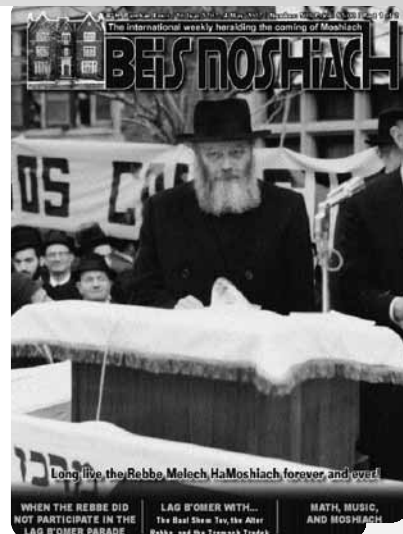


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744 Eastern Parkway
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ERETZ HA'KODESH

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

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:

M.M. Hendel

ENGLISH EDITOR:

Boruch Merkur
editor@beismoshiach.org

HEBREW EDITOR:

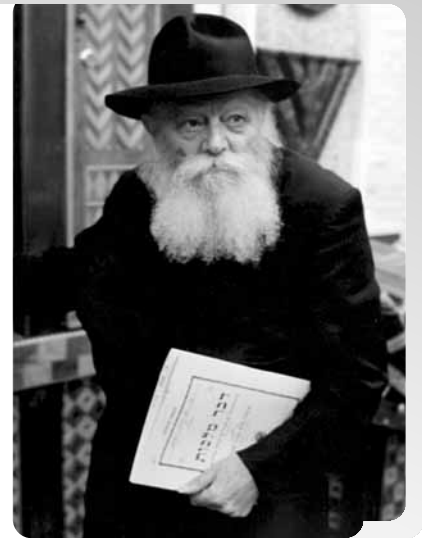
Yaakov Chazan
editorH@beismoshiach.org

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HOW COULD G-D DEFILE HIMSELF TO SAVE US?

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



[Continued from last week]

4. The creations that express simplicity, being analogous to the sublime simplicity of G-d (are **not** mere analogies [or symbols, with no inherent resemblance or direct connection to that which they represent], rather they), do so on account of their **deriving** from **those** aspects that surpass the natural order of Creation (*hishtalshlus*). [Thus, they are veritable (physical) manifestations of their Supernal source, albeit in limited form.]

(Likewise, the **limitations** and **forms** [of certain things] are analogous to the Supernal **Qualities (Middos)** insofar as they are manifestations of them¹; they **descended** from the Supernal Qualities, as discussed above in Section 3.)

It is understood, however, that since they are **creations**, they **must** have several boundaries and limitations. Therefore, when we apply the “simple” elements as an analogy for the simplicity of G-d, the boundaries and limitations (that they **necessarily** possess, being **creations**) must not be mixed in to the equation, for **those** aspects are **not** analogous to the Infinite Light of G-d, may He be blessed.

Take, for example, the sun, which is undiminished by its [unceasing] emissions of light and rays. The sun derives this quality in virtue of its being an analogy for [G-d’s immutability, as described in the verse], “I, G-d, have not changed.”² (And as discussed above, the sun’s being analogous for, “I, G-d, have not changed,” is on account of its being³ a **manifestation** of “a sun...is G-d.”⁴) However, the various limitations and etc. associated with the sun (being that it is a creation) are **not**⁵ analogous to the Infinite Light of G-d.

5. This preface sheds light on the topic of our discussion, namely, the difference between a regular Kohen and a Kohen Gadol as these concepts are expressed Above.

It is indeed true that the Kohen Gadol that exists below is an analogy for and an example of the Kohen Gadol Above, but only insofar as the specific concept of **additional priesthood and holiness** is present in the Kohen Gadol below. Those matters pertaining to the Kohen Gadol below that exist in him simply on account of his being a creation, a soul in a **body**, are **not** analogous to the aspect of Kohen Gadol Above.

Thus, it is understood that since the human manifestation of the Kohen Gadol, with respect to the concept of **high priesthood** that he embodies, is beyond (or separated from) the concept of defilement,⁶ to the extent that even “for his father or mother he shall not become defiled,” it comes out that the concept of defilement is not applicable to the aspect of “Kohen Gadol” that exists Above.

(The fact that it is indeed possible for the Kohen Gadol to become defiled does not pertain to the concept of **high** priesthood that he embodies. Rather, it is on account of his being inherently restricted by the limitations of a body.)

However, the aspect of a regular Kohen that exists Above (the source from which is derived a regular Kohen Hedyot (a common priest) below), since the concept of defilement applies to a Kohen Hedyot that exists below – even with regard to the aspect of **priesthood** that he embodies, for which reason he **may** and **must**⁷ defile himself, “for his close relatives and etc.” – therefore, it also exists in the Kohen Hedyot

Above.

In light of the above we will understand how G-d could, as it were, be involved with the burial of Moshe, as well as the concept of “and all My clothing I soiled.” The concept of high priesthood rules out the possibility of defilement from the outset. The question is only relevant to the concept of common priesthood that exists Above, and in that regard is the aforementioned response, “The Jewish people are called children of the Omnipresent,” and, “for his unmarried sister, etc., for her, he shall defile himself.”

6. Another related issue:

The Baal HaTurim⁸ comments on the verse, “You shall be for Me a nation of *kohanim*,”⁹ that this means “Kohanim G’dolim (high priests).” That is, at the time of the Giving of the Torah, **every** Jew was at the level of Kohen Gadol.

Thus, it is understood that just as the concept of defilement does not apply to the aspect of high priesthood as it exists Above (as discussed in Section 5), likewise this is so with regard to Jews in virtue of the aspect of high priesthood they possess. (From this concept is derived the well known principle that no impurity can defile a Jew’s Yechida (the highest dimension of the soul).)

From this explanation we see the great love G-d has for the Jewish people, expressed in “all My clothing I soiled,” as follows. With regard to the essence of the soul, from the outset the concept of sin (and defilement) does not apply. Of consequence, also the concepts of exile and becoming “soiled” do not apply. That is, the concept of defilement and exile are only applicable to the revealed soul-powers. Nevertheless, G-d defiles Himself, as it were, in order to take the

revealed soul-powers of the Jewish people out of exile. Even those [which are not the soul itself, but mere expressions of it] He cannot leave behind in exile¹⁰; He redeems all the Jewish people, along with all their possessions and concerns (*inyanim*) with the true and complete Redemption through our righteous Moshiach, speedily in our days, amen.

(From the discourse and address of Shabbos Parshas Emor 5724)

*Even the soul-powers
[which are not the
soul itself, but mere
expressions of it] He
cannot leave behind
in exile; He redeems
all the Jewish people,
along with all their
possessions and
concerns with the true
and complete
Redemption.*

NOTES:

¹ See Tanya Ch. 3, beg.

² Malachi 3:6. See *Likkutei Torah Shir HaShirim* 14c, as well as several other places.

In Hemshech 5666, pg. 477-8 it explains that (not only the lack of change in the **sun** is analogous of, “I, G-d, have not changed,” but)

³ For which reason many of its particulars, including its aspect of greatness, exemplify concepts that emerge in the discussion of “a sun...is G-d.” (See *Likkutei Levi Yitzchok*, Notes on Tanya, pg. 27, beg.)

⁴ From the verse, “For a sun and a shield is G-d, the L-rd” (T’hillim 84:12). Also, see Footnote 20 in the original.

⁵ See Footnote 21 in original.

⁶ To note that the Kohen Gadol does not desecrate his service when he offers a sacrifice as an *onen* (one who had just

learned that day that a close relative had perished) (Rashi on Parshas Emor 21:12; Sanhedrin 84a, beg.)

⁷ *Tur Shulchan Aruch Yora Deia* 373:3

⁸ Unlike the Mechilta on Yisro 19:8

⁹ Yisro 19:6

¹⁰ See Shmos Rabba 15:5, “It is **impossible** to leave behind My *truma*.”

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A DAILY DOSE OF MOSHIACH & GEULA: 16 - 22 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

16 IYAR – 31ST DAY OF THE OMER: EXILE COMES TO THE WORLD

“Exile comes to the world for idolatry, for immorality, for bloodshed, and for not leaving the earth to rest during the Sabbatical year.” (Pirkei Avos 5:9)

It is understood and underscored in this saying how much the existence of the world negates the concept of exile, to the point that “exile comes to the world” only when we transgress the most severe concepts in Torah. Were it not for this, even if we would violate 609 mitzvos of the Torah *ch”v*, there would still be no place for the concept of exile.

Furthermore, the reason for this is understood quite simply: Since this is G-d’s world, it is inconceivable for it to have any concept of exile.

(Shabbos Parshas Balak 5744 – bilti muga)

17 IYAR – 32ND DAY OF THE OMER: THE SPIRIT OF MOSHIACH PRECEDED THE CREATION OF LIGHT

At the very beginning of the Creation, it is already stated (B'Reishis 1:2), “And the spirit of G-d hovered over the surface of the waters,” and as taught in the Midrash (B'Reishis Rabba 2), “This is the spirit of Melech HaMoshiach.” Furthermore, only after this does the Torah states, “And G-d said, ‘Let there be light.’ and there was light.”

In other words, even before light was created in the world, there was already “the spirit of Melech

HaMoshiach.”

(yechidus, MarCheshvan 6, 5752)

18 IYAR – LAG B'OMER – HILULA OF RABBI SHIMON BAR YOCHAI: THE RASHBI AND REPAIRING THE PARTITION

...(And behold) regarding the days of Moshiach, when “I shall make the spirit of impurity pass from the earth,” our Sages, of blessed memory, have said (Koheles Rabba 1:4): “‘I strike (*machatzti*), but I heal’ – the separation (*mechitza*) I made between the higher and lower realms – as the higher realms are alive and continue to exist, whereas the lower realms are dead – in the Future to Come, I will heal this separation, so that this separation will no longer be needed whatsoever.”

Furthermore, Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, the source of the revelation of the secrets of the Torah, purified this separation, and the main revelation will be in the Future to Come, for the Rashbi illuminated it with the most complete aspect of light, the light of Moshiach.

(Likkutei Sichos, Vol. 4, p. 1302)

19 IYAR – 34TH DAY OF THE OMER: THE FUTURE REDEMPTION AND THE LIGHT OF DAY

The Redemption of the Exodus from Egypt (and similarly, the Redemption from the Babylonian Exile and the other exiles until the Future Redemption) was a redemption followed by an exile, while the Future Redemption will be an eternal redemption not followed

by another exile. It is taught in the Midrash that this is because the Redemption of the Exodus from Egypt represents the light of a candle, which can be extinguished, whereas the Future Redemption represents the light of day, which cannot be extinguished.

This means that the revelation of the Future Redemption will be a revelation of infinite light, not subject to any cessation, and therefore, it will be an eternal redemption with no exile to follow.

(Kuntres 15 B'Av 5751)

20 IYAR – 35TH DAY OF THE OMER: GRANT SALVATION TO YOUR PEOPLE AND BRING THE REDEMPTION

It is brought in *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* (9:3) that “we customarily count and number by saying the verse, ‘Grant salvation to Your people, etc.’” (T’hillim 28:9), which has ten words.

However, it is stated explicitly in *Seifer HaPardes L’Rashi* (Sec. 99) that we count according to the verse, “And I, in Your abundant kindness, etc.” (T’hillim 5:8).

It thus can be said that in the later generations of the Heels of Moshiach – when doubled and redoubled darkness reigns in the time of the exile – when ten Jews gather together, first and foremost, we must ask for the Redemption: “Grant salvation to Your people and bless Your inheritance, tend them and exalt them forever!”

(Shabbos Parshas VaYakhel-P’kudei 5743 – bilti muga)

21 IYAR – 36TH DAY OF THE OMER: GOING OUT TO THE REDEMPTION WILL BE IN CALMNESS OF SPIRIT AND VIGOR

The completion of the purification of the world will be specifically at the end of this final exile, with the True and Complete Redemption, “as the days of your going out from the land of Egypt, I will show you wonders.”

The departure from exile to Redemption will be in a manner of “you shall not go out in haste; you shall not go in flight,” “for I shall make the spirit of impurity pass from the earth.”

Therefore, they shall go out from exile (swiftly, but) in a manner of peace of mind and peace of body, in complete perfection and health.

(Shabbos Parshas VaYechi 5752)

22 IYAR – 37TH DAY OF THE OMER: SHALOM ALEICHEM, MELECH HA’MOSHIACH

...And Dovid Malka M’shichei will come and redeem us, and each one of us says to Moshiach Tzidkeinu, “Shalom Aleichem,” in the plural –

thus including the souls of the entire Jewish People in the generation of the Redemption, and (Moshiach) responds to each one separately, “Aleichem Shalom” (“Aleichem” in the plural, including the actions and avoda of every Jew), and “Aleichem Shalom” to the whole Jewish People together.

(Shabbos Parshas BaMidbar 5751)

*The departure from
exile to Redemption
will be in a manner
of “you shall not go
out in haste; you shall
not go in flight,” “for
I shall make the spirit
of impurity pass from
the earth.”*

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'COME HEAR' OR 'COME SEE'

BY RABBI CHAIM ASHKENAZI
SAID AT A CHASSIDISHE FARBRENGEN

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LAG B'OMER AND SHAVUOS

At Mattan Torah, we were given *p'nimius ha'Torah* (the esoteric part of Torah) as it is bound up with *nigleh d'Torah* (the exoteric part of Torah). Nevertheless, it was hidden from all except a few individuals who privately studied it. It was only through Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, to whom it was said regarding the Zohar, "with this book ... they will be redeemed from exile," that *p'nimius ha'Torah* began to be revealed and spread, through teaching it to select students.

Then the Ari z"l and the kabbalists who followed him, taught it further by establishing yeshivos for the study of *p'nimius ha'Torah*. Through the revelation of Chassidus by the Baal Shem Tov and the Alter Rebbe and the Admurim who followed, *p'nimius ha'Torah* became the province of all Jews.

Therefore, Lag B'Omer is considered the Mattan Torah of *p'nimius ha'Torah*, as well as the day that preparations for Geula began. Let us examine why it is specifically the study of *p'nimius ha'Torah* that leads us to Geula. What do we and the world gain by studying *p'nimius ha'Torah* to the extent that it is this study in

particular that is the appropriate preparation for Geula?

