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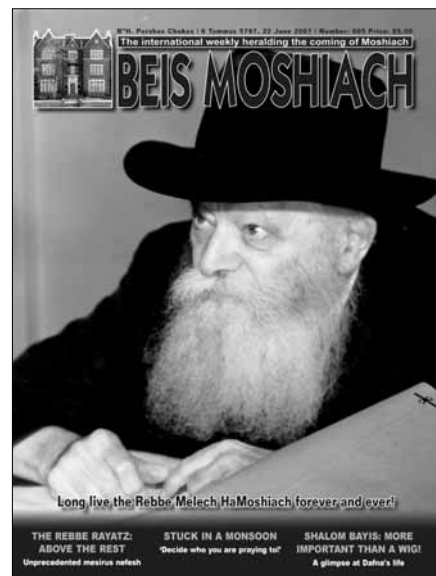
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DECIDE WHO YOU ARE PRAYING TO!

Mivtzaim | Eli Shneuri



USA

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

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:

M.M. Hendel

ENGLISH EDITOR:

Boruch Merkur;
editor@beismoshiach.org

HEBREW EDITOR:

Yaakov Chazan;
editorH@beismoshiach.org

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IMPORTANT TO CLEAR UP MISUNDERSTANDINGS ABOUT CHABAD

RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON
Lubavitch
770 EASTERN PARKWAY
BROOKLYN 13, N. Y.
HYacinth 3-9250

מנחם מענדל שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש
770 איסטערן פארקווי
ברוקלין נ. י.

By the Grace of G-d
18th Teveth, 5716
Brooklyn

Mrs. Rachel Altein
2731 Cruger Avenue
Bronx 67, N. Y.

Blessing and Greeting:

I received your letter of Rosh Chodesh Teveth. I have been waiting for this kind of letter for a long time, and I am glad to note that you are now using your ability and qualifications with which you have been endowed, to exercise a good influence in your environment, especially among the women. I trust that you are also making an effort to spread the teaching of Chassidus in particular. And since you start in this direction, I trust you will continue in accordance with a saying of our Sages, that "Sacred things should be on the ascent," and as also Chanukah teaches us to increase the lights every day.

With regard to the doubt that you express as to whether the women are prepared at this time to be organized into a Chabad women's group, if there is a possibility that such a step at this time is premature and might hinder the development of your work, it should be postponed. The main thing is to imbue them with ~~their~~ teaching, and to prepare them for greater things, and this is certainly something that can be done immediately in a suitable way. It is especially important to clear up to them many prevalent misunderstandings about the teachings and Way of Life of Chabad, which are unfortunately often misunderstood and misrepresented through ignorance.

May G-d help you to carry on your good work in contentment and peace of mind, which will help clear up many other personal problems, especially as this kind of work is bound to bring you G-d's Blessings in a generous measure.

With the Blessing to hear good news from you concerning all above,

M. Schneerson

P.S. I am gratified to read in your letter that you can at last understand the problems besetting you, though not always able to solve them. But it is well-known that the understanding of a problem is in itself already half a solution, especially where the problems are such that their solution lies in your own hands.

A DAILY DOSE OF MOSHIACH & GEULA:

6-12 TAMMUZ

Selected daily pearls of wisdom from the Rebbe MH" M on Moshiach and Geula.

Collected and arranged by Rabbi Pinchas Maman
Translated by Michoel Leib Dobry

6 TAMMUZ: THE TORAH OF PROPHECY IN THE WISDOM OF FLESH AND BLOOD

The departure from Heaven ("a new Torah will go forth from Me") to come down into the world is emphasized by the revelation of "a new Torah" through Melech HaMoshiach. For together with the fact that "he is a great prophet," he will also "possess wisdom...greater than Shlomo ("the wisest of all men")...and therefore, he will teach the entire nation."

In other words, the new Torah that will be revealed through him in a manner of prophecy will be drawn down and clothed within even mortal intellect.

(Kuntres "Torah Chadasha M'Iti Teitzei" 5751)

7 TAMMUZ: MOSHIACH WILL EXPLAIN THE INNOVATIONS OF TORAH TO THE SANHEDRIN IN THE GREAT RABBINICAL COURT IN YERUSHALAYIM

Regarding the "new Torah" that cannot be revealed through an experienced scholar who learns according to the general principles of

Torah, except through G-d—

Melech HaMoshiach (who "possesses wisdom...greater than Shlomo") will explain and teach this new Torah (according to the general principles of Torah) in "the Great Rabbinical Court in Yerushalayim," in a manner appropriate to the understanding and comprehension of the intellect of the Sanhedrin.

(Kuntres "Torah Chadasha M'Iti Teitzei" 5751)

8 TAMMUZ: THE LETTER "ALEF" DISTINGUISHES BETWEEN "GOLA" [EXILE] AND "GEULA" [REDEMPTION] [A]

At the coming of Moshiach, the "gola" (exile) will be turned into "geula" (redemption) by inserting the letter Alef into "gola."

The letter Alef has three interpretations, indicating three levels in the G-dly revelation that will be in the future.

Firstly, Alef is derived from "aluf" (chief, master). At the Future Redemption, there will be revealed how G-d is the Master of the World. That is, the power of the active within the passive will be revealed, the revelation of G-dliness within and in approximation to the world.

(Shabbos Parshas Emor 5751)

9 TAMMUZ: THE LETTER "ALEF" DISTINGUISHES BETWEEN "GOLA" (EXILE) AND "GEULA" (REDEMPTION) [B]

The second interpretation: Alef derives from "*ulpana*" (study), e.g., "I will teach you wisdom" (Iyov 33:33).

In the Future to Come, there will be the revelation of Torah, regarding which it is said (Midrash T'hillim 90:4), "Torah preceded the world two thousand years" – a revelation of G-dliness that is higher than the world, yet it has a certain value in proportion to the world, revealed specifically through the Torah that preceded the world.

(Shabbos Parshas Emor 5751)

serve to cut short the days of man *ch"v*, as is written (Yeshayahu 2:4): "And they will beat their swords into plowshares, etc." Furthermore, the concept of the opposite of life will be nullified, and as is written in Midrash (Tanchuma, end of Parshas Yisro): Years are shortened through the evil inclination, but in the Future to Come, "death will be swallowed forever, and G-d will wipe away the tears from every face."

(Shabbos Parshas VaYechi 5752)

12 TAMMUZ – BIRTHDAY AND HOLIDAY OF REDEMPTION OF THE REBBE RAYATZ: THE FINAL STAGE OF PREPARATION FOR THE TRUE AND COMPLETE REDEMPTION

It is known that as a result of the imprisonment and the redemption of my revered teacher and father-in-law, the Rebbe, on Yud-Beis – Yud-Gimmel Tammuz (5687), he arrived in the United States, in the lower half of the globe, where he established his place of residence and avoda during his last ten years in this world (until 5710).

Since all matters (and especially matters connected to the nasi) are

by Divine Providence, it is understood that the reason for his arrival in the lower half of the globe...is that it was the Divine plan that the place of his residence and his avoda (in the final years) will be in the lower half of the globe...

Furthermore, since this generation is the last generation of the Exile and the first generation of the Redemption, his redemption is the final stage of redemption, the preparation for the True and Complete Redemption.

(Shabbos Parshas Korach 5749)

In the Future to Come, the wonders of Torah will be revealed, the revelation of the inner teachings of Torah, which is wondrous and distinct unto itself – the revelation of the Essence and Being of G-d, may He be blessed.

10 TAMMUZ: THE LETTER "ALEF" DISTINGUISHES BETWEEN "GOLA" (EXILE) AND "GEULA" (REDEMPTION) [C]

The third interpretation: Alef has the same letters as "*peleh*" (wonder). In the Future to Come, the wonders of Torah will be revealed, the revelation of the inner teachings of Torah, which is wondrous and distinct unto itself – the revelation of the Essence and Being of G-d, may He be blessed.

(Shabbos Parshas Emor 5751)

11 TAMMUZ: ETERNAL LIFE IN THE FUTURE TO COME

Then (in the days of Moshiach) iron will no longer

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LISTEN TO THE STORY – EVEN A 100 TIMES!

From a farbrengen with Rabbi Leibel Groner, the Rebbe's secretary
Prepared for publication by Nosson Avrohom

Why should we tell and listen to stories about tzaddikim? How do you instill fear of Heaven in children? Why do we tell stories on Motzaei Shabbos? * Stories of the Rebbe. * Part 2 of 2

[Continued from last issue]

Stories of Chassidim, all the more so, stories about the Rebbe, are a segula for yiras Shamayim.

There was a Chassid who had to be with his family outside of New York every Pesach, and every year a relative would ask for matza for him. One year, when it was this man's turn, the Rebbe gave him matza for himself and for that other Chassid, and the Rebbe added the surprising instruction, "Surely you will try to see to it that he receives the matza tonight for the first

seder."

I stood on the side and saw that the man was surprised, but the Rebbe repeated, "Surely you will see to it that he receives the matza tonight." The man wanted to ask the Rebbe about this, but there was no time. He packed the matza and rushed to the post office, but the guard said the branch was closed.

He asked the guard to let him in anyway since it was an urgent matter. The guard said that even if he let him in, there was no one to help him, and that it would remain

on the desk until the next morning anyway. The man had no choice but to go home.

As he prepared his seder table, someone knocked at the door. To his surprise there was the man for whom he had asked for the matza. Due to certain family matters, the person had to stay in New York for Pesach.

"Now I understand what the Rebbe meant when he said you would get the matza tonight!"

The Rebbe always left over some of the afikoman. One day in the middle of the summer the Rebbe told me, "There on the bottom of the bookcase is the afikoman. Take a piece and wrap it up." The Rebbe gave me an address in Bombay, India and said I should send the matza by express mail. He said, "After you send it, call the family and tell them, since I received a letter from them that their mother is very sick and the doctors don't know how to help her, I sent the afikoman. When it comes, they should give her a bit of it and since matza is 'food of faith' and 'food of healing,' Hashem will surely send her a refua shleima."

I called the family in India and told the daughter what the Rebbe told me to say. Two weeks later she called and said that when they received the package, they gave it to their mother and she immediately improved. I encouraged her to continue doing so and a day or two later she regained consciousness and within a short time she had recovered.

Another story. A Chassid from Crown Heights called me and said he urgently needed a yechidus and it could not be postponed. I said he should come Thursday night, and he arrived on Thursday night along with his wife. They were in the Rebbe's room for fifteen minutes and then left.

A few days later he called and



said, “I will tell why it was urgent. My wife has been depressed for a few months. We tried treating her in various ways by doctors and psychiatrists and with different medications, but nothing helped. I thought she might cause herself harm, and knew I had to see the Rebbe and get his advice and bracha.

The Rebbe said that sometimes he had to use “Poilisher” methods (referring to overt miracles) to help people.

“Before we went in, we described the situation in writing. During the yechidus, the Rebbe said, ‘You see down there, there is a bottle of wine that I use for Kiddush on Shabbos. There is also a cup which I use for Kiddush. Bring me the bottle and the cup.’

“I did so and placed them on the desk. The Rebbe told me to pour wine into the cup, and I filled up the cup. Then the Rebbe told my wife, ‘Take the cup and say the bracha out loud so I can answer amen, and then drink it.’ She said the bracha, the Rebbe answered amen, and she drank a few drops.

“The Rebbe told her, ‘No, you have to drink the entire cup. Not all at once; I have time. Drink a little now and then some more in a few minutes.’ It took about fifteen minutes until she finished the entire cup and then the Rebbe blessed us

and said, ‘Be well, and good news.’

“Why am I calling now? Tell the Rebbe that the night we returned from the yechidus, we saw an immediate improvement, but I didn’t know whether it was temporary, having been in the Rebbe’s presence, or whether it would be ongoing. After a few days, I see that the Rebbe eliminated the entire situation as though it never happened.”

The Rebbe said that sometimes he had to use “Poilisher” methods (referring to overt miracles). When Dr. Seligson went to the Rebbe Erev Pesach to get matza, the Rebbe gave him a whole one and then added some broken pieces and said he should grind it up and use it as medication. It helped for a refua shleima.

We saw that the Rebbe used all possible ways to help people, and

some ways were seemingly not the ways of Chabad, but in order to help someone the Rebbe utilized these ways too.

There was a couple that was not Lubavitch who had a 15-year-old son. Instead of sending him to their own type of school, they sent him to 770. When he was of marriageable age, shidduchim suggestions were proposed. He asked the Rebbe and the other side did as well, and they received the Rebbe's consent to meet. At that point, the bachur told his parents that he had the Rebbe's consent to meet the girl.

His parents wanted to check the girl out and after a few days his mother said that the girl was not suitable. The bachur insisted, "But I got the Rebbe's *haskama*!"

The parents and bachur argued about this and in the meantime, the couple met and decided they wanted to marry. They wrote to the Rebbe asking for his consent and *bracha*. The bachur added that his parents opposed the shidduch but they wanted to marry and they were asking the Rebbe what to do.

