting with my friends I responded to them. They hung the letter with the answers on the bulletin board before a symposium they held once every two weeks, in the course of which they discussed the answers and raised additional questions.

Now, two days before my yechidus, Dovid had sent me their letter, which said they were inviting me to appear at their symposium. When I had my yechidus, I showed the Rebbe this invitation. I had already written to the Rebbe about our involvement with them.

The Rebbe's answer was sharp: **Married men may attend mixed venues (men and women), but not yeshiva bachurim or bachelors.**

I began to understand that even when spreading the wellsprings there are limits so that it should not adversely affect one's fear of Heaven. We cannot do everything.

Even in later years, I always merited receiving guidance and close involvement from the Rebbe. After I got married, the Rebbe told me to obtain *smicha* (rabbinic

ordination) and then to study for *dayanus* (ordination as a rabbinic judge).

In 5724, I began working as a teacher of halacha in the vocational school in Kfar Chabad, also with the Rebbe's bracha. I won't review the dozens of letters I received, but now, having just celebrated Pesach, I will tell you about how I am connected with this holiday, from the perspective of spreading the wellsprings, in two ways:

The first is with the matza campaign, which I became involved with in 5724 until 5736. The director of Tzach at that time, Rabbi Yisroel Leibov, asked me to organize this campaign. It was a very successful campaign and many T'mimim were involved in it.

Until 5724 about 300 pupils visited every day, but that year the numbers began to climb into the thousands and tens of thousands, until we had about 6000 pupils a day!

Those were different times, days of volunteerism infused with the spirit of shlichus. I'll never forget Rabbi Meir Friedman, singing the niggunim of "Keili Ata" or "MiMitzrayim" with the children. What was said to the children came from the heart and entered the heart. Nobody was paid for their

work and all were enthusiastically involved.

The best part of all, from my perspective, was when I received a letter from the Rebbe at the end. In 5736, the last year I was involved with this campaign, the Rebbe

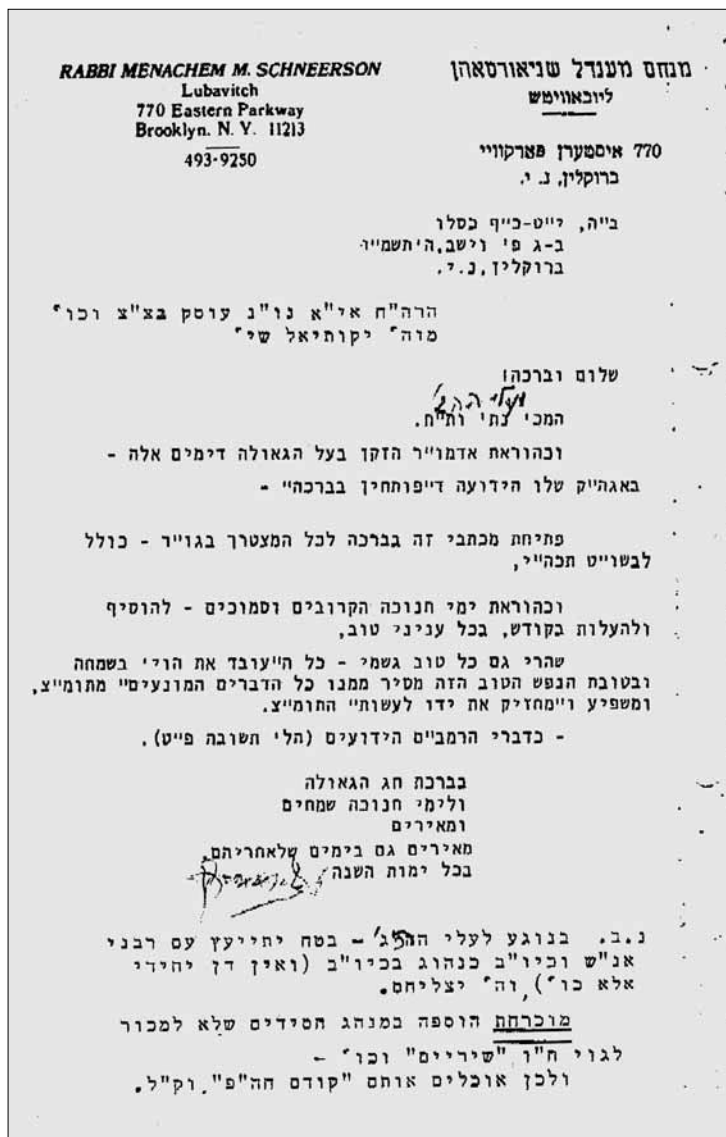
was in 5746. As a teacher of halacha I had to teach the laws of Pesach so the students would know what to do. After a year of teaching, I published a booklet with a compilation of customs.