One of the amazing miracles that took place at Mattan Torah was that the Jewish people **saw** that which is **heard**, and they **heard** that which is **seen**. According to the Rebbe's explanation, this means that G-dliness was apparent, and obvious, like something that is seen, whereas physicality could only be "heard," a less direct experience. This was a **one-time occurrence** since it was something that came from **above-downward**.

The goal of *p'nimius ha'Torah* is to get us to the point where seeing that which is heard, and hearing that which is seen, is accomplished by us, from the **bottom-upward**, and **in perpetuity**, until we see the fulfillment of the prophecy about the Geula, "and the glory of Hashem will be revealed and all flesh **will see** it."

SEEING AN OX AND COW OR SEEING G-DLINESS?

In the *Sichos Kodesh* it is brought in connection with the difference between *nigleh* of Torah and *p'nimius ha'Torah*, that in *nigleh*, when we come to resolve or to prove something, the expression used is "**come and hear**." In the Zohar, which is the inner dimension of Torah, the expression used is "**come and see**." Why the difference

in terminology? Because *nigleh* of Torah is "heard" and *p'nimius ha'Torah* is "seen."

One would think it would be the opposite, that topics in *nigleh* – which deal with concrete things, like oxen and donkeys, lost and found objects, buyers and sellers, etc. – are things that are seen before our very eyes. S'firos, spiritual worlds, G-dly light and the order of spiritual devolvment (*seider hishtalshlus*) are matters that we only hear about. Why don't we say the opposite, that *nigleh* is "come and see," and in the Zohar it should be "come and hear?"

The explanation is as follows. The Torah is G-dliness. Although it speaks of material things, G-d's wisdom is contained within them. When you study *nigleh*, the G-dliness in Torah is heard, which means that although you understand the topic well and you can picture the ox and donkey or the object that was found, you only "heard" the G-dliness.

You can compare the G-dliness perceived in the study of *nigleh* to information about a product that you have heard about but have not seen. Certainty about the existence of this product is not 100%. For the same reason, when perceiving G-dliness in *nigleh*, we don't necessary change to the point of going out of what we were and

being swept up into a new reality we just heard about.

In contrast, the G-dliness in p'nimius ha'Torah is open and certain. It speaks clearly about s'firos, the order of spiritual devolvment, influences from Above and G-dly revelations that are drawn down in various ways. This affects the person so that he goes out of his materiality and becomes swept up in the G-dliness that is **visible** to him.

The nigleh of Torah that speaks about the material world, through which we understand spirituality, is only comprised of parables to G-dliness, which is why it is referred to as **hearing**. The study of nigleh says to the one who learns it: come and **hear**. I will lead you to the Creator's wisdom to the point of hearing.

P'nimius ha'Torah leads the one who learns it to: come and **see**, to the point of seeing G-dliness. That is why p'nimius ha'Torah and specifically, Chabad Chassidus, illustrates G-dly matters to the point of understanding and intellectual grasp in a way of "they will draw sustenance from it." Thus, studying matters of G-dliness is likened to eating and drinking, insofar as food becomes one with the person who eats it; it becoming his blood and flesh.

NO DISPUTES IN "COME AND SEE"

Thus, p'nimius ha'Torah is considered a foretaste of the teachings of Moshiach and was revealed specifically in the fifth millennium by Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, because from the fifth millennium began the "two thousand years of Moshiach." The teachings of Chassidus were revealed in the second half of the sixth millennium – which equates to Erev Shabbos, Erev Yemos HaMoshiach after midday – as a

foretaste of Moshiach.

In addition to the new understanding of Torah, the innovation of Moshiach will be primarily **sight**: "and all flesh will **see**." The Alter Rebbe in *Likkutei Torah*, in the maamarim of Shvii Shel Pesach, explains how Moshiach will teach millions of Jews, including Moshe and the Avos, etc., because he will teach through vision. There will be a new revelation. Indeed, there is no comparison between one who hears about a delight of some sort and one who sees it and tastes it!

Another difference between



nigleh and p'nimius ha'Torah is that the study of nigleh is in a way of questions and answers. There is almost nothing straightforward in nigleh. For example, when the Nusach HaT'filla was arranged, it was necessary to choose a chapter from nigleh to be said before the davening, in order to fulfill the Talmudic dictate of praying after the study of clear halachic rulings. Just as we approach t'filla with the acceptance of the positive mitzva of loving your friend as yourself, so too, a part of Torah without debate was chosen.

Even though the debates in

nigleh are for the sake of Heaven, in order to understand the topic properly, prayer requires preparation without even an argument for the sake of Heaven. We do not stand up to pray except with a halacha that has no debate, so as not to be disturbed in prayer. That is why the *Braisa* of Rabbi Yishmoel and the 13 Middos are recited before davening, because it is the only chapter without any difference of opinion.

About p'nimius ha'Torah, on the other hand, it says, "it contains no questions or debates." This is because when G-dliness illuminates in a way of seeing, there are no questions or debates. Indeed, when you see something, what you see is clear. There can be a debate about how to understand something, but there is no debate about what you **saw** (on condition, of course, that everybody saw the same thing, at the same time, and everybody's eyes are healthy and functioning properly).

In p'nimius ha'Torah, since it's "come and see," there is no debate. G-dliness is hidden within nigleh and that is why there can be arguments.

I saw in the handwritten note of a Chassid of an earlier generation that they said in the name of one of the Admurim that when it says that Eliyahu HaNavi will make peace in the world, it means that if there is an argument between two people, Eliyahu will show how both are right. However, it seems to me that Moshiach will say that both sides are **not** right, because to Moshiach, there are no arguments; everything is clear from the start.

Perhaps this is the explanation to the story about the wedding in Zhlobin, when Rabbi Levi Yitzchok of Berdichev showed the Alter Rebbe how his Chassid had a "revelation of Eliyahu." The Alter

Rebbe in turn showed Rabbi Levi Yitzchok the Chassid, R' Binyamin Kletzker, who was davening Shmoneh Esrei at the time. The Alter Rebbe said about R' Binyamin: right now, the yechida of the soul is shining, which is greater than the revelation of Eliyahu experienced by your Chassid. This is because the aspect of Moshiach is far greater than Eliyahu, and yechida is Moshiach.

HOW A BAAL NIGLEH SEES AND HOW A BALABUS SEES

Since we merited that Hashem brought us to Toras HaChassidus, a completely different sort of avoda is required of us. Whatever we see can be viewed as it exists and appears from its material manifestation. What we need to do is, not relate to it as our eyes see it, because then the spirituality, which is the truth, will only be **heard**. Rather, we need to **see** the spirituality. Then the material angle will only be heard.

In earlier generations, Chassidim would use certain derogatory terms (not that they meant to denigrate anybody, only to comment on the situation one was in). Among the famous derogatory terms that were heard at farbrengens (and Chassidim who were referred to this way were very ashamed) were **balabus** and **baal nigleh**. These were references to a view and weltanschauung based on seeing the material. The **baal nigleh** and the **balabus** were symbols of disdain to Chassidim.

At a farbrengen, the Rebbe Rashab said about his son, the Rebbe Rayatz, "Where is my balabus?"

When the Rebbe Rayatz heard this, he cried and said to his father, "Call me by any name but not that!"

(Obviously, we don't understand

what the Rebbe Rashab meant, but the story illustrates how negative this designation was.)

To see the world only as something material, and to establish an outlook on life based on this, guarantees that eventually the person will reach the point of heresy, Heaven forbid.

THE GOAL: TRIUMPH OF FORM OVER MATTER

The basis of Chassidus is for form to overpower matter, which means to **see** the **form** and consequently, the **matter** will only be **heard**. We had this back at Mattan Torah when they saw that which is heard and heard that which is seen. According to the Rebbe's explanation in *Likkutei Sichos*, they **saw** that which according to the laws of Creation can only be **heard**, namely the spiritual form, G-dliness, etc.

At Mattan Torah, the Jewish people saw the world as it truly is – namely, that the **material** is **heard**, and the **spiritual** is **seen**. This is known to all who have tasted of the "tree of life" of Toras Chassidus Chabad.

The following explanation clarifies why a person's measure of Ahavas Yisroel tells us what he is truly up to in his avodas Hashem. Avodas Hashem is not merely about carrying out specific tasks on a daily basis like a person who gets up in the morning and prints out a list of tasks, who crosses things off the list as the day progresses. It's the first step in avodas Hashem, but it's not the goal!

The goal is, as the Alter Rebbe writes, that avodas Hashem needs to accomplish the rule of form over matter. Therefore, if he succeeded in achieving true Ahavas Yisroel, which can only exist when the form rules over matter, this expresses his true standing in his avodas

Hashem.

The conduct of the **baal nigleh** is the opposite of that of avodas Hashem. He is actually going in "reverse" and thinks the entire time that he's moving forward, and his proof is that he's not in the same place. He doesn't notice that although he is traveling, he is traveling in the wrong direction!

Chassidus explains every verse and saying of Chazal on this basis. This is why we find people that were particular not to learn nigleh in the usual measure on Shabbos but would instead focus on Chassidus, because on Shabbos the form triumphs, as the following famous story illustrates:

When the holy Ruzhiner tzaddik was a boy and he was learning Gemara with his teacher, they were studying the topic of what a person should do if he is lost in the desert and doesn't know when Shabbos is. There is a debate about this in the Gemara. The Ruzhiner said: I don't understand. How could a person not know when Shabbos is? The world looks completely different on Shabbos!

On Shabbos, the Ari z"l learned six pathways in nistar and one path in nigleh. On weekdays, he learned six pathways in nigleh, and one path in nistar. The Chassidic practice to learn Chassidus before davening comes from the same idea. The goal of t'filla, as the Zohar puts it in the analogy of a ladder, is to raise a person up from a situation in which the matter triumphs, to a situation in which the form triumphs.

This is one of the reasons why Chassidim made efforts, beyond the norm, to see their Rebbe, because it was there that they felt the form overpowering the matter. The day they first saw their Rebbe was considered their birthday because they were born into a new reality.

DON'T LOOK AT THE EXTERNALS

A Chassid examines himself when reciting the bedtime Shma, not just to see how many tasks he crossed off the list that day but also, and more importantly, to see how his hearing and seeing are doing. What does he see and what does he hear?

Chassidus maintains that someone who does no sin is a beinoni and not a tzaddik. Why isn't he a tzaddik? Because he is missing the main thing: the form hasn't sufficiently overpowered the matter, because deep down, he is a rasha. He sees the world from the material angle and doesn't just hear it.

What is a rasha? Someone who sins. Why does he sin? Because he sees the world from the material angle and the form is what he hears. The difference between the beinoni and the rasha is that the rasha does nothing to stop this, while at least the beinoni knows it's wrong. Even though the beinoni sees things as the rasha does, he uses "brakes" to stop himself, but his perspective is the same as the rasha's.

How Chassidus views the Aggadata (non-halachic parts) in the Gemara is based on this same principle. Without Chassidus, the Aggadata sound peculiar. For example, it says that Adam's stature reached from earth to the heavens and even his heel darkened the sun. If you only look at these expressions and stories from the material angle, it's utterly bizarre.

According to Chassidus, most of the secrets of Torah are hidden within these Aggadata. From the outset, it's not the material that is seen; it is understood that these are spiritual descriptions and the physical is used as an analogy.

Chabad Chassidim were educated to look at every Jew and not focus on the material, what the person puts on display, even though the externals are what stand out. We are taught to look within.

There are many stories about this from the Rebbe. I'll give you one example. A non-Chassidic rosh yeshiva publicly mocked the Rebbe's campaigns and the Rebbe's kiruv. This rosh yeshiva's son went off the derech and one day he went somewhere where Lubavitcher bachurim asked him to put on t'fillin. He agreed. The bachurim saw that he knew how to do it himself and they asked him: How

The Ruzhiner said: I don't understand. How could a person not know when Shabbos is? The world looks completely different on Shabbos!

do you know? He answered that he was a former yeshiva bachur. They invited him to the yeshiva. In this way, they eventually brought him back to Torah and mitzvos.

His father was very happy about this and since he was honest, he decided to go to the Rebbe to thank him and to ask his pardon for his former negative attitude. When he showed up one day for "dollars," the Rebbe's response to him was: What you feel about your son, is what I feel about every single Jew. It makes no difference what spiritual state he is in, he is Hashem's child.

THE JEW UNDER THE DUST

We were taught to **see** (and not just to **hear**) the inner spiritual form within a Jew – that he is a child of Hashem, His only child, as it is explained in Chassidus.

(I remember that when I learned with R' Shaul Brook a"h, he said to one of the talmidim: You are an only child to your parents!

(The talmid said: You are mistaken! I have several brothers and sisters.

(R' Shaul said: But they have nobody else like you, and therefore, you are their only child!)

This is true for every single Jew. Based on his unique inner form he is an only child, and we have to see it and not just hear it.

They tell the story about the Chassid, R' Shmuel Levitin a"h, that he once traveled to the US to raise *maamud* (support for the Rebbe) and the Rebbe told him to visit a certain wealthy man but not to ask him for money. R' Shmuel went to the wealthy man, who asked him the purpose of his visit.

R' Shmuel said: Every Jew is a letter in the Torah. Sometimes a letter gets erased, and the Rebbe is like a scribe who fills in the missing letter. If a letter is missing, the Torah is not kosher, and this symbolizes every Jew.

When R' Shmuel returned to the Rebbe Rayatz, he told him what he had said. The Rebbe said his analogy wasn't precise since a Jew cannot be erased, as it says, "even though he sins, he is a **Yisroel**." He is still called **Yisroel** (and not merely Yaakov). What can, however, happen is that dust can accumulate and it can **appear** as though it was erased. This is the role of a Rebbe, to wipe away the dust and to reveal the truth in its glory.

In this story we see that the goal is to see the letter as it truly is. What is covering it is not its real

state. That is only **hearing**, and that is why we should not relate to what **appears**, for that is erased, but we need to wipe it and reveal what is underneath. What we truly see is the letter that exists, which is why we wipe away the dust. If we only saw dust, the truth would seem to be that there is no letter and it has to be rewritten.

I heard a story about a Chassid who, on Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur, said the lines, “a person’s foundation is dust and he ultimately returns to dust,” with a happy tune. They asked him: It’s one thing if you said a person’s foundation is dust and ultimately it becomes gold and silver. Then you’d have something to be happy about, but if a person comes from dust and goes back to dust, what is there to rejoice about?

