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WILL WE ALL DON THE EFOD IN THE FUTURE TO COME?

Likkutei Sichos Vol. 31, pg. 156-164
Translated by Boruch Merkur

1. At the end of Laws of “The Vessels of the Holy Temple and Those Who Serve Therein”¹ (at the conclusion of the chapters discussing the Priestly vestments),² Rambam writes: “You find in the words of the Prophets that the Priests who girded themselves with a linen [apron-like garment called an] *efod* (“eighty-five men bearing the linen *efod*”³) were not High Priests, for the *efod* of the High Priest was not a linen *efod*. In fact, even Leviim wore the *efod* made of linen. For Shmuel the Prophet was a Levi, and regarding him it is said⁴ that he was a ‘youth girded in a linen *efod*.’ Rather, this *efod* was worn by the disciples of the prophets and one who was worthy that the holy spirit would rest upon him, attesting that this person has risen to the height of a High Priest, who is inspired with the holy spirit to speak according to the *efod* and the breastplate.”⁵

It must, however, be understood:

Rambam’s work is comprised of legal rulings, [as the Rambam writes in the Preface to *Mishneh Torah*] “*halachos halachos*”⁶ [i.e., it is strictly a legal text]. Thus, why does Rambam write in the conclusion of the Laws of the Vessels of the Holy Temple, “You find in the words of the Prophets that the Priests who girded themselves with a linen *efod* were not High Priests, etc.”? For at first

glance, this information has no legal relevance. (If it is because it is the style of the Rambam to conclude each volume of *Seifer HaYad* with words of inspiration regarding ethics and acquiring positive character traits,⁷ this segment does not fit that description.) It is, rather, commentary on and elucidation of “the words of the Prophets” (for the verse, “eighty-five men bearing the linen *efod*,” does not refer to High Priests, etc.). This passage apparently has no place then in *Seifer HaYad*.

Kesef Mishna offers the following comment on the wording of Rambam’s law: “He wrote this so that we would not be puzzled by what is written⁸ about Achimelech son of Achituv: eighty-five Priests wearing the linen *efod*.” However, it is still not understood: (In addition to the fact that in this book, Rambam does not concern himself with reconciling and elucidating verses in Tanach⁹ →) If one wishes to explain that the intent of Rambam is to reconcile his words with Scripture (that the linen *efod* mentioned in the words of the Prophets is not the *efod* of the High

Priest), he should have brought this concept **earlier**, in the preceding chapter,¹⁰ where it speaks about the particular laws of making the *efod*.¹¹

Also, Rambam’s lengthy wording here clearly indicates that his intent is not (only) to explain that the linen *efod* mentioned in the words of the Prophets is not of the Priestly vestments (the *efod* of the High Priest), because:

a) According to the notion that the innovation of this law is that the linen *efod* is not the *efod* of the High Priest, why does Rambam continue to explain that the disciples of the prophets garbed themselves in a linen *efod* in order to “attest that this person has risen to the **height of a High Priest**,” emphasizing the **opposite** of the law that the linen *efod* is **not** associated with the *efod* of the High Priest.¹²

b) Rambam brings proof from the fact that “even Leviim wore it. For Shmuel the Prophet was a Levi, and regarding him it is said that he was a ‘youth girded in a linen *efod*.’” At first glance, Rambam should have brought stronger proof by citing the verse,¹³ “**Dovid** was girded with a linen *efod*,” for Dovid wasn’t even from the Tribe of Levi (more effectively proving that the linen *efod* is not associated with the High Priest).¹⁴

[To be continued be”H]

NOTES:

¹ So is the full name of these laws, as in the beginning of the work *HaYad*, as well as the title preceding the laws.

² 10:13.

³ Shmuel I 22:18 (quoted in *Kesef Mishna*, as mentioned later in the text).

⁴ Ibid 2:18.

⁵ See the Yerushalmi, Tractate Sanhedrin (10:2): "Teaching that they all were worthy to be High Priests." And as the Rambam comments on the Yerushalmi – that they indeed wore the linen *efod*. However, see the Targum on Shmuel I ibid, "that they were **fit** (*k'sherim*) to don the linen *efod*," suggesting that they did not actually wear a linen *efod*, rather, "they were all worthy of the High Priesthood" (commentary of Rabbeinu Yeshaya on Shmuel I ibid). See Evven Ezra on Parshas Tetzaveh 28:6: "Many commentaries offer this explanation

(written in Shmuel I ibid) – that they were [merely] worthy to bear the *efod*." See Footnote 36.

⁶ Wording of the Rambam in his book's Preface.

⁷ See Rambam end of Laws of T'mura: "The majority of the laws of the Torah are intended only...to correct one's mindset and to straighten out one's deeds."

⁸ Shmuel I 22:18.

⁹ For even if one wishes to explain that, according to the opinion of Kesef Mishna, the intent of what is written in the Preface of Rambam's work, "One first reads from the **Written Torah** (and then he reads from this [from *Mishneh Torah*], etc.)," is not only regarding the Five Books of the Torah but also Tanach, it is, at first glance, only regarding what is relevant to Torah law and the explanation of the Mitzvos mentioned in the Tanach, but not to resolving and

elucidating verses of the Tanach.

¹⁰ Chapter 9.

¹¹ Also, then Rambam should have answered the question on the verse, "**Eighty-five** Priests?! ... We don't appoint [even] two High Priests concurrently!" (as in Yerushalmi Sanhedrin, ibid), as he cites earlier in the Laws of the Temple's Vessels (4:15, end).

¹² And he should have written..., "A linen *efod* was worn by anyone who was fit for having the Divine Presence rest upon him, as we find regarding Shmuel wearing a linen *efod*."

¹³ Shmuel II 6:14. Similarly, Divrei HaYamim I 15:27.

¹⁴ And Rambam does not comment that it was a linen tunic of the regular Priest, as in the first explanation of Rabbeinu Yeshaya on Shmuel I, ibid.

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THE ROLE OF PARENTS IN CHINUCH

Prepared for publication by Menachem Mendel Tzfasman

On the eve of 22 Teives, a special event for parents was held in Yeshiva Tomchei T'mimim of Netanya, for the parents to meet with the staff entrusted with the education of their children. A dinner was held in the main hall of the yeshiva, during which the parents heard a fascinating lecture on chinuch from the Rosh Yeshiva, Rabbi Moshe Orenstein. * The following is a transcription of that speech by one of the parents.

As Lubavitcher Chassidim, we are well trained in living by the adage that “everything is by Divine Providence.” We were educated and trained to contemplate and observe in every step of our lives, the power of Divine Providence. Nevertheless, there are times when even we find ourselves stunned and compelled to say, “Wow!”

When I sat down yesterday to think about what to say before you this evening, I opened amongst other works, the HaYom Yom. Naturally, I

looked at the HaYom Yom of today's date, and here is the “Wow.”

This is what the Rebbe writes there:

“My father proclaimed at a farbrengen: Just as wearing t'fillin every day is a mitzva commanded by the Torah to every individual regardless of his standing in Torah, whether deeply learned or simple, so too is it an absolute duty for every person to spend a half-hour every day thinking about the Torah-

education of children. And to do everything in his power – and beyond his power – to inspire children to follow the path along which they are being guided.”

As Heaven is my witness, when we decided to hold this special event on this evening, I had no idea that it “falls out” on such a HaYom Yom. If you wish, this can serve as another proof and expression of the innate power of Tomchei T'mimim to find the truth. In any case, we have the opportunity, at the very beginning of 22 Teives, to fulfill the Rebbe's directive to “devote time for thought.”

TWO VERSIONS AND WHAT THEY MEAN

It is very interesting that this statement of the Rebbe Rashab is mentioned by the Rebbe in two versions. One time, the Rebbe said that the statement was made on Simchas Torah that fell out on a Wednesday, and this is what he said: “Yidden, today is Wednesday. It's not every Wednesday that we hear such things. Just as it is a mitzva to put on t'fillin ... so too, it is a mitzva to set aside an hour a day to think and take action regarding guiding one's household and to be one who builds up his home.”

In another place, the Rebbe writes: “In the sicha of Simchas Torah 5660/1899: Just as it is an obligation ... to put on t'fillin every day, so too, it is a mitzva and obligation ... – each person according to his station and condition in comprehension – to set aside a half an hour, at least, once in two or three days, to diligently pursue the benefit of the guidance of his sons and daughters.”

In the first version, the Rebbe speaks about an hour every day and in the second version, the Rebbe speaks about half an hour at least once in two or three days. The

HaYom Yom says neither the first or second version, but a half-hour every day.

THE THIRD BIRTHDAY OF TOMCHEI T'MIMIM

There is another surprising thing about the second version in which the Rebbe Rashab says that the obligation depends on “each person according to his station and

age 3 is when we begin to accustom a boy to mitzvos. The Rebbe made this announcement on Simchas Torah in the year 5660, precisely three years after Simchas Torah 5657, the day he gave the yeshiva its name: Tomchei T'mimim.)

First, we have to understand what is special about the mitzva of t'fillin that the Rebbe chose to use it as an analogy for chinuch. After all, there are many other mitzvos we are obligated to do on a daily basis.

However, in various sichos, the Rebbe refers to this and says the comparison lies in the necessity of subjugating the mind and heart.

Perhaps we can learn another lesson. Chapter 41 of *Tanya* is the chapter that the Rebbe told many T'mimim (as well as Anash) to meditate on often, especially before Shacharis. It is actually an explicit instruction from the Alter Rebbe himself in that chapter.

In this chapter, the Alter Rebbe guides us in how and what to think about before putting on tallis and t'fillin,

in order to arouse fear of Heaven within us. The Alter Rebbe says that we need to meditate upon the greatness of the Ein Sof, blessed be He, and His kingdom, which is a kingdom of all worlds, upper and lower. The greater the King's majesty, the more fear it engenders of the King, and how He fills all worlds and encompasses all worlds, and despite this, Hashem sets aside all of Creation and focuses His malchus on His nation, Israel.

In other words, all the worlds are not the purpose. Am Yisroel are the only ones He specifically takes under His kingship. Then, says the Alter Rebbe, the person meditating has to think about how despite the fact that Hashem is called King of Yisroel, of all Yisroel, He focuses His malchus on him in particular, because every person must say: the world was created for my sake. A person must see himself as the center and purpose of existence. Hashem is occupied with nothing aside from me and me alone!

This is not about egoism. This is pure avodas Hashem. This is about taking responsibility. Man, as the center of the universe, is the axis around which all of existence revolves. It all comes to him from all directions; all of Creation and all events depend on him to ascertain their meaning and decide how they will continue to function. This is what is meant by, “the world was created for me” – not that everything is there just for me, but I am responsible for all of existence and for everything that takes place. If I am the center of the universe, this means that I and my actions, for better or worse, are what determine all of reality.