The Rebbe said the shidduch should be in a good and auspicious time. I explained that the Rama (commentary on the *Shulchan Aruch*) paskens that when it comes to where to learn and who to marry, you do not need your parents' consent.

The bachur called his parents and said, "We have the Rebbe's consent and we are getting married." The parents were furious and said they would not attend the wedding, nor would any of his siblings or any of the extended family and he would get no financial help from them.

A week later, the mother came to 770 and entered the *zal* (study hall). She went right over to her son and smacked him and said, "You are not marrying her!"

Out of respect for his mother, the bachur did not react, but when she left the *zal*, his friends went over to her and said, "We don't understand. You sent your son to Lubavitch and you know that someone who comes to Lubavitch becomes a Chassid. By us, the main thing is the Rebbe. If you have reasons why the girl is not suitable, tell the Rebbe. He will hear what you have to say and maybe agree..."

I know about this since they came in right afterwards and told the whole story. This was a Tuesday and I told the bachur's father to

come Thursday night and I would try to get them in to see the Rebbe. That's what happened, and they went in to see the Rebbe while some bachurim waited outside, curious about how it would work out.

After fifteen minutes, the parents came out and the mother said she no longer opposed the shidduch. One of the bachurim dared to ask her, "We don't understand. The other day you slapped your son in public and now, after fifteen minutes, you changed your mind?!"

The mother said, "When we

THE REBBE'S CUSTOMS ON SHABBOS

Rabbi Groner shared some of the Rebbe's customs on Shabbos regarding eating. In the writings of the Arizal it says that we draw down more holiness during the Shabbos meals than during the *t'fillos*. To some degree, we saw this by the Rebbe during the Shabbos meals. During the week, the Rebbe did not wash and did not eat meat or chicken. If the Rebbe ate, it was fish. Every day, during the day, the Rebbe hardly ate. After *Shacharis* we brought the Rebbe a cup of tea with cake and did the same after *Mincha*. The only time the Rebbe ate a meal was in the evening.

After 5748, when the Rebbe no longer went home but remained in his room, I would bring in supper. After the Rebbe finished eating he would ring a bell and I would come in and clear everything away. One night, the Rebbe rang and I went in and saw that the Rebbe had hardly eaten any of the fish.

I thought that the Rebbe hadn't finished eating and maybe he wanted something else, so I waited to make sure he didn't want to eat more and was busy with something else. The Rebbe asked me why I was waiting and I said maybe the Rebbe wanted to finish something. The Rebbe said he had finished eating. I dared to comment, "The Rebbe ate only a little," and the Rebbe said, "Today I ate a lot."

That's the way it was every day, but Friday night the Rebbe washed and ate more than a *k'zayis* of *challa*. He ate all the fish and soup, meat, and fruit compote. Shabbos afternoon, when there was a *farbrengen* after *Mincha*, the Rebbe did not eat the Shabbos meal. During the summer, when the *farbrengen* finished at five and sunset is at eight, sometimes the Rebbe did not go and eat.

When I saw this happening a few times, I called the Rebbetzin and asked whether we should prepare a meal in 770 and if the Rebbe would stay in 770 we could serve the meal there. The Rebbetzin agreed. The next Shabbos, when I saw that the Rebbe was staying in 770, I brought him the meal we had prepared. The Rebbe asked, "What's this?" and I said that it was the Rebbe's meal. The Rebbe instructed me to leave it for him and he ate, though very little, a *k'zayis* of *challa*, etc.

went in and explained why the shidduch was not suitable for our son, the Rebbe said, ‘When a bachur and girl ask me about a shidduch, before I answer them I look in all the sifrei shidduchim up Above. When I see that there is no obstacle, I give my consent.

“When they wrote me asking whether they should meet, I checked all the s’farim and saw no obstacle to their meeting. When I received another letter in which your son said you opposed the match, I thought perhaps I had missed some book where it was written that it wasn’t a good match. I went over all the s’farim again and didn’t see any opposition, so I gave my bracha.’

“If a tzaddik can go up Above and see all the sifrei shidduchim and tell us that he checked them and there is no Heavenly opposition, who are we to oppose it?”

As I said earlier, with the Rebbe it’s all done modestly and the Rebbe was very particular about this. When the Rebbe told the couple that he goes up and checks the sifrei shidduchim, this is highly unusual for him. The Rebbe revealed a bit of his kocho and this was in order to do a favor to the family so there wouldn’t be a falling out.

In 5711 or 5712, the Rebbe appointed Rabbi Shmuel Zalmanov and Rabbi Zalman Gurary to what was then called the Vaad Chabad. Every Sunday they were given instructions about certain matters and they also reported about what had happened the week prior.

One Sunday I saw that R’ Zalman Gurary left the Rebbe’s room shaken up. I asked him what happened and he said, “Give me a chair before I collapse.” R’ Shmuel explained, “When we went in, before we began speaking, the Rebbe said, ‘Today I was at the Ohel and my father-in-law told me that since R’ Shmuel Zalmanov and R’ Zalman Gurary would be coming and I have a message to convey to them, I ask you to be the shliach to give them the message so that they know...’”

This was the first time that the Rebbe revealed that he conversed with his father-in-law after the latter’s passing. R’ Zalman asked the Rebbe, “And what else did the Rebbe say?” to which the Rebbe answered, what you need to know, I tell you; what you don’t need to know, I don’t have to tell you.

My wife’s uncle, R’ Moshe Leib Rodstein, was the secretary of the Rebbe Rayatz. After the Rebbe Rayatz’s passing on Yud Shvat, the Rebbe asked him whether he would be staying on as secretary, and he agreed to do so. Many times after the Rebbe returned from the Ohel, he would ask me to enter his room because he wanted to dictate letters. We understood that the Rebbe had received answers at the Ohel and he needed to write them.

One night the Rebbe asked R’ Moshe Leib to come



in. He went in with all his papers and pens, and after only ten minutes he came out. He told us, “I was with the Rebbe a week ago to write letters and when the Rebbe finished dictating, I stood near the door and did not leave. The Rebbe said, ‘Moshe Leib, you cannot go home because your wife sent in a letter and she told you not to come home without an answer. If you were to go home and open the door, she would be standing there and you would tell her that I still had not gone to my father-in-law and I cannot answer. But tonight – smiled the Rebbe – you can go home without any problem, since I was at the Ohel today. I conveyed your wife’s question and the answer is negative, she should not do what she asked about doing.’”

These were rare occasions in which the Rebbe revealed things like these. Although he seldom referred to it, it certainly took place more often, as the Rebbe Rayatz said, “Every time I want to see my father (the Rebbe Rashab), I see him, and every time he wants to see me, he sees me.”

HISKASHRUS: FEEL IT AND ACT UPON IT!

By Rabbi Menachem Mendel Gluckowsky, Rav, Chabad Community,
Rehovot; Deputy Secretary, Chabad Rabbinical Court In Eretz HaKodesh
Translated By Michael Leib Dobry

*We must use our head and feel with our heart in order to know what the Rebbe wants, and this obligates us all the more. The Rebbe doesn't lead us by the hand in every detail. He leaves us room to set the guidelines. We have to know how to move in the direction of the Rebbe's position in order to know what the Rebbe wants. This is no simple avoda. It demands that we learn everything the Rebbe has said and contemplate upon it again and again. **
Excerpts from a chassidic farbrengen.

It was well into the night at the farbrengen of Motzaei Shavuot 5724. Towards the end of the farbrengen, the Rebbe began to speak about Russian Jewry, then still behind the Iron Curtain, and he opened with blessings uttered with great emotion. When the Rebbe concluded, he said "L'chaim." Those in attendance were rather sleepy, as they were after an intense two-day holiday, with all its meaning and relevance.

Suddenly, the Rebbe appeared white, trembling, as he moved his chair from the table. He grabbed several napkins from the table and began to speak with tremendous heartfelt pain: "What are the farbrengens and all these sichos worth if when someone blesses the Jews of Russia, people don't respond appropriately? When we give a bracha to Russian Jewry, this is an auspicious time for the salvation of G-d in the wink of an eye. If they would say "L'chaim" as they should, millions of Jews would be freed from Russia." Thus, chassidim understood that the moment of "an auspicious time" had been wasted.

The participants at the farbrengen were deeply shocked, both by the Rebbe's manner and his appearance. I heard from people who were there that this was a frightening sight. There were some who started singing a niggun. It took about a minute, a minute and a half, until people began to see the Rebbe coming back to himself...

A few days later, Rabbi Shmuel Chefer traveled to France, as per the Rebbe's explicit instructions. After he had completed his affairs there, he had about eighteen hours until his return flight back to Eretz Yisroel. He asked if he could visit the Chabad yeshiva in Brunoy, where he wanted to meet the outstanding mashpia, R. Nissan Nemenov. He traveled from Yerres to Brunoy, and went in to speak

with R. Nissan.

R. Nissan asked what had happened with the Rebbe on Shavuos. (This was not as things are today, when everyone is constantly connected through the latest technologies. I remember that when I learned in Brunoy, there was one telephone in the yeshiva that worked only with great difficulty. We would be in touch with our parents via written correspondence or we would send tape recordings of ourselves speaking.)

Rabbi Chefer began to tell R. Nissan what occurred at the farbrengen and particularly what happened at its conclusion. He added by telling how people saw that the lost opportunity had affected the Rebbe, to the point of harming his health. Then, he asked R. Nissan: Why did the Rebbe take so much to heart the fact that those in attendance didn't feel the auspiciousness of the moment? We are, after all, merely chassidim – and how are chassidim to know when there's "an auspicious time" Above?

R. Nissan listened, pondered for a moment, and said: "If we were properly connected to the Rebbe, we should be feeling something." To **know** that this is an auspicious time Above – no. But if you're connected enough, then you definitely can **feel** something."

We can prove this point in the physical realm as well, when parents are at one end of the earth and something happens to their children vast distances away, they nevertheless feel that something has happened. The essential connection brings out this feeling, even without any clear information.

This is what hurt the Rebbe at this farbrengen: "Where are the people who are connected to me, those who are devoted to me? Why don't they feel something of the very essence of this matter?"

This obligates all of us. When I heard this story from R. Shmuel Chefer, I said to myself that this obligates us

to develop this type of feeling where we have to feel such matters in the way the Rebbe wants.

We recently learned in Parshas Shlach how G-d said to Moshe, "Send for yourself men," and Rashi explains, "For yourself – **according to your own understanding.**" **The Rebbe asks: Why does Torah leave this matter "according to your own understanding"? It doesn't seem that this is a praiseworthy moment for Moshe Rabbeinu that he sent the spies on his own volition,**

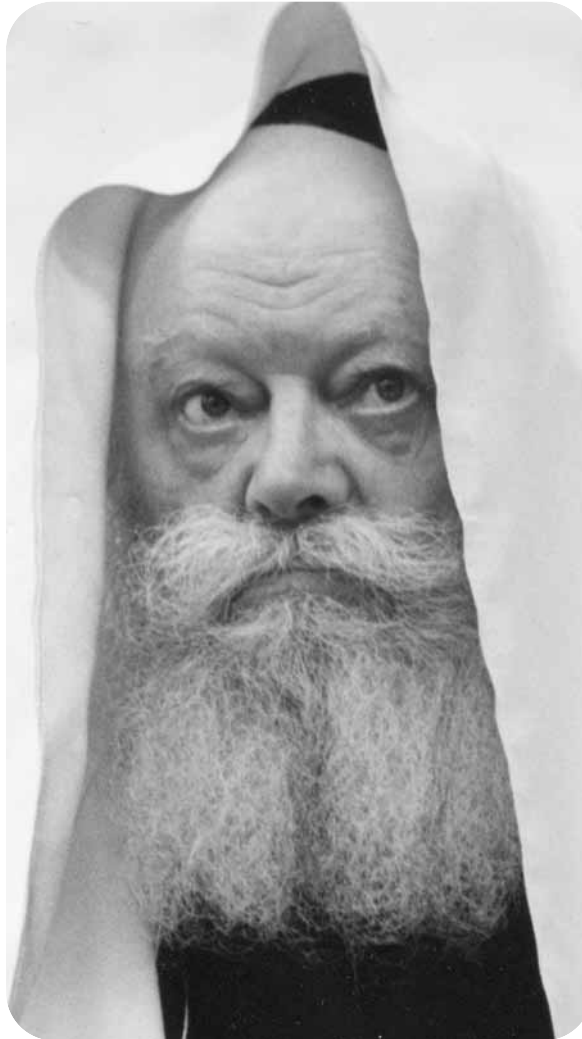
particularly in light of the damage caused as a result! The Rebbe explains that the instruction of "Send for yourself – according to your own understanding" has relevance to the overall subject of shlichus. When the m'shaleiach sends a shliach, he wants him to do things "according to your own understanding."

The Rebbe leaves us room to set the guidelines – the broad-mindedness to understand for ourselves what we are supposed to do. The Rebbe provides us with the general direction for the shlichus and its objective, but what to do on a daily basis in every detail – he leaves that to the shliach to do "according to [his] own understanding."

