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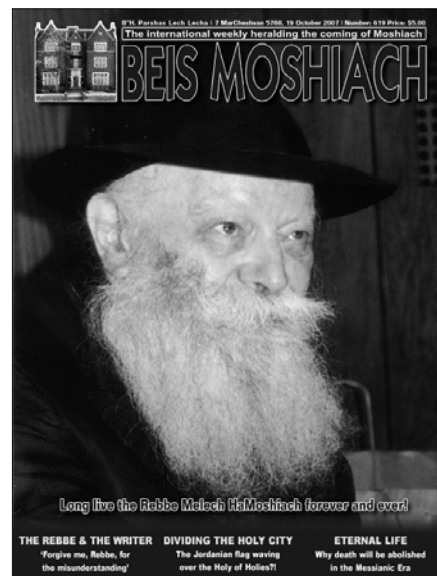
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G-D'S RETURN WITH THE JEWISH PEOPLE FROM EXILE

Likkutei Sichos Vol. 9, pg. 175-183
Translated by Boruch Merkur

[Continued from last issue]

10. This concept is alluded to in Rashi's wording of the phrase, "He has inscribed redemption for Himself when they **will be redeemed**" [in the passive tense]. For, at first glance, it will be readily apparent that the redemption of the Jewish people will be by the hand of G-d, as it is **explicitly** mentioned in several places and as Rashi mentions (in the section beginning with the words, "Moreover, we could say"), "He personally...hold[s] the hand of every single person." Why then does Rashi employ the phrase, "when they will be redeemed," suggesting that they will be redeemed in a manner that is virtually automatic (instead of, "when He redeems them" [which would emphasize the role of G-d in the process of redemption])?

The answer emerges from a discussion⁴⁹ of two different descriptions of G-d's Creation. Creation, as it is attributed to G-d's name Elokim, is described as being [active], "Elokim **created**," whereas Creation as it is associated with the aspect of G-d signified by the word "He," [with its connotation of being] hidden and concealed, is described as: "He commanded and

they were created" [in the passive tense].

The aspect of Divinity that is connected with redeeming every Jew **individually**, "every single person **from his place** [in exile]," comes about through "**His hands**, etc." [insofar as He "hold[s] the hand of every single person"], and thus it is self-evident that it is G-d Who "holds the hand, etc." Whereas, when speaking of how "(He has inscribed redemption for) **Himself**," signifying the very Essence of G-d, which will occur "when they will be redeemed," the complete redemption of the entire Jewish body⁵⁰ – at **that** level, "they will be redeemed" in a manner that is virtually automatic.

11. Another concept is alluded to in the commentary of Rashi we are discussing:

Notwithstanding the fact that the concept of "He has inscribed redemption for Himself when they will be redeemed" will take place after the completion of

“He...literally hold[s] the hand of every single person [to extract each one] from his place [in exile],” nevertheless, Rashi first mentions the concept of “when they will be redeemed, etc.” and only then “He...literally hold[s] the hand of every single person, etc.” The reason for this [counterintuitive] order is that the redemption of the **entire Jewish people** is the purpose⁵¹ that brings to “He...literally hold[s] the hand of every single person.”⁵²

Rashi thereby introduces an instruction in the service of G-d. Namely, when a Jew wishes to redeem himself from his personal “exile,” he must recognize and do all that is dependent upon him so that **all** Jews should also leave “exile.”

Indeed, one might otherwise think as follows. So-and-so is at the depths of lowliness, to the extent that he is presently still **in exile**, whereas he is at the ultimate height, already “prepared” for the Redemption. If so, why should his redemption be bound up with and dependent upon **another’s**? However, the verse at the beginning of the Torah portion Nitzavim teaches us that even the “stance” (*nitzavim*) of “**your leaders**” (*rosheichem*) can come about only after it has been established that “**All of you** stand together today,” an expression which includes even “those of you who chop wood and those of you who draw water.”

When we follow this order, we have the promise that “All of you stand together today” – a reference to the day of great judgment (Rosh HaShana)” – namely, that we stand⁵³ and are found to be meritorious in

judgment,⁵⁴ and we receive an inscription and sealing for a good and sweet year, including a year of redemption,⁵⁵ “G-d, your L-rd, will return your captivity,” meaning that G-d will personally extract **every Jew** – “You, the Jewish people, shall be gathered one by one” – very soon indeed.

(From the address of Shabbos Parshas Nitzavim VaYeilech 5727)

NOTES:

49 *Likkutei Torah* Shir HaShirim 14c, discourse beginning with the words, “Thus the poets will say,” 5691, 5684, **and in several other places.**

50 See Footnote 50 in the original.

51 See Footnote 51 in the original.

52 Similarly with regard to every individual person, first he redeems the very essence of his soul (the aspect of Tziyon), which transcends division, and thereafter he redeems the revealed powers [of the soul] (“every single person”), and then also his Animal Soul and body, which are equated in terms of superficiality to the gentile nations (“the returnees of the **Ammonite people**”).

53 As per the commentary of **Rashi** (VaYeishev 37:7), “‘stood upright’ (*nitzava*) – it remained standing erect in its place.”

54 See the teaching of the Baal Shem Tov in *HaYom Yom*, pg. 90.

55 See Footnote 52 in the original.

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7-13 MAR-CHESHVAN

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

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

7 MARCHESHVAN: SANCTIFICATION OF THE MOON – SIGN FOR THE JEWISH PEOPLE THAT THEY WILL ALSO BE RENEWED

There is a further explanation of the greatness of the spiritual elevation attributed to *Kiddush Levana* (The Sanctification of the Moon), as our Sages, of blessed memory, have said (Sanhedrin 42a): "All those who bless the month in its proper time are considered as if they have greeted the Sh'china"... Though the Jewish People have not merited to witness the Sh'china and are far from greeting it in their exile, nevertheless, the renewal of the moon is a sign for the Jewish People that they will also be renewed in order to glorify their Creator by greeting Moshiach.

Thus, when we bless the month in its proper time, which is a sign that we will be renewed in the future as [the moon] is, it is as if we greeted Moshiach.

(sicha, Shabbos Parshas Noach 5752)

8 MARCHESHVAN: SANCTIFICATION OF THE MOON – ACTION TO BRING THE REDEMPTION

Thus, it is understood that when we make a proper accounting (on the subject of the Redemption), the matter must be expressed with an increase of care and stringency in [the fulfillment of] *Kiddush Levana* (The Sanctification of the Moon).

First and foremost, we must take care and strive to do *Kiddush Levana* in proper and befitting clothes, in the street – "the king's glory is in a multitude of people" – even in those places where they have yet to be meticulous on this matter (since they dwell among Gentiles), including also the care regarding the time for *Kiddush Levana*.

Furthermore, and most importantly, the Sanctification of the Moon should be with the special purpose of hastening and bringing about the immediate arrival of Dovid Malka M'shichei, through the increased demand and request for the Redemption, as is said at the conclusion of *Kiddush Levana*: And they shall seek Hashem their G-d and Dovid their king. Amen.

(sicha, Shabbos Parshas Noach 5752)

9 MARCHESHVAN: THE THIRD BEIS HA'MIKDASH – THE CULMINATION OF ITS SPIRITUAL INFLUENCE WILL PENETRATE THE ENTIRE WORLD

At the dedication of the Third Beis HaMikdash, “the Sanctuary which Your hands, Hashem, have established,” there will then be revealed the concept of “I will come to you and bless you in every place where I mention My Name” (as is written at the conclusion of the reading of the Ten Commandments at the time of Mattan Torah) throughout the entire world (literally “in every place”).

This means that the culmination of the Beis HaMikdash, where “the Kohanim were given permission to mention G-d’s Ineffable Name at the Priestly Blessing,” will be revealed and instilled within the entire world, as is written, “on that day G-d will be One and His Name will be One” – “just as I am written, so too I am called” – since the whole world will be a dwelling place for Him in the lower realms (as exemplified by the Mishkan and the Beis HaMikdash).

The world is already prepared! When a Jew does his avoda properly...he will see how the world, its nature, and the gentile nations help him in his avoda.

(Kuntres Shabbos Nachamu 5750)

10 MARCHESHVAN: THE BEIS HA'MIKDASH – IF WE WOULD HAVE MERITED, THE FIRST WOULD HAVE BEEN THE LAST

The quality of the Future Beis HaMikdash, “the Sanctuary which Your hands, Hashem, have established” (with two hands, when G-d will reign forever and ever, in the Future to Come, for the entire kingship is His), was already stated at *Shiras HaYam* (the Song of the Sea) in relation to the building of the Beis HaMikdash, which they were required to build immediately upon their entry into Eretz Yisroel, and according to the saying of our Rabbis, of blessed memory, “If the Jewish People would have merited it, they would have entered the land after having ascended from the sea.”

Thus, the entry into Eretz Yisroel (through Moshe) would have been eternal with no exile to follow, and the building of the Beis HaMikdash would have been eternal, followed by no destruction.

(sicha, Shabbos Parshas Matos-Massei 5751)

11 MARCHESHVAN: MAKING A DWELLING PLACE FOR G-D IN THE LOWER REALMS

The Divine purpose to the Creation of the world is “a dwelling place in the lower realms” (Tanchuma, Parshas Naso 16), to make the very lowest, “of which there is no lower,” into “a dwelling place and abode for Him” (*Tanya*, Chapter 36).

This purpose was not carried out in its fullest sense in the Mishkan and the Beis HaMikdash (where the indwelling of the Sh’china was seen with our physical eyes), but specifically through the avoda in the time of the exile, when the physicality of the world is at its full strength, by transforming this physicality, even at its very lowest level, into a “dwelling place” for Him.

(Likkutei Sichos, Vol. 16, pg. 293)

12 MARCHESHVAN: THE AVODA TO BRING THE REDEMPTION – RECEIVING HELP FROM THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD

The question is asked: What will the world and the nations of the world have to say about a Jew doing his avoda of “spreading the wellsprings outward,” and specifically in hastening the True and Complete Redemption, as they don’t understand what it all means? Although this is a great and lofty avoda, nevertheless, a person will claim that it seems that we still have to give consideration to the

world!

The answer: The world is already prepared! When a Jew does his avoda properly – in a manner that is higher than measure and limitation, together with the fact that it is clothed in the vessels of nature’s garments – he will see how the world, its nature, and the gentile nations help him in his avoda.

(sicha, Shabbos Parshas Korach 5751)

13 MARCHESHVAN: HOW IS IT POSSIBLE THAT SPECIFICALLY THIS ORPHANED GENERATION WILL MERIT REDEMPTION? (A)

There is a well-known parable brought in Musar s’farim that when a dwarf stands on top of a giant, he is able to see further than the giant can.

The first generations were giants, and we are dwarfs in comparison to them. Nevertheless, since the avoda of our generation comes after their avoda, it is specifically [our avoda] that will bring the Redemption.

(sicha, Acharon Shel Pesach 5742)

HOW DO YOU MEASURE SUCCESS?

By Rabbi Shabtai Slavaticki, Shliach in Antwerp, Belgium

THE ROOTS OF SUCCESS

Many people want to know how to succeed in life. What is the recipe for success?

First of all (and this is true for all things in life), you need to define what you mean by success. We live according to the definitions that we assign things, knowingly or unknowingly. For example, a woman might define a good mother as one who prepares good food for her children and takes care of their cleanliness and health. That's fine. The problem begins if she stops there and doesn't expand her sphere of responsibility.

Someone asked the Alter Rebbe what the source of success (*hatzlacha*) is. Everything in our world is derived from supernal worlds. For example, every food is derived from a particular *s'fira*. Sugar devolves from the world of *chesed*, whereas onions are from the *midda* of *g'vura*. When the Alter Rebbe was in jail, he ate honey (*chesed*) with radish (*g'vura*), since he wanted to incorporate both *middos*.

There are people who go on diets and lose weight while other people follow the same diet and are not as successful in losing weight. The reason is that every person has foods that pertain to the source of his *neshama*, and what is good for one person is not necessarily good for someone else.

If so, where does success come

from? The Alter Rebbe answered, "Success does not devolve from the *middos* but from *keser* (crown), which is above the *s'firos*."

What connection does success have with *keser*? Why do we need *keser* in order to be successful?

Every *midda* expresses one aspect of the soul. When I help someone, I express my attribute of *chesed*. When I have pity on someone, it is derived from my attribute of *tiferes*. What is the inner point which is above the *middos*, which is the source of all the *middos*? That is *keser*. *Keser* is the person's Higher Self, which is not expressed in any particular way. *Keser* does not have its own independent substantive existence; *keser* expresses the innermost being of the king which is above qualities, above any expression. When a person sits in a room alone and closes his eyes, not moving towards anyone or anything, that is *keser*.

True inner success is derived and sourced in *keser*, **when a person is free of all attributes, middos, and limitations.**

SIMCHAS TORAH AS A MODEL

How do we attain this utter essential simplicity? How do we go out of our limitations?

The time that the Rebbe showed the most joy and was most "revealed," was Simchas Torah. Chassidim knew that the *hakafos*

"I felt dizzy – the man said – and I could not make Kiddush. I excused myself and went to my room with a bottle of vodka. I poured myself cup after cup until I fell asleep. I felt that if I stayed awake, I would not be able to withstand the test."

were a tremendously auspicious time and many people achieved salvation then.

One time, during *hakafos*, someone asked the Rebbe for a *bracha* for children. The Rebbe said, "There is a decree in heaven against you, but if you go out of your limitations, Hashem will also go out of His (as it were) limitations. Help others beyond your ability to do so, and Hashem will help you." Today, this person has several children.



Rabbi Shabtai Slavaticki

If a person wants to tap into the innermost core of his soul, he needs to go out of his limitations. There is an aphorism from the Rebbe Rayatz that goes, “At what point does Hashem begin? Where man ends.” When a person feels he attained the pinnacle, that he squeezed out the last of his strength and cannot do more, and still and all, he makes another little effort – that’s where Hashem begins.

A well-to-do Lubavitcher asked the Rebbe, “Where does the mitzva of tz’daka begin for me?” The Rebbe answered, “For you, the mitzva of tz’daka begins when it hurts, when it’s difficult for you to give.” When a person puts \$5 in a pushka and it’s hard for him, he fulfilled the mitzva of tz’daka. To Hashem, success is measured by your investment, your effort. That’s where a person is liberated from his animal soul and moves from the counterfeit “I” to the genuine “I.”

STRETCH ANOTHER LITTLE BIT

One Simchas Torah, I led the prayer service at the *amud*. The Chabad custom is that when the chazan davens on Simchas Torah, he makes a somersault at the end of the davening. The idea of a somersault is to express the greatness of *kabbalas ol* (acceptance of the yoke, submission) with the head down below and the feet up.

When the davening was over I made a somersault and broke my leg. After a few weeks in a cast, the fracture knitted together and the cast was removed. However, since the ankle muscles hadn’t been used in a long time, I had to do physiotherapy to get my leg back into shape and normal functioning.

On one visit to the physiotherapist, he asked me to stretch my leg as much as I could. I did so and he asked for more. I tried harder and stretched it some more and once again he asked me to stretch it a bit more. I bit my lips and stretched a bit more. Then he explained, “What you do naturally is not enough. If you want to restore your leg and awaken the strength hidden within it, you have to stretch the muscle more than usual. It’s only when you make the effort and reach for your utmost that you release its dormant powers.”

This sums up our avoda here in



Artwork by R' Zalman Kleinman

this world. If we want to succeed, we need to go out of that which limits us, to stretch another little bit. And then we will discover incredible strengths within us.

BOTTLE OR CUP?

R' Mendel Futerfas once farbrenged with bachurim and the question being discussed was what does Hashem want of us. On the table was a bottle of vodka. R' Mendel opened the bottle and poured some vodka into a cup and asked, "Which is better, the bottle or the cup?"