This is also how the Rebbe explains the verse, “And behold, Hashem stands over him.” The fact that “forever Hashem, Your word **stands** in the heavens” – in other words, the fact that Hashem's G-dliness exists in the world, that Hashem is King, is on *him*, in the merit of this one Jew! The Alter Rebbe places this responsibility on every Jew, saying that not only the world “stands” on him, but even Hashem, as it were!

Every man is supposed to think about this meditation before putting on tallis and t'fillin, reflecting on the fact that all of Creation, upper and lower, all of existence, depends on his actions. “And He unites His



condition in comprehension.” Although chinuch requires special talent and wisdom, this wording seems to indicate that it requires “deep insight,” which demands intense concentration.

Another amazing point is that although this was said on Simchas Torah, the Rebbe chose to mention that it was Wednesday, the secular aspect of the day, without mentioning that it was Yom Tov.

(I'd like to point out an interesting idea. We all know that

malchus on His people Israel and on him in particular,” to the point that **therefore**, Adam was created alone, to teach us that the world was created for my sake.

BRINGING A JEWISH CHILD INTO THE WORLD

Maybe we can say that this is also one of the reasons why the Rebbe Rashab chose t’fillin as an example. Before we begin this holy task of educating a Jewish child, we have to meditate with this meditation and remember that this child is the reason for Creation! The entire universe including the upper and lower realms, all depend on him, on this one child. Perhaps this is also the meaning of the Rebbe’s expression regarding his father-in-law, the Rebbe Rayatz, “To my father-in-law, every Jew is an only child,” because the world was created for his sake.

Baruch Hashem, all of us here brought children into the world and we thank Hashem every day for this great kindness. But sometimes we forget that we didn’t just bring *any* child into the world. We brought a **Jewish** child into the world! We brought the purpose of the world into being, a child on whom the entire world depends. We brought a child whose every thought, word, and action have a direct effect on all of existence! When this is what parents think, then the entire approach and chinuch will be completely different. This is the comparison to wearing t’fillin.

Perhaps that is what the Rebbe Rashab means when referring to the need for “comprehension,” because contemplating the greatness of the Alm-ghty, how He fills and encompasses all worlds and how He leaves the upper and lower, etc., and unites His kingdom upon him is definitely a

type of meditation that depends on “the state and condition of his comprehension” of the person doing the contemplating.

Maybe this is also the idea behind the reference made by the Rebbe Rashab on Simchas Torah, “Today is Wednesday,” without mentioning the fact that it was Simchas Torah. In Yiddish, Wednesday is “*Mitvoch*,” which in English means “mid-week,” smack in the middle of routine. Comes the Rebbe Rashab and says: A Jewish boy is the center of the world and its purpose, and for him the world was created, not just at N’ila on Yom Kippur when he loudly proclaims with great concentration, “Shma Yisroel,” and cries out, “Hashem Hu HaElokim” seven times with the intention of giving up his life, not only on Simchas Torah when he grasps the Torah scroll and dances with all his might, but also on Wednesday, on just a routine weekday. Even then – in fact, especially then – this one child is the purpose of it all.

(Based on this, perhaps we can also reconcile the two versions about how much time to devote to chinuch, and differentiate between taking action (“to think and **do**”) in chinuch (an hour a day), and meditating (“**in the benefit of the guidance**”), as mentioned earlier (half an hour once in two or three days).

This then is the bottom line that sums it all up. We need to see in every child, the purpose of Creation. This is the truth and this is how we need to approach chinuch.

Let us spend some time talking about some practical advice concerning our children. The topic of chinuch is a broad one, and it is hard to pick one area and focus on it. In any case, I will touch on two points that are extremely important.

THE TEENAGE YEARS AND FRIENDSHIP

The first point is about having a personal relationship. I will even dare to call it a friendship. This age is characterized by a child beginning to feel independent. Previously, we were used to the family, especially the parents, being a significant part of his life and his decisions. At this age though, the child slowly but surely changes this for his peers. Nevertheless, parents have a great deal of influence, much more than they tend to think they have (as opposed to the age of beis midrash/yeshiva g’dola when their influence is far less).

We parents do not really have the means to do anything about this. Independence is a given. It is a force that is stronger than us and it’s a pity to waste time on trying to change it. When it happens before our very eyes, we are left with one approach, to become his friend. If peers are what is important to him, then let us be a part of that group, simply by being a friend, without quotation marks.

When the child comes home, we should not only observe opportunities but actively *create* opportunities, to shower him with love, personal attention, our interest, and mainly a friendly relationship. This could be having a snack or breakfast together. It could be going on an outing together during *bein ha’z’manim* (intercession). We have to find what will make the child feel comfortable in our company. Unconditional friendship. It makes no difference what was or what will be, he is our best friend (and the truth is that we have no better or more loyal friends than our children).

I would even recommend that this friendship include consulting with your child about certain things (preferably not about topics that have a direct impact on yeshiva),

like: In your opinion and experience (saying that elevates the child and wins his trust) do you think it would be a good idea to send Moishe (his younger brother) to the Rebbe for Tishrei? Discuss the pros and cons with him, how he felt when he flew to the Rebbe, etc. There are many other examples. By the way, if you do this, you will discover original ideas that you didn't think of

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yourself. Our task is to bond with our child at all costs.

We have a talmid who is smart and very special but was "blessed" with big challenges. Baruch Hashem, I can say, almost for sure, that he is past them now. He once opened to me and said, "My father is my best friend. That is what saved me."

I am very familiar with the people involved around this bachur and I can testify that his father is indeed his best friend. I think we can say with assurance that a child who can unhesitatingly say, "My father is my best friend," is almost guaranteed to provide much Chassidishe nachas.

There is another very important point (as follows) that doesn't necessarily go with the first point, but that is our task, to find a way to combine the two. Nobody promised us that chinuch would be easy.

THE WISEST OF ALL MEN

We all know the story in the book of Kings about the two ladies who came to Shlomo HaMelech. One claimed "my son is the living one and your son is dead," and the other one said the opposite. Shlomo, the wisest of all men, came up with a solution. Cut the child in half! The mother of the living child immediately cried out: Give her the child, just don't kill him!

I once heard that in a yechidus with a teacher, the Rebbe asked: What sort of advice was this of Shlomo HaMelech – to kill the child? How does it show his brilliance? If there will be another dead child, how would that help?

The Rebbe explained: Shlomo certainly did not intend on actually killing the child, but on killing him spiritually-educationally (I didn't hear the actual words the Rebbe said, only the point that he made). Shlomo suggested that one year the child should be raised in one woman's house, and the following year, in the other woman's house. At this point, the mother of the live child cried out: What sort of confusing chinuch will this child get? What kind of adult will emerge from such confusion? Each person has their way, their own ideology. One time the child will hear this, and the next time he will hear that.

So the real mother relinquished her right to raise her child, so that he would turn out to be a mentch, healthy emotionally and spiritually.

The message is clear. We are here, baruch Hashem, in Tomchei T'mimim. Tomchei T'mimim has its demands and its emphases, its chinuch. Our job as parents is not to split our child in two. True, if the home was Tomchei T'mimim, we would be superfluous. Still, we need to make sure that when our child comes home for Shabbos and bein ha'z'manim, he comes home to a spiritual hothouse, to a branch of Tomchei T'mimim.

How do we do this? There are a few simple ways. I remember that when I was the same age as the children here, every time I went home, my father would ask me: Nu Moshe, sing a new niggun you learned in yeshiva. This niggun was the featured niggun of the meals that Shabbos and if the niggun was new for him, we would sing it over and over on our way to shul too.

"What new maamer did you learn?" he would ask. "Did you bring home a new *hanacha*?" This uplifts a child and gives him the feeling that his father is very involved in his life.

It's not enough to demand that the child learn. Furthermore, demanding this can cause harm and turn him off. Don't demand. Be a role model. Let him see *you* learn. I once heard a vort in the name of the Kotzker Rebbe that he said to someone who asked that his sons become Torah scholars: If you yourself do not learn, your children will learn this approach from you. They won't learn either, but they will ask their children to learn and so on...

Ask your son to draw you into the yeshiva atmosphere. Ask him to teach you an interesting Tosafos, to get you involved, to review what his maggdi shiur said in class or the

rosh yeshiva said in the shiur klali. Learn a sicha together in depth. At the Shabbos meal, the mother should ask her son to tell Chassidishe stories, ones that are not so well known but were told at various farbrengens in yeshiva.

DON'T CUT THEM IN HALF

We send home a monthly report to the parents informing them of their son's progress in learning and in his conduct. When the report arrives, show a genuine interest in

It's not enough to demand that the child learn. Furthermore, demanding this can cause harm and turn him off. Don't demand. Be a role model. Let him see you learn.

it. Imagine that the report arrives and the child is aware of that and nobody discusses it with him (it makes no difference whether the report is good or not). What does this do to him?

On the other hand, sometimes the marks show that he got in the 90's or even 100 on five tests, but he did very poorly on one test. I know parents whose first reaction would be: Oy, what happened here? That's a big mistake. The excellent marks didn't come out of nowhere. He worked to get them. The first thing you do is say something

positive. Always find the positive angle. Look at this nice line they wrote about you. This gives him the incentive to do better and the poor marks will disappear of their own accord.

The bachurim have a wonderful staff of devoted people who do their utmost to create a warm, Chassidishe atmosphere, but all it takes is one little slip at home to destroy it. You can call this "slip" surfing the Internet, listening to a radio program, or any other damaging thing. This cuts the child in two!

I once sat with a parent and his son in my office to discuss a chinuch problem. In the middle of our talk, the father said to his son that because of his behavior, he would not be arranging a soccer team during bein ha'z'manim as he had said he would.

I concluded the meeting on that note. I told the father that I had no complaints about his son. He was a tzaddik. I had a completely different problem and it was with the parents. I realize that this is an extreme example and not common among us, but we have to do some thinking about whether we do and say anything comparable, in a more subtle way. It cuts the child in two!

How parents refer to the yeshiva's staff (especially in front of the child), to the teachers, mashpiim, etc., is very important. What you say has a big effect later on, on how great an influence your child's teacher or mashpia will have on him.

The yeshiva is marking 14 years. In this brief period of time, we can definitely say that the problems teachers and parents had to deal with 14 years ago, are not the same as what we have to deal with now. The world and its enticements are not just in the Central Bus Station and the mall. All of "Olam HaZeh" can be found in a tiny gadget that fits in a child's pocket. If we don't

do our utmost to endow a child with Chassidishe warmth, we should not expect the world to do it for us.

BEING WITH HIM

I want to emphasize again how important love and a personal relationship with a child is. Who loves your children more than you? Still, we are so busy that sometimes we forget a child's real needs. If we managed to wash his clothes, we are satisfied, and if in the few hours he was in our presence after Shabbos we managed to iron his shirts, we are glad. The truth is though, that your child needs much more than that. He needs a loving word, your attention, your constant alertness to his state of mind. He needs to hear that you prepared the food he likes for Shabbos or for lunch just for him.