The Rebbe discusses in one of his sichos about one of the shluchim sent by the Rebbe Rayatz. The shliach went into the Rebbe Rayatz and began to "nudge" him with a variety of questions about his intended shlichus. He asked him questions on matters down to the very last detail: what to do, how to act,

what to say, what not to say. Yet, while the Rebbe Rayatz responded to all his questions, he said afterwards that this shliach acted like a spoiled only child who had to be led by the hand on everything and anything.

In contrast, we find regarding Avrohom Avinu. G-d told Avrohom Avinu to take Yitzchak to be sacrificed, "Take your son, your only son." He didn't



tell him all the details – whether to take a donkey or a horse, when exactly to go out on his shlichus... These matters He left to Avrohom Avinu to do according to his own understanding. “And Avrohom rose early in the morning” – he decided this on his own, as with all the other details.

This is the whole point of a shliach: to receive a general mission with a general objective, but the details to the mission – how, when, and what – must be done “according to your own understanding.” The shliach has to use his head and explore all possibilities on how to fulfill the shlichus. This is what the Rebbe wants: you are given a shlichus, a task, and you must use your knowledge, your common sense, and your abilities in order to carry out the shlichus in the best possible way.

As a result, this obligates us even more, for when we go to fulfill the mission that the Rebbe gave us, as R. Nissan said, this depends largely upon how much we are connected to the Rebbe, because we must use our knowledge to move things in the direction he wants, fulfilling the will of the Rebbe.

This is the meaning of the bracha that chassidim always wish one another at a chassidic farbrengen – “may we merit to go in the direction the Rebbe wants from us.” Afterwards, however, they add not only to take proper aim, but to carry out what the Rebbe wants from us.

There are some “experts” who know the inner meaning to the Rebbe’s intentions. They can tell you from today until tomorrow everything that the Rebbe meant. But when it comes to putting this into practice – *s’iz shvache maases* (things don’t go so smoothly)... There are others who

deal with the carrying out part, but they have no time to think about the “supernal meaning”; they simply want to do what the Rebbe wants them to do.

In 5738-9, after the heart attack, the Rebbe would farbreng on Motzaei Shabbos through a microphone. The sicha was carried via live broadcast to Eretz HaKodesh at around two or three o’clock in the morning. Once I was in Nachlat Har Chabad when a sicha broadcast took place. We went out from the farbrengen at around half past seven in the morning. Just as we were leaving, a “chassidishe chevraman” met his friend who was a “melamed” on his way to teach.

“Nu,” asked the melamed, “what practical instructions were issued at the farbrengen that I can tell my students?”

The “chevraman” opened his eyes wide. “What? You weren’t at the broadcast? Are you normal?” The melamed explained with the utmost sincerity that if he would have gone to the broadcast, he would have to wake up at three o’clock in the morning and go straight from there to class. However, there is a clear halacha in *Shulchan Aruch* that a melamed must sleep well in order not to get angry at his students, and thus he would be doing the work of G-d deceitfully. The “chevraman” negated his words with a scoffing “Eeeeh.” Only after much pleading and urging did he agree to tell the melamed the practical instructions from the farbrengen.

I stood there and listened on the side, as I thought to myself: Here’s someone who is constantly involved with “inner meaning” facing someone involved with practical execution...

The truth of the matter is, however, that we need both to

carry out and to channel ourselves towards what the Rebbe wants. We must use our head and feel with our heart in order to know what the Rebbe wants, and this obligates us all the more. The Rebbe doesn’t lead us by the hand in every detail. He leaves us room to set the guidelines. We have to know how to move in the direction of the Rebbe’s position in order to know what the Rebbe wants. This is no simple avoda. It demands that we learn everything the Rebbe has said and contemplate upon it again and again.

One of the most important things to the Rebbe is Ahavas Yisroel, both in the general and more personal sense. When we go through the Rebbe’s correspondence, we can see the Ahavas Yisroel there – how the Rebbe writes to every Jew, how he keeps in touch with them, the honor and respect the Rebbe conveys to every Jew. He writes how he couldn’t respond earlier due to his many obligations...and that it’s been a long time since I last heard from you...I was happy to hear from you... When we read what is written there, we see the care and attention that the Rebbe gives people. It’s simply unbelievable.

In our community in Rechovot, there’s a family where the mother told me the following story: She heard about the Rebbe somewhere, and she decided that he was an elderly Jew who was bored in life, and she would write to him so he wouldn’t be bored – something like a “pen pal.” She had no idea who the Rebbe was, but she understood that he was a wise man, and she could always ask him all types of questions. In fact, she would write a letter and she would receive a reply. She then answered him, and the Rebbe would answer back – and so it went. She received an answer to every letter she wrote.

One day, she wrote to the Rebbe that she wanted to start fulfilling

mitzvos, and the Rebbe replied that she should start by giving *maaser* from all money that she earned. This young woman was in regular contact with a young American man. They met when he was in Eretz Yisroel with a youth group, and they continued to be in touch with one another. Now, they wanted to get married, and she was planning to travel overseas to meet up with him. However, since she customarily never took a step in life without consulting the Rebbe, she proceeded to write him a letter asking for his advice, noting in her letter that this young Jewish man was not Torah observant. In his reply to this letter, the Rebbe wrote that while a table

on the other side of town, far from the Chabad institutions. Some time later, they were blessed with another child, a son, but they soon learned that *r"l* the boy was afflicted with a serious illness. This was already after Gimmel Tammuz, and the mother didn't know about the possibility of writing to the Rebbe today. She began to look for a solution to her son's ailment, going from rabbi to rabbi, mekubal to mekubal, but to no avail. Then, one of her friends brought to her attention the fact that it is still possible to write to the Rebbe today.

Despite her doubts, her friend urged her and she eventually decided to give it a try. She wrote a

her like a bolt of lightning: This is the fourth leg! Educating our children! The Rebbe didn't say anything about it to me then, because it wasn't relevant, but he promised that "the time to reveal that will come."

She went immediately to the offices of our educational institutions in Rechovot and registered her children, and by the next day, they were already learning in the Chabad Talmud Torah. Baruch Hashem, the illness completely disappeared, and today, the child is a student in the Chabad institutions in Rechovot.

This story comes to teach us that the type of personal attention that the Rebbe gave to this family, we must give to every Jew we meet.

When I was a young boy, I witnessed another such amazing story:

About forty five years ago, my father organized a children's minyan in the shul where he davened. He would gather together all the youngsters in the neighborhood, daven select portions of the t'filla with them, tell them about the weekly Torah portion, and afterwards, he would arrange a Kiddush with refreshments and a story.

Among the participants in the children's minyan were two brothers who lived with their mother – Chaim and Shmuel Kaplan. They were not from a religious home, though they came to the minyan. The minyan had a very strong influence on them, and they eventually moved on to study at the Chabad yeshiva in Boston. The Pesach holiday was approaching, but it was not relevant for them to go home, since their mother's home was not strictly kosher, and the yeshiva arranged holiday hospitality for them in Crown Heights. They wrote a letter to the Rebbe that included all the facts – where they will be for Pesach

R. Nissan listened, pondered for a moment, and said: "If we were properly connected to the Rebbe, we should be feeling something." To know that this is an auspicious time Above – no. But if you're connected enough, then you definitely can feel something."

generally stands on four legs, it can also stand on three legs. Therefore, there are three absolutely essential legs/mitzvos that she must set as pre-conditions with this young man. If he accepts upon himself to observe the mitzvos of Shabbos, kashrus, and family purity, then they can get married. The Rebbe concluded that in connection with the fourth leg – the time to reveal that will come.

The couple married, and eventually came to live in Eretz Yisroel, settling in Rechovot. By that time, they already had two children, and the mother registered them in a religious kindergarten in Rechovot

letter to the Rebbe, placed it in a volume of *Igros Kodesh*, and received an answer on the subject of education. This merely "proved" to her that there was no reality to this approach, and she continued to look for brachos in every conceivable place. When her friend successfully convinced her to try again and write a letter to the Rebbe via *Igros Kodesh*, the mother again received an answer dealing with education. The Rebbe's letter was addressed to an Anash member, in which the Rebbe asks why he doesn't send his children to Chabad institutions, for Anash children should learn in Chabad institutions. Suddenly, it hit

and why they will not be home... The Rebbe replied that they must be together with their mother for Pesach, and they should speak with Rabbi Shochat and my father about kashering the house in order that they can eat with their mother. Thus, the house was kashered for Pesach in accordance with the strictest standards.

My grandfather, of blessed memory, was still alive at the time, living in Boro Park, and we went to him for Pesach. On Erev Pesach, we stood in line to receive matzos from the Rebbe, who would give small pieces of matza to each person. Hundreds of people were standing in line. When our turn came, my father also requested matza for the Kaplan brothers. It was accepted practice to request matza for others, and then run quickly to the post office to send it off. Usually, the matza arrived in time for use on the night of the second seider.

The Rebbe looked at my father and asked, "Are they with their mother for the holiday?" My father replied in the affirmative, adding, "They will be at the home of R. Mendel Aronov and his family on the first night, and at R. Binyomin Rubinoff's on the second night. They will be home for the rest of the holiday."

"With their mother?" the Rebbe asked again.

"Yes," my father said. "The mother will go with them for each seider."

The Rebbe turned around and took a **whole matza** out of the carton and gave it to my father. Everyone is receiving tiny pieces, and they get a whole matza!

Look what's happening here. Hundreds of people are standing in line, someone merely mentions the Kaplan brothers to the Rebbe, and the Rebbe twice asks, "With their mother?" and gives a whole matza to show his affection and approval

of the fact that they are together with their mother for the seider nights and the entire holiday.

Why am I relating this story? To show the personal treatment the Rebbe gives to each person, how he cares about every Jew, making certain that none are left behind – not necessarily in the spiritual realm alone, but in the material sense as well – and to remember each one of them and give them his utmost attention. We have to learn from this how we must give personal treatment to each person and to take a genuine interest in his life out of a sense of true concern and caring.

When the Rebbe came out with the "Ahavas Yisroel" Campaign, the chassidic elders sat at a farbrengen upstairs in the small beis midrash of "770," and an argument ensued over the meaning behind this campaign. What is the Rebbe's innovation in this campaign? Aren't all the mitzva campaigns an expression of Ahavas Yisroel? Then I heard three opinions from the mashpiim.

1. All the mitzva campaigns represent Ahavas Yisroel towards fellow Jews, but we also have to think about one another amongst ourselves – in our own ranks.

2. When the Rebbe speaks about Ahavas Yisroel, he is referring to involvement with all mitzvos in *Shulchan Aruch* within the realm of "Love your neighbor as yourself," e.g., visiting the sick, comforting the

bereaved, etc. The Rebbe means that we should be involved in all of them.

3. It is possible for you to go out on "mitzvaim," yet turn it into something technical and dry. You help another Jew put on t'fillin, check his mezuzos, however, you are lacking the soul of the matter – the love towards your fellow Jew. How do we know if it's merely something technical or not? If you don't put on the t'fillin and that's it, rather you take an interest, maintain contact with him, make an effort for him, think about him in every detail, help him in his material needs – then you know that putting on t'fillin is not merely a technical matter.

As we have just mentioned, one of the explanations is that the proper conduct and the Ahavas Yisroel must also exist amongst ourselves – on a personal level.

In our community in Rechovot, I customarily say a drasha on Shabbos just before the Torah reading. Before the drasha, I say "Mazel tov" and bless all those families in the community who had a simcha that week, e.g., the birth of a child, a bar mitzva, a wedding, etc.

Sometimes I say the name of the family, particularly if it's a young couple that recently came to live in the community but is still unknown to most. Practically speaking, they usually don't come to shul on Shabbos, instead traveling to their parents or in-laws. During the week,

"I immediately went into yechidus and began to give over from memory the names of each Anash member and his family. Until I came to the name of one of my friends who had seven children, but I mentioned the names of only six of them..."



Rabbi Menachem Mendel Gluckowsky

they're learning in kollel, and as a result, no one knows they even exist in the community. When I announce the "Mazel tovs" in such cases, most of the community doesn't react, because they don't know who I'm talking about. I then add that if anyone wants to know who the family is, they can come to me after davening and I'll point them out... It turns out that there are instances where a young man can live in our community for three years, daven with us in shul every weekday, yet no one bothered to find out who he is.

This happens in our community and most everywhere else. It's possible sometimes to go around the community and not know someone. I'm occupied with my personal matters, he's occupied with his, and neither even knows the other's name. Similarly, we find that yeshiva students can go around the yeshiva for months on end, even years, and not know the name of a fellow student at his class level, as if they're total strangers.