One of the bachurim answered that the bottle was better since it contained more vodka. R' Mendel said, "It's true that the bottle contains more, but the cup is full! Hashem doesn't want more; **He wants full.**" In other words, Hashem doesn't demand that we do more than someone else but that we use the abilities we were given to their fullest.

A person who learns four or five lines of Gemara every day, which requires a lot of effort for him, is greater than someone who learns a folio of Gemara a day but, according to his abilities, can learn more. Success is not measured in quantity but in quality.

On the verse, "thus shall you say to the House of Yaakov and relate to the B'nei Yisroel," the Gemara says, "House of Yaakov refers to the women." The Midrash asks, why did the women precede the men? The Midrash answers, "Greater is the promise that Hashem promised to women." The Midrash goes on to ask, "What merit do women have? In that they send their husbands and sons to study Torah."

This is surprising, for a man exerts himself in study, yet the Torah puts the women first. Why? The answer is because she sends her husband and sons...

Success is defined by how much

I go out of my ego and liberate myself from that which confines me. When a man sits and learns, he sharpens his mind, he engages in intellectual discussions, he gets smicha and people respect him. He enjoys his learning. The woman is behind the scenes and has no enjoyment from the actual learning. Her sacrifice is greater and that is why her success is greater.

We say every Friday night, "She considers a field and purchases it, and plants a vineyard with the fruit of her labors." The success of the woman is in her effort, "you toiled and found, believe that." The toiling is the "find." Without toiling, there can be no finding.

AN EXTRAORDINARY WAY OF OBSERVING SHABBOS

In our community in Antwerp, there is a special person, a diamond merchant, who was not that religiously observant in the past. One day he called me and said, "I must meet with you, as soon as possible. I have to discuss something urgent with you."

We met right away and this is what he told me. "As you know, a few weeks ago I decided to keep Shabbos. Thank G-d it went well, until yesterday, until the big diamond trade show. On this Shabbos, which is close to the beginning of the secular new year, the diamond business peaks. It's the season for diamonds.

"That Shabbos, on my way back from shul, I passed the street where my store is located. All the stores on the street were open and had long lines of customers. My heart sank and I found it hard to stand and watch. If that wasn't enough, my neighbor asked me, 'What happened? Why isn't your store open?'

"I tried to explain that I had started observing Shabbos and that

is why my store was closed. He said, 'Are you crazy? To close today? Give G-d all the Sabbaths of the rest of the year and you take this one.'

"That was too much for me. We parted and I hurried home. My family was waiting for me to say Kiddush. I went over to the table and held the cup with my head racing. Should I open the store or not? I felt dizzy and that I could not make Kiddush. I excused myself and went to my room with a bottle of vodka. I poured myself cup after cup until I fell asleep. I felt that if I stayed awake, I would not be able to withstand the test. That is the reason I'm telling you the whole story. I would like a tikkun for this pathetic Shabbos, without Kiddush and without a meal."

When I heard this, I was tremendously moved by the sincerity of this Jew who had just begun observing Shabbos and who had had such mesirus nefesh. Tears came to my eyes and when he saw my reaction he was taken aback. He literally turned pale and he asked me, "Is it such a pity on me? Is there no way of rectifying what I did?"

I said, "I am crying because I'm moved, not because I'm sad. I am thinking about how Hashem looked at your Shabbos, and how He looked at my Shabbos. I sat with my family around the table and we sang niggunim, said divrei Torah, ate delicious food, and really enjoyed Shabbos. I think of your Shabbos and ask myself, which Shabbos did Hashem enjoy more?

"I think He enjoyed your Shabbos more. You went out of yourself; you were ready to sacrifice, to pay a steep price in order to keep Shabbos, and that's why you were far more successful, because success is measured by how far a person is willing to go. When a person sacrifices himself, he connects with the G-dliness within him, and that is the ultimate success."

THE REBBE & THE JOURNALIST

By Rabbi Sholom Yaakov Chazan

*In the winter of 5740, journalist Shlomo Shamir criticized the Igud HaRabbanim's part-day fast and was, in turn, sharply criticized by the Rebbe at a farbrengen. Shamir, who greatly admired the Rebbe, asked the Rebbe to forgive him. The Rebbe responded with guidance on how he should write. * I spoke with Mr. Shamir and heard a fascinating account of his lengthy yechiduyos with the Rebbe and about their relationship.*

THE REBBE: THE SITUATION IS TERRIBLE

Winter 5740/1979. At the farbrengens, the Rebbe warned about the dangerous situation in the world and repeatedly declared “the situation is terrible and frightening.” The Rebbe said the situation was so dangerous that it would be proper to declare a part-day fast. “It’s just that the approach of Chassidus does not endorse fasting,” said the Rebbe. “I don’t want to call for a part-day fast, but if there will be rabbis who understand the gravity of the situation who establish a part-day fast, I will participate.”

In the middle of Kislev there was an ad in major Jewish newspapers, signed by the Igud HaRabbanim of the US that called for a “day of prayer and partial fasting” on Thursday 23 Kislev. The reason given was, “the Jewish people in Eretz Yisroel and in the Diaspora are in a frightening and terrible situation with a great danger hovering over them, both physically and spiritually.” The rabbis of Igud HaRabbanim signed, as did other rabbis from the US, Canada, and Mexico.

After the ad was printed in the newspapers, the Rebbe publicly

approved the initiative. At the Yud-Tes Kislev farbrengen he said that although the approach of Chassidus is to negate fasting, nevertheless, since the rabbis decided that the grave situation justified a proclamation of a part-day fast, he would join them. The Rebbe called on all Chabad Chassidim around the world to join in this fast.

The Rebbe said that the residents of Crown Heights were obligated in this fast since the rav of Crown Heights had signed the announcement. Since the Rebbe himself was also included among the residents of Crown Heights, all those who were associated with him, would certainly also participate in this fast.

The rabbis’ announcement, and the Rebbe publicly joining in the part-day fast, caused a spiritual arousal amongst Jewish communities worldwide. Shluchim around the world joined the part-day fast and tried to include the members of their communities. Hundreds of thousands of Jews fasted and said T’hillim, as the rabbis said to do, in order to annul the decrees hovering over the Jewish people.

SHLOMO SHAMIR: WHY FAST?

At this time, an article appeared in the *Algemeiner Journal* by journalist Shlomo Shamir, called, “Why a fast all of a sudden?”

Shamir wrote, “I have no doubt, not even for a moment, that the Igud HaRabbanim and the other rabbis who signed the ad are worried about the terrible situation in Eretz Yisroel and within the Jewish world in general. However, it’s hard to understand how the current situation is any worse than it was three or four months ago. How was the situation in Eretz Yisroel and the Jewish world in general better three or four months ago, than it is now?”

In the article, based on rational logic and even on halachic and Chassidic ideas, Shamir cooled off the inspiration and said that to the best of his knowledge, nothing special happened in recent months and therefore there was no reason to impose a fast on the public.

Shamir attacked the Orthodox leadership that could not unite around any one issue, noting that every group fought for that which they held dear and refused to join the battles of other groups. He ended his article saying: Let’s stop fooling ourselves. As long as this type of leadership is what we have in the chareidi camp, with each group fending for itself, the situation will continue to remain difficult, as it is today, and as it has been. “No day of

prayer and fasting will help.”

The editor of the *Algemeiner Journal*, R’ Gershon Ber Jacobson a”h, a Chabad Chassid through and through, who heard the Rebbe at farbrengens talking about the state of the world, arousing people to do something and then joining the rabbanim in calling for a part-time fast, decided to respond to Shamir’s article in the same issue. In an article called, “Why should we fast?” he wrote, “If there are rabbis and leaders who declare a fast day and inspire Jews to give tz’daka and to repent and pray to Hashem that He save us from this terrible situation, we ought to say, ‘yasher ko’ach’ for their initiative in extricating Jews from despair.

“To come and say, as Shlomo Shamir did, that the fast won’t help, that prayer won’t help, and that in general he doesn’t understand why they decided to call for a fast day now and not a month ago, simply cools people off and adversely

affects the inspiration that the rabbanim seek to generate via the fast.”

The newspaper, with these two articles, was published on the fast day, and thousands of readers got caught up in the controversy surrounding the two opinion pieces. Some sided with Mr. Shamir, while others championed R’ Jacobson’s point of view.

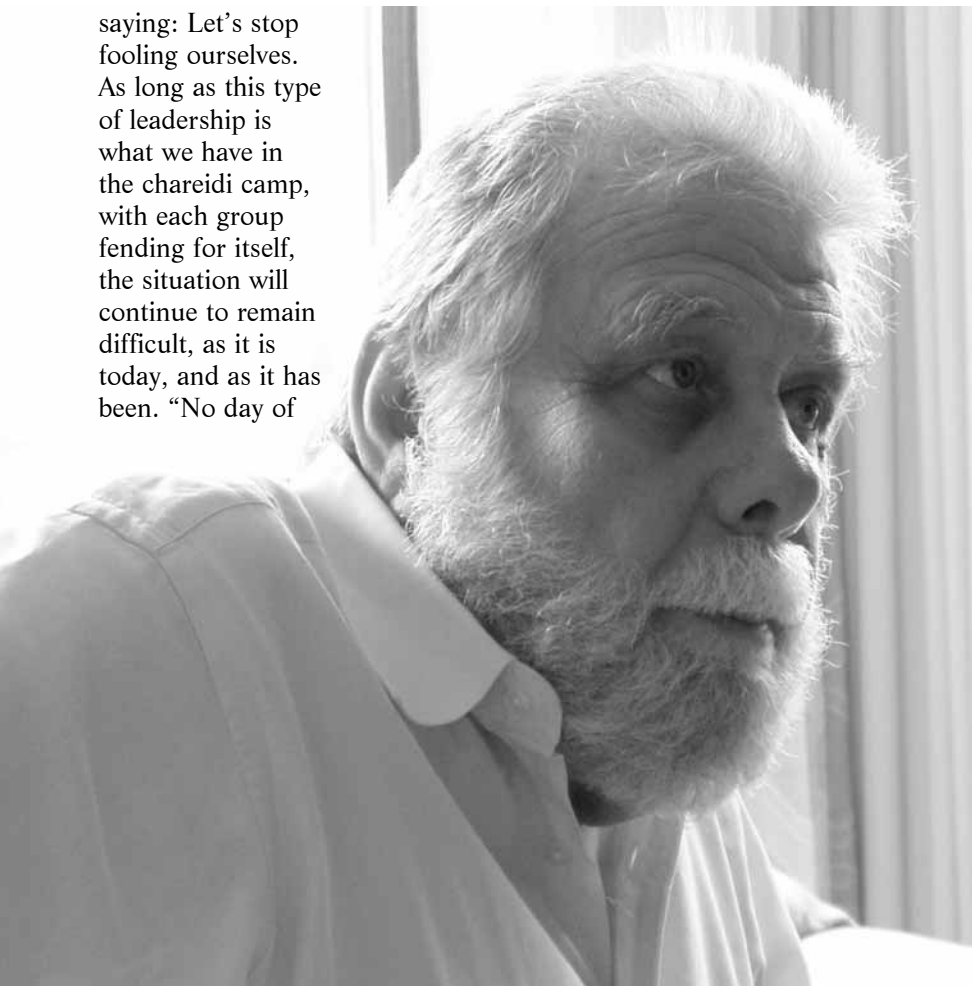
THE REBBE: I HAVE THE BEST SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND I SAY THAT THE SITUATION IS GETTING WORSE!

Two days later, during a farbrengen on Motzaei Shabbos VaYeishev, the Rebbe referred at length to Shamir’s article and sharply attacked it:

“There sits a journalist, who uses the ability to write which Hashem gives him, and he writes an entire article that makes a mockery of the Torah and the force of piskei din of rabbanim. Many Jews fasted, prayed, and gave tz’daka on the day the article was published, and he wasn’t ashamed to write: Why did you say T’hillim, why did you give tz’daka, why did you daven, why did you fast? Why today of all days?

“He thinks that as a journalist with sources of information, and being an expert in politics, that he knows everything. That is why he declares that there is no difference between the situation today and the situation of a few months ago, that it didn’t get worse.

“He ought to know that just as he is clever when it comes to politics, there are other clever people around, especially when the others have better connections than he, connections that he doesn’t have. Based on this knowledge, it is said in public, in a holy place, in front of dozens of Jewish people, that the



situation is terrible and frightening, and in recent weeks the situation has gotten worse!

“What ought a normal person, not religious, just a logical person, do before writing an opinion on this subject? To ask how the situation is worse? Yes, you are clever, you are the writer, you are the posek and you are the one who has to give everyone your opinions.

Nevertheless, you ought to take into consideration what someone else said, especially when that person repeats it time and again, in a holy place, in public, and asks that it be publicized! You should have come and asked: Perhaps you can tell me, at least secretly, how is the world in a terrible state?

“If it doesn’t suit you to come here, then you can send someone else! If it doesn’t suit you that people should know that you seek someone else’s opinion, send someone and ask anonymously! It doesn’t entail great effort to go somewhere, to someone, and to ask: Since you said several times that the situation in the world is terrible and frightening, and you said that you say this with full responsibility, perhaps I can know how the world situation is terrible and frightening?

“As long as they said the situation is terrible but didn’t connect it with any concrete action, he kept quiet. It was only when they connected it with saying T’hillim that he couldn’t tolerate it and immediately publicized his article, with logical explanations and explanations from *Shulchan Aruch*, and at length.

“This is a Jew with a full beard, a Chassidic Jew, not a Lubavitcher Chassid, but a Chassid. Go and ask your Rebbe whether it’s permissible to write like that!

“Why do I speak against this? Because there are Jews who think, when they see something written in the paper, that it’s true, especially

when it’s written in a religious paper...”

At the farbrengen, the Rebbe explained at length why the state of the world was awful. At that time, the Iranian hostage crisis was going on and the Rebbe saw this crisis as a strategic change in America’s position as a superpower. “When this one rises, the other falls,” said the Rebbe, and he concluded that the fall of the US meant the elevation of the Soviet Union.

Furthermore, the Rebbe mentioned that there were some Jews among the hostages, and most importantly, tens of thousands of Jews lived in Iran and they were in great danger.

When America is strong, it can readily support Israel, but now, when America is not in good shape, and it needs to find favor in the eyes of the Arab nations, its support of Israel is diminished and this itself endangers Israel. The Rebbe mentioned that in recent weeks Israel gave their oil fields to Egypt, thus undermining the impregnability of Israel’s security. All this was in addition to Israel’s economy which was in enormous trouble at the time.

If all that wasn’t enough, the state of Judaism in the world, and the state of morality in Israel had reached a low point. All this, said the Rebbe, were open things that were written about in the newspapers. Every journalist ought to know about them. When these events are properly analyzed, one would immediately conclude that the situation is terrible and frightening.

(At this farbrengen, when the Rebbe mentioned that the Jews in Iran were in great danger, the Rebbe said it was dangerous to publicize this and it was enough that it was spoken. For this reason, the sicha quoted in the earlier paragraphs was not published at the time, and it is being quoted here for the first time, from a tape of the farbrengen.)

SHAMIR CHANGES HIS APPROACH: THE SITUATION IS REALLY SERIOUS AND FASTING WILL HELP

The readers of the *Algemeiner Journal* who had bought the paper the week before, rubbed their eyes in disbelief when they read Shamir’s next article which said, “I believe with perfect faith that when a Jew says a chapter of T’hillim, it has an effect up to the Throne of Glory; I believe with perfect faith that if a minyan of observant Jews sits together in brotherly love and they say I’chaim or fast or say Slichos and cry bitterly, that it has the power to annul terrible decrees.