In Chassidus there is a parable about a king who sent his beloved only son to distant parts. The Rebbe learns from the parable on a deeper level that the king is with the son far more when he is far away than when he is at home in the palace. This is proven if the son feels that way.

I once heard a story about someone who had yechidus with the Rebbe. During the yechidus, tears fell from the Rebbe's eyes. The Rebbe said that there was a family in Crown Heights with five children. The four older children went on shlichus far away and a few months before, the fifth child, a daughter, got married. She was going on shlichus and was at the airport saying goodbye to her parents, where the tears flowed. "I am with them," said the Rebbe.

That is the message, to always be with your child. If we will be with him, he will feel it and he will return our love in his learning and in his fine, Chassidishe behavior.

L'chaim! May we speedily merit to see the Rebbe MH"M and be able to proudly say: "See the children we have raised!"

SOLAR ENERGY: AN INNOVATION THAT WILL REVOLUTIONIZE THIS CENTURY

Dear Mr. President:
Shalom and G-d Bless You!

With your permission Mr. President, I must bestow upon you all the compliments you truly deserve, as the "Captain of Our Ship, The U S A." There is no doubt, if you had not declared war against Afghanistan and Iraq, the "Twin Towers" on 9/11 would not have been the only terrorist attack in these United

States. They could and will no longer succeed, thanks to G-d, in additional terrorist attacks on our soil after 9/11. Once again it bears repeating, "the best defense is a quick offense," which has been proven right, time and again.

Mr. President, I would like to bring to your attention the very crucial energy crisis, and other moral and educational challenges rising up in our time. These problems were addressed by the very famous Lubavitcher Rabbi who was living on President Street in Crown Heights, Brooklyn, New York. He is a teacher and prays in the synagogue located at 770 Eastern Parkway also in Brooklyn, NY. I am one of his disciples and his messenger. It is my mission and intention to tell you, Mr. President, what this great Rabbi suggested to solve the "energy crisis" and other problems.

This amazing man of G-d, was not only involved in religious matters, but also in moral, educational and all of life's challenges of our era. This includes truly worrying for all of mankind, and not only the Jewish people. Examples of his concerns were: A) The introduction in our public schools of the "moment of silence," when a child of any religion is asked by the teacher to think about G-d; B) The declaration by congress to notify all the countries of the world to observe the Seven Noachide laws that are the basis of welfare of all mankind with the blessing of G-d. This was approved and supported by President

Reagan, of blessed memory; C) The solar energy problem/crisis.

President Reagan was attacked, shot and seriously wounded 27 years ago, in 1981. That tragic occasion brought forth from the Rabbi of Lubavitch a speech about the attack against the president, and wished him a prompt and speedy recovery.

The Rabbi added that this same year, 1981, was a special year when the Jewish people are required to say a special blessing, thanking G-d for the creation of the sun, and all the benefits we enjoy from it. (This prayer is said every 28 years, referred to as "The Sun Cycle") The Rabbi referenced a connection with the attack on President Reagan occurring in the same year 1981, and said "G-d requires the U.S.A. to quickly develop Solar Energy without delay, which is vital for the U.S.A..

Mr. President, 27 years have come and gone, and nobody is dealing with this project, our energy crisis. Nobody dares to, maybe for fear of the very strong and powerful oil industry, and all of its billions of dollars of power and strength and business interests.

Mr. President, I know you are aware of the engineer who began developing hydrogen energy and was found dead without explanation. We have no choice, Sir, as you, yourself said in a speech dealing with this subject. You explained to the American people the critical need for developing alternative means of

energy.

As I said at the opening of this letter, you are one of the most courageous presidents the U.S.A. has ever had, and it shifts to you to accelerate the development of this project, required by G-d and his emissary the Lubavitcher Rabbi. The Rabbi explained that the U.S.A. is a special country, founded by religious (pioneers) settlers. We are the only country that states on its

The Rebbe explained that the U.S.A. is a special country, founded by religious (pioneers) settlers. We are the only country that states on its currency "In G-d we Trust." G-d wants to help the U.S.A. through the mouth of the holy Lubavitcher Rebbe.

I respectfully suggest Mr. President, that you form a “committee of scientists” with the power and authority, that will plan for, and help carry forward this unique project.

currency “In G-d we Trust.” G-d wants to help the U.S.A. through the mouth of the holy Lubavitcher Rabbi. Now this matter is in your hands, if you choose to listen and act.

From the speech of the Rabbi we learn three things: A) Solar energy is the innovation that will revolutionize this century, and only this will help to save the economy of the U.S.A. and the free world; B) We have to act immediately, without fear of the oil industry that might fight this development which could endanger their businesses and investments; C) Only the U.S.A. can afford to invest the billions of dollars necessary to develop the solar energy.

Technically Speaking, we are today able to produce electricity from the sun, but it is more expensive than the other methods of oil, hydraulic energy, atomic energy to produce electricity. Researchers have to concentrate on developing the processes that will produce the solar energy and be competitive, compared to the other means of producing energy. With G-d’s help I believe that it will take the place of the oil energy.

Next year, 2008, synagogues all over the world will

once again say the blessing for the sun. This is a blessing that the sun retains in it, all the energy potentials that are practically endless, and have not yet been tapped, developed or exploited, according to the words of the Lubavitcher Rabbi.

I must add that the Rabbi is the prophet of our generation, and all that was predicted, actually occurred. There are many examples, I will provide two: A) The six day Israeli war, the Rabbi was the only one that assured us that Israel will have a major victory over their enemies, and they did; B) The Gulf war with the bombing of Israel from Iraq, the Rabbi said there will not be unconventional weapons such as chemicals or gas. This was said for the skeptics and disbelievers, and once again the Rabbi was right.

With regard to the suns energy possibilities, the benefits are: A) economic salvation; B) strategic anti-terror salvation; C) political advantage. History will reward the reputation of whomever helps to develop Solar energy. It is the innovation that will revolutionize this century, and only this will help to save the economy of the U.S.A. and the free world.

I discussed at length with professor Branover Herman of Beer Sheva University in Israel, who is now in New York, who is a physics professor and received the Nobel Prize for physics some years ago. He agrees fully with the idea of the Rabbi, that this is the only solution to the energy crisis threatening the U.S.A. and the free world.

I respectfully suggest Mr. President, that you form a “committee of scientists” with the power and authority, that will plan for, and help carry forward this unique project.

Mr. President, you can do it. It is now in your hands.

Shalom! G-d Bless You
Rabbi Mordechai Dray

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THE REBBE'S WORDS, NO P'SHETLACH

By Rabbi Zalman Hertzel
Translated By Michoel Leib Dobry

Beis Moshiach Magazine is pleased to present the next installment from the seifer Shlita by Rabbi Zalman Hertzel, discussing the faith of Lubavitcher chassidim in the seventh generation.

THE REBBE'S REQUEST

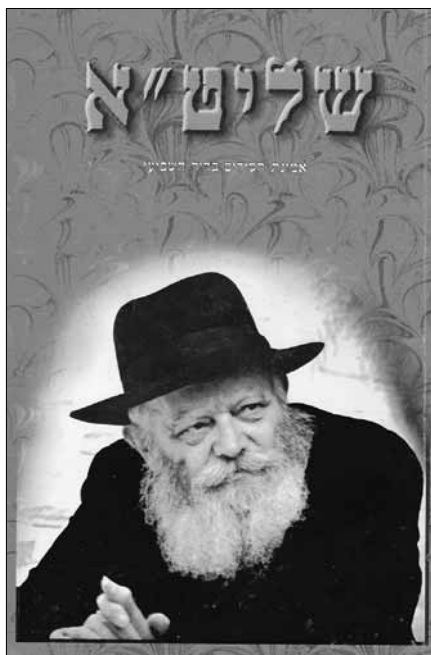
In a sicha from the 21st of Menachem Av 5744 (*Hisvaaduyos B'Lashon HaKodesh* 5744, Vol. 4, pg. 2453), the Rebbe said:

I ask the “shpitz Chabad” not to do any “shtus” (nonsense) by adding interpretations and allusions to my words, suggesting that I meant such and such. “*Dahs vahs ich mein, zahg ich*” (What I mean to say, I say). I don't need their help in this. If only they would do the opposite of “help.

What we have here is an explicit request heard directly from the Rebbe himself not to embellish his holy words.

If such things are said regarding the Rebbe's words in general about the need to understand them according to their simple meaning, without adding any interpretations

and allusions, then it most definitely applies when we're discussing the



words of the Rebbe on the Redemption.

A SIMPLE PIECE OF ADVICE

The Rebbe emphasized on numerous occasions that his words on the Redemption are to be understood as a small child understands them. More than once, the Rebbe sharpened the point: Ask a small child what “Moshiach Now!” means, what “Ad Masai?” means.

Since this subject appears frequently, we will settle for a selection of quotes. (A comprehensive understanding of the concept requires reviewing the sicha in greater detail.)

In a sicha from Shabbos Parshas Ki Sissa 5744 (*Hisvaaduyos B'Lashon HaKodesh* 5744, Vol. 2, pg. 1079), the Rebbe said:

When adults get confused on a certain concept, unable to find themselves, then *there is a simple piece of advice: ask a five-year old learning Scripture.*

They should ask the five-year old what is the meaning of the words “Ad Masai?” Is this merely a lament, a suggestion, or even a lip-service request in the manner of “What do we learn from this?” or is this a demand stated with all its strength? Then they will hear that the meaning of “Ad Masai” is: a demand stated with all its strength!

In a sicha from Shabbos Parshas Eikev 5744 (*Hisvaaduyos B'Lashon HaKodesh* 5744, Vol. 4, pg. 2399), the Rebbe said:

We also see from this the quality of children: When they ask a child what he means in his davening, “We hope for Your salvation all day,” “Speedily cause the sprout of Dovid Your servant to grow,” “May our eyes behold Your return to Tziyon” – *this presents no question for him whatsoever.* He simply means that the salvation should come immediately,

mamash! Salvation is a good thing and why push off a good thing until tomorrow when you can have it today? He understands this ***literally in simple terms***, without the need for any explanations or proofs whatsoever. Thus, even adults can learn from this what the simple meaning is to the words “We hope for Your salvation all day.”

Furthermore, as has been said many times, it is specifically the prayer of a child that is with simplicity, without mixing in side matters. He is completely unaware of the existence of “*s’firos*” and “*seider hishtalshlus*,” so when they ask him to Whom he is praying, he replies immediately and simply: To G-d Himself. Or, in the language of chassidus, to *atzmus u’mehus* (i.e., G-d’s very Essence)! He just doesn’t understand the question.

By the same token, it is understood that when he davens that “we hope for Your salvation all day,” i.e., that the salvation should come immediately!..., *it never crosses his mind to say that this means that the salvation will come after a while.*

Thus, they already have no need for any proofs and explanations; ***they only have to ask a child*** simply what he means with these words, and they will then hear what the simple meaning is!