I heard this matter illustrated in a

story from R. Shmuel Chefer about his father-in-law, Rabbi Chaim Yosef Rosenblum. When his father-in-law would walk back from shul to his home in Tel Aviv each Friday night and meet a young child, he would ask him, "What's your name? What's your mother's and father's name?" R. Shmuel Chefer, who was accompanying his father-in-law, asked him with great surprise, "Why do you take such an interest in every child you meet? Why do you ask him what his parents' names are?" His father-in-law responded with a story that happened to him:

"When the Rebbe Rayatz left Russia and traveled to Riga, Latvia, I was still in Russia. Over a long period of time, I also waited to receive my exit visa, until I eventually was privileged to leave. Before departing, Anash members asked me to mention them and their family members to the Rebbe, however, writing their names on a piece of paper could prove extremely dangerous. G-d forbid, if the border control would catch me with a list of names, they could place all the

Chabad chassidim on the list under arrest. What did I do? I sat and memorized by heart the names of all my friends, their wives, and their children.

"After I succeeded in leaving the country and came to the Rebbe Rayatz, I immediately went into yechidus and began to give over from memory the names of each Anash member and his family. So it went with all of them, until I came to the name of one of my friends who had seven children, but I mentioned the names of only six of them – he had a four-month-old son whose name I simply couldn't remember. I stood before the Rebbe, and I tried in every way possible to recall the child's name. Finally, with no alternative, I blurted, "S'geit nisht!" (It's not coming!)

The Rebbe Rayatz responded with a heavy sigh. "*Ay-yi-yi. Vi kumt es az men zohl fargesen dem chaver's kind's nahmen?*" (How can you possibly forget the name of your friend's child?)

"Ever since I heard the Rebbe Rayatz's *krechitz* (groan)," Rabbi Rosenblum continued to tell his son-in-law, Rabbi Chefer, "I make certain to know what a child's name is and what his parents' names are."

We see evidence of this on "*mivtzaim*," when we meet a Jew after a few months and call him by name, this genuinely moves and impresses him. Every Jew has to be considered literally as your own private treasure to be adored.

Thus, when we come together, we must show a genuine interest in one another. This represents the personal treatment demanded from us. We must relate to our fellow chassidim with love and brotherhood, as the Rebbe's only children, and then we will properly find the way to carry out what the Rebbe wants from us.

L'chaim! L'chaim!

SHALOM BAYIS: MORE IMPORTANT THAN A WIG!

By Sarit Disraeli

She came from a kibbutz and became frum, but her husband wasn't interested in living a religious life. She wisely and sensitively navigated this tricky period of their lives with peace, love, and happiness. Today she helps other people in the same situation.

When my mother told me the age of Dafna, her friend from the south, I couldn't believe it. She certainly doesn't like she's in her 60's. And she's young not only in her looks but in spirit!

Dafna is willing to share her complicated and unique life with our readers, hoping it will inspire them.

KIBBUTZ DAYS

I grew up on an anti-religious kibbutz in the south of the country. My parents were from Poland and they came from religious families, but like many others, they cast aside their observance when they came to Eretz Yisroel. They wanted to realize the dream of "a free nation in our land."

The education of children on kibbutzim in those days smacked of communism. We kids grew up together in a children's house and we saw our parents only three hours a day, from four o'clock in the afternoon to seven.

Actually, during those three hours I hardly saw them because visiting hours is when the kibbutz assigned them various jobs. So I grew up very alone, and although my father and mother lived two meters away from the children's house, I only knew about the concept of parents from children's songs. I forgot to mention that I was also an only child!

I clearly remember myself and my friends at age 3, sleeping on our own in a building connected to the fence of the kibbutz and the orchards. The shrieks of the jackals made us shiver in our beds in fright. There wasn't a single night when one of us did not wake up, and aside from crying together, there was no adult to comfort us.

In particular, I remember the ganenet/caretaker, whose maltreatment of the children was well-known. Whenever I told my mother about her she agreed with me, but she said they could not leave the kibbutz, and "when you get married, you will do what you like."

The years passed and I felt lonely and bitter. I always felt my life was not what it should be. I hated the teachers and their educational methods. Aside from crying though, I was powerless to do anything. I grew up into an unbelievably sensitive and vulnerable person.

As an adult I enjoyed doing the opposite of what everybody else was doing. I argued endlessly with everyone about everything. At my wedding to a moshavnik whom I met while in the army, I wore a

black dress. Everybody wore white, so that was an excellent reason for me to wear something different.

Having no choice, I built my nest in the kibbutz I hated so much. The education courses I took, as well as my husband's studying, were possible only within the kibbutz framework. So despite my dream to leave the kibbutz, and although I had given birth to a delightful baby, I remained deep in the nightmare called the kibbutz.

As soon as I returned from the hospital after giving birth, I was supposed to place my newborn in the infants house. Just imagine that. You come home, you are both healthy, *baruch Hashem*, but because someone else is not exactly healthy, you have to leave your infant in the care of strangers. Of course, his caretaker knows better than me what is best for my baby and makes decisions without asking me, the baby's mother...

Until we left the kibbutz, the same caretaker remained in her position.

Finally the day arrived and we packed and left for a *yishuv*, for a house of our own. I was thrilled about the new situation and decided I would live as I pleased without anyone telling me what to do. However, my joy was short-lived.

Within a short time I was faced with the reality of life. I didn't know how to do anything in my home. My mother couldn't teach me anything on the kibbutz. I didn't know how to cook, how to raise children. Cutting a salad and changing a diaper seemed like tasks I would never master. I had had no role models.

I had decided not to work so I could be with my baby and I fell into a depression. I spent weeks in bed. I couldn't get up and I felt this wasn't what life was about. I didn't stop feeling sorry for myself.

As you would expect, my *shalom bayis* was destroyed. I constantly yelled at my son and aside from crying, I didn't do anything to improve the unfortunate situation I was in.

At a certain point, while I was still finding myself,

I decided to abandon conventional medicine, which had disappointed me, and to study alternative medicine. Shortly after that I became a vegetarian, which is what helped my body heal, but what about my soul?

A PATH OF LIGHT

One day in 5743 (1983), at one of the courses I was taking, I met a religious woman. She was the first religious woman I got to know. At the kibbutz, they constantly explained how religious people were fools and they were involved in strange, obsolete practices from the Middle Ages. "We are living in modern Israel," they always said. "Judaism is for the exile, for the past."

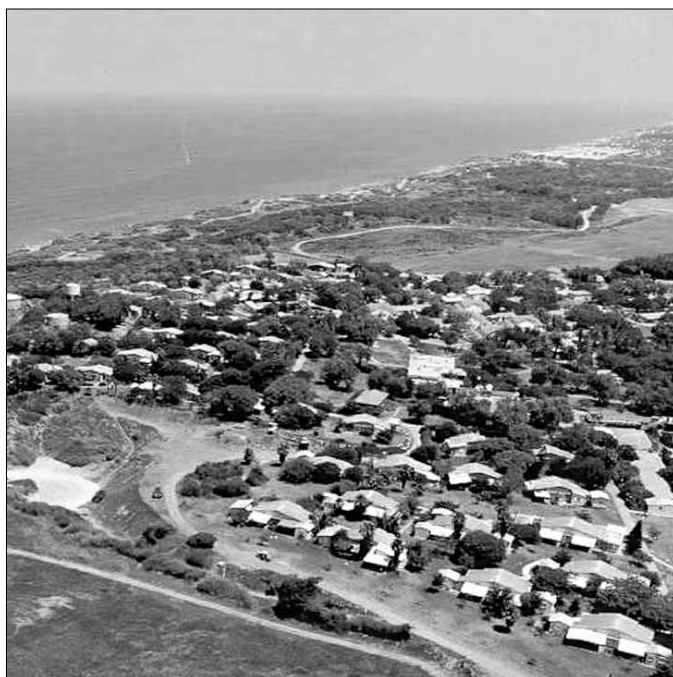
I was sure we were divided into the religious and the irreligious and we had nothing in common. To my surprise, the woman began telling me about the great wisdom and beauty of Judaism. Of course, I didn't believe her. She brought me a book on *kabbala* and on the first page I saw the *Seder Hishtalshelus* and the *S'firos*. I found it fascinating.

By Divine Providence, just at that time a *shiur* in *Chassidus* was started at the *yishuv* where I lived. My traditional neighbor urged me to attend.

Like a strutting peacock with head held high, full of "knowledge from the kibbutz," and with a full measure of snobbery, I did her a favor and went. I was certain that nobody had anything to offer me, definitely not *dossim* (a derogatory term for religious Jews).

The rabbi taught us a *sicha* of the Rebbe, and he explained it nicely. I listened and was amazed. The language he spoke was *Ivrit*, but I didn't understand what he said. One minute – what's happening here? I felt the sweet sensation of a challenge that seemed beyond me. I, who was so educated in so many disciplines, did not understand what he was saying?!

At the end of the class my neighbor asked me how I liked it. I arrogantly told her I didn't think I



would go again, but the following week I felt I had to go.

I felt that I had to give this amazing path a chance, just as I had examined so many other approaches. A deep voice whispered to me that my salvation would come from this.

* * *

Dafna paused and said to me, “Sarit, you don’t know how happy I am that Chabad is what I first encountered. I spent time looking into other religious groups and I heard lectures and listened to tapes, but I always felt they just weren’t it...”

* * *

Two weeks later, after I had attended my first two shiurim, I made the firm decision to bring this into my home. I felt I had to transform my home into a Chabad home, the sooner the better! I quickly changed my wardrobe.

I thanked Hashem for finally showing me the way, after nearly fifty years of suffering and bitterness. I happily shared my new studies with my dear husband. But he not only did not join me in my happiness, but he angrily declared his opposition to it all. I cried and said that ever since I could remember, my life was tragic and I pleaded with him not to prevent me from following the path I believed would lead me to happiness.

After exhausting discussions, my husband gave his blessing to my new path, on condition that 1) I would not get him involved in it, 2) I would not dare to think about covering my hair.

What can I tell you... I could understand the first condition, but the second? Could I be a Lubavitcher without covering my hair?

Soon after, I went to a rav to ask for advice. To my great surprise the rav said, “Shalom bayis is more important than a wig!” He instructed me to progress slowly and not to “shatter the vessels.”

I listened to the rav and decided to take it slowly, in stages, until I was able, with Hashem’s help, to turn things around. I started with attending the shiurim regularly. My husband said I could cover my hair at the shiurim and when I visited my Chabad friends. That was all fine, but he refused to see me that way himself.

At this time I began teaching and I covered my hair at work. So it turned out that most of the day I looked religious, but when I went home, I had to take it off. This went on for five years, with me covering my hair and uncovering my hair, covering and uncovering. It was very difficult.

As you would expect, my shalom bayis was destroyed. I constantly yelled at my son and aside from crying, I didn’t do anything to improve the un-fortunate situation I was in.

DON’T YOU WANT TO SEE THE REBBE?

A few years after I became a baalat t’shuva, my husband surprised me by asking, “Don’t you want to see your Rebbe?”

I was momentarily stunned. When I recovered, I said, “Of course, I’d love to,” but I wanted to go with him. He smiled and said it would take years before his job would allow him to take off.

Incredibly, a few days later, my husband said he had to travel on business to New York. I could see this as nothing but Divine Providence. And that’s how, with him taking the initiative, we went to the Rebbe!

A year went by and he asked me whether I missed the Rebbe. That’s how we ended up going to the Rebbe every year. When my son became bar mitzva, my husband was the one who came up with the idea of taking him to the Rebbe!

Where did you send your children to school?

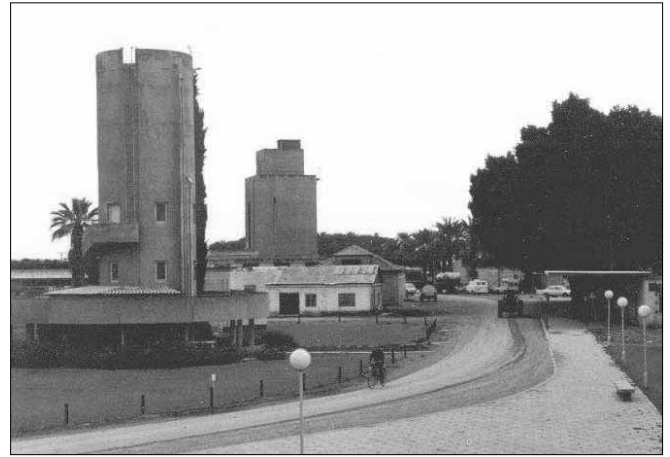
When I became religious, my youngest son was six. My other children were no longer of school age. My attempts to put him in a Chabad school failed (see box), but there was one thing I would not forego. Every day I sat with him and taught him about the holidays, halachos, and the parsha. I wanted him to be familiar with the traditional Jewish world, so when the time would come when I could put him in a Chabad school, he wouldn’t lag behind.

After a few years, I got my husband’s permission and I switched my son to a Chabad school. His teacher was impressed by his knowledge. After only a month, he integrated with his class and even caught up with them.

(I did a similar thing with my grandchildren, when their parents sent them to me. I told the happy



Children on a kibbutz (for illustration purposes)



Entrance to a kibbutz (for illustration purposes)

parents about my plans and they agreed, and that's how I came to teach them the basics of Judaism. At least they wouldn't grow up with hatred for religion, like I did. Recently, my grandson the soldier told me that till this day, he is still careful to recite Shma, which he learned in my home. I was thrilled to hear that.)