The one who made a particular impression on me was the mother of a student whose father had passed away a few months before Pesach. After Pesach, she came to the school to thank me for my booklet, for it enabled her son to run the seider.

Until then, the customs were scattered in various places in various books and sichos and there were always debates about how the Rebbe did this or that. I decided that in addition to the booklet I had published I would publish more on Chabad customs, printing it as a Hagada. I wanted it to contain all the customs as well as how-to instructions with Chassidic aphorisms and ideas too. I sent the galley of each new book I published to the Rebbe.

It was Purim and I still hadn't received a response. Seeing this, I sent the book to the printer. It was only when the book was

already on the presses that I received the Rebbe's response. In the beginning of the letter, the Rebbe wrote: **your letter was received, thank you.** The Rebbe added: **and the galley.**



The Rebbe's letter to Rabbi Green

wrote to me: **Your letter was received.** The Rebbe added a handwritten note: **Many thanks for the good news of the campaign.**

The second way has to do with the Hagada I published, which the Rebbe reviewed and amended. This

After a general-personal letter about Pesach, the Rebbe wrote: P.S. Regarding the galleys - surely you will consult with rabbanei Anash and the like, as is customary in such situations (and there is no one judge except, etc.), and may Hashem grant you success.

It is necessary to add the custom of Chassidim not to sell *shirayim* (food distributed by a Tzaddik), to a gentile, Heaven forbid, but to eat them before Pesach.

I was thrilled.

In 5732 I had a yechidus. What the Rebbe told me then, shaped my personal study curriculum years down the road. I told the Rebbe that although I had gotten married, I had not diminished in my learning of Nigleh and I was successful in maintaining a regular study schedule, but in Chassidus it wasn't working out for me.

The Rebbe gave me a very interesting answer: Take a topic in Chassidus and every day devote 15 minutes to study this topic. It makes no difference when these 15 minutes are, but when you learn, be sure to study only this topic. Every two or three months, change subjects though not before consulting with a mashpia about the new topic.

This instruction contains a deep message. It helps me tremendously and has produced practical results. Over the years I have published many s'farim explaining topics in Chassidus, and each time I study the topic in depth so that it is clear enough to me to convey it properly to those who study the book.

After putting in such effort in order to attain this level of clarity, after I publish something on a particular topic I feel exhausted by the subject. Then I change topics, just as the Rebbe told me to do in

that amazing yechidus.

WHO TAKES PRECEDENCE – CHILDREN OR STUDENTS?

Rabbi Moshe Edery received direction from the Rebbe regarding his life's shlichus, teaching in the vocational school in Kfar Chabad. That is the reason why even today, when the school has closed, he continues to be involved in education. * Moshe's yechiduyos and stories.

Rabbi Moshe Edery relates:

I devoted myself to the pupils of the vocational school in Kfar Chabad ever since I was a bachur in the yeshiva in Lud because of

*The Rebbe welcomed
me graciously, as
though I was the first
one to enter that
night. This greatly
moved me.*

instructions I received from the Rebbe in private audiences and in many letters. I will give you a little background before I tell you about the yechiduyos.

In 5722, when I was learning in Lud, R' Mordechai Levin asked me to go along with him to the vocational school in Kfar Chabad. I was only 17 years old at the time. The school had opened a new grade, the ninth, that year. He brought me into the classroom and introduced me to the students and asked me to start working with them.

I told R' Mordechai, of course, that I had to ask the Rebbe first, and I sent a letter with the offer.

The Rebbe's answer took a year and a half to arrive, and I began to work with the students. The answer said:

In response to your letter of 21 Cheshvan in which you write about holy work, *chinuch al taharas ha'kodesh*, guiding a group of students.