In a sicha from Shabbos Parshas Lech Lecha 5744 (*Hisvaaduyos B’Lashon HaKodesh* 5744, Vol. 1, pg. 440), the Rebbe relates the story about the printing of *Likkutei Torah* in 5608, then believed to be the year when the appointed time for the end of days had arrived. He concluded by saying that the purpose of publicizing this story was for people to learn the practical instruction of “*Tapahro da placho*” (the ax upon the wood), adding:

And even this concept is

accepted in its simplest sense by a small child – for when they tell him that there is “wood” and there is an “ax,” he understands in simple terms that the intention is an action with the ax upon the wood. However, when we speak with an adult, they have to explain to him that the ultimate purpose of learning is to bring about practical action.

At the farbrengen of Acharon Shel Pesach 5740 (see *Yechi HaMelech* #306), the Rebbe said:

A small child doesn’t know from “*kuntzin*.” Thus, when they tell him that *Likkutei Torah* was printed [in that year, in lieu of the Redemption proper (being a spiritual manifestation of the Redemption)] (as in the well known

confusing doubts – in the words of the Rebbe, “there’s a simple piece of advice: ask a five-year old learning Scripture.”

For purposes of clarity, there’s an important point to add: The efforts for precision in the Rebbe’s teachings (discussed at length in the previous chapter) simply cannot come at the expense of a simple and basic understanding derived from his holy words. Precision in his teachings enables an approach towards a much deeper understanding without disproving basic premises, and the practical results are understandable to a five-year old.

(NOTE: In connection with this concept, it is appropriate to review the sicha from Yud-Beis Tammuz

A child simply means that the salvation should come immediately, mamash! Salvation is a good thing and why push off a good thing until tomorrow when you can have it today?

reply of the Tzemach Tzedek to his son, the Rebbe Maharash), he has never heard of the seifer at all, since he is “a day-old infant,” and he does not understand all the lofty concepts [it contains]. **The only thing he does understand is that we need Redemption in its simplest and most literal sense, down here in this physical world!**

From all the aforementioned, it is understood that first and foremost we must understand the Rebbe shlita’s holy sichos according to their simple interpretation, as understood by a child, who sees things in the clearest, brightest, and most direct manner possible, without any unnecessary observations.

If an adult is faced with some

5744, where the Rebbe describes in great detail the understanding of “a five-year old learning Scripture,” even in the halachos of the Rambam’s *Mishneh Torah*. With this understanding, even a small child can eagerly grasp the simple general content within the Rebbe shlita’s sichos. As we have seen many times, the Rebbe explains relatively **deep concepts**, and then adds that it can be understood by a five-year old learning Scripture.)

Before, after, and during our precision in the study of his teachings, we must remember the aforementioned words of the Rebbe: “*Dahs vahs ich mein, zahg ich*” (I say what I mean). I don’t need their help in this.”

THE ADULTS JOIN THE CHILDREN

And if this applies regarding the Rebbe's teachings in general, then as mentioned before, it surely does regarding what he said about the Redemption. On this matter, the adults should follow the pure and innocent faith and understanding of small children, and we can see this from the farbrengen of Chaf Av 5742 (*Hisvaaduyos B'Lashon HaKodesh* 5742, Vol. 4, pg. 2019). The Rebbe instructed the children to sing the niggun "We Want Moshiach Now," adding:

It would be appropriate for them to begin their simcha with the niggun that they sing with innocence, without any considerations, that they want Moshiach "now" literally... And surely even those greater in years – even those greater in wisdom, understanding, and knowledge – will join them and sing together with them and really mean it, since this is a matter connected with the World of Truth and the Torah of

Truth – that they want Moshiach now. (See also the sicha from *Shabbos Parshas Mishpatim* 5744 – *Hisvaaduyos B'Lashon HaKodesh*, Vol. 2, pg. 988.)

Now that we have clarified the Rebbe's approach to learning in general and his approach to learning about the Redemption in particular, we have a general basis by which we can know how to resolve various questions.

THE "P'SHAT" AND THE "P'SHET'L"

However, we cannot settle for this alone, as I once heard in a delightful saying on the difference between "p'shat" and "p'shet'l":

The difference between p'shat and p'shet'l stems from the person who says them. If **I am the one** saying and explaining, etc., it's the p'shat. 'After all, how it is possible to explain it any other way – **that's the p'shat.**' However, if **someone else** is the one saying and explaining, etc., it's just a p'shet'l, as we customarily react – whether verbally or in our

hearts – when we hear the other person's interpretation, "Nu, a sheina p'shet'l."

Based on what has been explained up until now, we still don't have the necessary measuring stick to resolve absolutely the pressing questions facing us today, as the "ignorant one who just asks questions" will stubbornly inquire and interpret every sicha deeply and will even claim "justifiably" that his interpretation represents the simple meaning. (NOTE: See *Shaarei Geula* Vol. 1, pg. 51, regarding the proof from the Amida prayer, "we hope for Your salvation **all day**," literally – not as that "ignorant one who just asks questions" tries to claim that the hope is all day, whereas the salvation is when He wants it... The Rebbe refutes this claim with a question: When he prays for the welfare of a sick person, does he also request that G-d should send a speedy recovery when He wants it?...)

Therefore, we first must preface any further discussion with another innovation that the Rebbe shlita brought in the latter years.

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THE FOUNDING OF CHAMAH

By Rabbi Hillel Zaltzman

Prepared for publication by Avrohom Reinitz

In 5715, R' Moshe spoke with some of the younger Chassidim about founding an organization whose purpose would be to preserve Judaism, spread Torah and provide economic assistance to Jews in Russia. In those years, this was an outrageous goal, but R' Moshe managed to get some of the others excited. They convened in a secret location, placed their hands on a Tanya, and swore to work with mesirus nefesh for an organization whose activities would be in accordance with the guidance and leadership of the Rebbe. * Part 1 of the founding of Chamah.

In earlier chapters I described a little of the communal work in Samarkand that was done under the auspices of the organization Chamah. Now I would like to discuss the organization at length, and how it began with a covenant among some bachurim in Samarkand. As the years went by, it became an international organization that accomplished a great deal.

The one who founded the organization was R' Moshe Nisselevitz, a quiet, shy person outwardly but someone who was on fire inside. I always remember R' Moshe as a person who did communal work with all his heart and soul, one who inspired all those who crossed his path.

R' Moshe became bar mitzva before World War II. It was after the

Communist Revolution and all yeshivos and shuls had been closed, so his father took him to the underground Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim in Kutais, Georgia and asked that they accept his only son.

"I see that only Chabad Chassidim, with their mesirus nefesh, can stand up to this terrible regime," he said. In those difficult times, there was a famine and they told him that there was no food for the bachurim and they were starving for bread. R' Moshe's father said, "His lot will be the lot of everyone else," and he left his son at the yeshiva.

In the coming years, R' Moshe studied diligently in yeshiva and benefited from being in the presence of the great Chabad Chassidim and baalei mesirus nefesh, such as R' Betzalel Wilschansky (Tzalke Charsoner), R' Nissan Nemenov (Der Geller), R' Shmuel Notik (Kutaiser). In 5706/1946, when many of Anash left Russia via Lemberg, R' Moshe also tried to escape but the government had caught on to their smuggling plan and discovered the organizers and laid a trap for the Chassidim who hadn't left yet. R' Moshe was one of these Chassidim and he had to leave for Samarkand and change his family name from Nisselevitz to Friedman. In Samarkand, everybody called him Moshe Friedman or by his nickname, Moishke der Geller.



The shul in Kutais where Moshe Nisselevitz learned in the underground yeshiva Tomchei T'mimim

EXTRAORDINARY GOAL

In 5715/1955, R' Moshe spoke to my brother Berel and with Leibke and Berke Shiff, and a few other young Chassidim, about founding an organization for the purpose of preserving Judaism, spreading Torah, and providing economic assistance for Jews in Russia. In those years, this goal was completely outrageous, but R' Moshe managed to get some of the others excited. He infused that first meeting with an air of mystery. The young Chassidim were invited to a secret location where they laid their hands on a *Tanya* and swore to work with mesirus nefesh for an organization whose activities would be in accordance with the Rebbe's guidance and leadership.

A secret meeting of Chamah.
Standing (from right to left): Moshe Nisselevitz, Zalman Friedman, Hillel Zaltzman. Sitting (from right to left): Aryeh Leib Shiff, Yosef Shaglovitz, Gershon Ber Shiff, and Berel Zaltzman



When I was 16, R' Moshe said to me, "I see you have a talent for communal work and I suggest that you join us."

R' Moshe had hit the nail on the head. I had always had a burning desire to be involved in communal activity. I accepted his suggestion and he told me to think up some original ideas for communal work, saying we would meet in another few days and I could share my ideas then. From then on, I was a friend of R' Moshe.

At first, the organization was called Chaburas Ahavas Yisroel (Chai), but then R' Moshe read in the Shelah HaKadosh that there is a special inyan of bringing merit to the many and he called the organization

hundreds of Bucharian and Ashkenazi families before Yom Tov. In the winter, when officially you were only able to get a small amount of coal for heat, purchased with coupons only, we managed to illegally obtain hundreds of tons of coal and gave it out to Jews in need.

R' Binyamin Malachovsky and R' Moshiach Chudaitov were the ones who were mostly involved in this. They knew an Evangelist non-Jew whose wife was Jewish and he saw it as his privilege to help Jews, the Chosen People. He worked in a factory that packed coal and distributed it in the city, and R' Binyamin and R' Moshiach were able to smuggle hundreds of tons of coal for the Jews of the city.

knowing where he would learn and where he would eat and sleep. R' Naftali was the first bachur to come from outside of Samarkand.

Shortly after he arrived, R' Shmuel Chaim Frankel and R' Yeshaya Gertzman and others came. At first, the learning wasn't organized and it was only on Yud-Tes Kislev 5721/1960 that it settled into the pattern of the Tomchei T'mimim yeshivos.

While we were in Samarkand, we didn't think that the secret learning we did deserved the title "yeshiva," and certainly not "Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim." The first one to use the title "yeshiva," was R' Mendel Futerfas. After he came to us, he would ask me every so often, "What's doing at the yeshiva?" I didn't know what he was talking about. I asked him, "Which yeshiva?" and R' Mendel said, "What do you think - a yeshiva is a place where hundreds of bachurim learn? No! If bachurim sit and learn according to the curriculum of Tomchei T'mimim, that's a yeshiva!"

"Tell me," said R' Mendel, "do the talmidim learn four hours of Chassidus, in the morning and evening?" I said Yes, and he concluded, "Nu, then it's Tomchei T'mimim."

Bachurim began coming from other places, including the Carpathians. I remember the names Moshe Miller from Mukatchova and Moshe Leib Rotner from Afsha. Eventually we got bachurim from Riga, Moscow, and other cities.