“I also know that the state of Jews all over and especially in Eretz Yisroel is very serious. The situation grows worse and since I know that it has recently grown more grave and critical, I believe that Jews ought to fast, to pray, to say T’hillim, and to ask Hashem to send salvation. I also maintain that we ought to express our thanks to all the rabbanim and askanim who saw fit to declare a part-day fast last Thursday.

“I also believe that in these difficult times one cannot fulfill his obligation only by declaring a fast, and we cannot delude ourselves that just a fast will help us. One of the dangers in this difficult time is that we can fool ourselves and think that with a fast alone we’ve done all we can under the circumstances.

“I write this since in my column of last week, I gave the impression that I am opposed to fasts or that I intended to cool off or diminish from the importance of a fast day. Perhaps I was not careful enough and therefore a mistaken impression was made. I explicitly believe with perfect faith that everything the g’dolei ha’Torah pasken, and what tzaddikim decree should be done,



Jews need to fulfill. I believe with perfect faith in tzaddikim, and when g'dolei ha'Torah tell Jews to fast, Heaven forbid that I should say otherwise or argue with their decision. I am not capable of doing things like that."

SHAMIR ASKS THE REBBE TO FORGIVE HIM

What caused this drastic change in Shlomo Shamir's position? This week, I visited his home in Brooklyn and asked to hear about what happened, as well as about his relationship with the Rebbe. I met a journalist with youthful vigor who did not hesitate to state his opinion on every current topic, yet full of admiration for, and bittul, to the Rebbe.

When I asked him about the fast and the about-face he had made over the course of a week from his disdainful article to an article full of emuna and respect, he told me what

happened:

"When I saw the ad about the fast, I didn't know that the Lubavitcher Rebbe had given his approval. I thought it was the idea of a few rabbis. Since I suspected that these were rabbis who didn't do anything to improve the situation, other than announce a fast, I sharply criticized the announcement about the fast and pointed at the need for important other steps to be made to unite the chareidi camp.

"Unfortunately, the way the article read left room for the reader to conclude that I don't believe in the power of fasting to annul bad decrees. The Rebbe, fearing that my article might cool off the faith of simple Jews, sharply attacked the article.

"Right after the farbrengen, when I heard what the Rebbe had said, especially after I heard that it was said with great sorrow, I felt terrible. I immediately wrote a new column, clarifying that I believe with

perfect faith in the power of spiritual actions, like fasting and prayer, to change a bad decree. Once I knew that the Rebbe said the situation was dire, and after the Rebbe explained the changes on the world map, I was convinced that the situation was indeed grim, and I wrote that in the second article too.

"At the same time, I felt the need to write to the Rebbe and to clarify what I meant in my article, as well as to ask forgiveness for causing the Rebbe anguish.

"This is what I wrote to the Rebbe: 'I was told what the Rebbe said about the article I wrote in the *Algemeiner Journal*. The truth is that I was not referring to Lubavitch in my article, but to other movements and organizations within Orthodox Jewry, for how could an intelligent person suspect the Lubavitch movement of inaction? ... What I wrote wasn't properly understood and I did not intend to say that fasting and prayer are not helpful,

but that it is not enough and we need to take action to improve the serious situation.'

"I added, 'The very idea that the Rebbe was aggravated because of what I wrote in my column, and he is pained by my error, does not give me rest and I ask forgiveness from the Rebbe.'

"After I wrote this letter to the Rebbe, I wanted to be sure that whoever read my first column would know that I did not intend to disparage the idea of a fast. This is why, in my next column I made it quite clear so that everybody would know that I am a believing Jew and I don't contest the authority of

WORKING FOR THE ALGEMEINER JOURNAL

In New York I had the privilege of meeting and working with the editor of the *Algemeiner Journal*, Rabbi Gershon Ber Jacobson. He was a very special man, very close to the Rebbe. He once told me that he wanted to change the name of the newspaper to something that sounded more Lubavitch, but the Rebbe did not agree. The Rebbe wanted the paper to be something of general interest, not just for Lubavitchers. For this reason, I was able to write my opinions, even though they were often the opposite of the Rebbe's opinions.

R' Gershon didn't make a move without asking the Rebbe. I am sure that this z'chus stands by the paper today, for after his passing the paper is flourishing. It is only in the Rebbe's z'chus that the paper has even improved. R' Gershon's son, R' Simon and R' Yossi, are very talented. I am amazed by their work every week.

rabbanim, especially when they are supported by the Rebbe's words."

THE VIEW OF A TRUE JEWISH LEADER

Two weeks after Shamir sent his letter to the Rebbe, he received a long, detailed response:

B"H

**15 Teives 5740
Brooklyn, N.Y.**

Mr. Shlomo Shamir,

I was pleased to receive your letter of 4 Teives. After asking your pardon, certainly for someone such as yourself it is superfluous to point out that something that is written for others, and all the more so when it is publicized to a broad audience – i.e., your intention and goal is to influence others through the publication [of your writing] – what matters is how the reader understands it, and more importantly, the conclusions he derives from what he reads.

It is also obvious that in this letter of mine I absolutely do not mean how it will affect the work of Lubavitch or the relationship with Lubavitch, rather, the impact it has on matters of Judaism in general, including the well-known directive – t'shuva, t'filla, tz'daka remove [the evil decree], etc.

Since Hashem has given you a gift and you are a successful writer, this means that you have discovered the approach of how to impact your readers. In my opinion you need to read the article we are discussing another time, but this time as though you are merely the reader and not the writer, and surmise what the reader's conclusion would be, and whether there is something to correct, and in what manner, if you conclude that it requires correcting. And perhaps include someone objective, who has no prior opinion, to hear a completely objective opinion.

May every one of us use all the opportunities given to us to spread Judaism, Torah and mitzvos, and mainly – action, actual fulfillment of mitzvos in a way of increasing and adding light, as in the lesson of Chanuka, the holiday we have just observed.

At an auspicious time I will mention you and your family at the gravesite of the Rebbe, my father-in-law, including the innermost point - to raise your children, along with your wife, to Torah, chuppa, and good deeds, with expansiveness, both materially and spiritually.

**With blessing,
M. Schneerson**

"In this letter," said Shamir, "the Rebbe gave me an approach to life, how a newspaper journalist ought to treat his writing and his articles. To know what impact his writing can have on an audience and to constantly remember the goal: to spread Judaism by encouraging the fulfillment of mitzvos.

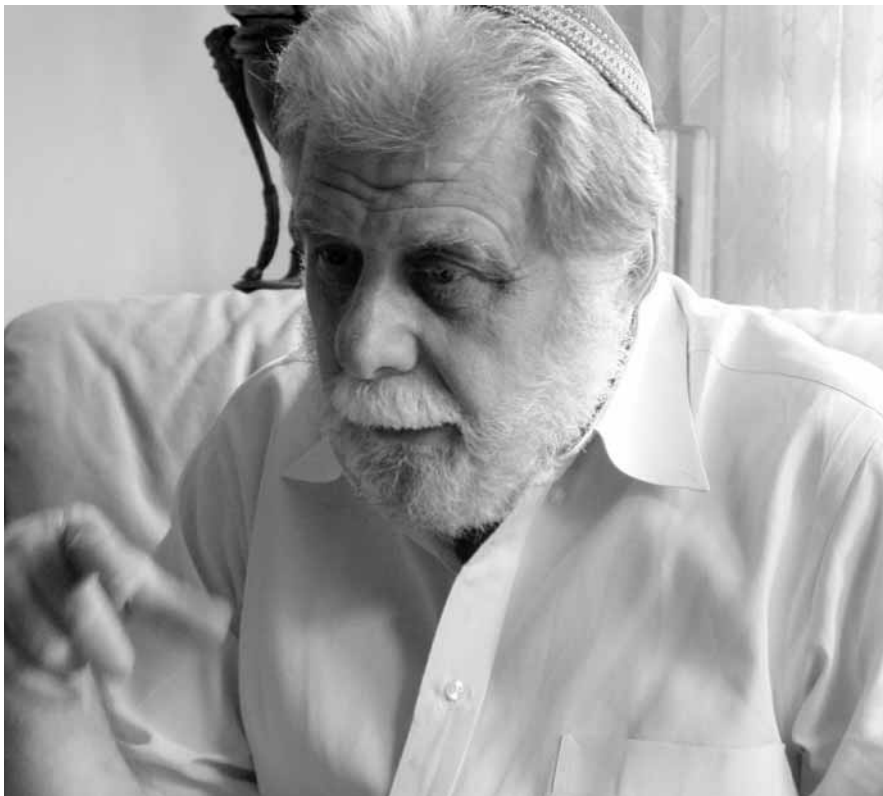
"I am proud that I had the privilege of receiving a letter like this from the Lubavitcher Rebbe. Only a true Jewish leader can see things this way."

THE FIRST YECHIDUS

Shlomo Shamir's connection with Chabad Chassidim began many years before that, in Tel Aviv of the fifties. "My journalism teacher was Shmuel Avidor, the editor of *Panim el Panim*. He was very friendly with Lubavitchers and through him I had the privilege of getting to know the foremost Chabad askanim of the previous generation.

"Till this day I remember with great pleasure our meetings with Pinye Altheus. Because of our meetings I began to frequent the Chabad shul in Nachalat Binyamin, where I met other special Chassidim.

"At the beginning of the seventies



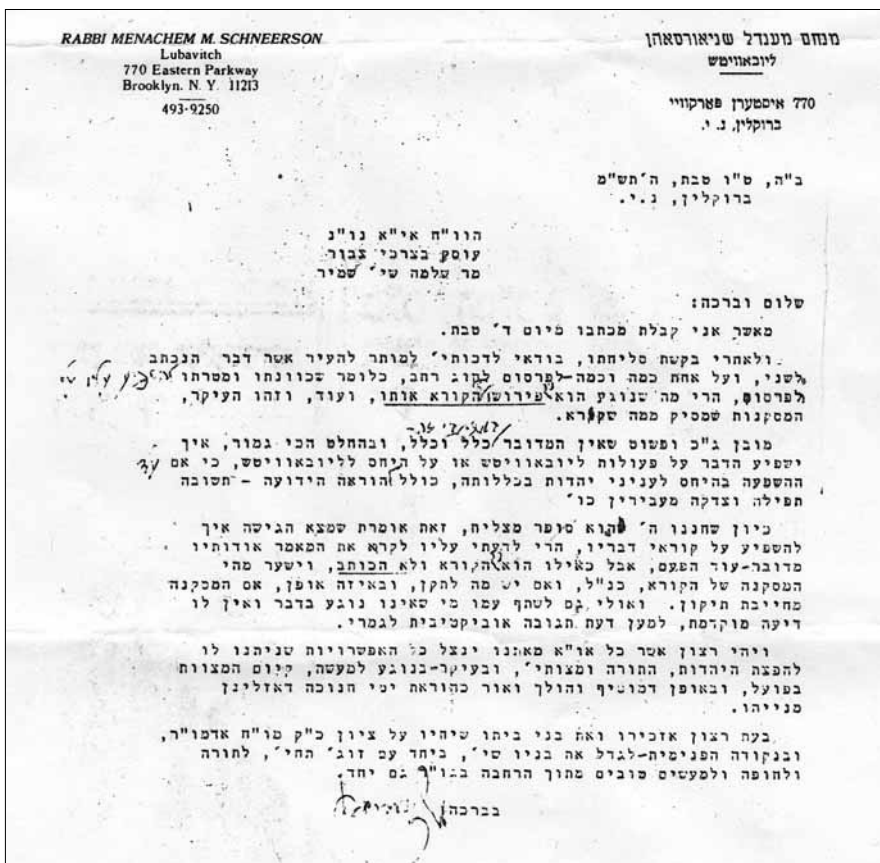
I was sent to New York by *Yediot Acharonot*. Since I come from an illustrious Chassidic family (my maternal grandfather was the brother of the Gerrer Rebbe, the Sfas Emes), I yearned to see the Rebbe.

"I spoke with the secretaries and they arranged a meeting for me. Before the yechidus I prepared a long list of questions. I prepared myself. For many years I had dreamed of meeting with the Rebbe, and there I was, standing at the door to his room, about to enter.

"The secretary opened the door and I walked in. The Rebbe rose up a bit from his chair. He shook my hand and invited me to sit down opposite him. His eyes were blue, his beard was gray, and he had a smile that could melt a pile of snow in New York. Although I am not a Chabad Chassid, I did not dare to sit in the Rebbe's presence and I remained standing throughout the yechidus.

"I was there for two hours. At one in the morning, the door behind me opened and the secretary whispered in Yiddish, 'It's late,' but the Rebbe continued to speak. He spoke for an hour and a half nonstop. He spoke about emuna. It was a long monologue about emuna. Not about the need for emuna, not about the holiness of faith and its importance. Not about ways to bring Jews from far and near to emuna. He spoke about the faith that already exists, that lives within the hearts of all Jews in our time, especially those who live in Eretz Yisroel.

"In his talk, the Rebbe emanated love for the Jewish people, for Eretz Yisroel, and those who live there. Infinite love. He is a big believer in them and even more so, in their faith. He believes that Eretz Yisroel is full of emuna, overflowing its banks, because its people are big believers. They believe in G-d and



The Rebbe's letter to Shlomo Shamir

believe in His promise to Avrohom Avinu – ‘to your children I will give this land.’

“The Rebbe said, ‘Every single resident of Eretz Yisroel is a big believer, sometimes without even knowing it. Eretz Yisroel is a barrel full and overflowing with emuna. What is missing is only the spark to ignite the barrel and cause it to become a conflagration of faith.

‘Take, for example, a Jew living in Eretz Yisroel who belongs to the communist party. He is a communist. I believe that he is a big believer. He sits with his wife and children in a country surrounded by enemies who want to annihilate him and his children. What is the thing that keeps this Jew in Eretz Yisroel? Faith in Marx’s teachings? No, I don’t think so. He sits in Eretz Yisroel, lives there, goes out to defend it now and then, because even without knowing it, he is a believer in G-d and he believes that Eretz Yisroel was given to the Jewish people.

‘We just have to awaken the awareness of his faith within him and with this awareness he will come to fulfill mitzvos. We need to teach him that observing Shabbos, kashrus, and putting on t’fillin, are natural outgrowths of the faith that lives within him.’”

WHICH PATH?

“The Rebbe went on to say, ‘How do we do this? How do we find the way to these great and previous believers? Are religious explanations necessary? Are good and wise leaders necessary? No. There is no need for religious explanation and no need for special leadership by effective leaders. Leaders are needed only in order to create something that is not there, but the emuna is already there, hidden within every Jew, waiting to be redeemed.

‘Only one time does the Torah

call the Jewish nation an army. When they leave Egypt the Torah calls the Jewish people ‘*Tzivos*.’ We are living today in a similar situation. We are about to leave Galus for Geula. The Jewish people today are like an army, one big army. Each of us is a soldier, me and you, the bachur learning in the nearby room. Today, each of us is obligated, and like in an army the first and most important rule is obedience, we too need discipline today.

‘First, our obligation is to fulfill orders and only afterwards to ask questions and for explanations. ‘We will do and we will listen’ was said already. First there is action, and only afterwards, those who feel a need can ask for and hear explanations. Today we don’t need leaders. We ourselves are soldiers and we are required to take action, each one according to his ability. The objective is to ignite the spark.’

“How? The Rebbe had a clear, unequivocal and daring answer. It wasn’t through explanation. Time was pressing. There is no time for explanations. ‘Today we need to demand, not ask, plead and explain, but to demand; to demand as much as possible, that which is hardest, that which is greater. The youth of our days seeks a challenge. They are looking for a difficult mission. The starting point needs to be taking in a lot, demanding a lot. Not asking and pleading and worrying about exaggerated demands. We need to speak to believers with the force and honesty of a person who wants the best for his friend. And in the face of such genuine fortitude, the one from whom we are demanding, will be impacted more than by anything else.