As I said, aside from wearing a wig, life was fine. Finally, after many years of anguish, my home had become a wonderful place to be. Whoever comes to our home agrees that it has a special atmosphere, baruch Hashem.

Our shalom bayis is also

wonderful, baruch Hashem. With my husband's consent, my kitchen is kosher and before Shabbos arrives he closes his office and rushes to get ready. If the children and grandchildren come, then they have a Shabbos too. My husband makes Kiddush (yes, he agreed to do this for me) and Havdala.

Our main bookcase in the living room has gradually turned into a bookcase of s'farim, as little by little I remove secular books and replace them with s'farim.

Before Pesach he did not say anything against my kashering the kitchen and he even offered to study how to make a seder. Indeed

he studied it all, thanks to some friends who came to our house. My parents, children, and grandchildren came for the seder and we all sang happily together.

So your husband is religious?

No. He is not religious; he lives a completely non-religious life and has no plans on changing his life. But he helps me a lot to make it easier for me. This is because he wants to preserve our shalom bayis, which is something we both want.

What happened in the end with your sheitel?

In 5748, it was nearly five years without my covering my hair full time. I decided to go to the Rebbe again and not to return until I got a clear bracha from him! That year, because of the year of mourning for the Rebbetzin, the Rebbe davened in his home and "dollars" were also given from his home.

The days went by and my visit was almost over. Time after time I planned on asking the Rebbe, but then I lost my nerve. I was afraid!

On my last day there, a few hours before my flight, I mustered my courage and when it was my turn I asked the Rebbe for a bracha for a sheitel, as my husband did not agree to it. The Rebbe said: ask the advice of a rav



or friend. I thanked the Rebbe and moved away and then I heard the Rebbe add, “and may we hear good news.”

At that moment I knew that it would all work out fine. I even managed to buy a sheitel before I left the US! (Until then I wore a kerchief.)

And?

I landed at Ben Gurion airport wearing the sheitel and decided to present this as the new reality. The whole family saw it and liked it, except for my husband who asked me to remove it. I told him it was forbidden for any man except for him to see my hair uncovered and I would not be able to leave the house. He insisted and I stayed home for three weeks.

One day we got a phone call from a couple who wanted to visit us on Shabbos. My husband, who had answered the phone, asked me if it was okay and I said it was, but a moment later I said, “No, actually it’s not okay.”

He couldn’t figure out why, so I told him, “Because I can’t walk around with my hair uncovered in front of other men.”

My husband said, “Okay, so cover your hair then. I have no more strength for this.”

“So tell them they can come,” I said.

In the end, they couldn’t make it, but I wore my wig and until this day, I haven’t heard another word on the subject. A bracha from the Rebbe!

How do you sum up your life today?

From a bitter malcontent, I turned into the happiest woman in the world. My relationships with my husband and children are excellent. The respect for parents that my dear children have cannot be found anywhere! Whenever they invite me to their home for Shabbos – of their own accord – they go above and beyond to make

MESIRUS NEFESH FOR CHINUCH

When I became a baalas t’shuva, my youngest son was 6 and all my attempts to put him into a religious/Chabad school failed.

As I relaxed one Shabbos, I read in amazement about the mesirus nefesh the Jews in Russia had in not sending their children to school on Shabbos. I thought – they, over there in atheistic Russia, dug in their heels and had mesirus nefesh for their children’s chinuch. What about me, here in Eretz Yisroel? Why couldn’t I send my son to a proper school?

I told this to my husband and to my astonishment, he immediately agreed and he only asked, “And if Gal doesn’t agree?”

I answered, “Since when do children make decisions about their education?” My husband offered to convince him to switch to a Chabad school!

It goes to show that when you are insistent and have deep faith, you can have it all!

Although we had all the reasons in the world to split up our home, thank G-d, we didn’t do that. All the drastic changes were done with simcha and love.

my stay a pleasant one, and it’s really all terrific.

A few years ago, when I celebrated my 60th birthday, they bought me a multi-branched candelabra for the number of people in our family. I was so moved.

Despite my age, I don’t feel old. I feel as though I’m getting younger. (if you see her, you’ll understand – Sarit) The Rebbe’s teachings are something unique that seem to push me ever higher. My health continues to improve and wherever I go, I am the ambassador of simcha.

I never worry. I focus on the Chassidic aphorism, “think good, and it will be good.” I see how true this is, over and over again, and it’s all a result of the study of Chassidus.

In conclusion, I would like to convey a message to those women

who are in the same situation, or to those who give advice to women in similar situations. Although we had all the reasons in the world to split up our home, thank G-d, we didn’t do that. All the drastic changes were done with simcha and love. “Shalom bayis is dependent on the woman,” and she with her patience, can deal with any situation with mutual respect.

Baruch Hashem, I have been able to help women who are in similar circumstances, because often it is the woman who is eager to become more religious and the husband sometimes lags behind.

You need to remember that each half of the couple has his or her life and there is also what they share in common. It’s not easy, but our lives are definitely special and full of challenges.

THE REBBE RAYATZ: ABOVE THE REST

By Yosef Yitzchok Suissa

When you study the Rebbe Rayatz's life you are amazed by his courage and unprecedented mesirus nefesh. * Presented for 12-13 Tammuz, Chag HaGeula.

With the approach of Yud-Beis Tammuz, it is appropriate to study the personality and the larger-than-life figure of the Rebbe Rayatz. He stood as a bulwark in the hardest of times for humanity in general and the Jewish people in particular, living through an unparalleled period in world history.

In that transition period between the Old Era and the New Era, with the fateful consequences of the Industrial Revolution, both World Wars, the fall of monarchies, the shakeup of old forms of government

in many countries, widespread anarchy, mighty ideological revolutions, the historic rearrangement of borders and populations, the sundering and alliances of various countries and finally, the horrific Holocaust and the establishment of the State of Israel – all this and more had a tremendous impact on the lives of Jews around the world.

It seemed that nothing remained of the old Jewish world and that no force could possibly stand up to these cataclysmic changes. Any

attempts to not only preserve that which still remained but also to expand further seemed doomed from the start.

If you reflect on the Rebbe Rayatz's life, his incredible bravery, you cannot help but be overwhelmed with awe. With mesirus nefesh, he faced all the forces of evil and won. Not only that, but he was able to get up, time after time, after every crushing blow, and not only begin again but do so in an ever increasing manner.

This Chag HaGeula is not only the day that marks the Rebbe's redemption from his personal suffering at the hands of the Communists; it is also a Chag HaGeula for the world. For immediately after leaving Russia, the Rebbe Rayatz initiated a new process of dissemination of Torah and mitzvos, the likes of which was never seen before. The circumstances were different and so were the conditions; the tools utilized were diverse and the target audience had changed.

There are some interesting stories in the Gemara (Bava Metzia 84-85) that offer some insight into the hierarchy of the Tanaim based on their actions. By analyzing these stories we can draw comparisons to what we know about the Rebbe Rayatz, the Baal Yom HaGeula:

There is a tzaddik or Torah scholar who doesn't have special qualities or ancestry – Rav Chama says that Shlomo HaMelech was referring (Mishlei 14:33) to him when he said, "in the heart of the discerning one lies wisdom" – this is the Torah scholar, son of a Torah scholar; "but within fools it will be publicized" – this is the Torah scholar, son of an ignoramus.

Above this, there is a tzaddik with *z'chus avos* (the merit of his ancestors) about whom "Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel said to his son, Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi, 'My son,



don't be upset, for he is Rabbi Elozor ben Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, who is sharper in his Torah study than you, for he is a lion the son of a lion, and you are a lion the son of a fox..."

Illustrious ancestry isn't enough and above that is the tzaddik who in the past became a baal t'shuva and "in the place where baalei t'shuva stand, even complete tzaddikim cannot stand." In this category were, among others, Rabbi Yossi and Reish Lakeish.

Rebbi Yossi was the son of Rabbi Elozor and the grandson of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai. It was Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi who brought him back to t'shuva by giving him to his uncle, Rabbi Shimon bar Issi. Reish Lakeish had led a band of bandits and he was brought back in t'shuva by Rabbi Yochanan. Reish Lakeish became Rabbi Yochanan's brother-in-law and his sharpest and most famous chavrusa.

However, even a tzaddik who is a baal t'shuva cannot stand in the presence of a tzaddik who is a *baal yisurim* (suffers), even if the suffering came upon him involuntarily. It is told about Rabbi Yossi the son of Rabbi Elozor that he was a great baal t'shuva and he had illustrious ancestry. However, when he died and he was brought to the cave where his father was buried, so he could be buried near him, a snake was in the entrance to the cave and did not allow them to gain entry.

They asked the snake, "Snake, snake, open your mouth and allow the son to be next to his father," but the snake did not allow anyone to pass. The people thought that this was because his father was greater than he, and a Heavenly voice said, "It is not because this one is greater than he but because this one experienced the suffering of the cave and that one did not experience the suffering of the cave."

There is a tzaddik who is a baal

yisurim whose suffering comes upon him involuntarily and there is a tzaddik who invites yisurim upon himself because of something that happened. The Gemara says that Rebbi Yehuda HaNasi said, “yisurim are beloved to me,” and he accepted thirteen years of a certain illness and another seven years of another type of illness.

It is told that the man in charge of the numerous horses’ stables that belonged to Rebbi Yehuda HaNasi was a wealthier person than the king of Shevor. There were so many horses in the stables that when he fed them, their neighing could be heard three miles away!

The man in charge of the stables made sure to feed the horses at the time when Rebbi Yehuda HaNasi cried out in suffering from his pain, yet Rebbi Yehuda’s cries were louder than the neighing of thousands of horses!

Despite the magnitude of Rebbi Yehuda HaNasi’s pain, the Gemara says that the yisurim of Rebbi Elozor, son of Rebbi Shimon, were on a higher level. Rebbi Yehuda HaNasi invited his suffering because of something that happened – he wasn’t sensitive enough about the suffering of a calf which was being taken to be slaughtered that had run to Rebbi Yehuda HaNasi for protection. Rebbi Elozor invited his yisurim out of love.

Despite the greatness of these tzaddikim with the merit of great ancestry or who were baalei t’shuva or baalei yisurim, the level of a tzaddik who toiled to disseminate Torah, to ensure that it would not be forgotten, especially in a time of crisis, and who saved many from sin, is even greater!

The Gemara tells about Reish Lakeish who marked the graves of the earlier Torah sages. When he wanted to mark the grave of Rebbi Chiya, it mysteriously disappeared. Reish Lakeish felt bad since he realized that despite his greatness in

Torah study, and despite his being a baal t’shuva, Rebbi Chiya was greater than he.

Reish Lakeish prayed, “Master of the universe, did I not delve into Torah as he did?” A Heavenly voice responded, “You expounded Torah like he did, but you did not disseminate Torah as he did.”

Rebbi Chiya’s greatness was on account of his spreading Torah and ensuring that it would not be forgotten. It is told that he planted flax and made nets out of it. He caught deer and fed their meat to orphans and out of the skins he made scrolls upon which he wrote the five books of the Torah.

He went from city to city and taught five children the five different Chumashim, and he taught six children the six orders of the Mishna. He would tell them, “Until I return, learn with one another so that each of you will teach the others the Chumash or order of the Mishna that he learned from me. So they all ended up knowing all five books of the Torah and all of the Mishna. By doing this, Rebbi Chiya ensured that Torah would not be forgotten from the Jewish people.

Rebbi Yehuda HaNasi, Rebbi Chiya’s teacher, said about this, “How great are the deeds of Chiya.” When Rebbi Yishmoel b’Rebbi Yossi heard this unusual expression, he asked Rebbi Yehuda HaNasi in surprise, “Is Rebbi Chiya even greater than you? And Rebbi Yehuda HaNasi said Yes. Rebbi Yishmoel asked whether Rebbi Chiya was greater even than his own father, Rebbi Yossi, and Rebbi Yehuda HaNasi said, “G-d forbid! Such a thing cannot be amongst the Jewish people.”

The very comparison grated on Rebbi Yehuda HaNasi. Why? What was the greatness of Rebbi Yishmoel’s father that even the great Rebbi Chiya, who made sure that Torah would not be forgotten, who was able to bring the Geula and

resurrect the dead with his prayer, could not be compared to him?

This was because his father was a baal mesirus nefesh for the fulfillment of Torah and mitzvos during the difficult times of the Roman decrees.

We see an amazing thing from this, that as great as a tzaddik may be, and his ancestry, and the merits of his forbears, being a baal t’shuva, a baal yisurim, and one who takes action to spread Torah and ensure that it won’t be forgotten, he cannot be compared to one who has mesirus nefesh for Torah and mitzvos. The very comparison elicits a “G-d forbid, such a thing cannot be.”

* * *

If you read about the Rebbe Rayatz’s life, you can see to what extent this giant and unique individual, was cloaked in the splendor and glory of times past, and possessed of the highest levels of holiness. The Rebbe Rayatz, in his personality and life, had nearly all the qualities mentioned above. Therefore, he is exceptional in every level ascribed to the tzaddikim mentioned above, to the point that it seems that there was no other tzaddik who can compare to him.