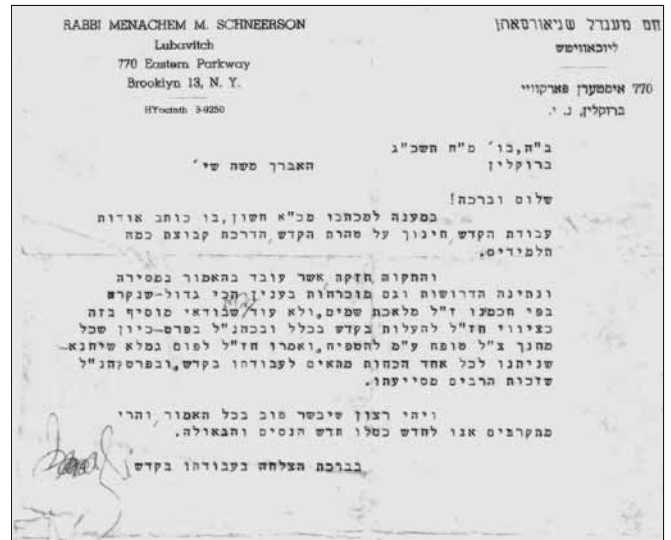
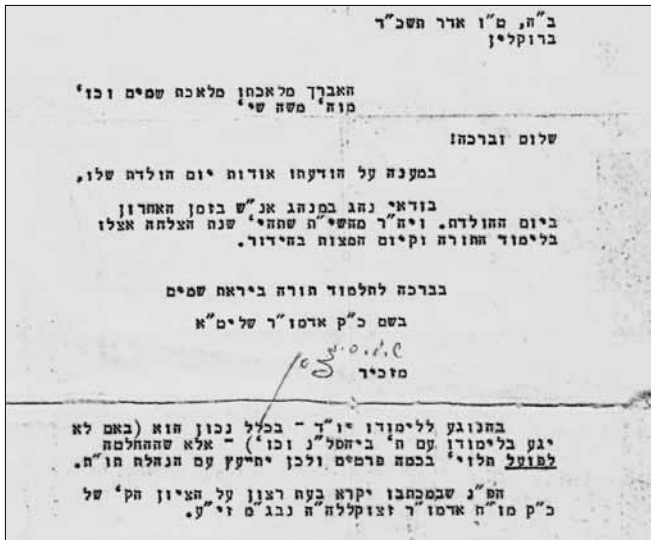
I firmly hope that you are working with the necessary and vital devotion in this great matter, which our Sages call the work of Heaven. Certainly you are adding in this – as our Sages enjoin us to increase in holiness in general and in this in particular – since every educator must be *tofeiach al m'nas l'hatfiach* (inspire people so that they in turn inspire others). Our Sages say that according to the camel is the load, i.e., each person is given the appropriate tools for his holy work, especially in this matter, and the merit of the many aids him.

May you relate good news in all the above for we are approaching the month of Kislev, a month of miracles and redemption. With blessings for success in your holy work.

When I received this letter I was very excited by the fact that the Rebbe assigned me the work I was doing and had blessed me in a way that was definitely not ambiguous.

Four years later, I went to the Rebbe for Tishrei 5726 for the first time. In those days the talmidim who learned with me in yeshiva were also going, in order to spend a year on K'vutza. I very much wanted to stay with the Rebbe, but when I mentioned the idea to one of the secretaries, he asked the Rebbe and the Rebbe said I should continue with my work in the vocational school.

That Tishrei was replete with special experiences. We barely ate.



Letters Rabbi Moshe Edery received from the Rebbe

After farbrengens we reviewed the sichos, went on mitvtzaim, were present at the t'fillos, and much more. Our excitement and amazement were indescribable.

In 5731, I was married in England to the daughter of Rabbi Odestofer, rav in Manchester. About a month later, in Teives, I went to 770 with my wife. We had a yechidus together. Although I had been close to the Rebbe on a few occasions and had participated in farbrengens and t'fillos, there is no comparison between that and going

into the Rebbe's room, knowing that the Rebbe is looking deep into my neshama, understanding everything about me, sensing my every thought and what will be with me.

Preparations were made accordingly. In addition to the pidyon nefesh that I submitted, I included two letters, one from my older brother Nissim, who asked the Rebbe to dismiss me from my job in the dormitory of the vocational school since I was married now and the job entailed a

lot of physical and emotional effort and was done primarily in the evening and morning. My father-in-law also wrote a letter saying that since I also gave shiurim in Gemara, I should be dismissed from my responsibilities as a counselor and just give shiurim.