Moshe Leib Rotner's father was a yerei Shamayim who raised his children to observe Torah and mitzvos, and he was looking for a place where they could be taught Torah. Since the Carpathian area was conquered by the communists only in 1946, the Carpathian Jews were not used to secrecy, as were Anash from the rest of Soviet Russia. Anash, who had already

The feeling was that we had to prepare for the coming of Moshiach, to the point that R' Moshe was unwilling to paint the walls of his house because he expected us to be traveling to Eretz Yisroel soon.

Chaburas Mezakei HaRabbim (Chamah). I thought those Hebrew letters had another acronym: Chabad M'Bris HaMoatzos (Chabad of the Soviet Union).

The organization's goal was twofold: to spread Torah and the wellsprings and to provide financial relief for Jews in distress. The organization had several divisions that were responsible for relief work and work to promote Jewish chinuch. It was all done secretly, of course. We even kept this secret from our relatives.

We raised money in a way that the givers did not know where the money was going. With this money we bought food and distributed it to

THE FIRST BACHURIM IN THE UNDERGROUND YESHIVA

In the summer of 5720/1960 a young, charming bachur by the name of Naftali Estulin came to Samarkand. His father, R' Zalman Leib, lived in Tashkent, but there he couldn't hide his son from the prying eyes of the government. The communists required that he send his children to public school, where they were educated to atheism. Thus, he sent his son to Samarkand, where he could learn Torah in the underground yeshiva. It was no simple matter to send such a young child to a strange city without

suffered from the tortures of the KGB knew that just being associated with Lubavitch was reason enough to be sent to Siberia, and they kept out of the way of the KGB.

When Moshe Leib's father heard that there was a yeshiva in Samarkand, he was sure that as soon as he arrived he would find it and if he didn't find it, he could ask in the big shul where they could direct him to the right place. He went to the shul in the old city which was under constant surveillance by the authorities, where none of the young Lubavitchers went, and there he met R' Feivish Gankin. R' Feivish was a yerei Shamayim who hung around the Lubavitchers but we kept our distance and certainly didn't tell him anything about the yeshiva.

When R' Feivish heard that a Jew was looking for a yeshiva for his son, this sounded very suspicious to him because someone looking for a yeshiva should have known that the shul was the last place to talk about a secret yeshiva! Once R' Feivish realized that he was a reliable person and a yerei Shamayim, he told him that he had also heard a rumor about a yeshiva but his efforts were in vain since he couldn't find anything. If a yeshiva existed, they



R' Moshe Nisselevitz



Hillel Zaltzman and Moshiah Chudaitov on Tamerlane Street in Samarkand

certainly wouldn't tell him.

After Moshe Leib's father realized he wouldn't get anywhere, he returned to the Carpathians. A few years later, my brother Berel went to Afsha in the Carpathians for the summer and by divine providence, he stayed with the Rotner family. When he saw how the house was run with yiras Shamayim and how the father yearned for his children to learn in a yeshiva, he suggested that he send one of his sons to be our guest, which would enable him to integrate into the Jewish community in Samarkand. Berel didn't tell him anything about a secret yeshiva.

Moshe Leib showed up in Samarkand a while later and his brother Meilich came shortly after him.

LETTERS FROM SAMARKAND, ENVELOPES FROM MOSCOW

The parents of most of the boys who learned in yeshiva did not know details about where they were. Not only did they not know where the yeshiva was located, they didn't even

know their sons were in Samarkand!

For example, the parents of Moshe Miller, who my brother Berel brought with him from Mukatchova in the Carpathians, were sure that their son was learning in the university in Moscow. They wanted their son to attend university but Moshe was convinced to attend the yeshiva in Samarkand. In order for his parents not to suspect anything, Moshe would give us his letters and we would send them to our friend Moshe Katzenellenbogen in Moscow, who would put them in an envelope stamped in Moscow. His parents received his letters with the seal of the post office in Moscow and had no doubt that he was attending the university there.

Even the parents in Tashkent who knew that their sons were learning in Samarkand didn't know anything about it. When I would go to Tashkent, I had to visit the parents and give them regards and tell them about their sons, but it was all kept secret. When I arrived at the parents' house, the mother knew that she couldn't be present during the conversation because I would be afraid she would ask too many questions and I wouldn't say anything. The father would only ask

if I had personally seen their son and when. They never asked me where they learned, with whom they learned, or where they ate and slept. They understood that if they asked too many questions, I wouldn't give them regards the next time.

THE ANNUAL DONATION OF THE RIBNITZER REBBE

Some of the bachurim who came to us from the Carpathians, traveled through Chernovitz in order to meet the tzaddik, Rabbi Chaim Zanvil Abramowitz zt"l, the Ribnitzer Rebbe, and to ask him his opinion about their going to Samarkand. He told them all to go and gave them his bracha for the trip.

Ben-Tziyon Rubinson, one of the top talmidim in our yeshiva, would go to Chernovitz every summer to spend it with his mother and sister (his father was in jail). Since his family, like all the Chabad Chassidim in Chernovitz, was friendly with the Ribnitzer, he would go and visit him. On these visits, the Ribnitzer would give him 1000 rubles as a donation for the yeshiva. This was a large sum in those days. It covered the salary of a melamed in the yeshiva for almost a year.

We also got nice donations from R' Moshe Goldis a"h, who was from the Carpathian area too. R' Moshe was a big businessman with a heart of gold, A true man of chesed. When he heard about bachurim from the Carpathians learning in Samarkand, he decided to visit them. When he arrived in Samarkand and began to inquire about these bachurim, we were very nervous. We didn't know him and in those years, when we even kept secrets from people we knew, we certainly didn't share information with strangers. But within a short time we saw what sort of person he was and R' Moshe Nisselevitz became close with him

and had a big influence on him. From then until we left Russia, R' Moshe donated large sums of money to our yeshiva and to our activities in Samarkand.

R' Moshe arrived in Eretz Yisroel in the 70's. Since the Russians did not allow him to take out valuables from Russia, he lost all his wealth. The members of Chamah, who located him in Eretz Yisroel, helped him travel to New York in order to raise some money. I was in New York at the time and I helped him meet with affluent local Jews. I also took him to meet wealthy Jews in



Naftali Estulin shortly after he went to the Rebbe

Montreal and told about his wonderful work in Russia. This opened up hearts and wallets and R' Moshe returned to Eretz Yisroel with a nice sum of money, enabling him to buy an apartment in B'nei Brak.

HOW IS AUNT NECHAMAH?

Once we founded the organization, we looked for a way to inform the Rebbe about it and our work, but were unsuccessful. The danger was too great. Since we couldn't report about our activities

in writing, we waited for an opportunity when one of Anash would be leaving Russia, and through him we conveyed a full report to the Rebbe.

In 5718/1958, R' Boruch Duchman left Russia. We give him detailed reports about our work but did not receive a response.

In 5721/1961, R' Berke Chein received permission to leave and as soon as R' Moshe Nisselevitz heard about this, he went to meet with R' Berke and told him about Chamah and asked him to tell the Rebbe all about it.

The next day, a day before he left, R' Berke went to R' Moshe and said that after their conversation the day before, he had learned the daily Chitas and had seen – on Tuesday of Parshas V'Zos HaBracha – Rashi's explanation on the verse, "and for the precious things of the fruits of the sun," that Yosef's land was open to the *chamah*, the sun, which sweetened the fruits.

R' Berke read this as an allusion to our organization called Chamah, and he was so excited that he asked R' Moshe to agree to accept him as a member of the organization before he left Russia.

After R' Berke left, we anticipated receiving some indication from the Rebbe that he heard about our work in the secret letters that we occasionally received from him. These letters were written by Rabbi Nissan Mindel, under various names, and all of them were signed "Zeide," the code name for the Rebbe. The body of the letter was written as though it was addressing relatives and inquiring about their welfare in Russia, and between the lines, messages were conveyed.

To our sorrow, the political situation in Russia after R' Berke left was not good and people were extremely fearful. Maybe this is why we did not get any messages from



One of Chamah's secret meetings. Sitting (from right to left): Michael Mishulavin, Yosef Shaglovitz, Gershon Ber Shiff. Standing (from right to left): Hillel Zaltzman, Aryeh Leib Shiff, Berel Saltzman, Moshe Nisselevitz, Zalman Friedman, Mordechai Goldschmidt

the Rebbe. Throughout this time, despite the tough times, our work expanded and we were mekarev many young Bucharrians (as will be told in the next chapter).

Before Rosh HaShana 5727/1966, when Naftali Estulin left Russia, R' Moshe gave him a detailed report about all Chamah's activities and asked him to give it to the Rebbe. About a month later, we received a letter from Naftali in which he wrote that grandfather wanted to know how Aunt **Nechamah** was and if she had enough helpers. This line, short but quite meaningful, inspired us greatly. The very fact that the Rebbe had heard about our activities and inquired about them encouraged us tremendously.

Since at this time, the work had expanded, R' Moshe wrote to the

Rebbe that Aunt Nechamah felt that she needed additional people to help her. A while later, the Rebbe responded by saying that Aunt Nechamah had to look for builders from her own social circle.

At that time we received a letter from Naftali Estulin who managed to slip into the letter references to statements that the Rebbe made along the lines of the Talmudic adage, "If the ox falls down, sharpen your slaughter knife." We interpreted this to be referring to the big klipa of those days, the Soviet Union, which would soon fall apart. This caused a great upsurge in activity amongst our members, especially R' Moshe Nisselevitz. The feeling was that we had to prepare for the coming of Moshiach, to the point that R' Moshe was unwilling to paint the walls of his house because

he expected us to be traveling to Eretz Yisroel soon.

The Rebbe's answers encouraged us to expand our activities. Although the KGB followed people in order to uncover illegal activities, they weren't making arrests at this time and we felt free to expand our work.

In order to fulfill the Rebbe's directive to expand the staff of workers for Chamah from amongst our group, we looked for boys who could keep a secret, even from their parents. We learned with the most trustworthy boys and they transmitted the knowledge further, to other boys. That is how we taught the Alef-beis, Chumash, and Gemara to hundreds of Jewish children.

We saw from experience that the boys who joined our communal work, progressed on all fronts. Their

association with our group removed them from their irreligious environment and gave them a chayus in spreading Torah until they themselves became “illuminating candles.”

THREATS BY INFORMERS

Since most of the children learned in public schools, the underground learning took place early in the morning before they went to school, or in the evening, after school hours. So at six in the

morning, the melamed would go to the house where the children were and would teach them the Alef-beis and Chumash. Sometimes the learning took place in the home of one of the children without his parents’ knowledge. As the parents slept in their room, their son would open the door for his friends and teacher and they would learn in a separate room.

Some of the boys progressed quickly in their studies and wanted to learn more and more. Those exceptional bachurim joined the underground yeshiva, where they learned according to the program of Tomchei T’mimim.