‘We saw,’ said the Rebbe, ‘that only in an emergency, when the fire is burning, are our youth ready for anything, for sacrifice and mesirus nefesh. Our youth want orders, not

debates, and an order to carry out something difficult, backbreaking, not easy. A Jew by nature is not flustered by difficulties. A Jew by nature is a *l’hachisnik* (contrarian). We are a stiff-necked people and a nation of mesirus nefesh. A nation of *davka*’ism.

‘Today they don’t even want to understand a lot as much as to know. The goal of information today is to know, more than to understand. What we need is this – Jewish knowledge, not religious explanations. If someone in Eretz Yisroel has questions, there are more serious and difficult questions about his very desire to live in this land, in Eretz Yisroel, as I said in the beginning.

‘I’m not saying that there isn’t, sometimes, a need to explain, to debate, but we cannot waste lots of time today on debates and explanations. We are living in a time of action and we must demand action, lots of action.’

“The Rebbe said all this to me since he saw my job as a shlichus. The Rebbe emphasized several times in our conversations, in later yechiduyos too, that Hashem gave me the gift of being able to write and I had to use it to spread the wellsprings of Torah and Chassidus.

“The Rebbe asked me a lot about the trends of public opinion in Eretz Yisroel, and about the views of various politicians. He himself demonstrated a rare expertise in everything going on in Eretz Yisroel. He knew everything.”

A DEMANDING FINGER

“At the time, I wrote about this yechidus in *Yediot Acharonot*. I wrote that the Rebbe has long fingers that are very delicate, the fingers of a pianist. When he wanted to emphasize something, he would point a finger – stressing, demanding.

“The Rebbe went on to say,

‘There are many among us who live in despair. They despair about the spiritual situation. They don’t believe that we can do anything or that it can change. Some lift their eyes to heaven and say: Only G-d in heaven can help, can save. They are dangerous. It is very dangerous today to go about in despair and to pin our hopes solely on aid from heaven.

‘My father-in-law, the Rebbe Rayatz, once said to me: The Gemara says that before Moshiach comes chutzpa will abound, etc., and the wisdom of scribes will be derided, etc., and truth will be missing, etc., the face of the generation is like the face of a dog, and the Gemara ends with – and what do we have to rely on, on our Father in heaven.

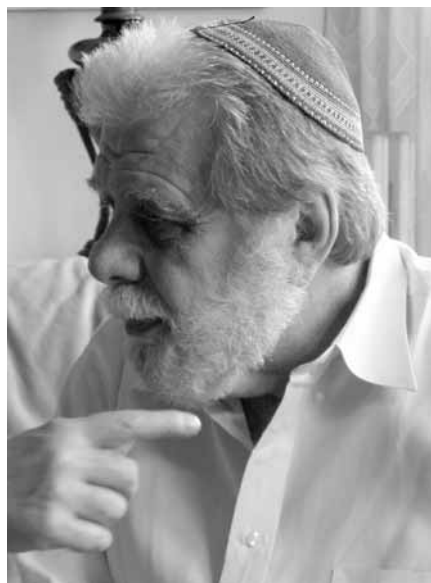
‘My father-in-law explained, after all the serious and difficult things that the Gemara enumerates about the era prior to Moshiach’s coming, it concludes with: and what do we have to rely on, on our Father in heaven. In this serious time, before Moshiach comes, even this relying on our Father in heaven is a serious matter. In other words, these days a Jew may not say: Hashem will help and nothing remains for me to do and nothing will be helped if I do anything.

‘This is a serious and dangerous error. Now each of us has the obligation to do, to bring the spark close to the barrel filled with faith. Every Jew has this spark.

‘I too have Chassidim who despair, who walk about gloomily and ask me: What’s the point of all this work? How will it help to have a Jew, who hasn’t put on t’fillin in decades, put on t’fillin? I answer them: We live in a time of danger to life and in this era even the slightest possibility is not to be overlooked. We have to do everything we can if there is a possibility that it will help and be effective.

‘A person can never know whether his actions made a difference or not. I remember that many years ago, my father-in-law started sending the talmidim of his yeshiva, during vacation, to cities and towns in the south of the US, in order to find Jews and bring them a little Judaism. One day, two talmidim came back, downcast and disappointed. ‘We went around for weeks and were unsuccessful. Nobody listened to us,’ they complained to me.

‘I repeated this to my father-in-law and he said: They don’t even know that they succeeded. Just



today I received a letter from an old woman in one of the towns they visited. She wrote to me that the sight of the two bearded bachurim who visited her aroused in her heart a wave of memories of her father’s home. She asked me to send her s’farim and guidance about how to return to a Jewish life.

‘From this story we learn that the person who takes action should not despair if he does not immediately see the blessing in his work. He can never know when the seed he planted will sprout.’

‘The hour grew late. As a relative

of the Gerrer Rebbe, I went to see him many times, but he spoke very little. This long conversation with the Lubavitcher Rebbe was a big surprise for me, but I enjoyed every minute of it. It was a genuine spiritual experience; there is nothing like it.

‘The Rebbe rose a bit from his chair as a sign that the conversation was over but not yet completed. When I pointed out to him that I had prepared questions and perhaps it would be better if I sent them in the mail, he said, ‘Why in the mail? Please come back again and we will talk.’ He shook my hand and said, as though concluding his long monologue, ‘If you, or anyone, asks: Why do I, of all people, have to take action, I will answer with a question: Why not?’

‘When I left the yechidus, I felt I was floating above the ground. It took me many days to come back to reality. The Rebbe’s penetrating eyes, his pleasant manner of speech, accompanied me for many days after that yechidus.’

A HEAVENLY MAN

‘The first yechidus was followed by others. Although the first yechidus came about because of my journalistic curiosity, the subsequent yechiduyos had nothing to do with my profession. I felt a need to go to the Rebbe. I don’t define myself as a Chassid, but I went to the Rebbe because to me, the Rebbe is everything.

‘Today people don’t understand what is meant by a heavenly man. The Rebbe is an example of a heavenly man. I once asked someone: Can you think of Ashrei single-mindedly, without thinking of anything else? He didn’t believe anybody could do this. Go and tell him that the Lubavitcher Rebbe’s thoughts are preoccupied with k’dusha twenty-fours a day, without a stop.

“I went to the Rebbe because I felt it was a mitzva to go and see him. It was simply important to me to see the Rebbe each time. I went for t’fillos, to farbrengens, and of course for lekach during the time of Yomim Noraim.

“One year, when I went for lekach, I met the photographer Levi Yitzchok Frieden. I knew him back from his days as a newspaper photographer in Eretz Yisroel, before he became a baal t’shuva. I was one of the people who connected him to Chabad. I met him at the journalists club in Tel Aviv and got him a job at Panim el Panim. There he met Chabad Chassidim and did t’shuva and became the unofficial photographer of the Rebbe’s court.

“When we met on line for lekach, we were both very moved. He told me that he could now pay me back for the favor of connecting him to Chabad, and when I would pass by the Rebbe, he would photograph me.

“In general, I shy away from pictures with Admurim. Although I went to the Gerrer Admurim dozens of times, as well as to the previous Belzer Rebbe, I have no pictures with them. But Frieden took a picture and till today I thank him for this. Every so often I look at the picture in which you see the Rebbe giving me lekach, and it inspires me. No doubt about it.

“I see the Rebbe’s influence in my daily life. That is what I absorbed from my meetings with him. To the Rebbe, all of life is Yiddishkait, all is suffused with Torah and avoda. Everybody knows the Rebbe never took a vacation. He is an example of a true leader.”

THE REBBE TOOK AN INTEREST IN THE OSTILA WEDDING

“I had the privilege of having



long yechiduyos. Over two hours long. Later on I realized that in Lubavitch, that’s the equivalent of eternity. The Rebbe spoke to me with great warmth. I think the Rebbe was especially fond of me, also because of my *yichus*. My maternal grandfather, the brother to the Sfas Emes, was beloved by his brother, and in the Sfas Emes’ letters, there are many letters that he wrote my grandfather. I think that because of my *yichus*, the Rebbe treated me with great respect.

“In yechiduyos with the Rebbe, the Rebbe expressed an interest in a book I had edited about the Ostila wedding. This was a grand wedding that took place two hundred years ago, between two Admurim’s families and it was attended by 200 Admurim, led by the elder Admur of the time, the Apter Rav. Those who opposed the approach of Peshischa Chassidim planned to take advantage of this opportunity to place a ban of excommunication on the Chassidim of Peshischa with the consent of all the Admurim.

“They also invited the Admur of

Peshischa, R’ Simcha Bunim, but the Kotzker Rebbe begged him not to attend the wedding and even lay under the wagon wheels. In the end, the Peshischa Rebbe agreed to send a delegation of Chassidim to the wedding. One of them was the Chiddushei HaRim (founder of the Gerrer dynasty), who was then a young man.

“When they arrived at the wedding, there was a situation in which the Apter Rav asked a very difficult question and nobody present could answer it. Then, from the end of the hall, they could hear the voice of the Chiddushei HaRim telling those next to him the answer. The Apter Rav called him over to the dais and asked him to repeat his answer. He was amazed by the answer and asked: Who are you?

“The Chiddushei HaRim said: I am from the smallest of the talmidim of the Peshischa Rebbe. Of course, this created a great tumult and in the end, the excommunication plan was aborted.

“I researched this story and wrote an entire book about it. I still

haven't completed it and it's in manuscript form. When I told the Rebbe about it, he expressed great interest in it and quizzed me about the details.

"A few times, when we met, he asked me when I was publishing it. It was very important to the Rebbe. It was so important to him that one time I was sitting at a Yud-Tes Kislev farbrengen in the crowd when I was suddenly called to come forward. The Rebbe wanted to speak to me.

"I made my way among the thousands of people who stood crowded together and then among the rabbanim and elder Chassidim who sat on the benches behind the Rebbe, and I leaned towards the Rebbe. The Rebbe asked me yet again about the book. I was flabbergasted. In the middle of a Yud-Tes Kislev farbrengen, what concerned the Rebbe? My book."

SHLOMO SHAMIR AND HIS BELIEF IN THE REBBE MH" M

In an article published in *Yediot Acharonot* in 1975, Shamir wrote at length about Lubavitchers' belief that the Rebbe is Moshiach:

"Rebbetzin Schneerson, the Lubavitcher Rebbe's wife, recently expressed her concern about the Rebbe's extremely busy schedule. The Rebbe's secretaries concur that in recent months, the rate of activity has increased and that his energy and workload are incredible. Chassidim whisper that the Rebbe is in the midst of feverish activity and his spirit is agitated and restless. Shluchim of the Rebbe say that more than ever, he is urging them on to fulfill his instructions. Guests from Israel and other countries who met with the Rebbe in yechidus were impressed primarily by his warmth and enthusiasm. As one put it, 'Something burns within him.'

"In the Rebbe's beis midrash in

Brooklyn, elderly Chassidim volunteer to explain the meaning of the feverish activity that characterizes the Rebbe lately. The Geula is coming. The Rebbe is preparing to greet Moshiach. According to them, Geula and Moshiach are not a wish, a prayer, or a dream but something real that is coming closer. They are not people who claim to know the end-time but are interpreting the Rebbe's behavior and what he says. They prove that the Geula is right behind the wall and is coming imminently.

"One of his mekuravim said to me: The Rebbe is preparing the entire nation for Geula, for the coming of Moshiach. All the activities and mitzvaim that he told us to do in recent years, are designed to remove the final obstacles for Moshiach.

"If the Chassidim think the listener remains unconvinced, they don't give up. They simply offer more explanations. The following is pretty much standard fare: the Rebbe Menachem Mendel Schneerson is the seventh generation since the founder of Chabad. He is the seventh leader of the Chabad movement. Moshe Rabbeinu was the seventh generation from Avrohom Avinu and regarding him it says, 'all sevenths are beloved.' The meaning of this is that the seventh receives the spiritual strength and the abilities of the first.

"The Rebbe himself, say the Chassidim, in his first public address that he delivered after he took on the leadership of Chabad, emphasized that the seventh is meant to carry out the shlichus of the first. Therefore, it is clear, that he is the leader who will lead us to Geula."

Based on this article, I found it hard to understand why, when I called Shamir to make an appointment for an interview for this magazine, that he made his

agreement conditional. He said we have to write that he opposes publicizing the Rebbe as Moshiach. I asked him why he opposed it and he said that he thought the Rebbe himself opposed this publicity.

When I told him that the Rebbe referred to himself many times as Moshiach, Shamir didn't believe me. I said I would bring the Rebbe's sichos with me and he could see it for himself.

At the beginning of the interview, I showed him the sichos. At first I showed him the sichos in which the Rebbe says in general that the Nasi of the generation is the Moshiach of the generation. But when he saw the sichos in which the Rebbe says that Moshiach's name is Menachem and

"So why don't you publicize these sichos? Why wasn't I shown these sichos until now?"

also Mendel, and that 770 is "Beis Moshiach," and this is where he will come from first, he said in amazement, "So why don't you publicize these sichos? Why wasn't I shown these sichos until now?"

I saw how a Jew who admires and esteems the Rebbe, understands the belief that the Rebbe is Moshiach the minute he finds out that the Rebbe himself said so in his sichos. As for his questions – why aren't these sichos publicized, why haven't I seen this before, each of us needs to ask ourselves, and go out and get to work!

My thanks to the staff of the Algemeiner Journal who opened their archives for me and helped me prepare this article.

SUCCESS IN FIGHTING THE WARS OF G-D

By Rabbi Sholom Dovber HaLevi Wolpo
Translated By Michael Leib Dobry

In response to requests by our readers, we now present the next segment from “V’Torah Yevakshu MiPihu,” Rabbi Sholom Dovber HaLevi Wolpo’s seifer on the Rebbe’s teachings regarding Chabad chassidus, its approach to emuna, and its various customs.



Similarly, we find regarding the “wars of G-d,” which Moshiach is winning and succeeding on a number of fronts, as the Rebbe has stated himself (Shabbos Parshas Chayei Sara 5752): “We already see in reality the concept of ‘he will fight the wars of G-d’ and how he has already been victorious in a number of respects.” There is no greater example of this than the tremendous victory that the Rebbe promised decades ago how the gates of the Iron Curtain would be opened, Jews would be able to fulfill a life of Torah and mitzvos in the fullest sense throughout the (former) Soviet Union, G-d would remove evil rule from the earth, and how the Moshiach of the generation fights against them and defeats them (see sicha, Vav

Tishrei 5727), and so it has been fulfilled. Today, there is almost no city anywhere in Russia, the Ukraine, Belarus, Kazakhstan, etc., with a Jewish population but without Chabad shluchim on the premises establishing Talmud Torahs, yeshivos, shuls, mikvaos, etc. This represents the realization of his holy and amazing prophecy from decades ago that **the Gentile governments will assist the Jewish People in establishing institutions of Torah and holiness.**

Furthermore, it is known that the Rebbe understood that the agreements made between the United States and Russia, etc., on “the reduction and elimination of weapons and the increase in matters required for the existence of the national and world

economy” represent “the beginning of the fulfillment of the destined ‘And they shall beat their swords into plowshares’ and **“the beginning of the action of Melech HaMoshiach upon the nations...**through the shluchim that he has sent worldwide reaching the farthest corner of the earth in order to spread Torah and Yiddishkait among the entire Jewish People... Furthermore, and most important, the spreading of all matters of goodness, justice, and integrity, even among the nations of the world through the fulfillment of the Seven Noachide Laws... And in the most recent period...this activity has reached a climax – with the breaking of the boundaries of that nation, which had once been engraved on its banner, and proclaimed war

against the spreading of Torah and Yiddishkait, to the point of waging war against the Creator and Ruler of the World... Nevertheless, the activities of the emissaries of the leader of the generation in spreading Torah and Yiddishkait there continued, secretly and with literal self-sacrifice, until recent times when the decree of the regime was nullified and it became possible to continue activities in spreading Torah and Yiddishkait with greater strength and greater fortitude, revealed and with publicity, to the point of the collapse of the previous regime and the establishment of a new regime that proclaimed justice, integrity, and peace on the foundation of faith in the Creator and Ruler of the World.” The Rebbe explains that this continued with the superpower summit meeting, where they decided upon “And they shall beat their swords into plowshares,” as mentioned above – and **“all this came as a result of the activities in spreading of Torah and Yiddishkait, justice and honesty throughout the world, achieved through the leader of our generation, the Moshiach of the generation”** (Shabbos Parshas Mishpatim, Seifer HaSichos 5752, pgs. 363-365).