The Chassid said: You don’t understand. A person comes from dust, and he goes to dust, but in between, he sees the truth. That is why I rejoice. As the elder Chassidim of yesteryear would say, one manages to see the truth by taking mashke, which is the spiritual equivalent of removing the clotted growths from the lungs of an animal to see if it is kosher. The lung represents spirituality – air, the breath of life – and the clots which cause the lung to stick to the flesh, represent materiality. If one takes mashke for this express

purpose, to remove the material from the spiritual, then there is much to rejoice about!

WE SEE GEULA!

In all generations, people were born and anticipated Moshiach’s coming and they died anticipating Moshiach’s coming. They did not merit to hear, “behold, it has

What can, however, happen is that dust can accumulate and it can appear as though it was erased. This is the role of a Rebbe, to wipe away the dust and to reveal the truth in its glory.

already come,” and he is already here, and has already been revealed, and he is already affecting the world. They weren’t privy to the news that the meal has already been prepared; it’s not in the kitchen, but is on the table already and we are sitting at that table.

We’ve been promoted not just one class but many classes, to the

point of **come and see the Geula**. As the Rebbe said several times, today we do not need mashke to be effective at a farbrengen. That means that the growths that connected us to the material, were removed from us. If so, we ought to rejoice with the simcha of Geula!

Let us not give in to the evil inclination who attempts, through all sorts of mediums that he employs, to show us, “see with your physical eyes what is going on here.”

According to the vision of the baal nighle and the balabus, we’ve retreated drastically. They say, when we merit to see the Rebbe again, he will tell us what is going on and where we are holding, because now what we see is darkness. Heaven preserve us from these balabatim.

Seeing hours of the Rebbe’s encouraging the singing of “Yechi,” in addition to hundreds of hours of sichos in which the Rebbe pulled us from level to level, ought to strengthen us with the belief that we will soon see how this entire period was only progress in the preparations to greet Moshiach.

It’s as though we are being told: Don’t be fools! You are insisting you want to **hear**, that you want to remain like our ancestors who just **heard** about Moshiach. The Rebbe tells us: **open your eyes and come and see – the time for Moshiach is now!**

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WHEN THE REBBE DID NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE PARADE

BY MENACHEM ZIEGELBOIM

(FROM HIS BOOK, SIPPUR SHE'L CHAG – LAG B'OMER V'CHAG HASHAVUOS)

When the Rebbe participated in a Lag B'Omer parade, you could clearly see his enormous love for Jewish children. The Rebbe would wave to the children and spend a long time watching the floats passing before him. Nevertheless, one year, the Rebbe did not participate in the parade. It was that year that the Chassidim learned how important the parade is.

PART I

Lag B'Omer was on a Sunday in 5733/1973, and as usual, the Chassidim expected a huge children's rally with the Rebbe's participation. However, shortly beforehand, something terrible happened and the Rebbe canceled his participation in the event.

It happened during S'firas HaOmer, the period of time when we are enjoined to increase our Ahavas Yisroel. A Chassid who lived in Crown Heights had a hard time paying his rent. After repeated requests from the tenant, the landlord couldn't take it anymore and he publicly shamed the tenant and even raised a hand against him. The landlord threatened to report him to the law.

Word of this reached the Rebbe, causing the Rebbe a good deal of pain. A short while later, the Rebbe hinted that, for a certain reason, he could not participate in the parade as he usually did. The Rebbe did not specify his reason and the organizers of the parade, who had already begun preparations, began to worry. There is no kingdom without a king and woe to a parade without its "crown."

The organizers held a meeting, at the end of which they decided not to publicize the news. Their reasoning went, since the Rebbe had announced it as a possibility and not as a certainty, perhaps in the end the Rebbe would participate.

The preparations for the parade continued unabated. The Jewish children of New York were invited to

participate in the parade and a letter to this effect went out from the famous rabbis, Rabbi Moshe Feinstein z"l and Rabbi Gedalia Schorr z"l.

Days passed and Lag B'Omer was approaching when the Rebbe let it be known that he would definitely not be participating in the parade. It was known that the landlord had continued to persecute the tenant and even increased the pressure and threats.

The one who revealed the connection between this event and the Rebbe's non-participation was the Rebbe himself, at the end of a farbrengen which took place one day before the parade. This was on Shabbos, Parshas B'Har, 17 Iyar.

The Rebbe said:

"What took place recently regarding the parade – that notwithstanding that everything was already arranged both here and in other places, as well as preparations for my attendance at the parade and personal preparations that I had to make in order to go out. Suddenly, something completely unnatural occurred which completely negated my going to the parade."

The Rebbe went on to say, with enormous sadness:

"Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai will be present at the parade, the Rebbe my

father-in-law will be present at the parade, but I am closed up in a room like Rashbi in the cave...”

Then the Rebbe added:

“I thought that since I could not participate in the parade, in the meantime I would ‘sneak in’ a farbrengen on Shabbos, and there I would say what I had wanted to say to the children...”

That is how the Rebbe conveyed his message to the Jewish children in honor of the day.

As far as how the Chassidim felt, you can read what R’ Kuti Rapp wrote at that time:

“We are all still in shock and cannot believe our ears. It is hard to speak about something so terrible, all the more so, to write about it...the Rebbe revealed his position regarding the parade. Woe to the ears that heard these things, gentle and rousing words that come from the innermost part of his heart; pain which rebukes his son and also pleads with him. The Rebbe cried once and many other times he choked back his tears. Our ears heard and our hearts trembled, for these were shocking things. I will try to repeat it briefly, but it is very difficult.

“At the end of the sicha, the Rebbe began to sing sweetly, arousing much compassion from all the people present. From his voice it was apparent that he was distressed over the situation, and he sang in a compassionate voice the words, ‘how good it is and how pleasant when brothers sit together.’

“The Rebbe did not end off the niggun in the usual way but with the niggun, “*Tzama lecha nafshi*.” When the Rebbe finished the first part of the niggun, he waited for the crowd to sing but due to the shock, there was utter silence. Then the Rebbe motioned that everybody should sing and only then did the crowd sing as usual.”

The Rebbe announced that there was no point in attempting to change his mind, “They truly have no reason

to beseech me, for as great as their desire is that I participate – **my desire is far greater**...what happened on the 29th of the Omer...I announce ahead of time that writing to me will not help. That is the reality. **I cannot go out.** This is not a matter of hard feelings towards any individual. I have no complaints, and therefore, it is not necessary to ask forgiveness.”

* * *

Some Chassidim decided that if the Rebbe was not participating, there was no reason for them to participate or to help in the preparations. However, the Rebbe made it clear that the parade was still a very important thing, and

“Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai will be present at the parade, the Rebbe my father-in-law will be present at the parade, but I am closed up in a room like Rashbi in the cave...”

people should work to make it happen.

“Regarding the parade, it is now necessary to continue working on it, on the contrary, with greater effort, especially when it is associated with Rashbi and Rabbi Akiva, and therefore, it is a great merit for everybody to participate in it. Indeed, it is a great pity on those who do not participate.

“Therefore, without looking at all the tangential matters, they should work on it and learn to work precisely as do those in Australia, Montreal, London, Paris, Minneapolis, and Chicago. You need to make efforts to work on it, in a way that it will result

in a public kiddush Hashem, and a kiddush shem Lubavitch.”

PART II

The Chassidim were, nevertheless, brokenhearted. As soon as Shabbos was over, some Chassidim, including elder and distinguished Chassidim, begged the Rebbe to participate in the parade, but the Rebbe made it clear that this time, he would have to refuse them.

To one Chassid who wrote to the Rebbe, the Rebbe responded: I said that they are involved in the parade because this is the Hilula of Rashbi, especially when during the parade many Jews will recite blessings that will rent the heavens. Furthermore, during the parade they will certainly explain to the children about Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai and Rabbi Akiva, thus causing them nachas, as the Chassidim in Eretz Yisroel and many other places do.

“Heaven forbid (and the Rebbe repeated this) that many thousands of children will suffer because of this. I strongly hope that they find those who will do this, mentioning Rabbi Akiva and Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai (and fortunate is their lot in this world and in the World to Come), and such action will be successful.”

There were Chassidim who maintained that the Rebbe’s non-participation would harm the parade. The Rebbe responded: If the boys and girls will say blessings and hear words of inspiration, it will cause me true nachas. If, nevertheless, they do not do what is necessary, they will be inflicting damage ...

From the Rebbe’s unusual responses, the Chassidim understood that he was determined not to participate, yet, they understood the enormous importance that the Rebbe attributed to having the parade in the best possible way, and how much nachas it gave not just him but also the holy Tanaim, Rabbi Akiva and Rashbi. No Chassid had a doubt that even if



the Rebbe was at home, in spirit and soul he would be with the children.

The Chassidim were amazed how the Rebbe did not participate on the one hand but supported the parade on the other hand, with great sensitivity and Ahavas Yisroel.

PART III

A few days later, the Rebbe asked for a detailed report about the parade. Despite the disappointment and the great pain of the Chassidim, they all devoted themselves heart and soul to the success of the parade, which was attended by thousands of children. Aside from the children, there were about 25,000 Jews who came from all over to watch the parade and participate.

The emcee, Rabbi J.J. Hecht,

repeated the Rebbe's sicha from the farbrengen of the day before. The organizers wrote in their report: Anash and the T'mimim worked, especially recently, with incredible dedication, and although they were heartbroken, they tried with all their might to make the best possible parade. Many of Anash and the T'mimim were inspired to make a rally next year too.

In conclusion, the organizers wrote: It was like the Rebbe shlita said at the farbrengen on Shabbos, a kiddush shem Shamayim and a kiddush shem Lubavitch.

In response to this good news, the Rebbe said: Many thanks, many thanks for the good news and for the great nachas, and especially for the great joy on Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai's day of rejoicing. May it continue throughout

the year and fortunate is the lot of every single person who was involved in all this.

At the farbrengen that took place the following Shabbos, the Rebbe asked all those who worked on the Lag B'Omer parade to say l'chaim.

* * *

Ironically, from the Rebbe's non-participation, the Chassidim learned important insights as to the Rebbe's concern for every Jew and his sorrow over one Jew harming another – to the point that, even though Rashbi and the Rebbe Rayatz participated in the parade, the Rebbe could not.

No wonder that the theme of the parades is, "how good and how pleasant it is when brothers sit together."

LAG B'OMER IN LUBAVITCH

COMPILED BY MENACHEM ZIEGELBOIM

The Baal Shem Tov, the Alter Rebbe, and the Tzemach Tzedek would go to the fields on Lag B'Omer. Although the Tzemach Tzedek did not generally travel, aside from the trips to Petersburg, on Lag B'Omer he would go with the Chassidim to the field. The Rebbe Maharash would go to Achramova, a village near Lubavitch. Starting in 5654/1894, the Rebbe Rashab would say Chassidic discourses on the subject of Lag B'Omer.

LAG B'OMER 5520/1760 THE TORAH OF THE BAAL SHEM TOV ON THIS AUSPICIOUS DAY

The Chassid R' Avraham Abba Persohn told about a Lag B'Omer meal that took place with the participation of the Baal Shem Tov in 5520/1760, his last year in this world:

The seuda on Lag B'Omer 5520 was a very joyous one. During the meal, the Baal Shem Tov said words of Torah on the verse, "and you shall love Hashem your G-d."

When he finished saying his Torah, concluding by discussing the concept of light, the Baal Shem Tov said, "In another 18 days I will merit the *ohr chozer* (reflected spiritual

light), as it says, 'and the spirit will return to the G-d Who gave it,' and 'spirit brings on spirit and draws down spirit' – a new light will shine forth until Moshiach comes."

The Baal Shem Tov was alluding to his passing on Shavuot of that year, but none of his disciples had understood what he meant.

(Likutei Dibburim vol. 3)

LAG B'OMER 5574/1814 "REJOICING ALL DAY UNTIL EVENING"

The elder Chassid, R' Abba Dovid "Iskasia," a Chassid of the Mittler Rebbe, described the Lag B'Omer festivities with the Rebbe:

"Already in the first year that the

Mitteler Rebbe established his residence in Lubavitch, in 5574, he renewed the old custom of celebrating Lag B'Omer in the fields outside the town, having a light meal, drinking mashke and eating hardboiled eggs, and singing niggunim and dancing.

"In the middle of the meal, or at the end, the Rebbe would come and say a maamer Chassidus and he would tell the elder Chassidim to recount their memories of the customs of celebrating Lag B'Omer in years gone by, to repeat the Torah topics, conversations, and stories that were said then.

"After the Rebbe returned home, the Chassidim would continue to rejoice all day until evening.

"After the tenant farmers – the Chassidim R' Shlomo ben R' Shimshon and R' Yosef Michael ben R' Feivish Moshe – settled in the villages outside Lubavitch, Lag B'Omer was celebrated with large feasts."

On one occasion, the Chassid R' Yitzchok Isaac of Homil and the Chassid R' Pesach of Malastovka met at an inn. R' Yitzchok Isaac asked his friend whether he still remembered the first Lag B'Omer celebrated in Lubavitch in the year 5574.

The two outstanding Chassidim began reminiscing and among other things they recalled that when the Mittler Rebbe came to the field, he said a maamer Chassidus based on the verse, "You established boundaries

to the earth.” At the end of the maamer, the Rebbe said to the Chassid, R’ Eliezer Chaim of Zhlobin, “Sing the niggun of my father, the Alter Rebbe, and we will be together with my father.”

(Reshimos D’varim, vol. 3)

LAG B’OMER 5604/1844

DOUBLE AND TRIPLE SIMCHA

In the year 5656/1896, Lag B’Omer was on a Friday. That year, the Rebbe Rashab said two maamarim about the inyan of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai. On Motzaei Lag B’Omer, Friday night, the Shabbos meal was combined with a Chassidishe farbrengen, which took place in the house of his mother, Rebbetzin Rivka. It was attended by the Rebbe as well as the elder Chassidim and dignitaries.

At this farbrengen, the Chassid R’ Chanoch Hendel told about what took place on Lag B’Omer 5604 in

Lubavitch:

In 5604, which was my first year in Lubavitch, Lag B’Omer was on a Tuesday. Lag B’Omer was celebrated as it always was, by going outside the town, one time to the square in front of the Hanarava courtyard, where the landholder and Chassid, R’ Shlomo ben R’ Shimshon, a Chassid of the Mittlerer Rebbe, lived; one time to the open field in the village of Achramova, where the landholder and Chassid, R’ Yosef Michael bar Feivish Moshe, an elderly man and mekushar of the Alter Rebbe, lived.