The Rebbe read the letters and then looked up at me and said: **overcome all the obstacles from within and without and continue your guidance with outstanding success.** These words are engraved within me.

I go forward with these words till this very day. Even now, when the school was closed, I meet graduates every day and see how the fact that they learned in the school and were educated with the foundations of Chabad chinuch, has made them into better Jews.

I got an offer from the administration of the yeshiva to come half a day a week to the vocational school in Kiryat Malachi in order to help out there. I wrote to the Rebbe and the answer was not to do anything that could harm the school in Kfar Chabad. The Rebbe added: **when in doubt, consult with objective askanim.**



Rabbi Moshe Edery receiving a dollar from the Rebbe

In 5732, I had another yechidus. I had two children by then. Before I went in I wrote to the Rebbe first asking for a bracha for the children in the school that I worked in and then asking for a bracha for my own children.

The Rebbe read the note and said: **Just as you know how to write and ask for your children, so too you should ask for the children of the vocational school who will be like your own children, literally.**

The Rebbe was hinting that it shouldn't be only a symbolic gesture [i.e., mentioning the children in the school first] but it should be the reality.

I must mention another yechidus that I had in 5733. I was waiting to enter the Rebbe's room when Shimon Peres, who was Defense Minister at the time, arrived and went in. He was in the Rebbe's room for nearly two hours and I'll never forget how when he came out he was surrounded and asked what they had spoken about.

He agreed to say a few words, "Your Rebbe has his two feet on the ground." I went in right afterwards and the Rebbe welcomed me graciously, as though I was the first one to enter that night. This greatly moved me.

On 26 Tishrei 5734, I had a yechidus. It was Monday, half past midnight. The Rebbe spoke with me at length about my shlichus in the vocational school. After the yechidus, I wrote it all down and submitted it to the secretaries so that perhaps the Rebbe would agree to read it and make any corrections. The next day I got a phone call from R' Binyamin Klein, who said that the Rebbe had reviewed it. He told me the corrections. This is what the Rebbe said:

You have to see to it that the

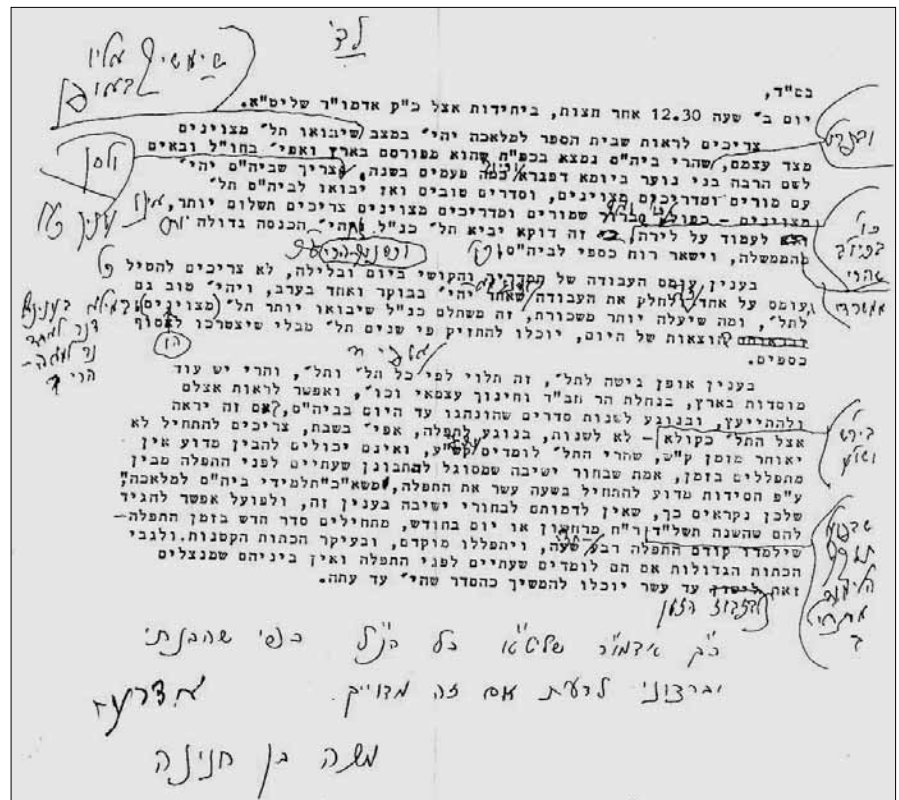
vocational school be such that it attracts superior students, especially when the school is in Kfar Chabad, which is famous in Israel and even abroad. Many young people go there on special days in the year and the like, several times a year, and so the school must have excellent teachers and counselors and good schedules, and then superior students will attend it – doubling, etc.