In those years, when nobody dreamed about leaving Russia, many parents saw their children’s futures in the Soviet Union and they wanted them to excel in their studies so they would be accepted by a university, the ultimate achievement as far as Russian parents were concerned. For this reason, many parents did not look favorably upon the fact that their children had stopped attending school and were in an underground yeshiva instead. Their children wouldn’t earn degrees in a yeshiva and wouldn’t have a financial future.

A woman once burst into the home of R’ Moshe Nisselevitz and said to his wife: I must urgently speak with your husband. R’ Moshe came out and she laced into him: If you draw my son into learning with you, I will inform on you all to the authorities!

Another woman showed up and she also threatened to inform the authorities if her son continued to learn. Having no choice and fearing that their informing on them could shut down all their underground activity, R’ Moshe asked the two boys not to come and learn anymore.

One of the boys ended up going back to learning and this is what happened. R’ Moshiah Chudaitov,

KGB AGENT INQUIRED ABOUT FARBRENGENS

As much as we tried to maintain secrecy in all our work, especially with farbrengens, there were times that we overdid it. One of those times, which is most memorable was the Yud-Beis Tamuz farbrengen that fell on Shabbos that year. We held the davening and farbrengen in one of the houses in the Bagishomol neighborhood. There, in a huge yard, lived Refael and Moshiah Chudaitov, Moshe Nisselevitz, and others. At that farbrengen, we went a bit “out of our keilim,” and did not keep things quiet and we enabled many people to participate. Among the participants were several whom we were suspicious of but we had had a lot of mashke and continued farbrenging. As for the danger, we hoped G-d would watch over us.

A short while later, one of our group, one of the most reliable, was summoned by the KGB. At first he thought he would hide and just not show up but when he got a second summons, he decided to run to his relatives in Moscow for a while. When he returned, he received another summons. He saw that he could no longer hide and he went to the lion’s den.

As luck would have it, he fell into the hands of the infamous interrogator, Akchurin. This Akchurin was a Moslem Tatar and appointed by the KGB for Jewish affairs. At the beginning of the interrogation they showed him that they knew nearly everything that he knew about himself. Incidentally, they yelled at him for not being honest at his job and even for stealing from the government. These were well concealed facts that until that moment he thought nobody knew about but him.

After that introduction they asked him a direct question: Do you know Moishke the Blondie the head of the Mafia? We know that he organizes underground Jewish schools, they said, and although this is legal, everything has to be written down in the government offices.

He knew where they were heading with that. They pretended that the crime wasn’t that serious and claimed it was just a matter of registration so he would be convinced to tell them what he knew in the hopes that the information wouldn’t harm anyone. He denied having any connection with Moshe. I don’t know a man by that nickname and I don’t know about the activities you referred to.

Then the chief interrogator said: You should know that we know that you organized a farbrengen in Bagishomol (and he took a paper from under his desk so he could pronounce the word “farbrengen”).

After he left the KGB office unharmed, he hurried to Moshe and told him what had happened. They obviously knew plenty about our work but due to the political climate at the time, they could not arrest us and they only sought to frighten us.

who did not know that the boy's mother had threatened to inform, spoke with the boy about the importance of learning Torah, and this convinced him to return to learning. This time though, it was done secretly so that his parents did not know about it.

A few years later, these two boys left Russia and are today, the parents of Chassidishe families and their children are shluchim, yerei Shamayim, and lamdanim.

EXILE THE PLACE OF TORAH ITSELF

At the beginning of the 60's, the secrecy was so great that even our closest relatives did not know about the underground yeshiva. One of the ways we kept it under wraps was by constantly moving it from place to place. Instead of fulfilling the dictum, "exile yourself to a place of Torah," we exiled the place of Torah itself.

When we found a place where we could learn, we knew that in another two weeks or a month we would have to move elsewhere. Since the bachurim were young, we could not contain them in a closed room day and night, and for their health we had to let them out in the yard. They played in the yard, which was enclosed with a wall, but their voices could be heard by the neighbors. All we needed was someone to notice the unusual sounds for them to investigate.

For a period of time the classes were held in the home of my brother Berel at 6 Tchalekskaya Street. My brother had an enclosed yard around his house and within the yard there was another small building with a roof and heating, which was far from the rest of the yard. That is where the bachurim learned. At that time, when my father or mother would visit my brother, he would make sure they wouldn't see any bachurim learning in his house. In

Russia, nobody was sure that the KGB wouldn't call them the next day and why should they be aware of this secret? Nobody could be sure they would withstand the test and torture of the KGB, so it was simply better not to know!

In one of the yeshiva's exiles, we went to my parents' house at 23 Rosa Luxembourg Street. At that time, my sister and her husband Eli Mishulavin lived in the same house as my parents and they shared a living room. When we found out that my brother-in-law's parents were coming to visit, the children hid in my parents' bedroom and

brother-in-law's parents began to laugh and they said: Why are you running? Now we understand why that room was always closed and what those noises were. My brother-in-law said to his parents: Please, you didn't see anything and you know nothing!

Having the yeshiva in our house entailed quite a sacrifice. In addition to the great danger in the event that the yeshiva was discovered, there were also daily difficulties. For example, when my mother was tired during the day, she had no place to rest since the learning took place in her bedroom.



Goodbye party with Reb Boruch Duchman. From right to left: Berel Zaltzman, R' Boruch Duchman, Hillel Zaltzman, Dovid Mishulavin, Eli Mishulavin, Michael Mishulavin, Avrohom Zaltzman

learned there. My brother-in-law's parents sensed that something was going on in the bedroom because strange sounds could be heard from there and the door was constantly closed. But they didn't ask any questions since they knew that they were better off that way.

Of course we always made sure that the gate to the yard was locked, but one time we forgot to lock it and my brother-in-law's parents entered the yard and the house and saw the bachurim there. When the bachurim noticed them, they all ran to the bedroom, but it was too late. My

After I married I lived in a small room in the yard of my parents' house. After my daughter Chana was born, I divided the room in two. In one half we had two beds and in the other half we had a table and chairs and a cot for the baby. The bachurim learned in this second half. My wife cooked lunch for them as did whoever hosted the boys.

After a while I moved to my own apartment on 7 Noviya Street. The landlord was a Bucharian Jew who had just moved to Kazakhstan. He was a shoemaker and since in Kazakhstan a cobbler was respected

and well paid, many Jews from Bucharina moved there. His wife remained in the house but in the summer she went to him with the children and I had the house to myself. This was a wonderful opportunity to have the yeshiva in my house.

R' Yosef Volovik was the maggid shiur and the talmidim were: Avrohom Goldberg a"h, our nephew Avrohom Pressman, Dovid Itche Marinovsky, Shmuel Chaim Frankel, and Shaika Gertzman. We usually tried not to have more than four bachurim in one place, but sometimes there was no choice, and so I had five or more bachurim in my house.

As I already mentioned, we could not coop them up all day and they would go out to the yard. We were very nervous that the neighbors would hear them since the fence that separated between the yards was made of thin boards. At that time, my wife was afraid to stay in the house lest one of the neighbors come and ask her what the noise in the yard was about. Her fear was so great that she preferred leaving the house in the

morning and walking with three-year-old Chanale until nighttime when I returned from work.

I understood her but asked her to remain in the house nevertheless since if one of the neighbors would knock at the door, it was better that someone answer the door and supply explanations than if nobody answered, for that would just increase the neighbor's suspicion.

My wife realized she had no choice and had to stay home but she cried and said: Why didn't you tell me when we met one another that this would be my fate after we married?

BLACK AND WHITE SHOES

I will end this chapter with an interesting answer that we received from the Rebbe in response to our question. When we expanded our activities and began working with local children and being mekarev them, there were Chassidim who said that this was not the way of Chabad. They had never heard of anything like this, to seek out people to be mekarev them. In Lubavitch

they learned, and when new bachurim showed up they were mekarev them. Otherwise, they sought nobody out.

In addition, they said, it was dangerous and we could be arrested. At this time, when we were all in danger of spiritual annihilation, we had to look out first for our brothers, the Chassidim, and only afterwards perhaps to be concerned about the Bucharian community.

We thought and acted otherwise and yet, when we had the opportunity to ask the Rebbe, when my sister and her family left for Eretz Yisroel in 5729/1969, we spoke with my brother-in-law, Eli Mishulavin and asked him to ask the Rebbe our question when he crossed the border.

The plan was for him to write us in code and the sign would be – does grandpa like only white shoes or does he like dark shoes too. A short while after they arrived in Eretz Yisroel, we got an answer from the Rebbe in the mail. Grandpa didn't understand what difference the color made. He liked them all equally!

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THE REBBE HIGHER THAN ‘SHIVISI’?!

By Rabbi Sholom Dovber HaLevi Wolpo
Translated By Michoel 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.

Rabbi Meir Mazuz, shlita, further writes: “During Tammuz 5751, I saw in South Africa in the home of my host, a decent and respectable Jew, a ‘Shivisi’ plaque with a picture of the Lubavitcher Rebbe on it. I was totally shocked, and I asked him to take it down.”

Even according to his words, did this decent and respectable Jew mean to show that the Rebbe is higher than “Shivisi”? He surely hung the picture innocently and without any special intention, and we must not cast aspersions upon the faith of tens of thousands of chassidim based on what one decent and respectable Jew did in South Africa.

The truth is that I don’t understand what all the excitement is about hanging a picture on a

‘Shivisi’ plaque. Even in Sephardic circles, siddurim, T’hillim, etc., with pictures of the Torah leaders of our generation on the outer cover have recently been published **by their official organizations with the full knowledge of those same Torah leaders.** (Yet, it stands to reason that if Chabad would do such things, they would come out against them with boycotts and condemnations saying that it’s idol worship, etc.) I never saw anyone come out against these siddurim, even though the pictures naturally appear not only **above** every page with “Shivisi,” but also above the hundreds and thousands of instances where there appear the seven names of G-d that can never be erased. Just as the printers never intended to place the tzaddik’s



picture higher than a siddur or one of G-d’s Holy Names, so too this decent and respectable Jew in South Africa never intended to have the tzaddik’s picture be higher than the Name Havaya, when he put the picture of the leader of the generation, Melech HaMoshiach, above “Shivisi.”