The way it worked was, about a week or two beforehand, they would arrange where they would celebrate, usually casting lots among the Chassidim who usually hosted it. In 5604 the lottery was won by R’ Yosef Michael.

The Chassid who would be hosting, would invite the Chassidim who were *yoshvim* (young married men who studied Torah full-time), as well as guests, to come on the eve of

Lag B’Omer. After an early Mincha on the 32nd of the omer, he would serve a large feast with fish and meat, and this would go on until Maariv. During the meal they would review Chassidus, tell stories of Chassidim, sing and dance, and would generally stay up all night.

On the morning of Lag B’Omer, they would begin their lengthy davening at dawn. At eleven o’clock there was a dairy meal with plentiful mashke. From about three o’clock and on, they would wait for the arrival of the Tzemach Tzedek.

That year, Lag B’Omer was celebrated in Lubavitch with double and triple simcha. The reason was that throughout that winter the Tzemach Tzedek forbade the Chassidim from coming to Lubavitch. This was because of the difficult situation at that time, due to the informing of the Maskilim in Vilna, to the point that he hardly said any maamarei Chassidus.



On Shabbos HaGadol the Rebbe said a maamer and the Chassidim were very happy, also because they heard that the Rebbe allowed Chassidim to come to Lubavitch. Word about this change spread quickly, and for Shabbos Parshas Emor and Lag B'Omer about 400 guests came to Lubavitch, led by the famous Chassidim, R' Yitzchok Aizik of Homil and R' Hillel of Paritch.

That Shabbos, the Rebbe said three maamarim, one on Erev Shabbos after Shacharis, the second before Kabbalas Shabbos, and the third on Shabbos before Mincha.

Since Monday, Erev Lag B'Omer, was "the fast of BaHaB," the rabbanim, R' Nechemia of Dubrovna, R' Yitzchok Isaac of Vitebsk, and R' Yitzchok Isaac of Homil, convened as a beis din and paskened, as an emergency measure, that because of the public simcha, they would not complete the fast and after the early Mincha, as was customary, they would have the celebratory feast.

Aside from the stories, the Rebbe said a maamer, "Eid HaGal HaZeh, v'Eida ha'Matzeiva." He stayed for about two hours and then went home.

"And so," concluded R' Chanoch Hendel, "the entire day of Lag B'Omer, from the moment we arrived at R' Yosef Michoel in Achramova until the Rebbe came on Lag B'Omer in order to bless the Chassidim who were celebrating, seemed to us like only a few hours, due to the great simcha and elevated spiritual pleasure.

LAG B'OMER 5609/1849

A SURPRISING BRACHA AT THE LAG B'OMER SEUDA

The Chassid, R' Shmuel Betzalel, known as Rashbatz, participated in the Lag B'Omer farbrengen with the Rebbe Rashab in 5656/1896. He too shared his recollections and described the Lag B'Omer celebration that took place in 5609 in the field near

Hanarava. That was the last Lag B'Omer celebration that the Tzemach Tzedek participated in.

That year, Lag B'Omer was on a Thursday. On Wednesday, Erev Lag B'Omer, after Shacharis, all the yoshvim, the talmidim of the yeshiva, the old guests (those who arrived in Lubavitch for Shabbos Parshas Acharei-K'doshim and remained until after Shavuot) as well as the new guests (those who arrived for Lag B'Omer) went to the Chassid R' Shlomo, by his invitation, to celebrate there with him, as was customary every year since the Mittlerer Rebbe settled in Lubavitch in 5674.

This was a day of great celebration for us. The elders danced with their coats off and we young men, talmidim of the yeshiva, danced like rams. We listened raptly to every word uttered by the elder Chassidim.

On Lag B'Omer, around four in the afternoon, the Tzemach Tzedek arrived and said a maamer Chassidus, "To Understand the Inyan of Kesser, which is an intermediate between the Ohr Ein Sof, The Emanator, and the Emanated beings." Despite his apparent physical weakness, the Tzemach Tzedek stayed for three hours. Before leaving, he asked the Chassidim to sing the Alter Rebbe's "Niggun Arba Bavos." As the Chassidim sang, the Rebbe sat in great d'veikus with his eyes shut and tears coursing down his face.

When they finished singing, the Rebbe stood up and said: May the merit of the Baal HaHilula (Rashbi) protect our Jewish brethren and the particular community. All loudly cried out amen. The Rebbe smiled and said: Amen, *kein yehi ratzon*.

When the Rebbe left for home, the elder Chassidim gathered, with R' Hillel leading them, to review the maamer which the Rebbe had just delivered. They all expressed their amazement about the Rebbe asking that the Alter Rebbe's niggun be sung.

The Rebbe's concluding words worried them very much.

On Monday, 22 Iyar, a rider came from the city of Zhitomir with a letter from the printers of that city, saying that on Monday the police came as well as the secret police. They made inquiries about the printing of *Likkutei Torah*, how many copies had been printed, and to which cities it had been distributed. About 280 copies, which were still at the printer, were sealed with the police seal, and the printers were ordered to appear before the secret police in Kiev.

This bitter news spread quickly in Lubavitch and within an hour everybody was spreading rumors, some exaggerated, until the children of the Tzemach Tzedek had to go to him to hear what really happened. In the evening, R' Asher, who heard from Maharil (the Rebbe's son), said that the Rebbe told him and his brother, R' Shneur Zalman, that there was nothing to worry about.

Thursday evening, a rider arrived in Lubavitch from Kiev with a letter from the philanthropist, Dobry. The letter said that on Wednesday, when Rabbi Shapiro, the owner of the print shop in Zhitomir, had appeared before the secret police in Kiev, the policemen spoke harshly to him and arrested him.

The next day, Thursday morning, Rabbi Shapiro was brought in for questioning again, and after being interrogated he was returned to his cell. Towards evening of the same day, he was released. The next day, Friday, the secret police in Kiev told the branch in Zhitomir to remove the seals from the volumes of *Likkutei Torah*.

Only after this incident, which frightened the Chassidim, did they understand what the Rebbe had meant in his blessing at the end of the Lag B'Omer celebration. Certainly, it was his words that made the difference in the upper worlds.



The Rebbe Rashab

LAG B'OMER 5653/1893 BONFIRES IN YERUSHALAYIM AND CHEVRON

In the past, bonfires on Lag B'Omer were made not only in Miron but in Yerushalayim and Chevron too. In 5653 (or 5654), the Rebbe Rashab bought the honor of the first lighting in Chevron and said: I would like to buy the lighting in Chevron but they should not buy for me at the gravesite of Rashbi. The reason had to do with the fact that nonreligious Jews celebrated at the gravesite of Rashbi.

Here is the description of the

Chassid, R' Folye Kahn who spent Lag B'Omer with the Rebbe Rashab:

On Lag B'Omer, after Shacharis, there was a brief farbrengen in the dining room in the home of the Rebbe Rashab. On the table were mashke and peeled hardboiled eggs. The Rebbe took an egg with a fork and put in on a plate, cut it with a knife lengthwise and then cut each half again lengthwise. They sang some niggunim and the Rebbe said a maamer Chassidus.

They would allow the yeshiva bachurim to attend this farbrengen.

(Shmuos V'Sippurim)

LAG B'OMER 5654/1894 CONNECTING LAG B'OMER OVER A FIFTY YEAR SPAN

On Lag B'Omer 5704/1944, the Rebbe Rayatz farbrenged with the Chassidim. During the meal, the Rebbe spoke about the Lag B'Omer that took place fifty years earlier in 5754, when he was a boy of 14:

"My first Lag B'Omer with the Rebbe, my father and teacher, was fifty years ago in 5754," the Rebbe began nostalgically. "We went to the field."

The Rebbe began to speak about the special quality of going out to the field on this great day. "All the Rebbeim, including the Alter Rebbe, loved the field; to be a man of the field. Our master, the Baal Shem Tov, was a man of the field."

The Rebbe explained the avoda of our Rebbeim specifically in the fields. Namely, that you can more easily succeed in raising the sparks in the field and all Jews who are on the level of "man of the field."

"It is known to all that the person who is called a 'man of the field' (i.e., Eisav) is the person who calls forth accusations against the Jewish people, which is why evil decrees are promulgated on the Jewish people. Our master, the Baal Shem Tov, revealed that even the simplest Jews – ...not only men of stature, elevated men like Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, but the simple people – are also children of G-d."

The Rebbe mentioned the names of all the Rebbeim who preceded him, who would go out to the field on Lag B'Omer. This is what happened on Lag B'Omer 5654, when he was a boy, when he went to the field with his father, the Rebbe Rashab:

The Rebbe Rashab finished davening at ten o'clock and said a maamer Chassidus.

"After 11:30, we went to the field and nobody knew about this. We went to R' Zalman Shtzerbinder, and

there were 'revelations' there. That year, my father said the maamer, 'B'Chad Katira Iskatarna,' and 42 years later, in 5678, the Rebbe said this maamer again with the introduction, 'To Understand the inyan of the Hilula of Rashbi.'"

The Rebbe reviewed the profound content of that wondrous maamer Chassidus.

(based on Seifer HaSichos 5704)

LAG B'OMER 5656/1896 AN EXTRAORDINARY DAY

Lag B'Omer 5656 in Lubavitch was a special day. The Rebbe Rayatz devoted a lengthy description of it in his diary, which he wrote two days afterwards, on 20 Iyar.

That year, Lag B'Omer was on a Friday and many guests came to Lubavitch for the occasion including the Chassid R' Avrohom Abba Persohn and R' Shmuel HaLevi Horowitz, who was known as R' Shmuel Mazinker.

This is how it was on Lag B'Omer with the Rebbe Rashab in Lubavitch:

Thursday night after davening, the Rebbe said a maamer, "To Understand the Inyan of the Hilula of Rashbi," in the home of his mother, Rebbetzin Rivka, in the room called, "the hall with steps."

On Lag B'Omer, Friday after candle lighting and before Kabbalas Shabbos, the Rebbe said another maamer, "One time the world needed rain and Rashbi said words of Torah on the verse, 'behold how good and how pleasant it is when brothers sit together,' and it began to rain."

The Rebbe Rashab's meal began close to eleven o'clock at night. It took place in the home of Rebbetzin Rivka and was attended by distinguished Chassidim, including R' Nissan Skoblo, the teacher of the Rebbe Rayatz in his youth, who came especially to hear authentic Chassidic stories from R' Avrohom Abba Persohn.

Despite the late hour, the meal wasn't rushed and it lasted a long time, until the large wall clock, which was hung on the southern wall, chimed and announced the lateness of the hour, half past midnight. The servant R' Yosef immediately announced that the clock was behind and that he had more faith in the rooster, which began to crow about an hour earlier.

They checked and saw that the servant was correct and that it would be dawn in another few minutes. They

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everyone.*

recited the Birkas HaMazon.

When they left Rebbetzin Rivka's home, the sun had begun to rise. The air outside was pleasant and they tarried in the yard for more than an hour in order to review the sichos and stories they had heard during the meal.

At seven in the morning, when the Rebbe Rashab arrived after immersion in a mikva, he gave his son, the Rebbe Rayatz, the maamer, "One time etc.," which is in *Seifer HaMaamarim* 5629, in order to study it several times.

LAG B'OMER 5680/1920

A LAG B'OMER MAAMER FOR A SINGLE CHASSID

The Chassid R' Moshe Dovber Rivkin was a young married man when he served the Rebbe Rashab in the latter's final years. He stood by the side of the Rebbe Rayatz, and both of them served the Rebbe Rashab until he passed away. This time together made them very close, a closeness which continued even after the histalkus on Beis Nissan 5780/1920.

The Rebbe Rayatz found it harder than everyone else to accept the passing of his father, and for about a year he was closed up in his room aside from davening and going occasionally to the gravesite of his father in Rostov.

About a month after the histalkus, the Chassidim built a fence around the gravesite, which was a little higher than the height of a man. This fence was made of thin, wooden slats and it completely surrounded the holy site.

The Rebbe visited his father's grave once or twice a week, where he would daven and cry loudly, his voice being heard at a distance. For reasons known only to him, the Rebbe Rayatz would ask Rabbi Rivkin to accompany him to the cemetery.

* * *

Lag B'Omer 5680 was about a month and a half after the Rebbe Rashab's passing. On this day too, the Rebbe Rayatz asked R' Rivkin to accompany him to his father's gravesite. R' Rivkin agreed and afterwards, he wrote a moving description of how the Rebbe Rayatz conducted himself at the holy gravesite and on Lag B'Omer in general.

Lag B'Omer 5680, the Rebbe Rayatz davened at length, as the chazan, until after midday. During this period, the Rebbe Rayatz would daven at great length, as the chazan, with loud weeping and tremendous



The Rebbe Rayatz

d'veikus.

When he finished davening, the Rebbe and R' Rivkin went to the holy gravesite. As on all his visits, as soon as the Rebbe entered the gravesite he burst into tears while reciting T'hillim, until the hearts of all who heard him melted.

After saying some chapters of T'hillim, R' Rivkin left the gravesite, leaving the Rebbe alone with his father. He sat on a nearby bench outside the fence.

While sitting there, he noticed the Chassid R' Tzemach Kutman peering in through the slats in the fence, watching the Rebbe.

About half an hour later, the Rebbe suddenly became quiet. R' Tzemach came running in a state of excitement, and asked R' Rivkin to go over to the fence and look through. R' Rivkin looked through the fence and saw the Rebbe standing silently with a closed T'hillim in his hand, but his lips murmured constantly while he made motions as people do when talking to one another.

It was clear to us, as far as we could tell, that he was reviewing a maamer for his father, wrote R' Rivkin in his memoirs.

This extraordinary scene went on for more than an hour and when it was over, the Rebbe opened the

T'hillim once again and began to recite from it loudly and with tears, as before. After twenty more minutes, the Rebbe came out and together they returned to the Rebbe's house.

* * *

A large group of Chassidim gathered at the Rebbe's home, all waiting for the Rebbe to arrive for they assumed that on this auspicious day he would say a maamer Chassidus. However, due to the late hour, they began to daven Mincha with the Rebbe as chazan.