Although obviously excellent teachers and counselors need higher pay, money should not be quibbled over at all, for this is what will bring students, and as a result there will be greater revenue from the government and it allow for a financial benefit to the school.

As for the counselor's burden of work and the difficulties by day and by night, the work need not fall all on one person but should be delegated. For example, one person in the morning and one in the

evening, and this will be good for the students too. That it will cost more in salaries is worthwhile, as mentioned earlier, for more (superior) students will come and consequently in those matters that can serve a hundred as well as one with the current rate of expenses you will be able to support twice the students without having to add money.

As for the approach to the students, it depends on the nature of each individual student. There are other schools in Nachalat Har Chabad and Chinuch Atzma'i. You can observe there and consult with them. As for changing the schedule from what it was until now, if the students will view it as a leniency in fear of Heaven and *Shulchan Aruch* then don't change it. As for the davening even on Shabbos, you must start no later than the time for Shma, for the students learn *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* at the very



The Rebbe's editing of the notes from the yechidus

least, and cannot understand why they do not daven on time.

True, a yeshiva bachur who has the ability to meditate for two hours before davening understands according to Chassidus why the davening should start at ten, but not the “students of the vocational school,” which is why they are called thus, for they are not to be compared to yeshiva bachurim in this matter.

You can tell them that this year, 5734, when the full schedule begins on Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan or another day of the month, they will learn for a quarter of an hour before davening and daven earlier, especially the younger grades. As for the older grades, if they learn for two hours before davening and none of them use this to waste time until ten o'clock, they can continue according to the schedule that they've had until now.

At the end of my draft of the yechidus that I submitted for editing, I wrote my first name and my mother's name without my last name. The Rebbe added my last name (see picture).

In conclusion, I want to tell a little story about shlichus that I did between Rabbi Dovid Abuchatzaira of Nahariya and the Rebbe. The story took place a few years after the passing of his grandfather, the

holy Baba Sali, Rabbi Yisroel Abuchatzaira (1890-1984), who had a special connection with the Rebbe although they never met.

One day, I was on my way back to Kfar Chabad from Netivot when I stopped for a hitchhiker who asked for a ride to Kiryat Malchai. For some reason, I took him to the door of the wedding hall he wanted. When I asked him what the occasion was, he said Rabbi

I figured that if the Rebbe did not send him a reply in the mail, there was something going on...

Dovid Abuchatzaira was there.

Since I knew Rabbi Dovid Abuchatzaira, I figured I might as well go in since I was right there. I saw him speaking to an audience and afterwards we met and I told him that I would soon be seeing the Rebbe. He asked me to wait a little bit and he took a paper and wrote on it and asked me to give it to the Rebbe.

When I arrived at 770, I gave the note to R' Binyamin Klein and the next day there was a response from the Rebbe. The secretary told me the response so that I could repeat it to Rabbi Abuchatzaira. The letter was open and I saw that the Rebbe blessed him with wondrous phrases while noting that he (Rabbi Dovid) was from “holy stock.” I figured that if the Rebbe did not send him a reply in the mail, there was something going on.

When I arrived in Eretz Yisroel I contacted the shliach in Nahariya, Rabbi Yisroel Butman, and arranged a time to go together to Rabbi Abuchatzaira. It was ten o'clock at night when Rabbi Dovid read the Rebbe's letter. He said, “By Divine Providence the letter arrived now because tomorrow I am opening a new kollel in Nahariya and I am now announcing that I will give ten apartments to Lubavitcher young men.”

The fact that I took the hitchhiker to the hall and I met Rabbi Abuchatzaira is what led to his sending a letter with me to the Rebbe. The Rebbe chose to send a letter back with me and all this resulted in Chabad young men being able to be included in the apartments that Rabbi Abuchatzaira set aside for the new kollel he opened.