We also see this in other matters where he has fought. For example, in the battle to preserve the territorial integrity of Eretz Yisroel, the Rebbe maintained his position despite the fact that all streams within world Jewry ridiculed him for his stance, even chareidim. There were even those who actually supported giving away land to the enemy *r”l* and those who silently agreed to territorial compromise. Yet, now that **all of his unheeded warnings have been realized** due

to our many transgressions, everyone admits that he was right and praises his name, as he was literally the only one who initiated the war of G-d not to abandon the life and security of millions of Jews, immediately after the Six Day War. (There can be no question that just as he achieved final victory in his war against the Soviet Union, he will also win this war against the shameful and traitorous Zionist government and all who support it, when he reveals himself and actually brings complete perfection and security to the Holy Land and all who dwell there at the Complete Redemption.)

There is also the subject of “Who is a Jew?” whereby **religious and chareidi sectors joined** the left-wing forces and **prevented** the passage of an amendment to the Law of Return stating that conversion to Judaism must be “according to halacha” – all due to giving precedence to their ministerial positions and government budget allocations or simply because of their determination to wage war against anything connected to Lubavitch. Now, everyone admits to what the Rebbe shlita saw with his clear vision. They have started to wake up to the need to solve the problem, and at the very least, they have begun to make certain that the local rabbinate everywhere throughout Eretz Yisroel make proper clarifications as to a person’s status as a Jew, and not rely upon some false Zionist document.

Yet, even while he has still not achieved total success in some of these matters, the final victory will eventually come, and the events of Gimmel Tammuz 5754 are in no way an indication of failure in “the wars of G-d” (regarding which the Rambam

writes, “or he was killed”), rather according to the Rebbe’s own words on Shabbos Parshas VaYakhel 5710 (Toras Menachem, Vol. 1, pg. 21) regarding the Rebbe Rayatz and the concept of “the king casts aside his own life for the purpose of winning the war.” The Rebbe explains further in his maamer “Basi L’Gani” (5741): “Not only does the king squander his treasures; he even casts aside his own life. We understand from this that the concept of victory, the spiritual attribute of Netzach, **pertains to the king more than his revealed life**, as the root and source of the attribute of Netzach in the higher realms and also within the king is not only much deeper than all other concepts of king and country, but even more than the king’s very life.” Thus, there is no concept here of nullifying the signs and descriptions of Moshiach. On the contrary, this is specifically what will eventually be revealed as the most pivotal stage in the final victory.

“All this came as a result of the activities in spreading of Torah and Yiddishkait, justice and honesty throughout the world, achieved through the leader of our generation, the Moshiach of the generation.”

LONGEVITY & ETERNAL LIFE

By Rabbi Yosef Karasik, district rav Bat Chefer – Emek Chefer

Why did people live for hundreds of years after the world was created while our lives are so much shorter? When did the change to a shorter life begin? Why will death be abolished in Yemos HaMoshiach? A fascinating look at the parsha from the perspective of Chazal, Kabbala, and Chabad Chassidus.

CHANGES IN MAN'S LIFESPAN

Back at the beginning, in the first two thousand years of the world, people lived an average of 900-1000 years, far longer than in later years – from the generation of Avrohom until today, where the average lifespan is less than 100 years. “The days of our years are seventy years, and if with strength, eighty years.”

The prophet Yeshaya (25:8) prophesied that in the era of Geula, people will live longer than the early years of the world, to the point of eternal life, as it says, “Death will be swallowed up forever.” No death at all and we will live forever!

The lifespan of a something says something about its creator. The longer the thing lasts, the

greater its creator. Since man was created by the infinite G-d, he ought to have lived forever. How can there be sickness, decay, and death? This seems to indicate a deficiency, Heaven forbid, in the Creator?

Obviously, sickness and death are not derived from a flaw in the Creator, but are part of the G-dly plan. Hashem created the world for a purpose; nothing was created by happenstance. The purpose is “to correct the world with the kingdom of G-d,” so that the G-dly light is revealed with the true and complete Redemption. Every created thing fulfills its mission in its own way – a Jew in *tikkun olam*, the goy in helping the Jew, etc.

Hashem assigned every part of creation a certain amount of time in which to fulfill its mission in the world in a natural manner.

When all goes well, and the created being does its task, when it is finished it departs from this world.

(Adam HaRishon was created to live forever, because he had the job of fixing the entire world and he was supposed to receive the Torah and mitzvos and immediately upon finishing his work in *tikkun olam* he would have moved on to the second era in which reward is given. Since he sinned, he was punished and his life shortened and the G-dly plan was changed).

However, there can be changes in the lifespan originally assigned to a person, making it either longer or shorter:

Longevity: Some people live good, long lives as a reward for their good deeds. In the Gemara Chagiga it tells of a woman who was called, “Miriam who raised children.” For some reason she died before her time and did not finish her mission. Her years were given to a Torah scholar who was exceedingly tolerant of others so he could complete the woman’s mission in addition to his own.

Shortened life: A person who does not fulfill his mission in this world might lose years of his life as the Midrash (Tanchuma Yisro) says, “through the Evil Inclination, years are shortened,” or because of other reasons. Chazal tell us about Chanoch,

whom “Hashem hastened and removed and he died before his time,” as a preventive measure, so he would not sin (because “he thought to change and do evil”).

Theoretically, it could be the other way round, that someone who finishes his task would die early, as it says about Rabbi Tarfon (P’sikta Rabbasi) that when he was sick and his friends came to visit him, his mother asked them to pray for his recovery in the merit of his punctilious observance of respect for his mother.

His friends said, “He did not achieve even half of the mitzva of honoring parents,” and the reason was that since his life was in danger, his friends deliberately spoke deprecatingly about him. They feared that if he had fulfilled the mitzva of respect for parents to perfection, he would have finished his mission in this world, so they declared that he hadn’t done the mitzva in its entirety so that he would continue to live and do this mitzva.

LONGEVITY IN THE MERIT OF TORAH AND MITZVOS

The connection between health and long life and a person’s spiritual state is not rationally understood, for what does physical strength have to do with mitzvos? People’s long or short lives are understood as the way of the world, and not as something dependent on mitzvos!

On the contrary, says Rabbeinu Bachayei. One would expect a tzaddik who spends most of his time on Torah and mitzvos to be weaker than a wicked person who has no fear of G-d and who takes care of his health (“delicacies expand a man’s heart and lengthen his days”). So the

fact that a tzaddik is blessed with longevity and the wicked is not, is an “absolute miracle and is hidden from the eyes of people who do not see it as anything but the way of the world and its nature.”

Rabbeinu Bachayei goes on to say that the reason why we don’t see every tzaddik living long and every wicked person dying young is because “there is no complete tzaddik and there is no completely wicked person.” Another reason given is that a wicked person receives his reward in this world so he will not receive it in the next world. The tzaddik sometimes does not receive his reward in this world so his reward will be greater in the next world.

PROGRESSIVELY SHORTER LIVES

Back to our topic – the changes in lifespan as the generations went on. Why did the huge drop from hundreds of years to around a hundred begin in the generation of Avrohom? Why was it that in the generations preceding Avrohom who publicized faith in one G-d, they lived longer?

The Ohr HaChayim says that the earlier generations had greater tasks to accomplish in tikkun olam and so they were given commensurately longer lives. As the generations passed, their tasks decreased and so their lives were shortened.

Another reason for the longevity in those days is because of their peace and brotherly love,



“and the entire land was one nation and one language,” as well as because of their respect for their parents. Eliyahu HaNavi related: One time I was sitting in the large beis midrash in Yerushalayim and a student came and asked me how the earlier generations were different than all other generations, as they lived so long. I told him: They lived long so they could do kindness with one another: “Sheis sustained and supported his father Adam. Enosh supported his father Sheis, etc.”

The Ramban explains the shortening of life as due to the deterioration of the world. Even after Adam was punished to die, he was healthy and strong and so he lived nearly 1000 years. The deterioration of the world because

only by Hashem’s kindness (as Chazal say in P’sachim) and this attribute of kindness is a loftier level of G-dliness that is unaffected by the deeds of man. That is why it does not shorten life for sinners and doesn’t increase life for tzaddikim.

Hashem, being infinite and unlimited, Whose creations are infinitely lower than Him, remains unaffected by man’s service, as it says in Iyov, “If you sin, how did you affect Him, and if your willful wicked deeds increased, what did you do to Him? If you did righteousness, what do you give Him and what does He take from your hand?”

From the Giving of the Torah and onward, “Hashem lowered Himself to the world in order that

years are shortened, but in the future, death will be swallowed up forever. Furthermore, says the Rebbe, the very existence of iron and weapons that shorten life will be abolished, as it says, “And they will grind swords into plowshares,” and the Jewish people will live forever as souls in bodies.

The reason: Death is a result of the fact that the world is sustained by a G-dly light that is finite. Since the Divine energy imparted to the world has a limit, so too life in this world is limited. Additionally, this is what allows for the Evil Inclination, which shortens life. But in those days the world will be nourished by the Divine “infinite power,” the supernal attribute of chesed, and therefore there won’t be a limit to the influence of chesed and life to created beings.

Furthermore, in the era of Geula, reward will be given for the fulfillment of Torah and mitzvos and since Torah and mitzvos have an unlimited, supernatural power, when you do them, you are connected with the G-dly power that is beyond all limitations, and all impediments are nullified. The power of Torah is unlimited, so the reward for those who keep it is also unlimited, which is why they will live eternally.

It says in Chassidic works (*Yismach Moshe*) that created beings that exist in the world, which is limited in place and time, cannot live forever, because they are bound by the limitations of time. Accordingly, Chazal explain the verse, “so your days will be lengthy,” as “a world that is completely long,” referring to Olam HaBa and Yemos HaMoshiach, when the infinite power of Torah will prevail in the world which will enable us to live forever. May we immediately merit the Geula shleima.

The power of Torah is unlimited, so the reward for those who keep it is also unlimited, which is why they will live eternally.

of the Flood and man’s actions (which affected the climate and) weakened people, and that is why people lived shorter lives.

“SUSTAINING THEM WITH HIS KINDNESS”

In *Likkutei Sichos* (vol. 15, p. 66, *Kuntres U’Maayan*, 8), the Rebbe gives a marvelous explanation for the longevity of earlier generations:

Ever since the Giving of the Torah, Hashem sustains the world with the attributes of chesed as well as din. That is why life is limited in accordance with reward and punishment for fulfilling Torah, mitzvos and good deeds. In the years preceding the Giving of the Torah, the world was sustained

the avoda of the *tachtonim* (lower realm) would mean something to Him. That is why mitzvos affect our longevity.”

Before the Giving of the Torah, the original state of the world was such that Hashem was above the world and there was no connection between Him and the world and man. In those days, even though people did not have the merit of Torah, and they even angered Hashem with idol worship, they lived long lives because they were sustained by Hashem’s chesed.

ETERNAL LIFE

In the future, there won’t be illness and death, and Jews will live forever as souls in bodies as the Midrash says, “In this world,

CHOSEN FOR SHLICHUS

By Dafna Chaim

*Over thirty years have passed since the first group of shluchim and shluchos went to Eretz Yisroel. * We spoke to three of the shluchos about shlichus, about their memories, about their children who leave home for other shlichus positions, and we heard their insights and advice.*

The Rebbe personally picked you for a special shlichus to Eretz Yisroel. What is the significance of this in your day-to-day lives?

Mrs. Piekarski: The very fact that the Rebbe chose us is a big thing. It's a great privilege that we live with every day. In addition, with the Rebbe's selection of us there is the added advantage in the absolute confidence that this is where we belong.

Often, couples about to go on shlichus wonder which shlichus to pick. It might be a foreign country where they will have to deal with a new language and a different mentality, and there are concerns about the future. My husband and I also checked out several possibilities. Fortunately, the Rebbe spared us any doubts

and made the decision for us.

Along with the great privilege, it's also a tremendous responsibility that requires that we continually carry out this shlichus in the best possible way. We don't want to disappoint the Rebbe, G-d forbid, and we want to pass along the torch of shlichus to our children too.

Mrs. Schildkraut: I remember that when our entire group went together to *Gan Eden HaTachton* to receive the Rebbe's bracha before traveling, on 27 Shvat, there was great excitement. The Rebbe showered us with brachos – in health, children, and livelihood – and gave each of us a *Tanya*, Siddur, and money to give to tz'daka in Eretz Yisroel.

It was altogether moving and uplifting. All the women but me were pregnant and I felt utterly

confident that I would soon merit to have a child.

These are the feelings that accompany me over the years. Although I don't think about it every minute, it's there, and it's a source of great joy and bitachon. A tzaddik once said that a Jew ought to dance for joy for being a Jew. Naturally, he doesn't dance all day, but these feelings arise at special moments of simcha and nachas, or at times of dispiritedness when there are difficulties in shlichus.

That scene with the Rebbe gives me the strength to carry on. The knowledge that the Rebbe chose us personally for a mission he so valued, fills me with strength and enthusiasm every time I think about it.

Along with the great privilege, we cannot forget that being a





The shlichos passing by the Rebbe shortly before leaving for Eretz Yisroel

shliach is a tremendous obligation and every moment of our lives has to look the way the Rebbe wants it to look. I remember once going to buy a sheitel with Nechama Greisman a"h, also a shlucha, and she said to me that we have to be very careful about what kind of sheitel we buy, since we represent the Rebbe.

Mrs. Popack: No doubt, it's a great privilege and not a day goes by that I don't thank Hashem for the great privilege we have in being part of the amazing family of shluchim that were chosen by the Rebbe himself. The fact that we went as a group was a big advantage. It was easier to deal with the early difficulties as a group than as individuals.

In general, a close bond was created among the shluchim as in a family, and until this day we are

close. When there's a simcha in the family of shluchim, it's like the simcha of a close family member.

Since we left on shlichus we have been here, in Tzfas. I am an *eim bayis* (house mother) at Machon Alte, which means being a mother, sister, friend and mashpia to the girls. I help them along as they become baalos t'shuva and this naturally creates a very close relationship with them, which continues even after they start homes of their own. It's a 24-hours-a-day shlichus with never a dull moment.

Usually shlichus entails going out, in the attempt to influence one's surroundings. In my case, it all comes to me and each day has its share of surprises and challenges. The phone begins to ring early in the morning with all

sorts of things that need to get done. A woman giving birth needs to be accompanied to the hospital; a graduate needs chinuch advice; someone needs help with shalom bayis; a couple is having a hard time with parnasa, and on and on.

The Rebbe said that shlichus benefits not only the place where the shliach is sent but the shluchim themselves. Looking back over your years on shlichus, what has shlichus given you?