At the end of the davening, the Rebbe went down to his private apartment in order to eat something and to rest a bit from the avoda of the day, while the Chassidim waited in the shul.

In those days, two months after the histalkus, the Rebbe still refused to say maamarim publicly.

A few minutes later, R' Rivkin was called to the Rebbe's room, where the Rebbe said bitterly, "Today, when I was with my father, I promised him I would review Chassidus before the Chassidim, but I don't have strength to speak before all of them. Since I promised my father, I want to review a maamer for you alone, so I can fulfill my promise."

R' Rivkin agreed and the Rebbe told him to sit on the chair facing him. The Rebbe began to say a maamer for just one Chassid! This maamer was based on the discourse, "To Understand the Inyan of the Hilula of Rashbi."

When the Rebbe finished saying the maamer, he asked R' Rivkin not to tell everybody about it, but R' Rivkin dared to say to the Rebbe than he should not ask such a thing of him and that he definitely planned on telling everyone.

"And that's what I did," said R' Rivkin. "I told Anash about it and reviewed the maamer for them. It restored their souls."

(based on Ishkavta D'Rebbi)

MATH MUSIC AND MOSHIACH

*For the 55th yahrtzait of Rabbi Yisroel Aryeh Leib Schneerson z"l.,
13 Iyar, 5767*

BY PROF. SHIMON SILMAN, RYAL INSTITUTE AND TOURO COLLEGE

In an earlier paper, "The Logic of Intelligent Design" (Beis Moshiach #575), we explained the logical, common sense basis of the concept that the universe has a Creator. In this series we continue to develop the concept of creation, ultimately focusing on the Earth.

EINSTEIN AND CREATION

The Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach was often asked how one could prove the existence of G-d. He frequently responded with a proof based on what is now called Intelligent Design. For example, in one letter he wrote:

"When we see a printed book with hundreds of pages, it is obvious to the observer that there is a printing house where they arranged all the letters in such a way that they explain intellectual concepts, etc., not that there was an ink spill and by chance the drops of ink became arranged upon hundreds of pages in the form of letters explaining various things. This applies much more so when we see a piece of wood or stone, etc., and then we find out about the arrangement of its atoms, which number not merely in the hundreds or thousands, but there

are billions of billions of them, and they are all arranged in a wondrous manner and follow extremely precise fixed laws. This is explained at length in the *Chovas HaLevovos* and in the *Kuzari*, etc. See also the *Seifer HaChakira* of the Tzemach Tzedek." He called this "the most obvious proof."

Similar thoughts were once presented by one of the greatest scientists of all time: Albert Einstein. He was once asked how he understood G-d, and in response he explained: "We are in the position of a little child entering a huge library filled with books in many languages. The child knows someone must have written those books. He does not know how. He does not understand the languages in which they are written. The child dimly suspects a mysterious order in the arrangement

of the books but doesn't know what it is. That – it seems to me – is the attitude of even the most intelligent human being toward G-d. We see the universe marvelously arranged and obeying certain laws but only dimly understand these laws."

Indeed, it was one of Einstein's own theories that brought the scientific world to the awareness that the universe had a beginning. The story of its discovery was told by Einstein's wife, Elsa:

It began like any other day. Elsa Einstein was preparing breakfast for her husband, Albert. As she later recalled: "The Doctor came down in his dressing gown as usual for breakfast, but he hardly touched a thing. I thought something was wrong, so I asked what was troubling him. 'I have a wonderful idea,' he said, and after drinking his coffee, he went to the piano and started playing. Now and again he would stop, making a few notes then repeat: 'I've got a wonderful idea, a marvelous idea!' I said: 'Then for goodness' sake tell me what it is, don't keep me in suspense.' He said: 'It's difficult; I still have to work it out.'"

He continued playing the piano and making notes for about half an hour, then went up stairs to his study, telling her that he did not wish to be

disturbed, and he remained there for two weeks. “Each day I sent him up his meals,” she said, “and in the evening he would walk a little for exercise, then return to his work again. Eventually, he came down from his study looking very pale. ‘That’s it,’ he told me, wearily putting two sheets of paper on the table. And that was his theory of relativity.”

It was Einstein’s theory of General Relativity. It was a new way of looking at the universe based on the non-Euclidean geometry of Riemann and it had some startling implications that even Einstein was not prepared for. Among other things, it implied that the universe had a beginning, that it was not always here. Einstein himself was of the opinion that the universe was a “steady state” – universe, i.e., it

was always here.

As a result of further theoretical and experimental research, it is now an accepted part of modern science that the universe had a beginning. One contemporary authority on cosmology praises the Jews for holding on to the belief that “G-d created the heavens and the earth” throughout history, while the rest of the world believed otherwise. This kind of thing was foretold in the Torah in the last verse of the Song of *Haazinu* “The nations will praise His (G-d’s) people” (D’varim 32: 48). Rashi explains that in the times of Moshiach “the nations will praise the Jews saying, “Look how praiseworthy this nation is! They remained attached to G-d in spite of everything that happened to them. They didn’t leave him. They knew His

goodness and greatness.”

The true significance of the fact that now science also understands – in its own terms – that there was a beginning is that it is a sign of the times, the Messianic times, when, as we say in the Rosh HaShana prayers, “Every creation will know that You created it and...will understand that You formed it and every living thing will declare, ‘The G-d of Israel is King and His domain extends over everything.’”

MATH, MUSIC AND MOSHIACH

Einstein’s General Relativity brought to the attention of the scientific world the fact that the universe is a “new universe,” i.e., it has a beginning and it was not always here. And science brought Einstein closer to an awareness of the Creator of the universe.

There is an interesting story about another way in which Einstein came to an awareness of G-d. On April 30, 1930, Yehudi Menuhin, the famous Jewish boy wonder violinist, a descendant of the Alter Rebbe, gave a magnificent performance in Berlin. After the concert, several prominent members of the audience, Albert Einstein among them, were allowed to go backstage to meet Yehudi. Einstein rushed over to him, embraced him and said, “Now I know there is a G-d in heaven.”

So Einstein knew that “There is a G-d in heaven,” and that “Someone must have written those books,” but what about connecting with Him by observing G-d’s Mitzvos? In fact, as a young boy, he had observed some Mitzvos, such as keeping kosher, for a number of years, and while he was not observant in his adult life, he maintained an interest in Judaism. He read Maimonides (Rambam) in translation and said that he wished he knew Hebrew so that he could have read Maimonides in the original. He also owned a pair of T’fillin.



Albert Einstein playing at a public charity concert in the New Synagogue of Berlin on January 29, 1930

I once had a friend who had been raised in a non-religious home and considered himself an atheist. He was a musician by profession and would study abstract algebra on the side, as an intellectual hobby. He said that when he came upon Galois Theory (a very elegant branch of modern abstract algebra) he became convinced that if there could be something so beautiful, elegant and intricately structured in the world, there must be a Creator who designed it. This brought him to believe in G-d. He decided to look deeper into Judaism, contacted the local Chabad House and began studying Judaism. Eventually, he became completely observant, a *Baal T'shuva*.

A major difference between Einstein and my friend is the times. These are Messianic times and thus there is a greater sensitivity and openness to G-d and a desire to connect with him personally. The Chabad House itself is in fact a part of this. Melech HaMoshiach has covered the globe with this network of Chabad institutions with the goal of filling the world with the knowledge of G-d and making it available to everyone.

There is a strong trend among scientists now not only to recognize G-d as the Creator, but to view man as the focal point of this creation. That is, G-d created the universe for a purpose and that purpose involves man. This is known as the "Anthropic Principle." More than that science cannot know because science only understands the Creator by looking at the creation. Knowledge of the purpose of creation must come from the Creator Himself. This is the Torah, which G-d gave to Moshe Rabbeinu to instruct man on the fulfillment of the purpose of his creation, which is to make the world a place where the glory of G-d is completely revealed.

CONTINUOUS CREATION

The story of creation continues: It is a fundamental teaching of Chabad

Chassidus that G-d continually creates the world anew. This principle was first taught by the Baal Shem Tov, then explained in detail by Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi, the Alter Rebbe, founder of Chabad Chassidus, in his famous book, the *Tanya*.

This teaching is based on a verse in T'hillim (Psalms 119) which says, "Forever, O G-d, Your words stand in

Rashi explains that in the times of Moshiach "the nations will praise the Jews saying, "Look how praiseworthy this nation is! They remained attached to G-d in spite of everything that happened to them. They didn't leave him. They knew His goodness and greatness."

the heavens." G-d created the universe with the 10 creative statements at the beginning of the Torah ("Let there be light," etc.). The *Tanya* explains that the existence of every entity in the world derives from the Hebrew letters and words of these 10 statements in some way. These letters are the life force with which G-d maintains the existence of every object even after it was created,

and if He withdrew those letters the object would return to nothingness.

In Chassidus, even the most abstract concepts have the most practical application. Continuous creation tells us that since G-d, Who is the source of all good, is always re-creating the world, everything that we experience is truly good. As the Alter Rebbe writes:

"The true belief in the Creator is...that the creation is...from G-d's wisdom, which cannot be comprehended by any creation. This creation occurs at every moment – all the creations come into being in a manner of *yesh me'ayin* (something from nothing) from G-d's wisdom which gives life to everything. When one thinks deeply into this and can imagine his own coming into being literally at every moment, how could it occur to him that anything bad is happening to him....G-d's wisdom is the source of life, goodness, and pleasure ... It's only because this is not comprehended well that it may seem that one is experiencing evil or suffering. But the truth is that no evil descends from Above. Everything is good. But it is not comprehended because of the great magnitude of the goodness.

"This is the fundamental faith for which man was created – to believe that there is no place unoccupied by G-d, and in the light of the King's face there is life. Thus, there is strength and delight in His place since there is only good the whole day. Therefore, the very first thing is that a person should be happy and rejoice all the time and literally live off his faith in G-d, Who gives life and is good to him at every moment ... The believer will not be concerned with any suffering that he may experience and in all worldly matters the positive and the negative are the same for him with true equality."

[To be continued be"H]

BRINGING MOSHIACH TO MIRON

*As thousands of Jewish children march in Lag B'Omer parades around the world, hundreds of thousands of people make their way to the gravesite of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai in Miron. * This opportunity is used by the bachurim of the Chabad yeshiva in Tzfas, as well as the N'shei Chabad of Tzfas, to the fullest to spread the B'suras HaGeula on an unprecedented scale, and to be mekasher Jews to the Rebbe MH"M. * A brief diary of the Moshiach campaign activities in Miron last year.*

GROWING FROM YEAR TO YEAR

Whoever traveled the roads leading to Miron saw the Rebbe's picture. Most of the people who went to the gravesite of Rashbi took material on inyanei Moshiach and Geula that was given out by Chabad. The highlight for many visitors of all backgrounds and affiliations was being able to write to the Rebbe.

The Igud Talmidei HaYeshivos of the Lubavitcher yeshiva in Tzfas, which is near Miron, organized the massive outreach. The work expands year after year.

THE IGROS KODESH STAND

The *Igros Kodesh* stand serves as a magnet, attracting numerous people to write to the Rebbe and benefit from his counsel and blessings. This is in accordance with the Rebbe's directive in the sicha of Shoftim 5751, "to publicize to all members of the generation that we have merited that Hashem has picked someone with free choice, who is incomparably greater than the people of the generation, to give instructions and advice regarding the avoda of all the Jewish people and all members of this generation in all matters of Torah and mitzvos, and

regarding daily life and conduct in general."

From start to finish, from preparing for Lag B'Omer and then on the day itself, the organizers received the Rebbe's blessings, which guided and empowered them throughout.

THE POWER OF GEULA

Lag B'Omer evening, eight o'clock.

The Hilula of Rashbi is an incredible event in Eretz Yisroel. About half a million people, men, women, and children, make the pilgrimage to the gravesite of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai. It's the best place to spread the B'suras HaGeula and to publicize to all that there is a prophet among us, and to work on bringing Moshiach one moment sooner.

The mountain was ready for the guests. A huge picture of the Rebbe was in place, blowing gently in the breeze. A large Moshiach flag greeted those entering via the footpath. A video screen was set up and videos of the Rebbe played constantly. Here and there you could see people who had already gone up and come down, who were watching the video.

Some T'mimim had already dispersed in the area leading to Rashbi's gravesite and began giving out Moshiach cards to those going up the mountain. The fluttering of streamers of Moshiach flags which were strung across "Moshiach plaza" could be heard gently in the background,



joining the songs of Geula that burst forth from the loudspeakers placed in the center of the plaza.

The announcement made over this sound system on the minute, about the opportunity to write to the Rebbe through the *Igros Kodesh*, gave the signal to the T'mimim to get ready for the throngs. A few pairs of hands rolled up sleeves and got to work. One structure was set up for men and another for women. As soon as the first table was unfolded, it was crowded with people who wanted to write to the Rebbe. "Where's paper?" "Who can help me?" "I also want to write to the

Rebbe..."

That was just the beginning. Throughout the night, traffic continued to move and as time passed the crowd got larger. Any bystander would see an amazing sight: dozens of Jews standing around the *Igros* stand – Sephardim, Chassidim, Litvish, Yemenites, Mizrachi, wearing knitted yarmulkes, makeshift yarmulkes, religious, and not-yet-observant.

The men sat with the T'mimim and the women with the N'shei Chabad of Tzfas. People were told to make a vessel for the blessing by making a good mitzva resolution whether in

Shabbos observance, t'fillin every day, checking their mezuzos, etc. They reported to the Rebbe about their commitment and said "Yechi." Then their letter was placed in one of dozens of volumes of *Igros Kodesh*. The volume was opened and people were amazed by the direct answers. Some of them had been skeptical by the claims of the T'mimim that the Rebbe MH"M is *chai v'kayam* and answers people even today.

After writing to the Rebbe, they go over to the Kabbalas HaMalchus stand nearby. This is where they sign to their acceptance of the leadership of the

Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach, and to their desire for the true and complete Redemption.

The four large poster boards that were brought for this purpose were filled with signatures. More than 2500 people signed!

WRITING WITHOUT A BREAK

The morning of Lag B'Omer.

T'fillin stands were set up and throughout the day, people stopped by to put on t'fillin and to give tz'daka which hastens the Geula. In previous years, the *Igros* stand was folded up in the afternoon, but this year, the stand operated 24 hours, nonstop!