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CHILDREN DOING ALL THEY CAN

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

The Rebbe: “The chinuch of tinokos shel beis rabban must be in a way that the children become completely permeated, deeply within with the idea and point of Moshiach so that when you merely glance at a Jewish child, what do you see? Moshiach! Their entire being is Moshiach – the revelation of ‘You have shown ... there is nothing aside from Him.’”



THE POWER OF A TEXT MESSAGE

In preparing for the Seudas Moshiach this year, in light of the Rebbe's injunction to “do all that you can,” we didn't suffice with distributing brochures in all the shuls. We personally invited all our mekuravim and acquaintances to the event at our Chabad house. In addition, we sent a text message directly to the cell phones of dozens of friends who subscribe to messages from the Chabad house.

I debated whether to send the message to a friend who is associated with the Litvishe stream in Beit Shaan. He had told me that he would absolutely not appear at Chabad events even though Chabad was “saving the Jewish people.” On the other hand, he refers people

who need encouragement to put on t'fillin to us. Nor does he conceal his amazement when he hears of more and more mekuravim who have begun to put on t'fillin regularly or have decided to keep Shabbos thanks to the influence of the Rebbe's shluchim in Beit Shaan. However, participating in a public event of Chabad is out of the question.

In the end, I sent him a message too. It couldn't hurt. Another few buttons to press and he received it too.

A few hours went by and it was Shvii shel Pesach. The bachurim and T'mimim in Beit Shaan went out to visit shuls and to invite people to the Moshiach Seuda. They didn't realize that they were also visiting the beis midrash of the chareidi, Litvishe crowd in Beit

Shaan.

Upon entering the shul they asked one of the people whether they could talk about the Moshiach Seuda. They were told they could come in but everybody knew about the Seuda already since their rabbi had spoken about it earlier. He had told them that he had received a text message about making a Moshiach Seuda and they planned on doing so the next evening in their shul!

SALVATION FROM AN UNEXPECTED SOURCE

About a year and a half ago, we – the shluchim of Beit Shaan – wanted to intensify our Moshiach activities among the people of the city. We wished we had the money to organize an Erev Geula once in a while with a lecture, refreshments,

etc., for dozens or even hundreds of people.

Just a few days went by and a dear Chassid in Crown Heights offered to fund an Erev Geula in Beit Shaan four times a year. Of course, we agreed. Since then we have been generously assisted in publicizing the Besuras HaGeula among the people of Beit Shaan.

SEUDOS MOSHIACH ALL OVER

In maamarei Chassidus it is explained how every year, on Rosh HaShana, a great light is drawn down, a light greater than anything before. So too with the Moshiach Seuda – every year it reaches new heights. That's what happened this year in Yishuv Mechola, which is near Beit Shaan.

An unofficial shliach named Tomer lives there, who recently left a Shomer HaTzair kibbutz, got married and established a Chassidic home in Mechola. He is doing wonderful work there with farbrengens and shiurim.

Exactly one year ago, on Yud-Alef Nissan, he gave the Rebbe a birthday gift and cut off his long ponytail and got a Chassidishe haircut. This year too, he gave the Rebbe a tremendous spiritual gift (which cannot be publicized yet), but what he and his wife accomplished this past Pesach is simply incredible.

They invited the entire yishuv to a Moshiach Seuda that took place in their home. They themselves couldn't believe it when they saw dozens of friends coming and crowding around the tables. The rav of the yishuv spoke (this rav participates in all the farbrengens Tomer arranges). Friends brought wine and matzos and the singing and dancing lasted deep into the night. They brought the simcha of the Geula and the "Moshiach dance"



The children of Beit Shaan with Moshiach flags at a rally

to all the byways of the yishuv and to every home and family.

It is told that Reuven Dunin a"h told the Rebbe that when he comes to Eretz Yisroel he is invited to visit his home in Chaifa. The Rebbe told him that when Moshiach arrives in Eretz Yisroel, he will visit every Jewish home. Now the homes in Kfar Mechola are ready for a visit.

ALL THE CHILDREN ENLISTED TO PUBLICIZE THE BESURAS HA'GEULA

What can little children do in inyanei Moshiach and Geula? A lot! First of all, when they come home every day from school on public transportation, they give the driver and all the passengers a T'fillas HaDerech card with the Rebbe's picture and the word Moshiach on it. The driver and the passengers are happy with it and they put the

picture in their wallet or pocket.