Mrs. Schildkraut: The greatest privilege is to be partners in the Rebbe's enormous work in the world, work that prepares the world for its destiny, Geula. The Rebbe, in choosing us, gave us tremendous abilities and this is a big thing. When I look at the array of mosdos that we have

founded, I can't believe my eyes. This is not normal success. It is obvious to me that this is not a result of our natural abilities.

Mrs. Popack: Over the years, hundreds of girls have passed through Machon Alte, and some of them live now in Tzfas. With many of the graduates, our relationship is close and warm as with family. Baruch Hashem, there are many moments of nachas and joy from the girls and great pleasure in seeing them marry and start their own homes. Some of them go out on shlichus too.

Mrs. Piekarski: That we had the privilege of raising our children in Eretz Yisroel. Before we left on shlichus, Eretz Yisroel was not in our plans. If not for this shlichus, it is almost certain that we wouldn't be living here. It's hard to know what would have happened if we lived somewhere else, but over here we deal with a challenging shlichus on a daily basis.

In a certain way, our difficulty in fulfilling our shlichus is greater since we did not found any mosdos. This makes us ask ourselves repeatedly: what did I do today on the Rebbe's shlichus?

Tell us about an especially touching moment with the Rebbe.

Mrs. Popack: On Purim Katan 5738, there was a surprise farbrengen. We shluchim, who were just chosen for the third group of shluchim to Eretz Yisroel, were told by the secretaries about this farbrengen and were asked to be present with our families. We did so, with the men downstairs in the zal and the women in the women's section on top.

Suddenly, during the farbrengen, the Rebbe asked the shluchim going to Eretz Yisroel to

come over and get l'chaim. The Rebbe gave each one of them an envelope. Then the Rebbe asked Rabbi Groner to ask the women of the new group to Eretz Yisroel to come downstairs.

At first, Rabbi Groner didn't understand what the Rebbe meant. The truth is that nobody did. The zal was packed with Chassidim and if you remember how the zal looked during a farbrengen you understand why they were puzzled. But when the Rebbe asks, you don't ask questions.

We went downstairs, while the men, who filled the room, moved aside and cleared a path. We nervously went up to the farbrengen table. Mrs. Bukiet and Mrs. Rivkin, who held babies, went first, and the Rebbe gave each of them an envelope and the babies were given a small Siddur. I was the third in line.

The Rebbe looked at me with a smile and then looked at my father, who stood not far from the farbrengen table. My father had tears of joy in his eyes and I was overcome with emotion. My parents were thrilled and so proud of us. The Rebbe blessed me and gave me an envelope which contained a *Tanya*, a small Siddur, and the kuntres *Ahavas Yisroel* signed by the Rebbe, as well as lira notes to give to tz'daka in Eretz Yisroel.

I think it was the one and only time that women passed by the Rebbe in the middle of a farbrengen. I will preserve this precious memory in my heart for eternity.

Mrs. Piekarski: In Elul 5733, I was learning in Beis Rivka in Eretz Yisroel. I wanted to go to the Rebbe, but my brother told me that you don't travel without the Rebbe's permission. Towards the end of Elul I wrote to the

Rebbe about wanting to travel and the Rebbe's answer was "with the hanhala's permission."

I asked Rabbi Chefer for permission and he agreed that I could go but only two days before Rosh HaShana, like the other Israelis, and not as I had planned to go a week earlier.

During Tishrei, I took it upon myself to arrange shiurim for the Israelis and I reported to the Rebbe about this. Every day the Rebbe sent out dimes for me to give to those who participated in the shiurim.

Before returning to Eretz Yisroel, I asked for yechidus and Rabbi Groner said that yechidus was only for guests (and my family was in Crown Heights). I said I had come as a guest and he agreed.

That year, I was a madricha in Beis Rivka. I was 17 and my charges were mostly girls who were 18. I found my job spiritually and physically taxing, and in the yechidus I asked the Rebbe for a bracha for success. I added that I was a bit apprehensive about the enormity of the responsibility and felt that the job was too much for me.

The Rebbe pushed the letter around with his finger, smiled and said, "It's good that you're nervous because that means you understand the big responsibility in the education of children in general and the chinuch of His children in particular."

Without a doubt, this shlichus prepared me for my future shlichus in Eretz Yisroel and maybe I can say that my shlichus in Eretz Yisroel began with that one.

When we came to Eretz Yisroel as shluchim and my husband saw the difficult material conditions, he did not understand how I agreed to go on shlichus here. I'll

give you an example. In my parents' home there were three phone lines. When I was a kalla, one of them was my personal line. In Eretz Yisroel, we had to wait for *years* for a phone line. I don't have to tell you how hard it was without a phone in the house, when every phone call that needed to be made was a project.

Mrs. Schildkraut: One of the most moving moments was when we arrived in Eretz Yisroel. We were welcomed with such warmth and enthusiasm. It was touching and unforgettable.

Hundreds of people, including journalists, came to the airport from all over the country to welcome us, the Rebbe's shluchim, with singing and

where I want them to live. I only hope and pray that it will go well for them and that they will carry out their shlichus in the best possible way, and when the Rebbe has nachas from them, we also have nachas.

I have to say that their absence is filled with the girls from the Machon. Every simcha they have, every birth, I feel like a child or grandchild is being born in the family. It fills my heart with joy and tremendous satisfaction and compensates somewhat for the physical distance of my children.

Mrs. Piekarski: First of all, we too are children of our parents and we are still torn between our home and parents. Maybe our experience in handling it, the fact

ourselves and our children, or amongst themselves.

I always make sure to update each one with what is going on with the others and I encourage them to keep in touch with one another, to take an interest, to help out. When one of the boys calls from yeshiva abroad or from Thailand, at the end of the conversation I say, "I'm sure you want to speak to Shmulik."

We also try to help them as much as possible, to encourage them when necessary. Parents by nature want to help their children, to ward off difficulties, to give them direction whether it's in the chinuch of their children, in working with mekuravim or any other difficulty. There are times when our experience is helpful to them, and there are times when they have to arrive at their own solutions.

Mrs. Schildkraut: We are pleased that our two married daughters are on shlichus, one in China and one in Austria. When we went on shlichus, my in-laws took it very hard. They are an American family of three generations and they had never been to Eretz Yisroel. For them, Eretz Yisroel was the land of Tanach, not a place to live. They worried about how we would manage with the conditions there.

Today, when I have a daughter on shlichus in China, which for me is something like Eretz Yisroel was for them, I understand them a lot better. It's definitely easier to go through difficulties yourself than to have your children go through them. The worry about the children, missing them, the fact that the grandchildren, whom we waited for, are growing up far away and we have to suffice with phone calls – it's not easy.

Yet we have many moments of nachas, when we hear about their

Yet we have many moments of nachas, when we hear about their success. My mother has a line that she always says, "May there be nachas from afar and not sorrow from up close."

dancing. There was a commotion and there was the sense of excitement and great simcha. In those exhilarating moments it hit me, "We are shluchim of the Rebbe! We represent the Rebbe in Eretz Yisroel!" It was an amazing feeling.

The shluchim who went to Eretz Yisroel are now in the midst of marrying off their children, who themselves go on shlichus, sometimes overseas. How do you deal with this?

Mrs. Popack: Although it's very hard and we miss them so much, we are happy that they are following in our footsteps. The way I look at it, wherever the Rebbe wants my children to live is

that we ourselves left our native surroundings and moved to a new place, helps us understand the difficulty in raising children far from the extended family. But it's still hard to see your children only once or twice a year and to know the grandchildren through pictures and phone conversations.

Baruch Hashem, today it's easier to easier to communicate thanks to modern technology. Back in the early days of our shlichus, a phone call abroad was a rarity, whereas today, you can speak with your children around the world on a daily basis. I think that parents have to play an important role in preserving the family ties, whether between

success. My mother has a line that she always says, “May there be nachas from afar and not sorrow from up close.”

Shlichus is what my life is all about, and when I see my children doing this too, then despite the hardships, I am happy about it.

Do you have a tip or two for young shluchim starting out?

Mrs. Piekarski: First, to be mekushar to the Rebbe and to understand that all our successes do not come from our own kochos. You need to go with your Chabad pride, without worrying about what people will say. We go

agreed to do it. That was the first time I spoke to an audience.

I went to the place on the appointed day and before I spoke, the administrator got up and said to the students, “I want to tell you a story. In the fifties, I was a shliach of the Jewish Agency in Rio de Janeiro in Brazil. One day, I went on the bus and at one of the stops a Chabadnik got on. He was a tall and impressive looking man, with a beard, a hat and dressed typically chareidi. I was surprised. The last thing I expected to see there was a chareidi Jew.

“I’ll tell you the truth. I felt

tall and distinguished looking. He was the Rebbe’s shliach in Rio de Janeiro in the fifties and I think it must have been him...”

Along with Chabad pride, it’s important to go with a positive attitude, to get to work with simcha. We who were personally picked by the Rebbe to go to Eretz Yisroel were in the clouds. This z’chus gave us tremendous enthusiasm and simcha and it gave us lots of strength to deal with the various hardships (mice in the house, outdoor facilities, language difficulties, etc.). We accepted it all joyfully and with love, without complaining, realizing the significance and importance of our shlichus.

I don’t want shluchim going out on shlichus to experience difficulties such as these, nor do I think that we have to harp on the hardships we had. Every generation has its challenges. I would like shluchim to have that same joy and the awareness of what a great z’chus it is to be on shlichus.

A little tip for old-time shluchim who are taking young shluchim to help out: *Fargin*, give respect, encouragement, include them in the work as equals, share your enthusiasm for shlichus. We saw the Rebbe and received his encouragement and support over the years, while the young generation has it much harder. We can help them.

Mrs. Popack: I always tell my children, don’t forget that we represent the Rebbe. They are looking at us and checking us out and we need to be role models of how a Chassid is supposed to look. It’s a heavy responsibility.

I would also recommend to new shluchim: become friends with your mekuravim, like family, and then you will have much satisfaction and joy in your work.

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on the Rebbe’s shlichus and with his strength, and we have nothing to be ashamed about; on the contrary, this itself opens doors.

For our first Pesach in Tzfas, most of the shluchim went to their families in the center of the country. Three of us remained in Tzfas: the Chitriks, the Kaplans, and us. One day, Mrs. Rochel Hendel asked me to visit the branch of Bar-Ilan University in Tzfas and to distribute shmura matza to the students and to tell them a bit about Pesach. Since most of the shluchos had left, I didn’t have much choice and I

uncomfortable. I thought: There goes the galus-Jew with his old-fashioned clothes. How did he get here? I wondered how the passengers on the bus would react to his odd appearance. To my great surprise, they treated him with great respect and one of them moved over for him. That’s when I realized that Chabadnikim have nothing to be ashamed about.”

He finished his story and it was my turn to speak. “This is the first time that I am hearing this story, but my father is a Chabadnik who has a beard and is



The work of the Schildkraut family – the schools in Kiryat

Mrs. Schildkraut: The most important tip is give yourself entirely over to the Rebbe's inyanim; put in all your strength while at the same time, know that you are merely the channel through which it all goes. If we devote ourselves to what the Rebbe wants, we will be successful. We see that the Rebbe gives tremendous kochos. The Rebbe is actually doing the work and all we need to do is put our little finger there and want to be partners.

The Rebbe could do it all himself, but the Rebbe gives us the opportunity to take part in this holy work. It's a z'chus that you mustn't forego. When I need to get out of my limitations, I remember this and it fills me with chayus and energy.

Another very important thing to remember on shlichus is that our role is to bring the light of the Rebbe to the world, and therefore it's important to stick to what the Rebbe wants of us, and to do what he wants even if the reactions and the results are not encouraging.

I heard an amazing story from Michal Kaplan of Migdal HaEmek. Twenty years ago she went on Mivtza Neshek from

house to house in the attempt to get more women to light candles. At one house, the lady closed the door in her face. Twenty years later, that woman who shut the door in her face managed to locate her and told her that slamming the door aroused feelings of t'shuva in her. She was shocked at what she did and it shook her up to the extent that it led to her becoming a baalas t'shuva.

When the door is slammed in our face, when we are not appreciated, when the feedback is not encouraging, we need to remember that the only thing that interests us is feedback from the Rebbe, that the Rebbe should be satisfied. That's what is important and the Rebbe knows the truth. We don't always see the results of our work but that shouldn't cause us to weaken, because ultimately, our work will have an effect.

What are you doing in order to prepare the world to greet Moshiach?

Mrs. Schildkraut: At the beginning of our shlichus and even before we left, the Rebbe defined the goal of our shlichus and said it is to prepare the world to greet Moshiach. Our work is permeated with this point. It is

apparent in every activity we do, in the shiurim, the mitzvaim, the school – it is all permeated and connected with the great longing for Geula.

Mrs. Popack: At the Machon we always live with Moshiach; it's an inseparable part of the day. The curriculum includes regular shiurim in inyanei Moshiach and Geula and the girls go out on mitzvaim in which they disseminate the Besuras HaGeula to the residents of Tzfas and the surrounding area. The emuna and enthusiasm that the girls have for inyanei Geula reverberate in the Machon, so that whoever comes here will immediately sense it.

Mrs. Pickarski: We see today how the world is ready for Geula. In recent years we have observed an interesting phenomenon, which continues to grow. If in the past, we had to go out and work hard to draw people to shiurim or to any other program, now it's the opposite. People are looking for us. There is a tremendous thirst for spirituality out there. People approach us, show an interest in Judaism, and express a strong need to get involved. We, as shluchim, have to take advantage of this awakening and reach out to as many Jews as we can, each one in her way.

I think that in our generation it is hard to educate children to yiras Shamayim and Chassidishkait if you don't live with Moshiach. You need to live with Moshiach every minute of your life; connecting all parts of our lives with Moshiach and doing this with simcha and enthusiasm; treating this with respect, instilling in our children and mushpaim the feeling that they have a great z'chus to live in this unique generation, the generation of Geula. May we merit the true and complete Redemption now.

THE MANY ROLES OF A SHLIACH

By Rabbi Yaakov Shmuelewitz, Chabad house-Beit Shaan

A shliach is someone who is involved with a myriad of jobs. He's a shliach, rav, activist, *askan*, *shtadlan*, fundraiser, psychologist, etc. Sometimes a shliach is a shadchan, marital advisor, *shushbin* (the one who accompanies the groom to the chuppa), and *mesader kiddushin* (the rabbi who officiates at a wedding). The shlucha might later accompany the "bride" to the delivery room.

Over the years on shlichus, I have been involved in many of these roles and have experienced situations both happy and sad.

One of the most moving moments in the life of a shliach, one of incomparable nachas, is when one of his mekuravim gets married with the "Arba Bavos" playing in the background. Sometimes a tear is shed when I recall the long road we traveled together from the first time the groom visited the Chabad house with piercings in every possible place. I recall when the bachur decided to grow a beard and went to yeshiva, and the inquiries we made together during his search for a shidduch.

One time, in the middle of the winter, my wife and I went to New York to participate in the wedding of a bachur who went through the whole, long process with us. It wasn't an easy trip but it was worth it. Another time, I went to Paris in order to attend the vort of a bachur whom we adopted from the moment he came from Russia (without his

parents) until he found his bashert.

The Chabad house is usually happy to make a Sheva Brachos meal for the bride and groom. This way, all the mekuravim get to join the farbrengen and there's lots of Chassidishe simcha, niggunim, and divrei Torah.

The work does not end when the bride or groom are escorted to the chuppa. On the contrary, in a certain way it begins anew. After the wedding the couple needs guidance and support because life does not end at the chuppa; it begins.