Bachurim worked in shifts, though some bachurim stayed all night or all day, not wanting to leave the place that connected so many Jews to the Rebbe.

The sun began to set and people refused to leave the stand. Another one came by and another one. All wanted to write to the Rebbe, so how could they be refused? So, as the tables were being folded, some more people sat down to write to the Rebbe.

Lag B'Omer 5766 came to an end. The last of the T'mimim departed, returning to their base, the Chabad yeshiva in Tzfas. There they held a meeting to discuss the results of their outreach. Throughout Lag B'Omer, thousands of Jews had written and connected to the Rebbe while undertaking various mitzva commitments to hasten the Geula; hundreds of Jews had put on t'fillin and had given tz'daka; tens of thousands of Jews had watched the Rebbe on video and seen his picture; over 100,000 pieces of literature were distributed including Moshiach cards, "HaAm Rotzeh Moshiach" brochures that were reprinted in an eye-catching manner for Lag B'Omer; *Moshiach Now* CD's were grabbed up in the thousands and disappeared within two hours; *Sichat HaGeula*, "HaRashbi U'B'suras HaGeula," *Yechi HaMelech HaMoshiach* booklets for b'nei Torah,

STORIES FROM THE IGROS KODESH STAND

It was quiet, Lag B'Omer morning, as people sat and wrote to the Rebbe, when a frum man ran over to the stand. The T'mimim who manned the stand, wondered what his rushing was about. The man said that his little boy had gotten lost in the crowd of hundreds of thousands of people a few hours before. Despite the searching on the part of the police and volunteers, he had not been found.

"I came here to write to the Rebbe and to ask that I find my son right away!"

The worried father sat down to write to the Rebbe and opened to an answer with blessings. The man got up and left the stand, confident that he would soon find his lost son. Indeed, no more than ten minutes went by and the emotional father returned to the stand, holding the Rebbe's picture. He kissed the picture and didn't stop murmuring his thanks. "As soon as I left the stand, my son appeared. It's thanks to the Rebbe!"

NO HARD FEELINGS

The loudspeaker announced the opportunity to write to the Rebbe and a person showed up to do just that. He formulated his question and made a good resolution. He proclaimed "Yechi" and put his letter into a volume of *Igros Kodesh*.

The first sentence to catch his eye, in volume 13, p. 118, surprised him since it says, "In response to your letter of the special day, Hilula d'Rashbi."

He continued to read along with the Tamim and wasn't satisfied. "The Rebbe did not respond to what I wrote him in my letter! Is the Rebbe upset with me?"

"G-d forbid," said the bachur. "The Rebbe doesn't hold a grudge against anyone. The Rebbe loves every Jew as he is." The bachur was ready to get into a conversation with him about the significance of the description, Nasi HaDor, but the man was in a hurry. They continued to read the third letter and there it was, "Obviously, my lack of response is not because I harbor any hard feelings, G-d forbid, but is because I am preoccupied..."

P'SAK DIN

The p'sak din signed by hundreds of rabbanim, that the Rebbe has a din of a prophet and that he is Moshiach, was printed professionally on a large sign. Many people crowded around it and discovered that g'dolim of all groups support the belief that the Lubavitcher Rebbe is Moshiach. The p'sak got a great deal of attention when it was put up during the afternoon along the path designated as "Mehadrin" (for men only to avoid immodest mingling) where many religious Jews pass throughout the day. Many of them were stunned to see that this belief is not the exclusive province of Lubavitchers.

etc.

You may have thought that the expression "tired but satisfied" would have applied, but no. The T'mimim who organized the outreach in Miron were not satisfied. To them, the measure of success is the Geula, the

true and complete Geula by the Rebbe MH"M! The T'mimim, along with all the Jewish people, will not rest until we merit to see our Melech and to proclaim before him: *Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu V'Rabbeinu Melech HaMoshiach L'olam Va'ed!*

NISSIM IN NICE

BY CHANI NUSSBAUM

*31 years ago, Sarah and Yosef Yitzchok Pinson arrived in the scenic city of Nice, France on shlichus. * The story of their shlichus.*

“At the last Kinus HaShluchos on Chaf-Beis Shvat, the yahrtzait of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka a”h, I was especially moved when the names of all the shluchos was read. When they read the names of those who went on shlichus in the time of the Rebbe Rayatz, my mother was one of the few who stood up.

“My mother went on shlichus in 1944,” relates Mrs. Sarah Pinson of Nice, France.

Sarah and her husband were born on shlichus as both are from families of shluchim. She is from the Altein family and her husband is the son of Rabbi Pinson, shliach in Tunis. With an illustrious background like that, no wonder that they are doing wonderful work in Nice!

Nice is located in the south of France, on the Mediterranean coast, between Marseille and Genoa, and is a major tourist center and a leading resort on the French Riviera (*Côte d’Azur*). The city enjoys mild and sunny weather most of the year and with its palm trees and beautiful sunsets over the water, it is a most beautiful though decadent place. Yet, it is here that the Pinsons have achieved so much. Their shlichus began with simcha as Sarah relates:

“We’ve been here in Nice for 31

years. We arrived on Shushan Purim Katan. Perhaps this is the reason that Mivtza Purim is a major happening here, as I will soon tell you.”

Nice is an hour and a half’s flight from Paris and near Monte Carlo. It is not far from Montain, where the Rebbe Rashab went to vacation (the Rebbe Rayatz mentions the place several times in *Likkutei Dibburim*). There are about 20,000 Jews in Nice and much assimilation. Someone once said to the Pinsons, “Daily, you live the Rebbe’s battle of ‘Who is a Jew.’”

Sarah:

“Our work began, as I said, on Shushan Purim Katan. On our way to the post office to send off Purim brochures and mishloach manos, we met a girl who was wearing a Magen David necklace, something that identified her as a Jew. She got our very first mishloach manos. Naturally, this wasn’t all. She became a baalas t’shuva and has a beautiful family.

“At the Chabad house we have Torah classes for men and women. We run a day camp in the summer as well as in the winter. Children from all over the area attend them. We have a kosher restaurant at the Chabad house. Many people who wouldn’t ordinarily come to the

Chabad house come to the restaurant and are exposed to our work. That’s their first connection. On Sukkos, the Chabad house sukkah is the only sukkah in town, though by now, other Chabad houses have opened on the coast.

“We opened a Jewish school, which has 250 students. When we came here 31 years ago, there weren’t many children who attended a Jewish school. Now, there are two Jewish schools full of Jewish children who are getting a proper Jewish education.

“Kashrus has developed quickly here. When we arrived here, many products were unobtainable. Back then we made do with what we had or we imported food. Now, you can even get chalav Yisroel here.”

What is your focus on shlichus?

“I am principal of the school and for this job alone, I need 26 hours a day, there’s so much work. Yet, I also organize classes for women. Just recently, we started a parenting class every Tuesday. It is very popular.

“Lately, a group of women began putting on plays. I work on the script and together, we turn it into a play. The stories we perform convey authentic Jewish messages and make a deep impression on people.

“More recently, we have begun including girls so now we have fifty women and 12 girls.

“Every month we have an evening for N’shei Chabad. We had 200 women a month ago. I

remember that at the first evening for N'shei Chabad that we organized, a fax came from the Rebbe in response to a report I had sent, and there was great excitement.

"It was the first fax to arrive from the US. After we received the fax, the phone rang and it was Rabbi Groner with two questions. First, what was the significance of the participation of 200 women in a city like Nice. We answered that here in Nice, 200 women would be like 20,000 women in New York as far as the percentage of Jewish women in attendance.

"His next question was whether the women had received any sort of gift. We understood that this was the Rebbe's instruction and since then we try to do that. We make sure each woman leaves with something (a brochure, for example) and this in itself makes an impact.

"In one of the early years, at an evening for women that we held in honor of Yud-Tes Kislev, each

woman received Neshek and a brochure which explained the importance of fulfilling this mitzva.

"One of the women went home and put the brochure on a high shelf and discovered it a few years later. Since then, she began to get more involved in Judaism and she regularly attended the classes until she became a baalas t'shuva, thanks to the brochure as per the Rebbe's instruction.

"We have Shabbatons six times a year. At first we invited everyone to our home but lately, we have to make it at the Chabad house because our home cannot contain so many people.

"Last Shabbos we had a Shabbaton. Each time it is so moving to see how Jews here are thirsty for Judaism. Even before the Shabbaton is over, they ask when the next one will take place. We ask Hashem to give us the strength to do more and more.

"I just returned from the Kinus

HaShluchos in New York, where I met one of my students wearing a sheitel and dressed modestly. There is no nachas greater than that."

What do you do about chinuch for your children?

"We home-schooled the older ones and the boys left home at age 12 and the girls at age 15. The little ones have schools now that they can attend. My children are scattered between Eretz Yisroel, Argentina, and France. Only my younger daughters in grades six and seven are still here with us in Nice."

What about a mikva?

"For the time being, there is a mikva in the community building. We work hard to support it. We recently formed an organization of all the women in town, from all segments of the population, for the purpose of uniting everyone to support the mikva. We named the organization, Mayim Chayim, and we hope to find a new building that will enable us to build a beautiful



mikva according to the Chabad shita, for in Nice, buying a building is a difficult project.”

Speaking of buildings, the present Chabad house building was miraculously acquired. It was when they had already despaired of being able to buy a building. They found the present building, which they found suitable, but the owner insisted on renting it, not selling it.

“Then he suddenly changed his mind, with no explanation, and decided to sell it. The second miracle was when we bought it without having any money, but miraculously, it’s flourishing. As I said before, in Nice, we see nissim.

STORIES OF NESHAMOS

Sarah has numerous stories of neshamos and miracles. These too, are an inseparable part of the fascinating work of shlichus:

“An older woman who became close with us, retired and began to help us at the school. She is not religious but she got used to our school. Every summer, she travels to Eretz Yisroel on vacation and stays in Netanya. Last summer, before her trip, she had a serious money problem and didn’t know how to solve it.

“She went to her house and looked at a picture of the Rebbe and said to him: Please help me. I need your immediate help.

“She told this to me the next day and I immediately recalled a story which I had recently read, about a Jew who said his wife had suddenly become ill. In his dream he said to the Rebbe: Rebbe, save her!

“A short while later, Rabbi Chadakov called him and told him in the Rebbe’s name: Do not worry, everything will be all right, with Hashem’s help. Do what the doctor tells your wife to do.

“When the surprised man asked Rabbi Chadakov how he knew to

call just at the right time, Rabbi Chadakov said, ‘I don’t know anything. The Rebbe told me to call, and I did.’

“I was telling her this story when someone came into the office of the school and handed her a nice amount of money that she sorely needed. Her financial problem was solved. We saw how the Rebbe is always with us and takes care of things in supernatural ways.”

Another story which illustrates how the Rebbe responds to all:

“Two weeks ago, someone stopped my husband on the street as he cried out, ‘Rabbi Pinson, Rabbi Pinson!’ My husband saw a familiar

Here in Nice, 200 women would be like 20,000 women in New York as far as the percentage of Jewish women in attendance.

non-Jewish couple. They said that they came to the public Menora lighting that we have every year on Chanuka. They had a daughter who had no children, and this year, at the Menora lighting, they heard that it was an auspicious time for requests, so they had made a request on her behalf. ‘Now, we must tell you that our daughter is expecting a baby!’

“This story made quite a commotion in town and a kiddush Hashem. Yes, the Rebbe answers everybody and the time we light the Menora is indeed auspicious.

“There was a story with a lady who got involved with Judaism and Chabad and began participating in

classes, but her husband wasn’t interested in hearing about religion. Consequently, their family harmony was disturbed. Her husband maintained that she was going to a cult of crazies, and he left the house.

“He finally returned but he said there was no way his home would be kosher. The wife didn’t know how to handle this. What should she do? I advised her to write to the Rebbe through the *Igros Kodesh* and in her despair, she did so. In the letter she opened to, the Rebbe said to be careful about kashrus.

“I advised her to be even more careful than she had been until now, for example, to begin using only chalav Yisroel. She listened to me and began using chalav Yisroel. When her husband came home, he asked about the milk. She told him that the other stores were closed and she had bought the milk at the Chabad house. The two sat and drank this milk.

“Suddenly, the husband rushed out, saying, ‘I am going to buy more of this milk.’ And the miracle happened. Their quarrels ceased.

“The woman was so grateful and she wanted to write her thanks to the Rebbe, because in her wildest dreams she didn’t imagine her problems would disappear like that.

“Another woman came to consult with me about whether she should help her husband in his work or look for something independently. I suggested she write to the Rebbe. In the letter she opened to, the Rebbe referred to someone who wrote a similar request to him and at the end of the letter, the Rebbe wrote, ‘a blessing for an easy pregnancy.’

“The woman nearly fainted. When she recovered, she said she had just found out she was pregnant but hadn’t written about this to the Rebbe. This story took place eight years ago and was spoken about all over town.”



Rabbi Y.Y. Pinson giving a class

STORIES OF PURIM

Towards the end of our conversation, Sarah wanted to get back to Purim.

“As I told you, since we arrived here on Shushan Purim Katan, our tradition here on shlichus is that Mivtza Purim is done on a grand scale. Purim night we have a public Megilla reading, then a party with singing and dancing. In the morning, the Megilla is read every hour at the Chabad house. The Purim meal takes place in our home with fifty people.

“With the help of other shluchim we also have a Purim meal for

students, separate for boys and girls. R’ Menachem, the new shliach, organizes it, and then we have a grand farbrengen which lasts until dawn of Shushan Purim.

“One year ago, a couple came here to help us on shlichus, and so we had the Purim meal together. The couple didn’t have children yet. Since it was thirty years since we had arrived on shlichus, we had a big meal and the mashke was plentiful. Everybody blessed the couple from the depths of their hearts, while saying l’chaim, that the following year they’d have a child.

“Nine months after this

farbrengen, the couple had a son! Today, that couple lives in Canada. They recently called me to tell us that they anticipate good news again and thanks to this incident, they understand far better the power of saying l’chaim in the home of a shliach of the Rebbe.

“Another story that depicts the impact of our Purim activities, which we just found out about, has to do with a student who came to us for the first time for the Purim meal. He came last Shabbos to the Shabbaton we held and he said, ‘I will never forget that first Purim meal that I had in your home. I was sated not only physically but also spiritually.’ Purim definitely makes a big impression here and the impact lingers the rest of the year.