A conversation about Moshiach usually ensues and they discuss what to do to hasten the Geula. Since the children don't come home together at the same time, it sometimes happens that they give someone a card and the person says, "Oh, I already got one from a boy who looks like you..."

One woman, a regular passenger, has already learned a lot from the many bus rides. One day she saw our daughter with a suitcase instead of a briefcase. She asked her about it and our daughter said she was on her way to a "*Shabbos Sh'Kulo Moshiach*" (a Shabbaton devoted to the topic of Moshiach).

"What's that?" asked the woman. "Can I go too?" This is how many people are drawn closer to Judaism and to hastening the Geula.

A few days ago, two of our

children were asked to go to the store to buy a few things. They arrived after the store had already closed and met only the guard. Of course they gave him a Moshiach card and just then all the cashiers began coming out. They got cards too and a conversation ensued – what is Moshiach, who is Moshiach, etc.

Now, whenever our children go to the store, the salespeople say, “Oh, you’re the ones from Moshiach...”

Before Pesach this year, our girls ran a camp for a week for a few dozen children. In honor of Yud-Alef Nissan they had “Yom Rebbe” and all the children wrote letters to the Rebbe. The little ones wanted to

Reuven Dunin a”h told the Rebbe that when he comes to Eretz Yisroel he is invited to visit his home in Chaifa. The Rebbe told him that when Moshiach arrives in Eretz Yisroel, he will visit every Jewish home.

draw pictures and what do little children usually draw? A house. A tree. The sun.

One little girl decided to draw a Moshiach flag like the flags hanging in each of the classrooms. With much effort and precision she drew the Rebbe a Moshiach flag. Her friends learned from her and afterwards, we heard from some of the parents that they hung the picture at home next to the Rebbe’s picture.

In my experience, people are more willing to be receptive to children than to adults and it’s possible that children do it with more innocence and childish purity. I don’t need to tell you how much the children benefit from this too.

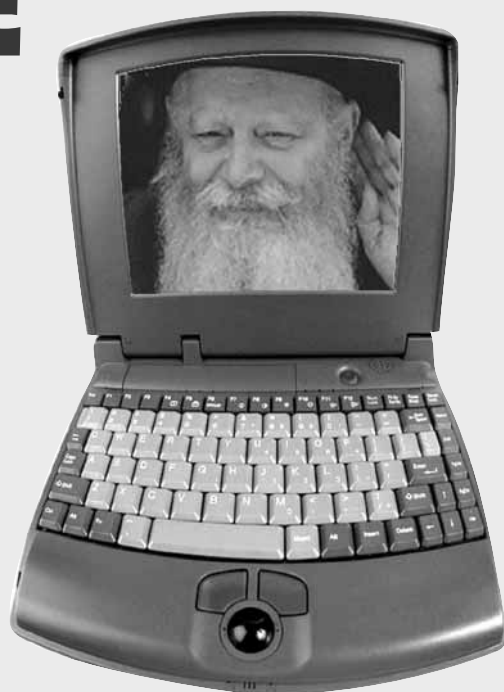
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ב"ה

WHY BISHARA AND NOT OLMERT?

BY SHAI GEFEN

WHAT DO THEY WANT FROM BISHARA?

The country is up in arms about Arab Knesset member, Azmi Bishara, who apparently gave information to the enemy during the second war in Lebanon, endangering Israel's security. There is talk of his being a traitor and about the general unreliability of Israeli Arabs. Suddenly, people are remembering the ticking time bomb called Israeli Arabs. Even the head of the Shin-Bet mentioned it in a report to the Knesset. As always, they remember too late and do too little.

All Bishara did was serve his people and prove that although he serves in the Knesset, his people come first. Claims of his being a traitor ought to be made against our own people who serve in the Knesset and for decades have been serving our Arab enemies and giving them our land. When the topic of "a majority of Jews only" was discussed in order that Israeli Arabs won't have a deciding vote on Foreign and Defense affairs, they screamed about racism and discrimination.

Now they've discovered an enemy within, a real enemy. The chutzpa is that they are still trying to claim that Bishara is an exception to the rule.