He had the merit of his ancestors, of “a lion son of a lion.”

He was a great baal yisurim (and he even had the quality of “he invited the yisurim,” because he certainly could have stopped spreading Judaism, thus preventing the persecution against him).

The Rebbe Rayatz’s entire goal was spreading Judaism and the wellsprings outward, and he founded the empire which is shlichus.

But above all else, there was no baal mesirus nefesh like him, literal mesirus nefesh, for the fulfillment of Torah and mitzvos under communist rule, mesirus nefesh to which this day, the Chag HaGeula, serves as a magnificent symbol and commemoration.

SHLICHUS IN CURITIBA

By BenZion Sasson



Entrance to the
new shul in the
Chabad House

Twenty-five years have passed since Rabbi Yoseph Yitzchak (Fitch) Dubrawsky and his wife arrived in Curitiba, deep in the heart of Brazil. The first steps were smooth, but then things became extremely difficult. However, Rabbi and Mrs. Dubrawsky didn't give up, and with great patience and stubbornness succeeded in creating a revolution in the local Jewish community. * The story of a young couple in a faraway city, known as "the most progressive city in the world." * Part 2 of 2

HOLIDAY SEASON

Like every Chabad House around the world, R' Dubrawski works to convey the positive messages of each holy day to the Jews of Curitiba. Circumstances and some of the unique characteristics of the city led to

some interesting situations in the early years of the Chabad House.

In anticipation of his first Sukkos in the city, the shliach began looking for a suitable place to build a sukka. The problem was that the shul did not have place for it. One of the Jews friendly

towards the shliach, upon hearing what he had in mind, began to scream, "How can you dare to think of such a thing, in a city full of gentiles?" The shliach was not put off, "Our forefathers built sukkos in Egypt and in Russia, and now we will build one in Brazil."

After some research, he came to the conclusion that the only option was the apartment building where he lived. Near the window of the washing machine room there was an empty asphalt area. He requested permission from the building committee, and after receiving the go-ahead, he began to build the sukka. However, the only way to reach the sukka was through the window of the washing machine room. This required stepping on a stool and then onto the washing machine, in order to climb out the window and enter the sukka...

The holiday arrived. A torrential rain, indigenous to Brazil, was pouring down outside. The shlucha remained indoors with her children, as her husband went out to the sukka with a group of guests that he brought home from shul. The sight of the group was especially heartening, considering what they would have to go through to get to and sit in the sukka.

Seeing the emotion on the faces of the guests, as they recited the "SheHechyanu" blessing for sitting in the sukka for the first time in their lives, brought the shlucha to tears. "Only then did I actually begin to understand the concept that I had learned so much about over the years, of what a 'Jewish soul' means."

Another incident, no less interesting, occurred one year on Chanuka. The story actually begins a few years earlier. Every Shabbos, R' Dubrawski would pass a certain church on his way to the



Mr. Jaime (Chaim) Lerner carrying the Seifer Torah on parade to the new shul

community shul. Each time he passed, the priest would be waiting outside and would call out a greeting. The shliach couldn't help but wonder why he had to go through that seemingly strange "experience" each and every Shabbos. And then Chanuka came along. He decided that year that it was time to arrange a public menorah lighting. First, he spoke to a Jew that owned a huge shopping mall. Understandably, the fellow refused. His next stop was the Mayor's office, who agreed to the idea, but said it was necessary to approach the Commissioner of Parks, as such an activity would fall under his jurisdiction.

R' Dubrawski, wanting to successfully pull off the acquisition of a permit to hold the event in a public place, sat down and prepared a short script for his talk with the Parks Commissioner. After preparing, he arrived at the offices of the Parks Commission. When he entered the office of the Commissioner, he was stunned to see that it was none other than his "good friend," the priest, in charge of all the public parks in Curitiba.

The shliach began his little speech, and to his amazement, the priest cut him off and said, "Do it wherever you think is best."

That was the beginning of the public menorah lightings in Curitiba. In recent years, the municipal government of Curitiba erects the giant menorah in the city's main plaza, and stores the menorah year-round in a municipal warehouse. The city also funds the cost of the stage and sound system for the event. "All it takes is one phone call as a reminder, and everything is set up and ready," says the shliach with a huge smile on his face.

Another interesting miracle in connection with Chanuka, takes place on a yearly basis. The

Chanuka season is generally a time of heavy rainfall. This fact placed a lot of pressure on the organizers, already in the very first year of the public lightings. Due to his concern, the shliach asked the Rebbe for a bracha that it not rain on the event.

What is truly amazing is that, "This has turned into a regular miracle," says R' Dubrawski. "Starting in 1986, when we began the public menorah lightings, until this day, each and every year, a few minutes before lighting, the rain stops and starts again a short while after the event concludes!"

* * *

Years passed, and the shluchim saw success in establishing connections with the community, directly or indirectly. The Rabbi of the community left to move to S. Paolo, and the community began searching for a new Rabbi. Although many already saw Rabbi Dubrawski as the right man for the job, there were still many who were opposed. This was primarily because the previous Rabbi officiated at many conversions that were not halachically correct, and this would lead to problems with a Chabad rabbi.

Throughout the early years, the Chabad House operated out of the apartment of the shluchim, which moved three times. At a certain point, he decided that it was time to move to a suitable building that would house the wide range of activities. When the Rebbe announced the year 5749 as a "year of building" it gave him the push, but a short conversation with some of his mekuravim from the community, made him realize that such a move would undermine the current situation in the community, which was not a good idea at the time.

Since he realized that moving to a larger building in another area was not the solution, he turned to his friend and supporter, the former president of the shul. Together, they drew up a list of local Jews whom they planned on approaching to ask for 20,000 dollars apiece for the purchase of a suitable building. What appeared to be nothing more than a fantasy, quickly began to take shape, and within four months, the necessary sum was raised and an impressive building was purchased for the Chabad House.

The success of the outreach activities continued to grow, and



View of the new shul



Expo of Jewish life built by R' Dubrawski



Chabad House pre-school in the early years

after only a few months, they had to knock down one of the walls to expand the capacity of the building. Over time, another wall was broken, and another, as the place expanded at a rapid pace, which made the shliach realize that he would soon have to undergo a serious expansion of the recently purchased building.

THE GIMMEL TAMMUZ REVOLUTION

A fascinating fact recounted by R' Dubrawski, is that since Gimmel Tammuz, he has felt a

tremendous “upsurge” in many area connected to the Chabad House. He really started to see the fruits of success, after working tirelessly for twelve years in Curitiba.

After ten years of plenty, in which the central Chabad House in S. Paolo, under the leadership of Rabbi Alpern, funded all the expenses of the Chabad House, the funding was cut off and he found himself facing the daunting task of fundraising. At the beginning, it was hard to explain to the locals, who were used to the free services, that now the shliach had to get

involved in money matters.

A few years later, another setback took place, which actually turned out to be a blessing in disguise. In 5756/1996, the community leaders took notice of the fact that the Chabad outreach work was growing by leaps and bounds as it attracted more and more people. This disturbed them and they decided to bring a “rabbi” to the community, who would offer some “balance.” As they hoped, the new rabbi revived “tradition.” He brought back the microphones and took down the mechitza, which forced the shliach to leave the shul once again and forced him to try to open a place of his own.

It started with Kabbalas Shabbos, when a group of young people making huge strides in Yiddishkai, asked the shliach to arrange for new and improved services. Shortly after, a regular minyan began on Shabbos mornings as well. The shliach and his wife began building a proper Chabad community with many people who expressed an interest in authentic Judaism.

The events held by the Chabad House in the following years, served to elevate the status of Chabad amongst the local Jews even more. One historical event was the wedding of their eldest daughter. It might seem that it would have been far easier for them to hold the wedding in Crown Heights, the groom’s hometown, but that is not the route they chose. They decided to make a proper kosher and Chassidic wedding in Curitiba, seeing to it that the wedding be in high style in order to convey to the locals that it is possible to hold a proper Jewish wedding even in a remote place like Curitiba.

A huge semi-trailer filled with delicacies arrived from S. Paolo. Rabbis and shluchim, friends and

mekuravim, converged on the city to participate in the wedding that became the talk of the town, and made a great Kiddush Hashem and Kiddush Shem Lubavitch.

It turns out that it wasn't just the wedding that served to bring Jews closer to authentic Judaism, but even the Sheva Brachos. On one of the nights, they were missing a "new face" in order to recite the blessings, and Andre Segal, one of the mekuravim, brought a friend of his, who came not suspecting that this would be his first step towards a Jewish life. This first step led to further steps, until he ended up marrying a Jewish woman, and now his daughter attends the Chabad preschool.

Over the years, they also managed to inaugurate a new mikva in the building of the Chabad House, which was built with the help of Jacques Frishman and another donor, and this event also helped raised the status of the Chabad community in the city.

BUILDING A COMMUNITY

In recent years, the wave of returnees in the city has grown, and many moved away because the city could not provide for their newfound religious needs. The shliach tried valiantly to convince his mekuravim to stay. Some of them responded that if a serious religious community was established, they would consider remaining. R' Dubrawski realized that he had no other option, and he decided to open a Kollel to serve as the basis for a vibrant Jewish community.

Towards this end, he brought out two new shluchim to the city, his sons-in-law, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Labkowski and Rabbi Menachem Mendel Stolik. The two arrived this past Tishrei, in order

to establish a Kollel, a Jewish school, and other learning programs.

Today, only a few months after their arrival, the two have fully integrated into the local community. However, R' Dubrawski feels that this is insufficient and is currently searching for two additional couples to strengthen the Kollel and the community.

The arrival of the new shluchim has infused new energy into the community around the Chabad House. Already following Rosh HaShana, a new preschool opened in the Chabad House for the children of the shluchim and the locals. The success of the preschool succeeded in arousing the ire of the community leaders, to the point that at a meeting two months ago of the local Jewish organizations, they addressed the issue of the danger to the local "Jewish school" due to the opening

of a Chabad School, and voted on a number of resolutions to eradicate the problem. R' Dubrawski, however, says, "I believe that the local community school will close down soon."

The space in the Chabad House has become too constricting to house all the various activities, and in recent months, the shluchim have begun searching for a suitable building, but to no avail. After they had pretty much given up hope, they were hit with a surprise from an unexpected quarter. The owner of the villa adjoining the Chabad House announced that he was moving out of his home. The unexpected news was received with great excitement, and one of the congregants pledged to donate the rent for an entire year. And so, a few days later, the Kollel began operating in the new building. The wall between the Chabad House yard and the yard around the villa was taken down, and within a

THE FINAL SHMA YISROEL

Rabbi Dubrawski recounts: Six years ago, I was approached by a brother and sister in their fifties. They began the conversation by stating that they were not Jewish. In the course of the conversation, they informed me that their mother was in the hospital and was at death's door. They went on to tell me that their mother had told them that before she leaves the world, she wanted to let them in on the fact that she is a Jewess, and she explained to them the chain of events that led her to forgetting her Jewishness. "Now, our mother wants to see a Rabbi, therefore, we came to you to ask you to please come with us to visit her. It is very important to her, and to us as well."

Of course, I acquiesced to their request, and I went with them to the hospital. When I arrived at the woman's room, I encountered an elderly woman in a bed surrounded by many beeping machines, which were barely keeping her alive. I wanted to verify that she was in fact Jewish, after fifty years of denial. I approached her bed and whispered into her ear, "Shma Yisroel," and she finished the rest of the verse, as well as the portion of "V'Ahavta." A few minutes later, she passed on from this world.

I took the opportunity to explain to her children that according to all indications they are also Jewish, but they didn't want to hear anything about it. Perhaps, someday, they will find their way back, but at least, the mother died in repentance...



**Rabbis M.M. Labkowski
and M.M. Stolik**



Rabbi Labkowski giving a Torah class

short time, the villa turned into an integral part of the Curitiba Chabad House “complex.”

Today, twenty five years after the founding of the Chabad House in the shliach’s apartment, the new Chabad House now functions as a shul and a full service Jewish center. Every morning, there is a large respectable minyan. The Shacharis minyan began a little over two years ago, when one of the mekuravim lost his father, which necessitated that he

They decided to make a proper kosher and Chassidic wedding in Curitiba, seeing to it that the wedding be in high style in order to convey to the locals that it is possible to hold a proper Jewish wedding even in a remote place like Curitiba.

participate in a regular minyan. Since then, it has gained traction, and due to the tragic occurrence, there is now a steady weekday Shacharis minyan in the Chabad House.

They just recently completed the building of the new shul within the Chabad House, which will replace the small room that was used until now. The new shul is beautifully built with many seats. The Chanukas HaBayis, along with a Hachnasas Seifer Torah and celebration of 25 years in Curitiba, is scheduled for the upcoming month of Elul.

“The success of Chabad here is to such an extent that everyone here knows that if Chabad undertakes something it will be done right,” one of the congregants says to me. “Today, the former president of the community is a regular at the Chabad House, which shows just how far they have come after years of hard work.”