I hope that I don’t give anyone heart palpitations if I should point out that the very fact that by Divine Providence, a picture of a tzaddik was hung on a ‘Shivisi’ plaque is not such a terrible thing, and there is no need to say about it “rachmana litzlan” (may G-d protect us!). **For anyone who is accustomed to learning the texts of the chassidic masters** knows that every Jew, and particularly the holy tzaddik of the generation, can

reach through his avoda even **higher than the Name Havaya** (as the plaque indicates “I have placed **Havaya** before me always”). Therefore, all sins are forgiven on Yom Kippur because the level of “you will be purified **before Havaya**,” which is **higher than the Name Havaya**, is revealed within the Jewish People (as is explained in the Alter Rebbe’s *Likkutei Torah* from 27:4, and Drushim L’Rosh HaShana 59:4). The mitzvos are

Naturally, all this does not come to encourage the hanging of pictures of tzaddikim on a “Shivisi” plaque. Rather, it is intended just to give the benefit of the doubt to someone who does so innocently and without intention.

called “mitzvos Havaya,” and therefore, the mitzva of t’shuva is drawn from the level of “I (*Anochi*) command you today” (D’varim 30:11), “*Anochi Mi Sh’Anochi – higher than Havaya*” (*Likkutei Torah*, Parshas Nitzavim 45:2). As is further written there (ibid. Parshas Pinchas 86b) in the name of the Zohar (III 257b), “*Anochi*” means “not alluded to in any letter and any dot,” i.e., higher than the Name Havaya with its four letters

(see *Maamarei Admur HaZakein* 5565, pg. 23, 36-37, regarding what Yitzchak said to Eisav, “And I will bless you **before Havaya**”).

This concept is no innovation of the teachings of Chabad chassidus, because it also appears in other s’farim. See what the gaon, Rabbi Yosef Chaim, of righteous memory (Baal Ben Ish Chai) writes in *Daas U’Svuna* (Chapter 1, pg. 55, new edition), in the name of the gaon of Vlazhin: “And even regarding the Unique Proper Name of Havaya, Blessed Be He, **we don’t assign this name to Him regarding His Blessed Essence**, except in relation to His connection with the worlds, as in his explanation of ‘He existed, He exists, and He will exist, and causes everything to exist’... But had G-d not designated the World of Atzilus, there would be no relevance regarding His Essence [to say] ‘He existed, He exists, and He will exist.’”

Even though this level of “before G-d” on Yom Kippur has relevance to every Jew, nevertheless, the concept pertains primarily to the leader of the generation, and as the Rebbe shlita says in the sicha from Shabbos Parshas R’ei 5710 (Toras Menachem, Vol. 1, pg. 184) on the pasuk “Behold, I (*Anochi*) set before you”: “For this pasuk was said by Moshe, and it even includes the offshoot of Moshe in every generation, **the leader of the generation who is called ‘Anochi,’ as ‘Anochi’ Above, ‘Anochi Mi Sh’Anochi,’ the level of kesser**. Furthermore, we find an example in the general levels of the souls of Israel, as ‘*Anochi*’ refers to the level of **Yechida**, the level of the leader of the generation.” This is explained according to what is known that Moshiach is the level of “the general yechida.” (See Ramaz L’Zohar III 260b, *Likkutei Torah L’HaAriZal* on the pasuk (B’Reishis 5:25) “And Chanoch walked with

G-d,” and other chassidic sources.) For the four parts of the soul – “*nefesh, ruach, neshama, chaya*” – correspond to the four letters of the Name Havaya, while the level of “*yechida*” is the level of kesser, which is higher than the Name Havaya, alluded to by the thorn of the letter Yud.

This relates to **what G-d requested of the Tanna, Rabbi Yishmoel, “Yishmoel, My son, bless Me”** (Brachos 7a. See also the explanation in *Maamarei Admur HaZakein – Inyanim*, pg. 382: “And it says in the writings of the Arizal that he possessed the level of **the revelation of yechida within the soul, reaching His very Essence**, the level of *kesser malchus*...and through the yechida of the soul, he could continue from there.” In *Maamarei Admur HaZakein – Es’halech Liozna*, sec. beg. “To understand the concept of the brachos,” the Alter Rebbe writes: “And G-d said to him that he should bless Him, meaning that he should draw from the inner illumination of His Divine attributes by raising the *mayim nukvin* (feminine waters) to His Essence.”) See also the Gemara (Shabbos 89a) about how G-d asked Moshe Rabbeinu “Succeed in My work,” and Moshe immediately replied, “Now, please, let the strength of Hashem be increased,” and *Seifer HaMaamarim Meluket*, Vol. 3, pg. 193, “V’Ata Yigdal” 5719.

In the Rebbe Maharash’s *Hemshech Mayim Rabbim* 5636, Chapter 177: “It is thereby understood what is written at *Krias Yam Suf* (Shmos 15:16): “Until Your people **pass**, O G-d (Havaya),” i.e., through the parting of the Sea, the Jewish People were elevated to a level **far higher than the four letters of the Name Havaya**.” See there for the explanation.

See *Likkutei Torah*, Parshas

Emor (32b): "Above Him stood the seraphim," and the question is explained above regarding the significance in saying about a created being **standing above the Sh'china, as it were**. 'I saw G-d (A-D-N-Y) sitting upon a throne high and exalted...above Him stood the seraphim' (Yeshayahu 6:1-2): The Name of Adnus means the level of the attribute of His Blessed sovereignty...as it is garbed in the worlds on the level of *memaleh kol almin* (permeating all worlds)...and therefore, it says, **'Above Him stood the seraphim,' i.e., as if they are higher than the level of the Name of Adnus**, which is the level of *memaleh kol almin*, because their primary longing is to reach the level of *sovev kol almin* (encompassing all worlds), which is called *kadosh* (holy)." (Regarding the angels, it is only relevant to say

"above Him" – on the Name of Adnus, whereas in the souls of great tzaddikim, it can also be said about the Name Havaya, because they attain the level of His essence "Anochi," not alluded to in any letter, as mentioned above.)

Naturally, all this does not come to encourage the hanging of pictures of tzaddikim on a "Shivisi" plaque. Rather, it is intended just to give the benefit of the doubt to someone who does so innocently and without intention.

עד מתי?!

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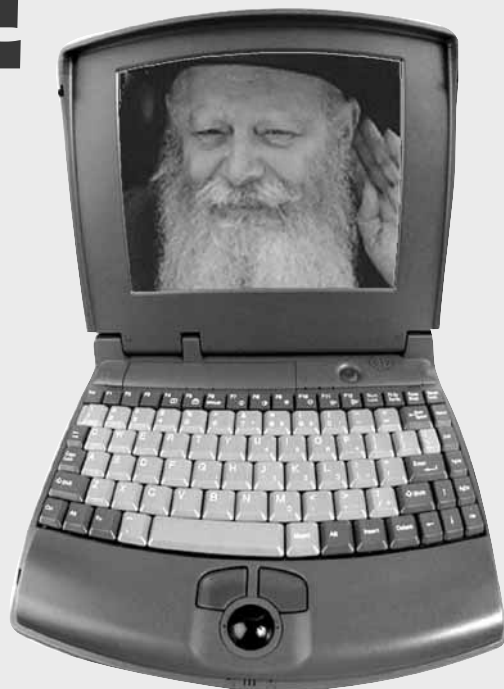
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ב"ה

SHLICHUS ON A FARM

By Avrohom Ber

A story of a Chassid who listened to what the Rebbe told him, without asking why.

YOU SHOULD WORK ON A FARM

On Motzaei Shabbos, Parshas VaYechi, there was a farbrengen in 770 in honor of the birthday of the gabbai, R' Zalman Lipsker. At this farbrengen, which was attended by his brother, R' Berel Lipsker, the two of them reminisced about their early days in America. Some of the stories they told are presented here.

When R' Yaakov Lipsker parted from his brother, R' Michoel in 1948 in the refugee camp near Brunoy, they did not imagine what a dramatic event

would take place at their next meeting. This would take place seven years later, Purim 5715/1955.

R' Yaakov was on his way to the US to see the Rebbe. When he arrived in America, he settled on the Lower East Side. (Crown Heights was a large Jewish community but had hardly any Chabad Chassidim.) After a short while, Rashag (the Rebbe's brother-in-law), who was the menahel of yeshivos Tomchei T'mimim, asked him to help fundraise.

Their fundraising was

successful and Rashag wanted R' Yaakov to continue doing this kind of work. R' Yaakov would not hear of it without consulting with the Rebbe first. The Rebbe Rayatz's answer was to go work on a farm(!).

R' Lipsker said, first of all, I don't have the money to buy a farm, and second, where can I find a farm? How should I know what to buy?

The Rebbe told him that Machne Israel would lend him the money and that he should look in the *Morgan Journal* for a farm.

R' Lipsker left 770 and went directly to a newsstand on the corner of Kingston Avenue (where the Jewish Children Museum is today). He bought the *Morgan Journal* and returned to 770 and back to the Rebbe's room.

He opened the newspaper and showed the Rebbe the ads, which included three ads for a farm. The Rebbe pointed at one of them and of course, R' Lipsker bought that farm.

GUESTS

Life on the farm wasn't easy at all. R' Lipsker raised chickens for a living. The price of chickens plummeted and there was hardly any profit in this line of work. This was in addition to the fact that it required physically toil and real exertion.

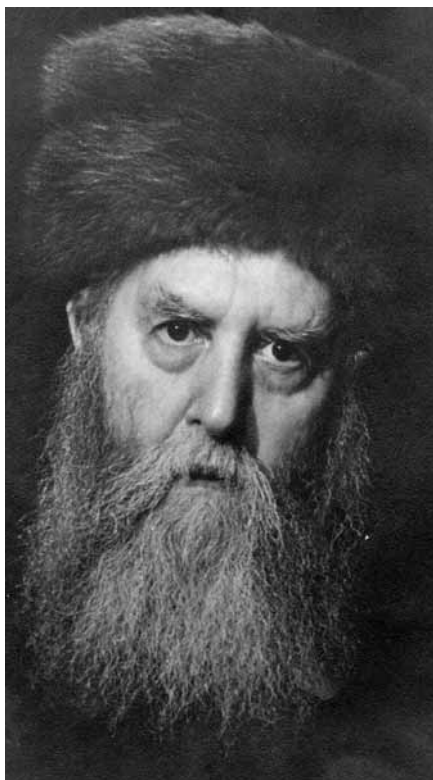
Nor was it spiritually easy to live on the farm. The people in the area in which he lived were mostly communists of the previous generation, those who hated anything that smacked of religion. Every Shabbos he had to walk forty-five minutes to shul so he could daven with a minyan. Most of the men in the minyan were not observant Jews.

One Friday, in the summer of 1949, the Lipskers were delighted to be visited by a group of

THE REBBE'S SHLIACH

Rabbi Yaakov Lipsker and his children arrived at the farm in New Jersey in the winter of 5709. Mrs. Lipsker, who was in an advanced stage of pregnancy, remained behind in New York. A week later she gave birth to a son.

Rabbi Lipsker returned to New York and in yechidus he asked the Rebbe Rayatz to be the sandek at the bris that would take place on the Lower East Side. The Rebbe said he could not make it but he would send a shliach. Rabbi Eliyahu Simpson was the Rebbe's shliach at the bris at which they named the baby Shneur Zalman (the one farbrenging on his birthday at the beginning of this article). They also had the privilege of receiving a telegram from the Rebbe, then known as the Ramash.