What is unique about getting involved in shalom bayis issues is the knowledge that the lives of a family are in the balance. Sometimes, a visit begins at nine in the evening and six hours go by and the problem is not solved. You arrange to meet again in a few more days.

Since I arrived in Beit Shaan twenty-one years ago, I remember

many problems that were referred to me regarding shalom bayis. At first I was taken aback by the disclosures and shaken by the stories, although outwardly I remained calm. I didn't know there were such serious cases of differences of opinion, but slowly I learned, with Hashem's help and with the strength of the Rebbe who sent me here, how to smooth things over and give advice.

Today, when I look in hindsight, I have some moments of nachas when I see those families continuing their lives together and raising their children to Torah and mitzvos.

FROM AN IDF BASE TILL THE WEDDING

Sometimes the stories are happy ones but sometimes, when things veer far from the straight path, and every shliach has encountered such situations, there are serious and complicated problems that are not



always readily solved. The following story has a happy ending and is told by Rabbi Yitzchok Lifsh, shliach in Tzfas:

“A few years ago I began giving a *Tanya* shiur at a military base of the Military Intelligence branch of the IDF near Tzfas. One of the officers that participated in the shiur became involved in Chassidus and the performance of mitzvos. I began to talk to him about studying in yeshiva when he was released from the army. He almost agreed, but then a friend showed him an article in a newspaper that made him doubt this move.

“At a certain point, I made a special trip from Tzfas to the center of the country, met with the young man, and said to him, ‘Come, let’s go and see the yeshiva,’ and this is what made the difference.

“Even after he started in learning in the Chabad yeshiva in Ramat Aviv, his Misnagdic friends who opposed the idea didn’t leave him alone. One of them called him and said that a mutual friend had had a son and they arranged to travel together to the bris. The truth is that there was no bris. The friend merely took him from Ramat Aviv to the Ponovezh yeshiva in B’nei Brak, where he told him about the dangers of learning in a Chabad yeshiva.

“It turned out that this unconventional way of dissuading him, actually served to convince him to continue learning in the Chabad yeshiva.”

Baruch Hashem, the bachur went on K’vutza and became a Chassid. He will soon be marrying a Lubavitcher girl. Rabbi Lifsh and the niggun “Arba Bavos” will accompany him to the chuppa.

RABBI, SHOULD I MARRY HER OR NOT?

Many years ago, a young bachur became involved in the Chabad

house and wanted to get married. He knew a suitable girl and they planned on marrying. At a certain point, he was unsure about her and he came to me and said, “I feel no connection to her, but if you tell me to marry her, I will marry her.”

I tried to explain to him that it doesn’t work that way. **He** had to decide whether he was interested in her or not, but the bachur insisted that I should decide for him.

“I’m not marrying for myself, but for the sake of Heaven, and what the rabbi tells me is what I will do...” I explained to the best of my ability the significance of choosing a wife. I hope he understood and that they are living a happy life together.

daughter in Beit Shaan and about her problems.

The shliach asked me to speak to the husband but not to let on that I knew anything. I could talk to him about any subject except for shalom bayis.

I wondered how to approach the man. What excuse could I come up with? I ended up going to him to ask for a donation and “by the way” began talking about his family. It was a long conversation and it was successful in one respect – I got a donation. He promised to donate a nice sum of money to be given over the course of the year, which he gave, but about shalom bayis he had nothing to say.

A year went by and it was time to ask for another donation. We met

“It turned out that this unconventional way of dissuading him, actually served to convince him to continue learning in the Chabad yeshiva.”

REMARRYING ONE’S DIVORCEE

A faithful shliach is also the spiritual father to mekuravim and to the community that develops around a Chabad house. A shliach who does it right, keeps all his people in mind and constantly inquires as to their material and spiritual needs. I sometimes hear about one shliach or another who invests hours and sometimes day and nights in order to help people, families, or young couples just starting out.

About a year ago, an old-time shliach told me that he knew of a couple in Beit Shaan who had shalom bayis problems. How did he know? Because the woman’s parents lived near him and were mekuravim of his Chabad house. They told him about their married

again and he committed to another donation. We spoke a bit about the family and he said all was fine. They had gotten divorced and she had moved to her parents, but “our relationship is excellent.”

Then he asked me, “Could you speak to her about our remarrying?” I told him that I have a good friend, a shliach who lives in the parents’ city and he could speak to her. Stay tuned ... next year ...

* * *

In conclusion: When you daven for people who are still looking for their other half, please add a small prayer for the faithful shluchim, all of whom have to marry off 10-20 additional children this upcoming year, and who help many other couples as well, that they be successful!

RABBI URI BEN SHACHAR A”H

By Rabbi Shneur Zalman Berger

“ACHEI T’MIMIM” IN TEL AVIV

Rabbi Uri Ben Shachar, distinguished resident of Kfar Chabad, passed away on Erev 18 Elul. He was born in 1927 in Rishon L’Tziyon to Chassidic parents. He was drawn to Chabad Chassidus by the mashpia, Rabbi Chaim Shaul Brook, who persuaded him to attend Yeshivas Achei T’mimim in Tel Aviv.

As he told me two years ago, “I grew up in a Chassidic family in Rishon L’Tziyon and the mashpia, Rabbi Chaim Shaul Brook, who was a good friend of my father, introduced us to Chabad Chassidus. He eventually got me to learn in Yeshivas Achei T’mimim in Tel Aviv, where I was greatly influenced by his unique personality.

“The talmidim of the yeshiva, including myself, learned from Chassidim, who were great Torah scholars. The learning was on a high level, but the physical conditions were not so great. However, the dean of the yeshiva, Rabbi Eliezer Karasik, and other good Chassidim, did what they could to improve the living conditions in yeshiva. The economic situation throughout the country was bad and the yeshiva did not get many donations.

“In those difficult days, the yeshiva had to obtain basic food items via donations that were collected daily. The owners of each

of the bakeries in Tel Aviv pledged to donate a loaf of bread every day for the talmidim of the yeshiva. As for meat, through the efforts of R’ Mendel Slonim a”h, they came to an arrangement with some butcher stores that set aside a certain amount of meat for the yeshiva. R’ Zev Zalmanov volunteered to pick up the donations of bread and meat from the bakeries and butcher stores every day.”

“IT IS PROPER AND GOOD TO COME HERE”

After a few years in which R’ Uri Ben Shachar learned in Achei T’mimim in Tel Aviv, he yearned to travel to the Rebbe Rayatz and be in his presence while learning in Tomchei T’mimim in New York. He described his feelings at that time, in 1947:

“I feel as though the walls of the yeshiva in Tel Aviv are confining me. A number of talmidim left the yeshiva upon their marriage and I have been hesitating about what I should do next. I am not ready to leave yeshiva and get married, especially when I lack the proper Chassidic solidity, which is the basic foundation to be able to go out and get on in life. Yet, I haven’t made peace with the fact that some of my friends have left yeshiva and only young talmidim remain.

“I concluded that my only choice is to try and be accepted by

Yeshivas Tomchei T’mimim in Brooklyn. In addition to a proper learning environment, in the spirit of Lubavitch, the Rebbe Rayatz is there and surely this has special significance for all the students in the yeshiva, especially someone like me who is in the process of acquiring Torah and Chabad Chassidus and an approach to the way and customs of Chassidim.

“I wrote a summary of these thoughts to the Rebbe Rayatz, and asked for his consent that I learn in Tomchei T’mimim in Brooklyn. At the beginning of the summer I received a letter from the Rebbe Rayatz (dated 11 Nissan 5707):

In response to your letter of 22 Adar about your desire to come and learn in Yeshivas Tomchei T’mimim in Brooklyn for a period of time and then to return: Every undertaking and avoda needs to be done in an orderly and grounded way, and therefore you should present this to my good friend, R’ Shaul Dov Zislin, and to my good friend R’ Moshe Gurary, and they should write their opinion to me regarding where you are at in the study of Nigleh and Chassidus and how necessary such a trip is and then I will reply, G-d willing...

“Of course I hurried to bring my question to them. At the time, they were members of the yeshiva’s administration. I asked them to write to the Rebbe about me, as he had requested. These two

The Rebbe told him, “Try, when you meet a Jew, to get him to reminisce about his father and grandfather and on that occasion he will sigh and say, ‘Oy, why am I not like them...’”

distinguished Chassidim discussed it and wrote their positive opinion that I was ready for a trip to learn in Tomchei T'mimim in Brooklyn.

“On 17 Elul 5707 I finally received a letter from the Rebbe Rayatz approving my trip. This is what the Rebbe wrote:

Based on the letter from my dear friends, R' Shaul Dov Zislin and R' Moshe Gurary, that it is good and proper that you come and learn here for a period of time, I agree that you should come and bless you with a good trip and with success in learning and avoda, materially and spiritually.”

LEARNING NEAR THE REBBE

R' Uri wanted to go before Rosh

HaShana but remained in Eretz Yisroel until Sukkos. In those days the trip to the US was no simple matter, entailing a long trip by plane and ship, bureaucratic red tape, and endless surprises.

R' Uri kept a detailed diary regarding the trip itself, from which we will quote some excerpts:

“My excitement is great for I am going to realize my dream to learn in the yeshiva near the Rebbe. Naturally, there are also the normal feelings upon leaving my parents and family and going out of the borders of Eretz Yisroel for the first time.”

He experienced many adventures on his way to the Rebbe and by Simchas Torah he was already in “Beis Chayeinu,” where he participated in a farbrengen by the “Ramash” (later to be the Rebbe MH”M) for the first time:

“We went down to the large sukka in the yard and I saw the Ramash, son-in-law of the Rebbe, sitting at the head of the table, with dozens of young people crowded around him on benches and tables, listening to what he said about the holiday. This awe-inspiring sight particularly impressed me. They explained to me that the Ramash farbrengs with the talmidim of the yeshiva every Simchas Torah night before hakafos. Only afterwards does the Rebbe’s farbrengen take place.

“The next day, Simchas Torah, I got up early and after immersing I went to the beis midrash in order to feast my eyes on what was going on. When it came time for davening in the Rebbe’s room, I went upstairs in order to participate in the davening as well as the hakafos.

“When the door to the Rebbe’s private room was opened, I recited the SheHechyanu blessing and I saw great things...

“My desire was finally realized



Rabbi Uri Ben Shachar (right) with his friend Rabbi Nosson Gurary

and I have come to be in the Rebbe's presence with faith that a new era is beginning with me, full of Chassidic content, which will have an effect for years to come."

This is what he wrote about his first yechidus with the Rebbe Rayatz:

"I had already seen the Rebbe on Simchas Torah, but the excitement

upon entering for yechidus is aroused anew and makes a mighty impression on me. I did not have particular questions but asked for blessing and success in learning and fear of Heaven. The truth is that it isn't yechidus in the simple sense of the word [one-on-one], since R' Elya Simpson, who served as the gabbai and is in charge of arranging yechidus, was there. He also served as translator, since I couldn't understand the Rebbe's speech [because of his stroke]. Rabbi Simpson is the one who told me, word by word, what the Rebbe said. The Rebbe blessed me with success in learning and diligence in accordance with the rules of the hanhala."

After Simchas Torah, R' Uri Ben Shachar went to learn in Tomchei T'mimim on Bedford Avenue and soon acclimated to the yeshiva's program. At the beginning of Sivan, he received a surprising order from the Rebbe. The Rebbe told him to visit a few cities in the US, and Rabbi Chadakov clarified that the main goal of this shlichus was to disseminate the books and booklets published by Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch, concluding, "Fulfill the shlichus with success, materially and spiritually."

Before traveling he went to the Rebbe Rayatz, this time alone, since he had gotten used to the Rebbe's speech. The Rebbe told him, "Try, when you meet a Jew, to get him to reminisce about his father and grandfather and on that occasion he will sigh and say, 'Oy, why am I not like them...'"

A SCHOOL UNDER A TREE

After a year and a half, R' Uri returned to Eretz Yisroel and a few months later he began working in chinuch in Rishon L'Tziyon. Later, he worked for "HaMachaneh HaTorati" which was also called

TRAVELING TO THE REBBE

When R' Uri's diary of his trip to the Rebbe Rayatz was published, he prefaced it with comments on the importance of traveling to the Rebbe and the preparations that are needed for the trip. With thousands of Chassidim who just came to the Rebbe for Tishrei, what he has to say is as relevant as ever. Some excerpts follow:

A Chassid's trip to the Rebbe is the spark approaching the torch. The torch is one, and it always remains in its full strength. It illuminates, it warms, and it does not change. The sparks are numerous and diverse. There are large and small sparks and sparks that are closer and further from the torch. The spark's size or proximity to the torch definitely impact on the power of the spark.

The constant yearning of the spark is to unite with the torch. And if not, he is likely to become extinguished with time. This unity gives him the ability to continue afterwards, to illuminate himself and his immediate surroundings. Therefore it is natural for a Chassid to yearn to see his Rebbe so that he can continue, more forcefully, to fulfill his mission which divine providence assigned him.

Of course, there are differences between one Chassid and the next. As in the example of sparks, here too there's the Chassid whose entire day is devoted to Torah and t'filla and whose entire being is nothing but praise to Hashem. However, he is like a ladder placed on the ground with his head in the sky. The head and all that follow it are devoted exclusively to Heavenly matters.

There is a Jew whose entire chayus is expressed solely in the feeling that he belongs to a large family of Chassidim, and this is without his delving into Toras HaChassidus and without understanding what Chassidus gives him, from a soul perspective. He knows only this, that in order to remain a complete Jew, he must belong to the family of Chassidim. This feeling is extremely powerful for him and with the strength of his wholehearted faith, he is also able to radiate to his surroundings.

The two types of Jews that I mentioned, as well as those who are in between these two extremes, know and recognize that all their spiritual chayus comes from the large torch that illuminates and warms, and therefore each one is ready to make every effort to reach the torch.

Therefore, when a Chassid decides to go to the Rebbe, he knows who he is going to and the purpose towards which he devotes his energy and lots of money. Surely he makes a spiritual accounting and the necessary preparations to be fit for that moment when he enters inside. Preparations are not measured only in the length of time between when the decision is made and when he arrives at the Rebbe. It is possible for this preparation to be made in a moment, on condition that it is done in the proper manner. Either way, the trip to the Rebbe is an established foundation in the ways of Chassidus.



At the dedication of the expanded school. From right to left: Rabbi Dovid Chanzin, menahel of the Reshet, Rabbi Eliezer Karasik, director of Aguch, R' Pinye Altheus, member of the hanhala of Aguch, Rabbi Uri Ben Shachar, menahel of the school in Yaffo, Mr. Avivi, director of the education department in the municipality of Tel Aviv-Yaffo

“P’ilim,” which is known today as “Yad L’Achim.”

At the end of 5711, the newly installed Rebbe told R’ Zushe Wilmovsky, the “partisan,” to establish a network of schools called Oholei Yosef Yitzchok. Some askanim, including R’ Uri, got involved in establishing this school system in Eretz Yisroel. R’ Uri took part in the initial meetings and in the first activities that preceded the establishment of the schools. When they spoke about starting the first four schools, he was offered the position of principal. He was unsure about this as he later related:

“I hesitated about whether to leave P’ilim. The financial situation wasn’t great but I finally accepted the job of running the Chabad school in Yaffo. At first it was a

part time job but the school quickly drew me into fulltime work. It was a difficult time for the Reshet. They opened four schools simultaneously in Kfar Saba, Yaffo, Malacha (in Yerushalayim), and Zarnoga (in Rechovot).”

Since there was no school building, R’ Uri opened the school year with sixty students on a number of benches that were put in the shade. The parents weren’t pleased, but when they saw the young teachers and principal who were ready to put their hearts and souls into their students, they had faith in them and allowed their children to remain, despite the unacceptable conditions.