However, the opponents of the Chabad House are busily at work and not resting on their laurels. A recent example that became the talk of the town a few months ago took place at one of the perennial community events. The shliach had long turned these events into an opportunity for a large scale t’fillin campaign. The fact that he personally knows every person there leads to about ninety percent

of those he approaches, agreeing to put on t’fillin.

A few months back, the community held a special event, and the new president of the community announced in the name of the new “rabbi” that Chabad could come to the event, but they could not put t’fillin on with the attendees. The story got out to the members of the community and to the local press, and it caused a firestorm of controversy as people expressed amazement as to how a Jewish rabbi doesn’t allow religious activities to be done with the local Jewish community.

A while after the story broke there was a large public meeting in which the shliach also participated. At one point during the meeting, he turned to the rabbi and said, “Chabad put t’fillin on Jews in Communist Russia and at the frontlines of all of Israel’s wars, in order to benefit those who might find it difficult to do otherwise. People have gone to extremes and done so much for the sake of t’fillin, and you want to say that from now on it will not be possible?” Many of the locals publicly decried the behavior of the “rabbi,” and the past Lag B’Omer, most of the community celebrated with the Chabad House.

How do you infuse the locals with matters of Moshiach and Geula?

In every class and lecture, I explain how current developments, whether in the field of technology or medicine, or the explosion of the internet, are all part of the process of the coming of Moshiach. I like to show people through current events that Moshiach is already here. The Rebbe explains that in the first stage it is not necessary for there to be outright miracles, but that it can all happen in a natural way, and we will see the G-dliness in

nature.

Three months ago, we once again held a “medicine and Judaism” seminar. During the lectures, it was mentioned that in the future we will be able to restart a heart with an ordinary battery. Things like that help people see the idea in a different light, to start believing that Moshiach is something real and imminent.

After 25 years, what has changed about you and the environment?

I feel that the city has really changed. The local Jews have altered their outlook on Judaism in general, and Chabad in particular. Today, they all feel connected to the Rebbe. Prior to Gimmel Tammuz, there was a time that every person who traveled to New York, even those that were not involved directly with us, made it their business to make time to be at the distribution of dollars by the Rebbe.

I look around me today and see the Rebbe’s words about the innate beauty of the Jewish soul come to life. The fact that young people flock to us to learn about Judaism is an expression of that soul. It is an indication that Moshiach is about to come. People who lived through the Holocaust and lost their entire families who were killed sanctifying Hashem’s name, often have a problem dealing with Yiddishkeit during the rest of the year. However, when it comes Yom Kippur, they come to shul and like all the others cry out “Hashem Hu HaElokim,” and to me that is a display of the greatness of the Jewish soul.

What is your main emphasis in the work of shlichus?

Torah classes are the most effective means to penetrate the hearts and souls of every person. Everything starts with a class in Torah, which is the most direct

path to every aspect of Jewish life. However, it is equally important after the initial contact to maintain an ongoing connection and to guide them to progressively higher levels of learning, and to go along with them as they progress.

The work in Curitiba is far from finished. Even now, after many successes and positive results, we are looking to the future with the hope and prayer that in the remaining moments before the complete revelation of Moshiach, we will be able to build a growing and vibrant community, with which to greet Moshiach. Now, it has progressed beyond the dream stage and is a tangible vision.

* * *

The few hours remaining before my flight back to S. Paolo I put to use observing the work of the Chabad House in action. The sight of the children playing in the playground set up in the yard; the morning session of the Kollel men; intense conversations between the shliach and some of the community members; and the heartwarming sight of the morning minyan that I heard so much about; all of these appeared to me as small parts of a complete jigsaw puzzle of life on shlichus. A shlichus carried out with inner fortitude and mesiras nefesh, which it appears will yet transform the “most progressive city in the world” into a city of vibrant Jewish life until the ultimate revelation of the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach.

**“FATHER, PLEASE DON’T
COME TO ME IN A DREAM”**

One of the many souls that came close to Judaism through the work of the shlichim is Andrei Segal, a young man who was very far from anything Jewish, although his aunt and uncle had become religious over the years.

One day, his father, Sergei, fell ill due to heart problems. Andre came to visit him before he was due to undergo a serious operation. He told his father, “I know that your brother started to become religious when he began saying Kaddish after the passing of your father, my grandfather. A similar thing happened with your sister after the passing of your mother, my grandmother. I sincerely hope that you will live, but if G-d forbid, something happens to you, I am asking you not to visit me in a dream to ask me to say Kaddish after you...”

The father underwent a successful operation, and after a long hospital stay, he returned home in good health. However, the son Andrei ended up becoming a full-fledged Chabad Chassid. It began when as part of his work for the local television network, he broke his leg. R’ Dubrawski would visit him regularly in the hospital and offer to put on t’fillin.

At the beginning, he resisted, but over time he softened up and began putting on t’fillin and slowly progressing in his Judaism. Over the years, he ended up doing a complete t’shuva. Today, he is married to a baalas t’shuva from S. Paolo, and they have children, one of whom is named Chana for the Rebbe’s mother.

This is just one story amongst many of how an entire extended family, with the help of the shlichim of the Rebbe, made the return to full Jewish life and observance.

THE REBBE LO MEIS

By Rabbi Chaim Ashkenazi

Why do we insist that the Rebbe is alive? What did the Rebbe say about this?

THE REBBE SAID IT ALL

I heard that when the former chief rabbi, Rabbi Yisroel Meir Lau, attended a Chabad dinner in South America, someone asked him what he thought about Lubavitchers who believe the Rebbe is *chai v'kayam*.

Rabbi Lau responded with a question: Tell me the truth, how would you react if your rosh yeshiva asked you to move with your family to Shanghai, China just for a year or two. Would you agree? Surely you admit that you would find all the excuses and reasons in the world not to do what he asked.

Yet, although quite a few years have passed since Gimmel Tammuz, Chabad Chassidim continue to go out on the Rebbe's shlichus, to light the Jewish spark and be mekarev Jews to their Father in heaven. They do it only because the Rebbe said so.

So tell me – who is *chai v'kayam*, your rosh yeshiva or the Lubavitcher Rebbe?

* * *

A similar story was told to me by R' Nachum Rabinowitz of Anash in Yerushalayim. One time, when he met with Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (the famous posek) z"l, R' Auerbach asked him: How is it

that Chabad Chassidim say that their Rebbe is alive?

R' Nachum answered: There are so many people about whom it is said "they are called 'dead'" (referring to the Talmudic dictum, 'the wicked in their lifetimes are called dead') yet they write 'shlita' after their names, and nobody is bothered by this. If there is someone about whom it is said that he is alive, why are people surprised?

Rabbi Auerbach smiled and said: You're right!

* * *

R' Nachum gave a clever answer but is it really the case that the Rebbe is only "**called**" *chai*? Some will answer yes, and some will say no.

Anyone unfamiliar with the Rebbe's teachings, or even if they are familiar and think that the Rebbe only spoke metaphorically, will say Yes. However, someone permeated with the belief that the Rebbe's teachings and guidance are pure truth, and certainly they are literally true, will answer unequivocally: "**chai**" is not just a description or Chassidishe hergesh designed to prevent people from depression; it's the reality.

In other words, understanding the Rebbe's reality today is dependent, in great measure, on one's knowledge and understanding of what the Rebbe said.

I was present during a conversation between a Gerrer Chassid and a Misnaged. The Misnaged said: Look at the Lubavitchers. What foolishness they say about their Rebbe regarding Moshiach and about his being here physically.

The Gerrer Chassid said: You should know that they don't say anything on their own. It's all written, either in the Torah or in Toras Chassidus. You don't have to

accept it, but you can't say it's nonsense and that they made it up.

In another conversation, this time between a Chabad Chassid and his cousin who is a Poilisher Chassid, the cousin said: I learned the sichos of your Rebbe and I'm telling you that if a Chabadnik says that the Rebbe did not say he is Moshiach, or if he says that there

does not have to be a Rebbe who is here b'gashmius, he's a liar. It says so in the Rebbe's sichos, in black and white. I don't have to accept it because I'm not a Chabad Chassid, but to say that he never said it, that's an outright lie!

I heard the following from a Poilisher Chassid: A Lubavitcher who says that nothing happened on

Gimmel Tammuz is not normal. And a Lubavitcher who says that on Gimmel Tammuz what happened is what appears to have happened – is also not normal!

WHAT CHANGED?

If non-Lubavitchers understand this, what happened to us? Every Chabad Chassid around the world openly proclaimed that the Rebbe is Melech HaMoshiach L'olam Va'ed until Gimmel Tammuz 5754, or at least until 27 Adar I 5752. They announced it unanimously, not because they all convened in one place and made the decision to do so, but because it was obvious that this is what the Rebbe was saying in his sichos and there was no other way to understand them.

Furthermore, the Rebbe did all he could to ensure we understood him, and he knew how his Chassidim and mekusharim understood him. Leading the believers were the "elite" of Chabad Chassidim, from the head chozrim on down. Everybody believed it.

Suddenly, after 27 Adar 5752 and even more so, after 27 Adar II 5754, and even more so, after Gimmel Tammuz 5754, some people decided that we don't understand what the Rebbe said and wrote. Their excuse is that what we can see is stronger than all the sichos, and this is a Yud Shvat, Beis Nissan, 13 Tishrei, 9 Kislev, and 24 Teives, once again.

As for those who think that Gimmel Tammuz is a Yom Hilula, there are different views about the current situation:

Some people are of the opinion that from Gimmel Tammuz and on, there is **no** Nasi HaDor. Some think that the Rebbe is the Nasi HaDor, and say (based on chapter 27 of *Igeres HaKodesh* in *Tanya*), that he is here "more than in his lifetime" (though it is not clear why this would be the case with regard



to the Rebbe and not the Rebbeim who preceded him, back until Moshe Rabbeinu).

There are others who say that the Rebbe is not only here “more than in his lifetime” spiritually, but is also **connected to the physical world**, unlike the other n’siim. According to this view, 770 is a place to gather for t’fillos and farbrengens because holiness does not move from its place. They are convinced that this approach is normal and nice, and this is the proper way to educate the next generation, and whoever doesn’t think so is not Chabad. These are the same people who previously maintained that whoever doesn’t think the Rebbe is Melech HaMoshiach L’olam Va’ed is not Chabad...

Beforehand, they understood what the Rebbe said one way, and now, they understand what the Rebbe said another way. If someone would come along and say – like that Misnaged who had a dream – that he saw G-d’s funeral, Heaven forbid, would they also say that until now, they understood the idea of “I am Hashem, I do not change,” in a way that means a change is not possible, but now they understand it differently?

THE WAGON DRIVER’S UNDERSTANDING

In a certain town there was a woman in labor who needed to be

taken on Shabbos to a town with a midwife. The rav told the wagon driver to harness the horses and take her. The wagon driver said he couldn’t harness the horses without a cigarette. The rav did not allow it and the argument continued until the woman in labor was in danger.

The rav said to the wagon driver that he should take a cigarette, the main thing being to harness the horses and save the woman’s life! The wagon driver concluded, who knows what other things are allowed to be done on Shabbos, but the rabbis just don’t tell us...

The ignorant wagon driver did not know that the halacha does not change according to the rav’s whims. He did not understand that it wasn’t the p’sak halacha that changed but the situation (without getting into a discussion about whether the p’sak was correct or not). He thought that the rabbis are concealing other leniencies from us. At a later point, he might think that if the rabbis don’t tell us what else is permissible, he will decide on his own!

The same is true here. There is a principle that every Chabad Chassid believed in firmly, because the Rebbe, the “faithful shepherd,” instilled/instills it within us. Suddenly, people come and say that the Rebbe didn’t mean to guarantee anything; he said it, rather, as a request and a prayer. They are just like that wagon

driver, and who knows what other things they will reinterpret!

In the best case they say about themselves – “we erred, it’s nonsense, it will cause a desecration of Torah and mitzvos, and whoever says it is not Chabad.”

This approach is something to cry over, because the far-reaching consequences are staggering.

A chareidi newspaper editor who is known for his hatred of Chassidim in general and Chabad Chassidim in particular, and especially the Rebbe MH”M, said: What do you want from me and the paper I represent when before Gimmel Tammuz I wrote that you’re not normal and are heretics and now, you yourselves write the same thing! The difference is that I wrote it about most of you – while you say it applies to those you call a “fringe element.”

As for us, we are strong in our emuna because we rely on what the Rebbe said, and he taught us (see *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 26, first sicha) that regarding Moshe it says, “**His day of birth atones for his day of death.**”

Atonement connotes cleansing. In other words, the birthday wipes clean the deficiency that could be the result of the day of death. What does this mean?

The removal from the plane of gashmius which takes place on the day of death cannot happen to the Nasi HaDor, because from the time of birth – from the moment the wondrous being called “Moshe Emes” is born – this deficiency is impossible. Indeed, it may not be the same body, but **he must be in a body.**

MOSHE RABBEINU DID NOT DIE – THIS IS MEANT LITERALLY!