Once again, they try to suppress the problem of the fifth column amongst us, which is far more dangerous than Arabs. Arik Sharon

and Yitzchok Rabin made critical decisions for the Jewish people in Israel, relying on the complicity of Arab Knesset members, and it was all kosher. These are the enemies within, who are far more dangerous than Bishara and his colleagues. It's time we addressed the real issue.

Whoever gave land to the enemy, thereby giving them a military advantage, and armed them with tens of thousands of rifles and weapons, opened the Philadelphi Corridor, fled from Lebanon, and neglected our security, did far more criminal acts than Bishara's meeting with the

president of Syria and visiting Lebanon and praising the Hezbollah for their rocket attacks.

The conversations Olmert had on the eve of Holocaust Remembrance Day with Holocaust denier Abu Mazen is far more terrible than Bashira's conversation with Nasrallah. They damage Israel's security far more and literally endanger our existence here more than the handing over of the kind of information that the leader of an Arab party has access to.

Olmert is talking about the establishment of a Palestinian state



The Rebbe's message: A Palestinian state is a disaster for Israel

and the destruction of dozens of outposts. This will continue encouraging terrorism and provide the infrastructure for the establishment of an Al-Qaeda state in Yehuda-Shomron.

DID YOU MURDER AND NOW INHERIT?

The Peace House in Chevron is in the news. Defense Minister Amir Peretz wants the Jews expelled from the building, which was purchased legally. Although we hear that a majority of the government is in favor of the house in Chevron, it just illustrates the disgrace of the leaders of the State – that Jews need to battle for their right to the city of our Fathers in Chevron.

Throughout the years, the Rebbe warned about the shocking situation in Chevron, defining the situation as one of “you murdered and will inherit too?!”

... Not only that but they want to concede Chevron! What a disgrace that in Eretz Yisroel there is a law which was signed by all Israeli government ministers, whose meaning is clear – that Jews are forbidden from living in Chevron and near the M'aras HaMachpella. This law was happily given to the mayor of Chevron, whose family murdered Jews in Chevron in the pogrom of 1929 – “did you murder and now inherit?” (Shabbos Parshas Eikev 5730).

I asked: Is it possible? How can it be that Jews pass a law that gives Chevron, city of our Fathers, to Arabs? Even if they don't want Jews living in Chevron, why must they do so by making such a law? As soon as they wanted to throw Jews out of Chevron, they sent soldiers to expel them and all that was done without a law, so why did they have to legislate this law which was signed by all the ministers? (Shabbos Noach 5731).

The response to all these terrible

things should be, as the Rebbe says, to firmly state that Chevron is ours:

Even when standing in a position similar to that under the Russian czar, without considering one's desires, one's nature, one's education, and those around him who mock, a Jew must have the strength to state openly that there is nothing to discuss when it comes to Chevron! Chevron belongs to Eretz Yisroel within its borders!

KIDDUSH HASHEM VS. CHILLUL HASHEM

The Rebbe said many times that merely talking about giving away land is a terrible chillul Hashem (desecration of G-d's name) and a denial of Hashem and His Torah.

When the prohibition to withdraw from our land is publicized, this acknowledges the eternity of Torah and the gift from G-d that we received, in addition to protesting, which is a must.

Baruch Hashem, following the Rebbe's birthday, the International Campaign to Save the Nation and the Land started an advertising campaign on the buses with the clear message: *A Palestinian state is a disaster for the Jewish people.*

The campaign began in Yerushalayim and has been welcomed enthusiastically. In the months to come it is hoped that the campaign will spread to other locales.

Lately, we've been hearing talk about returning to the '67 borders and the establishment of a Palestinian state. It has become routine talk, unfortunately, as though this is what will save us, when we all know it will lead to the final destruction, Heaven forbid, of the Holy Land. We were shown clearly, in a relatively short period of time, the destructive consequences of the Auschwitz Plan called the Disengagement.



Arik Sharon and Yitzchok Rabin made critical decisions for the Jewish people in Israel, relying on the complicity of Arab Knesset members, and it was all kosher. These are the enemies within, who are far more dangerous than Bishara and his colleagues. It's time we addressed the real issue.

We need to trumpet the Rebbe's message and *d'var Hashem zu halacha*. Let's not wait until there's no going back, but now, let us rise up and warn about the pending disaster and how just talking about it can be far more harmful than actually giving the land away.

Anash are asked to take part in this campaign, which is very costly. By participating, you are personally spreading the Rebbe's message to millions of people.