One of the first teachers was Mrs. Tzipora Heber who even today gets excited when she

describes R’ Uri’s work in starting the school in Yaffo:

“I had no degree or diplomas. I took the test from the Ministry of Education later on. There was no classroom and nothing that would indicate that it was a school. I gathered the children and we sat under a tree and I began to teach. R’ Zushe Partisan was the one who registered the children. He went to transit camps to do so and that’s how the school began.”

Within a few days, R’ Uri received permission from the gabbai of a nearby shul to use the shul for the school. In the meantime, until the municipality of Tel Aviv decided how to treat the new school started by Chabad, some young Lubavitchers did something daring.

One night in Cheshvan they set

up a Swedish pre-fab that was comprised of pieces that could be put together and dismantled. They brought the pieces from the yeshiva in Lud and after working through the night, the three-room structure was completed. They had also brought along tables and benches as well as educational equipment. The municipality eventually recognized the school and made sure to add buildings as the number of students increased.

At first there were serious money problems and the staff did not receive a salary. Nevertheless, the work carried on, as R' Uri related:

"For a few months we did not get a cent in salary. It wasn't a good feeling for me as a newly married man. I had no choice but to take loans. We had to go in the middle of the workday to ask for a loan since we had no money to pay at the grocery."

With the Rebbe's encouragement, R' Uri worked each year on the registration drive and he devoted the rest of the months of the year to educating the students in the ways of Judaism and Chassidus. This was done under difficult conditions of crowding and lack of equipment. It was only in 1975 that the school entered a suitable building with enough classrooms and rooms that met their needs.

R' Uri worked for 33 years as the principal at the school in Yaffo. Thousands of talmidim were educated under him to Torah, Chassidus, and fear of Heaven. After he retired, he was appointed the Rosh Kollel of "Tiferes Levi Yitzchok" in Tel Aviv and as the marriage clerk in Kfar Chabad.

WRITING THE HISTORY OF CHASSIDIM

Rabbi Ben Shachar edited two books that relate the history of

Chassidim. One is *Zikaron* which tells the life story of his mashpia, R' Chaim Shaul Brook. The second book *HaPartisan*, is a compilation of articles about his friend, R' Zushe Wilmovsky.

His friend and neighbor, Rav Avrohom Meizlich, said sadly after R' Uri's passing, "R' Uri Ben Shachar was a man of pleasant ways. Although he was a man of strong opinions, he didn't try to trump others in debates but spoke softly and tranquilly. Having set times to learn was extremely important to him. I know that for a long time he learned with a Chassid

who became a baal t'shuva many years ago but was lacking in the study of Gemara. R' Uri put his heart and soul into enabling this man to make up for what he had missed in his youth."

* * *

In recent months, R' Uri was quite sick and on Friday, the 17th of Elul he passed away. He is survived by his wife Rivka, his son Dov, and his daughters Esther Rosenfeld of Kfar Chabad, Bracha Reitzes of Yesod HaMaala, and Chemda Greenfeld of Crown Heights.

SHMITA HARDSHIPS

Over the decades of his serving as the principal in Yaffo, R' Uri had a sabbatical in which he went to the south of country to moshav Berosh, as per the Rebbe's instruction. This was at the end of 5718, when the Rebbe told a number of Chabad families to open a school in the moshavim of the Taanachim and in the southern town of Berosh.

R' Ben Shachar began preparing to open a school by putting together a staff of teachers. He was able to get a number of young teachers from the T'mimim who had what it took to be teachers, as well as some young female teachers.

New immigrants from Morocco lived in Berosh and most of them welcomed the Lubavitchers and allowed the Chabad staff to use four houses. However, the living conditions in this out-of-the-way moshav entailed much suffering. There were outhouses and iceboxes, not refrigerators. This did nothing to diminish the tremendous motivation of the Chabad staff, led by R' Uri Ben Shachar.

70 students came for the first day of school and this was a tremendous success. The hanhala of the Reshet, led by Rabbi Dovid Chanzin, aided them in acquiring books and equipment. The day-to-day work with the parents and students was done by the menahel, R' Uri, with the help of his devoted staff.

5719 was a Shmita year and by the Rebbe's instruction, Rav Chanzin sent fruits and vegetables that were permissible to eat to the teachers of the distant schools. R' Uri related that the packages of fruits and vegetables, as well as chicken, were sent by mail and they did not always arrive fit to eat and had to be thrown out.

R' Uri did not suffice with the usual work at a school but used the afternoon and evening hours to visit with the residents in order to get to know them. This contributed towards mutual admiration and with time, strong ties of friendship were forged between the teachers and with many of the residents. In the final days of 5719, R' Uri Ben Shachar returned to the school in Yaffo.

DIVIDING THE HOLY CITY

By Shai Gefen

16 years later. The picture has become clear. Shamir's followers speak openly about dividing Yerushalayim and allowing the Jordanian flag to wave over the Holy of Holies.

THE REBBE KNEW, WHEN NOBODY ELSE DID

16 years ago, Israel had what was probably the most hawkish government one could imagine, Shamir's government. Nevertheless, Shamir decided to go to the Madrid Conference and to give the Arabs autonomy in Yehuda and Shomron. The Rebbe, in an unusually scathing sicha, warned that this was the first step towards giving away Chevron and Yerushalayim.

Everybody was surprised. "We would like to assure the Rebbe that this is not our intention," they explained. "The Rebbe does not understand the facts on the ground." "What connection is there between autonomy and a Palestinian state and dividing Yerushalayim?" "There is a consensus on Jerusalem."

There were the clichés uttered by the politicians, and among ourselves there were also the pundits, who admired Shamir and his strength. They did not understand why the

Rebbe was committed to fighting him and bringing down his government.

16 years later. The picture has become clear. Shamir's followers speak openly about dividing Yerushalayim and allowing the Jordanian flag to wave over the Holy of Holies. Those demagogues on the Right, who like to talk big, have been revealed to be far worse traitors than the extreme Left. The Rebbe mentioned Chevron and Yerushalayim and incredibly, it was Netanyahu who gave away Chevron and Avigdor (Evette) Lieberman, who says he is in favor of giving sections of Yerushalayim to terrorists.

Those who labored under the false pretense, as though there is a broad consensus not to give away Yerushalayim, are mistaken. If we concede Yehuda and Shomron, why shouldn't we concede Yerushalayim? The Arab's main claim is on Yerushalayim.

With the approach of the conference to be held in Annapolis,

we need to fight to torpedo this major tragedy that threatens the lives of millions of Jews. Whoever thought that the Disengagement was the final stage in our concessions was so wrong. Until our politicians destroy Israel with their own hands, they won't let it alone. Only a broad and powerful public outcry can stop this insane process led by Olmert and Rimon.

Not surprisingly, on the day the possible concessions were publicized, Katyushas landed in Netivot. There was also news of a quiet intifada beginning on the Wadi Ara road, within tiny Israel, and about Hamas' absolute control over the Philadelphi Corridor, through which they are smuggling huge amounts of armaments.

We all see what is going on within every area that Jews abandoned and handed over to our enemies. There's no arguing with the facts; they are hell-bent on suicide.

"AGAINST HASHEM AND HIS ANOINTED ONE"

It was announced that an agreement was reached between Abu Mazen and Olmert, granting Jordanian sovereignty to the holy sites in eastern Jerusalem and the Old City. Minister Rimon, in a government session, hinted that in Annapolis they would discuss matters such as dividing Jerusalem.

Immediately after the Six Day War, the Rebbe warned that talks about giving away land would lead to giving away all the land, including Yerushalayim. As he told then Knesset member, Geula Cohen, "They will have to fight for Yerushalayim and conquer it once again."

32 years ago, the Rebbe spoke sadly about how they were about to give away the holy sites to Jordan and the Rebbe even wrote a letter to the journalist from *HaTzofeh* (the

Mizrachi newspaper), Yona Cohen. Unfortunately, what the Rebbe predicted is coming true:

There is a situation now of “the nations congregate, the people think of worthless plans,” this gathering is “against Hashem and against His anointed one.” The Arabs demand that the Jews give them the holy site of the Holy of Holies, give them authority over the Temple Mt., even to have the right to fly the Jordanian flag there.

The government thought this would be kept secret but the situation is such that it is already days and weeks that everybody – Washington, the Arabs, and even those who are pained by the lack of pride – knows about it ... They seek to justify it, that it will prevent danger to life, with all their explanations, but in the meantime, the meeting continues, along with this shocking matter that Jews will, themselves, hand over the holiest site and will allow the Jordanian flag to fly there.

They constantly “make noise” claiming that they would not allow the Old City of Yerushalayim to become an international entity, a city of three governments, but they are planning much worse! (first day Rosh Chodesh Iyar 5736).

In a letter of Isru Chag Shavuos 5736 the Rebbe writes to Yona Cohen:

To arouse a tumult of public opinion to say No to any consideration within certain groups that the Jordanian flag should fly over the Holy of Holies and that Jews will give it away, may it not come to pass. May the aforementioned tumult bring about that it not turn into a matter of partisan politics, etc. Even though

you certainly know about this, due to the enormous importance of the issue, I will add that the aforementioned shocking information has already penetrated “the higher echelons” and it is necessary to try, with full force, to completely annul this plan.

ATTACKS ACROSS THE COUNTRY

It was just the sixth yahrtzeit of Rechavam Zeevi (may Hashem avenge his blood) who we remember primarily for his involvement in Jewish matters and shleimus ha'Aretz with mesirus nefesh, with the Rebbe's guidance.



Headline “We will have to make decisions that we didn’t think we’d be forced to make.” * Even Lieberman veers Left: Arab neighborhoods in Yerushalayim should be given to the Palestinians

As he told me personally several times, whoever does not follow the Rebbe's view on shleimus ha'Aretz, will ultimately give land away to our enemies. He himself proved it when he refused to join Netanyahu's government even though Netanyahu's supporters pressured him to do so.

One of the most moving and special letters Zeevi received from the Rebbe, back when he was still Central Commander, demonstrates how special their relationship was:

I took especial pleasure and had inner joy from your letter about shleimus ha'Aretz, because I am sure that even though you

mentioned Yehuda and Shomron, you meant all of Eretz Yisroel to its borders, as delineated in our Torah, the Torah of life, which was given by the G-d of earth and heaven.

I strongly hope that with your nobility of spirit and with your influence, you will instill this view within ever growing and expanding spheres so that this view establishes the policy and negotiations with the nations, in order that all those who establish the policy should see the reality as it is. I mean that withdrawal, Heaven forbid, from the current borders is an open invitation to invasion and attack and to strike out at every point in the land, the security situation, and actual danger, may heaven protect us.

IT'S ALL TALK

When you look around, you can learn an important lesson. The Rebbe often warned that **even talking** about giving away land, endangers the Jews of Eretz Yisroel. Today, in hindsight, we see how all the talks led and continue

to lead to terrible consequences that nobody anticipated. At first, some said that talks do not lead to action. Today we see what resulted from the wild ideas that were proposed. With time, they became less crazy and the more we got used to them, the more legitimate they became, until they became issues to negotiate and facts on the ground.

We know that a little light drives away a lot of darkness. When we speak and fight against giving away land, and explain the situation to the world, certainly this will lead to positive results, the prevention of tragedies, and the preservation of Israel's security.

SPEAKING ABOUT THE SYNAGOGUE...

By Harry Fisher

A message from the Holy Land to all Chabad Houses around the world:

When we wrote the Rebbe asking for a bracha to stop the talking in the time of prayer and reading of the Torah and that no one should talk on a telephone in the synagogue, the answer came back: "I am delighted to hear what you are doing and I give you a bracha."

The synagogue has been a meeting place for Jews throughout the generations. Far more than merely a place to pray, it has been a fortress and help center. For centuries, Jews have come to the synagogue to meet old friends and make new ones. Before the invention of the newspaper, it was **the** chief place to find out what was happening in the world. It has been, and still is, a place that a Jew who was having trouble could come and find others that could give him assistance and advice. Throughout our long exile, it has been the prime institution for a Jew to maintain his 'Jewishness.'

With all the good that the synagogue does for the Jew, there is one serious evil that the Jew can do to himself there – and that is speaking during services.

The Holy Zohar (Truma 131a) speaks out about speaking in the synagogue:

"One who speaks mundane words (not connected to prayer or study) in the synagogue – woe to him – since he shows that he believes that there is separation in the upper worlds. Woe to him that he reduces faith, woe to him since he does not have a part with the G-d of Israel. He acts as if he has no G-d (since every one else is praying and he is not) and that G-d is not there in the synagogue and he does not fear from Him. He acts lighthearted in regards to the power of prayer.

He should be with the congregation who are praying and should put his mind and heart into speaking to G-d and not to talk to his friend at all. If he does not stop conversing with his friend, the angels above will announce: 'This

man who interrupted his praise of the Holy One should have his life interrupted. He should not see the glory of G-d.'

The repercussions of speaking in the synagogue are deadly. Since G-d desires that we all fear and honor Him, a person, who at the very time the congregation is assembled to give praises to G-d, separates himself from the prayer service and while in the midst of the congregation begins to have a conversation about mundane matters is causing himself grave consequences.

The Talmud (Brachos 6a) teaches us that *"a synagogue is the house of G-d."* (Brachos 23a). In addition, *"a synagogue is the house of G-d and the Divine Presence is always there."*

If you speak in the synagogue in the middle of prayers you are denying that He is your G-d and you have desecrated his holy name. You can expect the following problems (Deut. 27-28):

1. It will have a negative effect on your job, your business, your investments and any other expenses you have.
2. It will bring sickness upon your family, your wife, children, grandchildren.
3. It can cause a breakdown in relations with your wife and general peace in the house (*shalom bayis*).
4. It can cause death of family members at an early age.
5. It may cause older children to leave home, abandoning the Jewish tradition.
6. It leads to intermarriage

Talking in the synagogue is a very serious matter; please take it to heart. See some of the disasters that have befallen others Remember: there is no such thing as accidents; every thing that happens comes about from G-d.

The Torah tells us that you shall fear no man only G-d, which means that if someone insists on talking, you **must** tell him or her in a nice way to stop. If they do not stop talking, tell them that you will complain to the rabbi. If they do not stop talking, go to the rabbi and

tell him that these people are bothering you with their idle chatter and that he should stop them. If you think that it is embarrassing to reprove them, let them be embarrassed! If they are not embarrassed from speaking in front of G-d, let them be embarrassed to speak in front of the congregation! It is really for their own benefit.

If you are the leader of the congregation, the responsibility is yours. If you do not protect the honor of G-d then **you** have sinned against G-d and your sin is even graver than that of a layperson.

Remember, upon your death you must face the Heavenly court and there you must give an accounting for all of your actions. With this in mind you will refrain from sinning, especially regarding talking or speaking on a phone in the middle of prayers and during the reading the Torah. If you would speak in front of a mortal king, he could put you to death! How much more before the supreme King of Kings.

The sanctity of the synagogue and the House of Study is very great, and we are enjoined to fear the One who dwells in them, blessed be His name, as it is written Leviticus 19:30): "And My sanctuary shall ye reverence." Therefore it is **forbidden** to engage there in gossip or to make there any calculations except those pertaining to religious matters, such as the counting of charity money, or the like... (Code of Jewish Law Chapter 13 verse 1)

Every one present must be silent and listen with attention and devotion to the Chazzan's repetition of the Shmoneh Esrei, and respond Baruch Hu U'varuch Shmo and say Amen to every bracha. Even studying holy subjects is forbidden during the repetition, and needless to say there must be no idle conversation. (Code of Jewish Law Chapter 20 verse 1)

In accordance with the above, we ask you please, to refrain from carrying on a conversation during Davening and the reading of the Torah.