“During Purim we send out 2000 mishloach manos to Jews around the city. Aside from that, we send about another 100 mishloach manos from the house. Purim, as we have seen, is a holiday that bestows great strength. One person strengthens the other and together, everyone is elevated to provide nachas to the Rebbe.

“One year, we thought of having the Purim meal outside our home. Our children said, ‘Purim outside the house?!’ They refused to even consider it.

“Whoever comes here on Purim would think he is in Crown Heights with the people dancing on the tables and the tremendous Chassidishe simcha.”



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REMEMBERING AND REMINDING

BY SHAI GEFEN

THEY PREFER TO FORGET

The campaign of “There’s judgment and there’s a Judge” created a furor last week, as did other projects designed to delegitimize all those who had a hand in the expulsion of Jews from Gush Katif. There are people who don’t want to be reminded what they did to the Jewish nation and the devastated land they left behind, that miraculously blooming land that is now overrun by terrorists who endanger our lives.

Since the Disengagement, we have observed the media’s attempt to cover up one of the greatest crimes in our history. Thousands of expellees are suffering in silence. The media also tries to conceal the real state of our security, to the best of their ability in this day and age when word gets around via other means than state-censored news.

But someone is ruining their plan, and they are not willing to forgive. The campaign’s goal is to make the Israeli public aware of the crime of the expulsion and destruction so that the wounds never heal and the memory will prevent a repetition of the crime.

That is why, at the height of the recent war in Lebanon, millions of copies of, “We told you so,” were distributed. This publication quoted the opinions of security

experts about the terrible damage incurred by the Disengagement and the danger in the Convergence plan.

That is why the campaign, “There’s judgment and there’s a Judge,” hits a nerve. The Left and the collaborators, including those among us, who were in favor of the



Disengagement (or did not prevent it), are very angry and they want to stifle all public discourse on the topic.

I’m not talking only about those who promoted the Disengagement, but also and primarily I’m speaking about those who insisted that “With love, we will be victorious.” They

didn’t lift a finger to prevent that which could have been prevented (or at least postponed). The upset reactions show us how important are the various campaigns intent on publicizing the truth.

Yes, it’s painful, and many would prefer to forget about it, but we cannot allow them this pleasure, not as Jews, because of the danger to life involved, and not as Chassidim of the Rebbe, who was so pained by this.

Years ago, after Rabbi Wolpo published his book, *Daas Torah B’Inyanei HaMatzav B’Eretz HaKodesh*, the Rebbe told him in a yechidus (Iyar 5741) to publish another book in order “to show that everything we warned about, happened.” So Rabbi Wolpo published another book, this one called, *Shalom Shalom, V’Ein Shalom*.

The present campaign is intended to reveal the bitter and ugly truth, in order to prevent the giving away of more land for the establishment of a Palestinian state. As we remind them how they took the people who are meant to defend the people and the land, and used them in the most despicable way to serve the political needs of a crime family, we can prevent it from recurring and say with assurance, “our hands did not spill this blood.”



THEY SAY THEY'RE SORRY

In the news recently, there was an item about the Sharon family that they appointed unqualified officers for sensitive security positions, which generally require higher rank, in order to serve their self-interests. The results of this disastrous policy came out in shocking testimony before the Foreign Affairs and Security committees. No wonder then that those officers collaborated in the Disengagement crime, and when they were put to the test in the war in Lebanon last summer, they failed. The army was transformed into a political entity that serves the ruler, just like in the dictatorships that surround us.

This trickles down, little by little, into all segments of the population. Day by day, we discover that senior officers, as well as politicians, before leaving their positions express regret for the Disengagement and raise tough questions. Just last week, Major General Yair Naveh, who implemented the expulsion in northern Shomron, admitted in a lecture that he gave that “there was no security consideration in the Disengagement, rather, political considerations whose underlying motives may be investigated one day.”

Why don't they investigate now?! The tragedy of the Disengagement should not be superseded by the tragedy of the war in Lebanon; it's far worse! His contemptible work in uprooting Jews from their homes is what led to the downfall of the entire army. The same holds true for the other officers, like General Gershon HaKohen, who called the Disengagement, “a crime against the Jewish people,” and Res. General Yiftach Ron Tal, who opined that the Disengagement is a dangerous

course for the Jewish nation.

These admissions will continue as long as those fighting for shleimus ha'Aretz target all those who were party to the Disengagement. Those who realize that their name will be remembered in infamy on the list of criminals will do everything to have their names erased. When senior officers and lowly soldiers get the message that although they are merely cogs, they are operating as part of the well-oiled machinery of devastation and destruction, they will think twice about how to proceed.

The regrets we have heard expressed in recent months are not coming from the mouths of true penitents but thanks to the campaign against all those responsible for the crime.

NOT A REAL HOUSE

Everybody's angry at Knesset member Bishara for betraying Israel, but this is just the tip of the iceberg. The laws and the giving away of land that passed in the Knesset were made thanks to the support of those enemies of Israel, who intend on destroying us. It's only thanks to Hashem's kindness that they have not succeeded.

On Shabbos Parshas Metzora, 26 years ago, the Rebbe spoke prophetically about the Knesset, in which resolutions to give away land are made by Arabs and Christians. The Rebbe says that the only solution is to destroy the house and build a real house. An amazing sicha which is better understood today:

Giving away land from Eretz Yisroel doesn't only go against halacha but also goes against simple logic. It even opposes the intellect and emotions of the animal soul, for even the most fearful animal wouldn't willingly dance in fire or

Just last week, Major General Yair Naveh, who implemented the expulsion in northern Shomron, admitted in a lecture that he gave that “there was no security consideration in the Disengagement, rather, political considerations whose underlying motives may be investigated one day.”

extend his neck for slaughtering. Giving away parts of Eretz Yisroel is like jumping in the fire!

Those who want to give away parts of Eretz Yisroel – even though it says, “I give it to you as an inheritance” – sit in the Knesset. Therefore, there needs to be “and the house must be dismantled” [i.e., referring to the laws of a house with *tzaraas* which must be dismantled].

The present Knesset is not the real house, since in this house sit communists, Arabs, and Christians – to the point that some of them want to give away all of Eretz

Yisroel! They yell that because of peace it's all worthwhile, even giving away all of Eretz Yisroel. Therefore, "the house must be dismantled," and a new house made, a real house!

As was said a number of times, the world is currently shaking and from day to day it trembles more, to the point that today they have already stopped misleading people that the tragic deal signed at Camp David a few years ago is good.

They don't make celebrations in honor of it anymore and they even stopped clapping and patting each other's backs and saying "mazal tov" about this unfortunate deal. Actually, instead of establishing the day they signed the miserable deal as a holiday, they should have established it as a bitter, terrible day. Signing this unfortunate deal is something to cry about! I don't want to say "an everlasting crying," since Moshiach will come immediately, but two years later we see that the pressure on the Jews to give away land is only worse!

There was never such a thing in the history of the Jewish people, a situation in which Jews themselves offered to do such a shocking thing as to give away parts of Eretz Yisroel that belong to them to gentiles! Over the generations, the Jewish people endured much suffering, but never experienced anything like what occurred two years ago!

There was never such a thing in the history of the Jewish people, a situation in which Jews themselves offered to do such a shocking thing as to give away parts of Eretz Yisroel that belong to them to gentiles!

THIS IS INDEPENDENCE?!

The State of Israel recently celebrated its independence. On

Parshas Shmini 5741, the Rebbe said as follows:

The main reason why Jews are obstinate about undermining shleimus ha'Aretz is because of their feelings of inferiority in the face of the goy. They call this inferiority feeling independence!

Even when it was a government of goyim and gentile policemen, they did not feel as inferior before the goy as they do now, when those who sit in the government (and Knesset) and the policemen are Jews!

These Jews do not have the strength and the "pride of Yaakov" that are required of a Jew. When a Jew such as this sees the goy smiling at him, he completely loses his strength and is ready to do anything for him. In exchange for a smile (or a doubtful smile) from a goy, he is ready to endanger three and a half million Jews!

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DON'T BE SO DENSE!

BY RABBI CHAIM ASHKENAZI

TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY

In our generation, the generation of the Redemption, the Rebbe MH”M equipped us with the means to not be hindered by worldly matters by viewing everything with a look of Redemption. This idea, based upon the saying, “All the days of your life to bring the days of Moshiach,” leads us to contemplate and understand that everything happening before our eyes is part of the process of current Redemption, and not just a preparation for the Redemption. Excerpts from a chassidic farbrengen.

CLEAR OR BLOCKED LENSES

Years ago, in the days when it still wasn't possible to obtain alternatives to Chalav Yisroel milk for babies, a Lubavitcher chassid was once asked by his son's pediatrician why he preferred to feed his child soy-based baby food, which is very expensive.

The child's father explained to the doctor that non-kosher food dulls the soul, and therefore, he is ready to pay the higher price, as long as his son doesn't receive his nourishment from non-Jewish milk.

The doctor was amazed to hear this explanation. “How is it possible to understand that those who eat

non-kosher foods become thick-headed people?” the doctor inquired. “These people run businesses, use computers, learn in universities, and operate complicated machinery!”

Whether the young chassid succeeded in explaining to the doctor about dullness of the soul – we don't know. However, the doctor's question demands an answer: What is the meaning of the damage that forbidden foods are liable to cause to a person?

The factual source behind the spiritual damage caused by forbidden foods comes from the verse, “And you shall not defile yourselves with them, that you should become unclean

through them.” At first glance, it seems that the verse is unnecessarily repetitive: Both “defile yourselves” and “become unclean.”

Even the way the word “v'nitmeisem” (and you shall become unclean) is written in a strange manner – without the letter Alef. This teaches us that the meaning behind “v'nitmeisem” (and you shall become unclean) is actually “v'nitamtamsem” (and you shall become dull), i.e., eating forbidden foods (enumerated in the previous verses) causes the person to suffer dullness.

To understand the essence of the spiritual damage from non-kosher foods, we must first offer an illumination with the light of chassidus on why we say in davening “My G-d, the soul which You have given within me is pure.” The Alter Rebbe asks: What relevance does the concept of purity and impurity have to a spiritual soul?

The Alter Rebbe explains that “t'hora” (pure) derives from “k'etzem ha'shamayim l'tohar” (and like the appearance of the heavens for clarity), meaning pure and clear heavens without any covering and concealment. The pure soul sees the G-dly reality as it really is, and no coverings whatsoever can conceal it. However, with its descent into this world in the stages described in the words, “You created, You formed, You breathed,” there are already coverings – at every stage of descent, there is formed another covering and

yet another covering. This means that at the lower stages, the soul sees G-dliness through multicolored glass of a variety of shades and thicknesses, etc., and therefore, when it descends below, *sin ch*"v, becomes a most relevant concept.

"TO MAKE MERITORIOUS" – POLISHING AND SHINING

According to this explanation, we can understand the words of Rabbi Chananya ben Akashya: "G-d wanted to make the Jewish People meritorious, therefore He gave them Torah and mitzvos in abundant measure." At first glance, it seems that we could say that if G-d wanted to make us meritorious, if he would have given us just one mitzva – we would have succeeded much more, because we would have kept and guarded it at every opportunity. How do we possibly understand that in order to make us meritorious, He specifically gave us an abundance of mitzvos?

Chassidus explains that the word "*I'zakos*" (to make meritorious) means "*I'zacheich*" (to purify). The Jewish People were given mitzvos to make them as a piece of clear glass, totally pure and clean of any stains, to the point that their souls can see G-d as He truly is – without filters but with a simple and natural point of view derived from the healthy power of sight possessed by a person whose soul is pure.

What happens to someone who wears glasses with tinted lenses? He ends up looking into a mirror and seeing only himself. The thicker the tinted covering, the more and more the person sees himself and only himself.

The covering that blocks the eyes of the pure soul is formed when we absorb impure things with each of our five senses. Therefore, we have been commanded to avoid things that cause impurity – dimness and concealment for the eyes and the

other senses.

The Rebbe MH"M explains that this is the meaning of the commandment "You shall make judges and officers within all your gates": Establish protection at the gates through which impressions are instilled within you – your eyes, your ears, and your mouth – engraving things upon your body and your soul that are most difficult to erase.

Among all these gates, while the mouth grasps the most physical matter – food and drink – its influence reaches the soul's most delicate spiritual dimensions.

We can bring further examples to



prove this influence. For example, there's the story about a Jewish boy who was taken by one of the paritzim, in the days when paritzim did virtually anything they desired. In this case, the paritz wanted to force the child to convert *ch*"v. The boy, even though he didn't know much about Yiddishkeit, refused categorically to convert, and as a result, suffered mercilessly at the hands of the paritz. The priest suggested to the paritz that he should give the boy to drink, without his knowledge, from his *negel vasser* after he had washed in the morning. Shortly after drinking from these

impure waters, the boy agreed to convert.

Notice the great strength of forbidden water, as it overcame the soul's light and holiness, which had previously illuminated the body with such tremendous intensity that he was prepared to suffer afflictions in order not to undergo forced conversion. Yet, after consuming something forbidden, it caused a dullness so thick and coarse that he agreed to convert *r*"l.

MAINTAINING PURITY IS INDEED AN ART

Every craftsman guards his trade with the utmost stringency. The artist tends to his paintbrushes, the violinist gently moves his fingers across the strings, and the cantor is careful not to strain his vocal cords.

Chassidus demands, guides, and brings the person to craftsmanship of "to behold the pleasantness of G-d" on the highest level. Thus, it demands protecting the purity of the eyes of the soul with the most impeccable cleanliness, i.e., even being careful not to consume permissible things with a passion, because this too results in a covering that blocks off the light of the soul.

Chassidus brings a parable to illustrate this point: On a very expensive garment, a slight stain is considered as a serious stain. Similarly, regarding a very important person or someone who has to appear in very important places, he is required to be a proper chassidic role model. This is in accordance with what was said about Rabbi Hillel Paritcher, who was particularly and unusually careful in the way he maintained his daily conduct, in order that "*es zähl sich im leigen besser a vort chassidus*" (so that a chassidic concept will be internalized better). There is also the chassid, Rabbi Neta of Malastirtchine, who wouldn't sleep in a bed made by a woman. Once when someone wasn't careful in regard to R. Neta's strictness in this matter, he

woke up the next morning and said, “What do you care if I dream about chassidus?”