The Rebbe explains in this

I learned the sichos of your Rebbe and I’m telling you that if a Chabadnik says that the Rebbe did not say he is Moshiach, or if he says that there does not have to be a Rebbe who is here b’gashmius, he’s a liar.

It's now, when the believers are not popular and people make fun, that we have to be the professional players on the field and not abandon our job.

sicha (vol. 26) the reason why only Moshe and Yaakov, who are referred to as emes, meaning eternal, are said not to have died. The truth of Yaakov Avinu and Moshe Rabbeinu is not only 'not falsehood,' as is so with regard to all tzaddikim, but who are not eternal **physically**. All the other tzaddikim are eternal **as far as their neshamos**, and "even more than in their lifetime," but with Yaakov and Moshe, it is truth like the Torah is true; it endures, in a physical sense, forever.

The Nasi HaDor is not in the category of "even more than in their lifetime," as great as that is, for he is here b'gashmius. One of the proofs that the Rebbe brings for this is that just as the Mishkan is **physically** eternal, because it is the handiwork of Moshe, all the more so is Moshe himself eternal! This is why only regarding Yaakov and Moshe, who are "emes," does it say "he did not die." It is highly recommended that you study the sicha in detail.

After learning this sicha, can we treat Gimmel Tammuz like Yud Shvat? Of course we are not happy with the situation when we cannot see the Rebbe, but what should we do on this day? Should we do what is done on all the days marking the passing of the Rebbeim and say that nevertheless, the Rebbe is the Nasi HaDor? This is the opposite of what the Rebbe says, the same Rebbe who is the **only expert** who can say what a **Nasi HaDor** is, for the Rebbe says "**lo meis**."

As many questions as you may have on this sicha, they cannot divert us from the unequivocal declaration that we are not Breslov-style Chassidim; Nasi HaDor means "**lo meis**."

The debate needs to be over how to understand "**lo meis**," as it is meant literally. This discussion is similar to that in every maamer Chassidus and Chassidishe farbrengen about the fact that **the world is not a metzius**.

That the world is not a metzius is a given. Once we've established that, we can discuss this non-existence: is it not a metzius because it is **imaginary**, or is it a metzius but nevertheless **it has no significance at all**, or perhaps even higher degrees of nullification.

Despite the discussion that the world is not a metzius is a fact, and a Chassid needs to work on himself from moment to moment and t'filla to t'filla and farbrengen to farbrengen and yechidus to yechidus – to absorb the concept of the world's **non-existence**.

So too with the Rebbe. The Rebbe declared that **Moshe Rabbeinu lo meis**, so the **Rebbe MH" M lo meis**, and we must get it into our minds and hearts that the day of his birth (Yud-Alef Nissan) atones for the day of death, "atones" meaning cleansing.

FANS OR PROFESSIONALS?

In a yechidus with an

American bar mitzva boy, the Rebbe asked him whether he played baseball and which team he rooted for. The boy said that in the last game he watched, his team lost.

The Rebbe asked the boy what he did about the loss and the boy said: I got up and left the field. I didn't even wait until the end of the game.

"Did the baseball players leave too?" asked the Rebbe.

They can't leave, even if they're not doing well, explained the boy patiently, because they are professionals and have to try and win until the last minute of the game!

You too, said the Rebbe, are beginning now to participate on Hashem's "team." Try to be a professional and not just a fan!

* * *

The Rebbe's message to the bar mitzva boy is quite relevant to our present situation. It's no big deal to be a fan and to cheer when your team is winning. It wasn't a great achievement to spread the Besuras HaGeula in the days preceding Chaf-Zayin Adar, when everybody was certain that Moshiach was about to come and that his sworn fans would be in the front row to greet him.

It's now, when the believers are not popular and people make fun, that we have to be the professional players on the field and not abandon our job. Even if we don't see our king, let us continue to spread the message that the Rebbe is Moshiach and he is chai v'kayam, and we are anticipating his immediate **revelation** (not that we are waiting for him to **return**).

May we soon see the "**lo meis**" b'gashmius, with the true and complete Redemption now!

(Said at a Chassidishe farbrengen)

DECIDE WHO YOU ARE PRAYING TO!

By Eli Shneuri

A series of Hashgacha Pratis incidents leads two T'mimim to a pizza store in Dramsala, India, in their search for young Jews. One by one, they gathered to escape the torrential rains of monsoon season that suddenly began to fall.

It has become a tradition. Many bachurim who finish learning on K'vutza in 770, remain to learn for a few more years while receiving offers of shlichus in India. India has lately become an area of intensive Chabad outreach. The bachurim who go there have rich, unusual experiences. They are witnesses to stories of neshamos from another world, the world of wandering Jews who consider India

their spiritual refuge.

This is the story of Noam Elias, who is active today in the Chabad house in Kiryat Ono. Noam relates:

After an extended stay in 770, one of my friends begged me to join him on shlichus in a village in India, on a Himalayan peak overlooking the city of Dramsala. "Open a yeshiva in Dramsala," he said. "There are already Israeli bachurim and baalei t'shuva there,

but they lack suitable chavrusos."

I pushed him off again and again, hoping to enjoy more time in 770. I didn't see myself working in a place like India. I considered it out of the question, but after my friend kept telling me how urgent it was and after thinking of the bachurim waiting for us, I came to the conclusion that I couldn't say no. I figured a yeshiva framework suited me.

After receiving a positive answer from the Rebbe in the *Igros Kodesh*, I planned on leaving after Shavuos. Before Yom Tov we had already arranged the final details and after Yom Tov we were ready to go.

After an exhausting, sleepless, two-day trip, we arrived at our destination. When we walked in, we saw that the place was operating like an ordinary Chabad House. There was no yeshiva! After a brief nap, when we tried to understand what was going on, our disappointment grew when – in answer to our question, "Where are the bachurim?" – we were told that that was our job.

This wasn't part of our plan; the shliach's answer was a bombshell. We decided to go out and see if we could round up some guys.

After a few minutes of walking, we entered a pizza store and met three Israeli tourists. They had never put on t'fillin and their Judaism consisted of the fact that they were Jewish.

"When we were kids," they said, with a mischievous glint in their eyes, "we tried to make ourselves a bar mitzva outside of the kibbutz with a ceremony that included an aliya la'Torah, etc., but our parents found out about it and stopped us."

They grew up hating religion and religious people. And now, it became clear that they were not interested in continuing the

conversation with the religious people who happened to meet them in a pizza store in India.

In the course of our conversation it suddenly began to pour. It looked like a monsoon, a powerful rainfall that can last for hours and sometimes for days. They couldn't leave, so we got into a serious conversation. They said they were studying with a certain cult in a Tibetan monastery in the area.

In the course of our long talk, they were surprised to see that religious people were able to listen and make jokes. We explained that the world's religions are based on the Torah and they are all cheap imitations. They seemed interested in what we had to say.

Before they left, we gave them the address of the Chabad house. It was still raining but they left. The next day, they actually dropped in to the Chabad house to say hello and we took the opportunity and gave them each an aliya to celebrate their bar mitzvas.

While we waited in the pizza store for the downpour to stop, an English Jew walked in. He said that at home in England he put on t'fillin regularly, but some friends told him that while traveling he did not have to put on t'fillin. Naturally we told him that that is not true and said men are obligated to put on t'fillin daily – even away from home.

While he was putting on t'fillin, someone walked into the store who looked Indian. He gave us a long look and then asked, somewhat hesitantly, "Are you Jews?" When we said Yes, he happily said, "Me too."

He said he lived a few hours trip away from Dramsala. At some point he realized that his mother lit candles every Friday. When he questioned her about this, she told him they were Jewish and that Jews

had to do mitzvos, including lighting candles every Friday.

One day there was an article in the newspaper about the Jewish outreach in Dramsala and his mother became aware of Chabad's work in India. She advised her son to travel to Dramsala. "When you see people who look like the men in this article, talk to them and tell them that you are Jewish. They will be happy to help you."

His excitement was contagious and he put on t'fillin as he cried. It was then that I realized the magnitude of our shlichus here, to be mekarev these lost Jews to their Father in heaven.

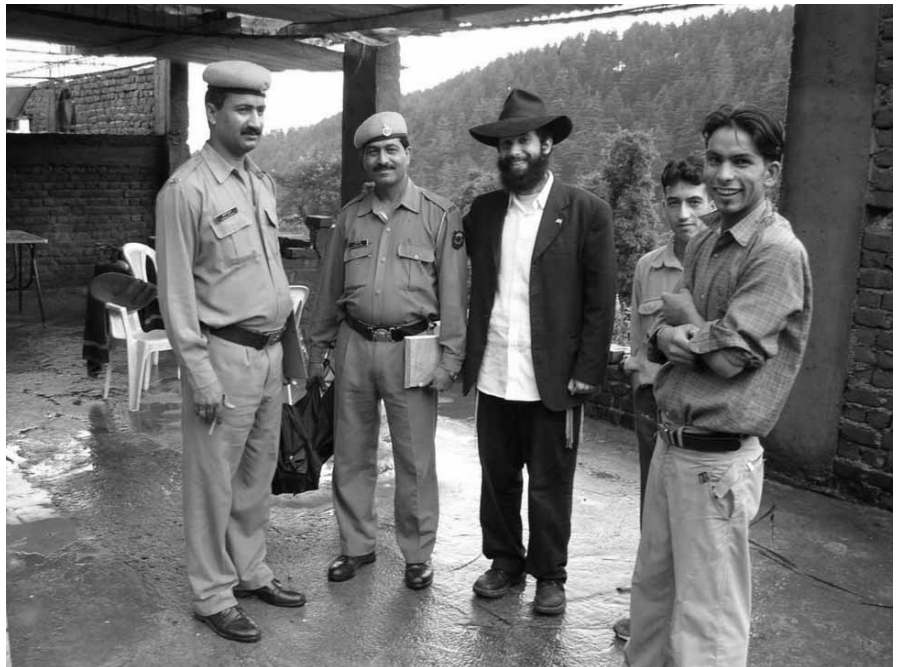
Before we could digest all this, and two minutes after the Indian Jew had finished his impassioned prayer, another Jew walked in, a

middle-aged Israeli kibbutznik. He said he was a dentist and five years earlier he had come to India searching for something. Since then he had been taking courses in a kind of ritual drumming involving idols, r'l.

"You enter another world," he tried explaining to us. "At first," he said sort of apologetically, "I didn't say their prayers. But after a while I said to myself, I don't believe in it anyway, so what do I care if I say it. So that's what I do."

After we spoke to him for a while, we suggested that he put on t'fillin. He refused, as we expected, and he said that it's been 28 years since he had last put on t'fillin.

I motioned to Mendeley, my friend, that he should take out the t'fillin. And then, with the element



"In the morning you're with them, and in the evening you're with us? Decide who you are with, who you are praying to!" They spoke quickly and with undisguised rage.

of surprise and without asking him, I rolled up the guy's sleeve and began putting the t'fillin on him. I didn't care that it was done this way, the main thing being that he put on t'fillin. Maybe the light of the mitzva would penetrate his soul.

He realized that we had spiritually-religiously kidnapped him and he yelled in self-defense. "Don't put t'fillin on me!" He protested but he didn't actively fend me off.

Suddenly, I saw his eyes darting about the room, right and left, up and down. "I'm not saying any prayer," he announced. "Not Shma Yisroel either."

"No problem," we told him. "You don't have to say anything."

He suddenly became terrified. "Quick!" he hissed. We could see how a battle was being waged within him between the forces of evil and the forces of holiness. It was clear to me that we were part of a story of a hidden neshama. I tried to accommodate him and do things quickly.

Then, seemingly out of nowhere, three Indians appeared. "What are you doing?" they shouted at him. I didn't understand

"We tried to make ourselves a bar mitzva outside of the kibbutz with a ceremony that included an aliya la'Torah, etc., but our parents found out about it and stopped us."

what they were saying amongst themselves, but I felt there was danger here.

"I am praying," he said softly.

"Then what are you doing here?" they screamed at him angrily. "In the morning you're with them, and in the evening you're with us? Decide who you are with, who you are praying to?" They spoke quickly and with undisguised rage.

The Israeli mustered the courage and in an emotional though steady voice he said in English, while pointing heavenward, "I'm with Him. He is my G-d!"

Then he turned to me and said, "Now start over again and do it properly and show me exactly what I ought to say." And there, while wearing t'fillin, with moist and

reddened eyes, he renewed his connection with G-d.

At that point, the Indians left. Apparently these were his "friends" from the cult of drummers.

I knew that we had been participants in a G-dly mission and had connected with a lost soul. You could see the chain of instances of "Divine Providence" that directs each neshama to its Source.

That Shabbos was Parshas Pinchas, which is his name. We invited Pinchas to the Chabad house and parted. He actually came on Shabbos and participated in the t'fillos, in high spirits.

We had the merit of bringing a few Israelis to the Chabad house to a yeshiva-type program. Many of them have, by now, married and set up Jewish homes and some are even on shlichus.

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