All these mode of conducts are additional forms of purification in order that we can see G-dliness better and more deeply. This is the reason why the word “*v’nitmeisem*” is written without the letter Alef: If you eat forbidden foods, then “*v’nitamtamsem bam*” – you will be blocked off, surrounded by a covering that will prevent you from seeing the truth.

There is an interesting story that occurred in the time of Rabbi Akiva Eiger illustrating how much we need to be careful about kashrus, even when there is the slightest tinge of doubt.

A boy was brought before Rabbi Akiva Eiger who was extremely sharp in his Torah study but whose mind had suddenly lost the ability to grasp Torah. Rabbi Akiva Eiger said that apparently the child had eaten some forbidden food, thus leading to his mind’s inability to comprehend Torah. The parents knew that non-kosher food would never possibly enter their home, and therefore, they checked if the boy had eaten something somewhere else.

This investigation revealed that once when the boy was passing in the street, he was asked to come into a Jewish inn and eat the leftovers of the wedding meal, and he had some of the meat. They went to check what had happened, and it turned out that the shochet was a pious G-d-fearing Jew who slaughtered everything precisely according to the strict laws of kashrus. However, the bride at this wedding had been divorced with an improperly written *get*. When the matter was brought before the Alter Rebbe, he wrote in reference to this *get* (see Response #109, end of the Alter Rebbe’s *Shulchan Aruch*) that it is invalid and that it is forbidden for the woman to remarry without another *get*. The Alter Rebbe added further: (If

the woman should remarry without a new *get*) any meat slaughtered for the wedding meal is deemed unfit and *treif*. The boy ate from this meat and it immediately caused a dullness that prevented him from learning Torah.

It’s amazing to see how far the strength of chachamim can reach, as something declared forbidden by the Alter Rebbe immediately causes dullness. This brings to mind the saying that “the words of the Sages are more severe than the words of the Torah.”

OTHER REASONS FOR DIRTY LENSES

The Rebbe MH”M told at a farbrengen that the Rambam once received a letter signed by seventy thousand people asking for the source on *T’chiyas HaMeisim* (Revival of the Dead), and suggesting that the verses brought by our Sages, of blessed memory, can also be interpreted in a different way. The Rambam did not want to offer a response, and gave the task to his student. In his response, the student wrote that they had obviously eaten forbidden food, thus leading them to ask such questions on one of the fundamental principles of the Jewish faith, as evidently they had not fathomed the intellect of our Sages, of blessed memory. At the end of his letter, he writes that they are liable for punishment, and *r”l* shortly thereafter, a king came with his army and killed them.

The Rebbe MH”M concluded by emphasizing that raising doubts on matters of pure faith happens not just from eating forbidden food, but also from eating **permitted** food with great **physical desire**.

Accordingly, we can understand why we sometimes *ch”v* have to undergo suffering. This is not *ch”v* meant to take vengeance upon the soul. Rather, in order that we can behold the pleasantness of G-d, we must clean our glasses and eyes from even permitted pleasures that we

consumed to satisfy our desires.

Thus, it’s not only food that can cloud our vision, but even the enthusiastic involvement in worldly matters or the longing for physical pleasures. Accordingly, we can understand what is stated in *HaYom Yom* – that the descent in Avodas Hashem starts when things are lacking in the avoda of davening. For if we are not involved in the avoda of davening, designed to instill the G-dly truth that “there is nothing else besides Him” within a person’s mind and heart, the world standing before his eyes covers G-dliness with camouflage colors, concealing it from us completely, thus laying the groundwork for *ch”v* possible spiritual deterioration.

Therefore, chassidim would guard themselves not only against forbidden things, but if their eyesight weakened, they didn’t want to start wearing glasses, claiming that it’s better to see less of this world. Every time we perceive the world as an existing reality, this creates a dullness and fuzziness for the holy soul, to the point that it is no longer as pure as it once was.

EVEN GREATER CAUTION WITH CHILDREN

This is the reason why the Rebbe MH”M spoke so adamantly against teaching secular subjects to Jewish children learning in “cheider,” when their souls are so pure. Why bring them in contact with spiritual coverings and impurities that will only interfere with the cleaving to G-dliness down the road?

By the same token, our Rebbeim warned against the use of non-Jewish milk, etc., particularly by small children, because the purer their soul is, the more long-term the damage *ch”v*. The *Shulchan Aruch* states that if a nursing woman eats forbidden food for the sake of preserving her health, it would be better for her not to nurse her baby. Even though such food is

permissible for her to eat, nevertheless, it causes a defilement and dullness for the suckling child.

This point is alluded to in Rashi's commentary on the verse, "you should become unclean through them": "If you become unclean in this world, I will make you unclean in the World to Come." We can ask here the same question that we posed regarding the soul: What relevance does impurity have to the World to Come? However, chassidus explains that the words, "I will make you unclean in the World to Come," means that in the World to Come, a time when we will need to merit G-dly revelations, they will neither sense nor feel them.

This reality is reflected in the words that someone once said to a certain rebbe: It is written that eating forbidden food makes a person dense, yet I eat such food and don't feel the denseness! The rebbe's reply: The fact that you don't feel how dense you really are – **that's the denseness itself!** Similarly, when someone injures himself *ch"v* and feels no pain nor sees any blood dripping from him, this shows how detached he is from what is happening to him.

It seems that this is the meaning of "one who repeatedly transgresses – makes it as if it is permissible." The first time a person commits a transgression, he feels that his glasses have been made less transparent. However, when he keeps sinning, the denseness becomes so great that he simply can't distinguish the additional damage.

In a similar vein, we hear people say, "I have participated in farbrengens (or Torah classes) for quite some time, and I don't feel that I'm missing anything" or "I haven't been to the Rebbe in years, and I don't see that it diminishes anything from me." If they don't feel what's missing, who knows how great the damage is!

The result of exercising caution against forbidden foods is stated in the verse, "He who **brought you up** from the land of Egypt," as the Gemara interprets: This is the **elevation** – that he is careful in all this, and his soul shines "like the appearance of the heavens for clarity."

REDEMPTION – CLEANING THE LENSES

In our generation, the generation of the Redemption, the Rebbe MH"M provides us with the mean to not be

*The boy, even though
he didn't know much
about Yiddishkait,
refused categorically
to convert. The priest
suggested to the
paritz that he should
give the boy to drink,
without his
knowledge, from his
negel vasser after he
had washed in the
morning...*

hindered by worldly matters, by viewing everything with a Redemption-perspective. This idea, based upon the saying, "All the days of your life – to bring the days of Moshiach," leads us to contemplate and understand that everything happening before our eyes is part of the **current** process of Redemption, and not just a **preparation** for the Redemption.

In generations past, a Jew knew that everything happening in the

world represents a hiding and concealment of G-dliness, and in the days of Moshiach, this concealment will be removed and G-dliness will appear openly. Today, a Jew has to contemplate upon the world from the viewpoint that every innovation in the world displays G-dliness even now, as it is actually part of the Redemption. If he looks at things in this manner, he won't see the world as something that conceals and stifles. Rather, the world (*olam*) – in its very state of concealment (*helem*) – illuminates, reveals, and cleanses one's power of perception, making it proper, correct, and true.

For example, the Global Positioning System (GPS), found today in many vehicles to enable the driver to reach his desired point of destination, in a sense, proclaims "there is nothing else besides Him." It sharpens the awareness that Someone is watching over us from Above and following our every move. A driver who doesn't follow the instructions receives an immediate warning, including guidance on how to get back on the right path, leading him to his point of destination. Isn't this the most concrete illustration of, "And behold, G-d stands over him," and, 'The whole world is filled with His glory,' and He looks upon him and 'searches his reins and heart' [to see] if he is serving Him as is fitting"?

It is possible that this is the meaning behind the Rebbe MH"M's request to "open the eyes" in order to see the Redemption. We must contemplate with open eyes, not covered with plaster and mud, and see how even today nothing hides and conceals the Creator. Rather, everything joins in the high and lofty process of revealing G-dliness and holiness. And then we will merit that "the world will be filled with the knowledge of G-d" with the True and Complete Redemption, immediately, mamash.

THE NEW 'BEIS MOSHIACH 770' SMICHA INSTITUTE

FOR PROFESSIONAL RABBANUS AND DAYANUS, BEITAR ILLIT, ISRAEL

It's not very often that you hear of a new smicha institute for rabbanus and dayanus, particularly one designated for Lubavitcher Chassidim and graduates of Chabad Yeshivos. It's especially unusual when it sets exceptionally high standards of Torah scholarship accompanied by excellent material conditions, including a generous monthly stipend. Yet that is the good news announced by R. D'niel Goldberg of Beitar Illit, who has decided to accept this challenge.

Registration started before Pesach, and has already closed for the summer semester starting in Sivan and for the fall semester starting in Elul, although applicants can still register to be placed on the waiting list for both Sivan and Ellul.

"We intend to invest serious funding in the institute, B'ezer Hashem," said R. D'niel in an exclusive interview to *Beis Moshiah*. "The new kollel, b'ezer Hashem, will be an academy of Torah scholarship on a particularly high level, both for Chabad students studying for smicha after their year spent at "770" in the "k'vutza," or after Shlichus, and for young married men who wish to study in depth Torah courses required for entering the rabbinate and serving as dayanim.

"At present, students often can't find the right environment for serious in depth study without

financial worry. We will carefully select the most qualified applicants to receive high monthly financial stipends, starting from \$770 and reaching as much as 36 times "Yechi" (28), a respectable sum in Israel by any standard.

Additionally, the town of Beitar is a most pleasant place to live, making it particularly attractive for young couples. It is situated in the Judean hills, just 15 minutes south of Yerushalayim, and 15 minutes east of Beit Shemesh. Bachurim who study assiduously will stay in comfortable dormitory accommodations, with excellent meals, and receive a monthly stipend of \$200."

The study of dayanus has been strongly encouraged by the Rebbe MH"M shlita (see, for example, at length in the sicha of 10 Shvat, 5737, edited by the Rebbe). He was always very pleased when rabbinic students successfully completed their tests for dayanus.

Of course, as befits a school of learning associated with the Rebbe MH"M shlita, the kollel will also be involved in strengthening Yiddishkait and disseminating the wellsprings of Chassidus, b'ezer Hashem. There are plans for Shabbatons for IDF servicemen and for college students, for spreading Yiddishkait in settlements around Beitar, and for establishing regular study sessions in Chassidus and subjects of Moshiah

and Geula.

Another important and – as far as we are aware – unique and innovative purpose of the new kollel is to train future educators for senior yeshivos and yeshiva high schools. "We are ready to incur considerable expense, if necessary, to bring special lecturers and expert rabbanim to lecture at the institute on educational subjects, enabling those students who are interested to graduate with a certificate in education," says R. D'niel. "They will be familiar with various educational methodologies and practical approaches, giving them an array of appropriate tools for dealing with all sorts of complicated situations."

What has inspired R. D'niel to invest so much money and energy in this project? "On several occasions, the Rebbe MH"M shlita encouraged me to be involved in helping and supporting chinuch. It has long been my dream to create a suitable environment that will encourage Torah scholarship to flourish and expand even further among the Chabad community," he replies.

Even before this project, R. D'niel has been active in giving grants to Chabad students studying at "770" encouraging them to devote themselves totally to intensive Torah study. He even initiated a special "Achdus Campaign" in which students from both ends of the Chabad

spectrum study Chassidus *b'chevrusa* three times a week, for which they each receive a monthly contribution towards their expenses. Additionally, the 12 students who distinguish themselves best in their studies and diligence in keeping the yeshiva's official study schedule receive a respectable monthly stipend.

"This kollel we're now establishing is an idea I've long been considering," says R. D'niel, "and this year I finally decided to take up the challenge."

The kollel is intended primarily for students who yearn to find a place of serious rabbinic studies at a high standard, where they will hear shiurim from expert rabbanim. Later they will take the difficult tests of the Israeli Chief Rabbinate, granting them a superior level of *smicha*. The outstanding material conditions will enable them to devote themselves entirely to their studies, to ascend to ever greater heights of Torah knowledge and expertise in their chosen fields.

When we enquire about the various dayanus programs available

to Chabad students, we discover to our surprise that hardly any suitable programs exist, and it is very difficult to get accepted there, especially as the number of students is limited.

But surely, we ask, there are many kollelim outside of Chabad for dayanus?

"True," replies R. D'niel. "Nevertheless, our new kollel is distinguished in four ways. First, it is sponsored by Beis Moshiah 770, and it will be conducted in that spirit. Second, as mentioned, it will include courses for certifying educators at yeshivos *g'dolos* and yeshivos *k'tanos*. Third, activities for strengthening and spreading Yiddishkeit will be coordinated with the official study program. Fourth, the superior material conditions we are offering for outstanding students will undoubtedly provide them with the calm they need to study Torah on a higher level."

Who will head the new kollel? "We are presently considering several outstanding candidates," replies R. D'niel, "to decide who will best benefit this key position, setting the tone for

the high level of scholarship and diligence."

At first R. D'niel planned to open the kollel in Ellul, the usual start of the school year. But when he wrote to the Rebbe shlita about his plan to establish the kollel, he was privileged to receive an amazing reply (*Igros Kodesh*, vol. 13, p.108-109), based on which respected rabbanim agreed it should be established as soon as possible, which is why it is *b'ezras Hashem* opening in Sivan.

The process of establishing and consolidating the kollel has been in constant consultation with Rabbi Shneur Zalman Gafni, Rosh Yeshiva of Ohr HaT'mimim, Kfar Chabad, and with Rabbi Shaul Rosenblatt, Rabbi of the Chassidic Library Shul, Beitar Illit. "Our intention," concludes R. D'niel, "is to create a solid, high-quality group of scholars who will be privileged to enjoy excellent material conditions that are unparalleled elsewhere, enabling them to rise to the greatest heights of Torah scholarship!"

How do you register (to be placed on the waiting list) for this unique program?

Please e-mail to BMoshiach770@gmail.com or fax to [011] 972-2-580-81-28 your resume, which should include the following:

- a) Your full name and contact info (home phone, mobile phone, address, e-mail address).
- b) Your age.
- c) Yeshivos and kollelim where you have studied since yeshiva ketana until now, and which years you studied at each institution.
- d) A letter of recommendation from your place of study during the past two years.
- e) Any languages you speak well.
- f) List any talents or experience you have that may contribute to outreach, etc.



Evening view from the kollel