The Rebbe Rayatz



Rabbi Yaakov Lipsker

bachurim who were sent by the Rebbe Rayatz on an important mission. Their job was to find a man by the name of Moshe Greenberg and to bring him to the third Shabbos meal and find out his mother's name. R' Lipsker apologized and said he did not know anybody by that name but he suggested they stay and see what happened.

That Shabbos, the Lipskers



**Rabbi Zalman Lipsker
farbrengeing on his birthday**

were accompanied by the bachurim as they walked to shul. Leading the group was Tzvi Hirsh Gansburg, who was older than the other bachurim. He was tense since he felt that the responsibility for the mission fell on his shoulders.

When they arrived at shul, R' Lipsker went over to the gabbai, a simple Jew (in the positive sense), by the name of Mr. Shatz, and asked him whether he knew Moshe Greenberg. The gabbai said he knew him. When R' Lipsker asked where he could find him, the gabbai said, "You don't need to find him since he's right here in shul!" and pointed at a man sitting there.

The man looked familiar to R' Lipsker and he tried to recall where he knew him from. Every Shabbos morning, as they walked to shul, they passed by the main highway that led to New York. There, at the bus stop, waited

CHUMASH WITH RASHI

Rabbi Yaakov Lipsker once brought the gabbai of the shul, Mr. Shatz (mentioned in the article as a simple Jew, in the positive sense) to the Rebbe for a yechidus. The Rebbe asked him whether he knew how to learn and Mr. Shatz said he knew a little bit.

The Rebbe asked him if he knew how to learn Chumash with Rashi and Mr. Shatz said that he certainly knew how to learn that. The Rebbe said, "If only I knew how to learn Chumash with Rashi!"

When he left the yechidus, Mr. Shatz asked Rabbi Lipsker in bewilderment, "Does the Rebbe really not know how to learn Chumash with Rashi?"

Moshe Greenberg.

This Jew had never visited the shul. Even on a yahrtzait, when everybody came to form a minyan so the person with yahrtzait could say Kaddish, Moshe Greenberg did not show up. That particular Shabbos, Moshe Greenberg went to shul for the first time.

MOSHE GREENBERG DISAPPEARED!

Tzvi Hirsh Gansburg began to think about how he could approach Greenberg and ask for his mother's name. He was afraid of the man's reaction. R' Lipsker told him that if he wanted, he would find out the mother's name. Gansburg agreed.

When Mincha was over, Moshe Greenberg was invited to the third Shabbos meal and he accepted the invitation. R' Lipsker sat down next to him. At some point, R' Lipsker got up and said l'chaim and said that he had yahrtzait for his mother and her name was Bas-Sheva. He then turned to Greenberg and asked him what his mother's name was and the man told him.

A week went by and then another, and another. R' Lipsker noticed that he did not see Moshe Greenberg at the bus stop Shabbos morning anymore. He wondered about this and decided to ask Mr. Shatz if he knew where Greenberg was.

"You ask where he disappeared to?" chuckled Mr. Shatz.

"Everybody is asking where he went and nobody knows, not the place where he worked, not the neighbors, not his friends, and not even his gentile wife and children."

It turned out that Moshe Greenberg, who had been married to a non-Jewish woman, had run away from his family and nobody knew where he was. The Rebbe

had received his mother's name and had extricated him from the klipos.

THE FARM WAS SOLD

Back to the farm. Life did not get better and the hardships got harder. R' Lipsker felt he had to ask the new Rebbe for permission to leave. This was already after 10 Shvat 5710, the passing of the Rebbe Rayatz.

The Rebbe strongly negated the idea of leaving the farm. "Since the Rebbe sent you there, you cannot leave," he said.

R' Lipsker asked the Rebbe several more times and each time, the Rebbe said No, and so he stopped asking.

Towards the end of 5714, when R' Lipsker was in yechidus and the Rebbe had responded to what he had written, the Rebbe stopped and thought for a while and then said, "Nu, that's all. It doesn't have to be a farm necessarily. Move back to the city."

"Where should I move to?" asked R' Lipsker, and the Rebbe told him to move to Crown Heights.

When you move to a new place, you need to find work, sell your old house, and buy a new one. The first problem was solved when R' Lipsker opened a grocery store on the corner of Kingston and Union, but the two other problems remained.

Before he began looking for a home in Crown Heights, he looked for a customer for his farm, but it wasn't a good time to sell a farm and nobody wanted it. A few potential customers showed up but nobody completed the deal. There were even instances in which the deal was cancelled after a non-refundable deposit had been given, but he did not have the heart to keep the money and

Suddenly, R' Yaakov smelled smoke. He tried to bring it to the attention of his wife and brother but they didn't smell it. When the smell got stronger, his wife got up and opened the door and smoke billowed in. It was a fire!

returned it. A long period of time passed.

One time, he was standing in *Gan Eden HaTachton* and when the Rebbe was on his way to his room, R' Lipsker told him about his difficulty in selling the farm and said, "It seems that from Above, they don't let."

The Rebbe raised his hand in a dismissive motion and said, "What goes on Above, we know. Go in good health and sell the farm."

When he returned to the farm, he found someone waiting there for him. This man wanted to buy the farm. The deal was sealed and R' Lipsker began looking for a home in Crown Heights.

In those days, it was very hard for a large family to get an apartment, all the more so when the family numbered 11 people.

After a long period of fruitless searching, he found a large apartment for rent. When he asked the Rebbe, the Rebbe said, "Rent, and look for a new one."

THE FIRE

The Lipsker family settled in their new home and R' Lipsker continued looking for an apartment. Despite all his efforts, he did not find anything suitable. After half a year, his brother from Morocco, R' Michoel, came to the Rebbe. It was a Wednesday night and R' Michoel Lipsker had a yechidus at twelve o'clock at night. The yechidus lasted nearly two hours until the Rebbe said it was time for him to rest after his long trip.

R' Michoel went outside to his waiting family, his brother and two sons who were waiting

outside with the suitcases. They walked to their house, where the boys went to sleep while the parents sat and talked after not seeing one another for seven years.

Suddenly, R' Yaakov smelled smoke. He tried to bring it to the attention of his wife and brother but they didn't smell it. When the smell got stronger, his wife got up and opened the door and smoke billowed in. It was a fire!

They quickly woke up the children and ran to the fire escape. On that cold night, the Lipskers saw their house and all its contents go up in flames. They didn't even have coats.

A week went by until R' Lipsker was able to find a new home, one that was closer to 770.

* * *

That is the story of the shlichus on the farm. We told the story about one person that we know was inspired by that shlichus. What was the goal of the shlichus? We may never know. But we can learn from R' Lipsker and his family about kabbalas ol to the Rebbe. The Rebbe says – and we go. Why? What is the purpose of the trip? That doesn't matter to a Chassid who goes on the Rebbe's shlichus with kabbalas ol.

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RAYS OF LIGHT AND GLORY

*From the notes of the rosh yeshiva of Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim in B'nei Brak, Rabbi Chananya Yosef Eisenbach. * Part 2 of 2*

[Continued from last issue]

TIMELY INTERVENTION

R' Ezriel Zelig Scharfstein of Cincinnati, who was close with Rabbi Lazer Silver (president of the Agudas HaRabbanim) and succeeded him, related that R' Silver had a special shiur every Friday night for rabbanim, shoctim, and other religious leaders.

One time, when R' Scharfstein went to the shiur, he saw the rav standing outside and R' Silver said to him: I am waiting for you because I have something interesting to tell you. Today I received a phone call from the Lubavitcher Rebbe!

R' Silver told him that the Rebbe had personally called him and asked him to go to Washington and push for the release of the Skulener Rebbe from jail in Romania. He tried to explain that he had already gone to Washington several times and



Rabbi Chananya Yosef Eisenbach

that he and other rabbanim and askanim had not succeeded, but since the Rebbe asked him, he went to Washington and met with the Secretary of State and other government officials.

Within a very short time, the Skulener Rebbe was released and

the Rebbe called R' Silver once again to thank him.

This is how it worked out. At that very time, the government of Romania wanted to appoint a new ambassador to the US and they awaited US approval. As a result of R' Silver's visit, the US government sent a request to Romania regarding the release of the Skulener Rebbe and this request was made together with their approval of the appointment.

The Romanian government understood this to mean that the two issues were connected, and since they were very interested in this appointment, they quickly released the tzaddik from Skulen.

BEFORE ASKING

The Chassidic rav, Rabbi Shmuel Zalmanov, who lived in Yerushalayim at the end of his life, related that in Tishrei 5726 he asked his friend, Rabbi Shneur Zalman Gurary, to ask for l'chaim for him. R' Gurary forgot. But at one of the Tishrei farbrengens, when R' Gurary raised his cup to say l'chaim, the Rebbe said to him: And for R' Shmuel Zalmanov?

ABOUT THE BOOK

The Chassid Rabbi Yisroel Tzvi Heber related that before he traveled to the Rebbe for Tishrei 5726, he went to one of the distinguished rabbanim of Tel Aviv to say goodbye. That rav told him that he had visited the Rebbe five years earlier and he asked R' Heber to mention his name for a bracha. He also mentioned that he was surprised that he got no feedback about the book he had sent to the Rebbe. He asked R' Heber to make inquiries of the secretariat.

Since R' Heber forgot the name of the book, he was unable

to make inquiries about it. When he entered the Rebbe's room for yechidus and mentioned the rav's name, the Rebbe said: He was here five years ago and we spoke about X and Y (and the Rebbe specified what they had spoken about). He also sent me a book and it is a good book.

HE WILL ARRIVE SUDDENLY

The mekubal Rabbi Menachem Zev Gringlass told me that in the early years of the Rebbe's leadership, some people were standing near the door in *Gan Eden HaTachton* and were talking about the coming of Moshiach and how it will be. As they spoke, the Rebbe suddenly opened the door and said: He will come like this!

TO SUSTAIN THEM IN FAMINE

Rabbi Sholom Dovid Geisinsky related in the name of his father, R' Moshe Aharon, that the doctors forbade him from fasting after a serious operation.

"Erev Yom Kippur morning, I received lekach from the Rebbe and after he said, '*shana tova u'm'suka*,' I said, 'I am worried about tomorrow's fast.'

"The Rebbe asked me, 'what?' and I repeated, 'I am worried about tomorrow's fast,' to which the Rebbe said, 'To sustain them in famine,' and I answered amen. In that moment the idea flashed through my mind: Moshe Aharon, you will fast tomorrow, and I went home very happily.

"On the way I saw Rabbi Kalman Marlow, the rav of Crown Heights, and I told him what happened. I told him that I believed that I could fast but I wanted to know about the medication, how to take it

according to halacha.

"The end of the story was that I fasted from 6:30 Erev Yom Kippur until 8:30 Motzaei Yom Kippur and I did not take the medicine. Amazingly, I davened for the tzibbur for Maariv and for N'ila too, and I also read the Torah at Shacharis and Mincha, and that is really an open miracle."

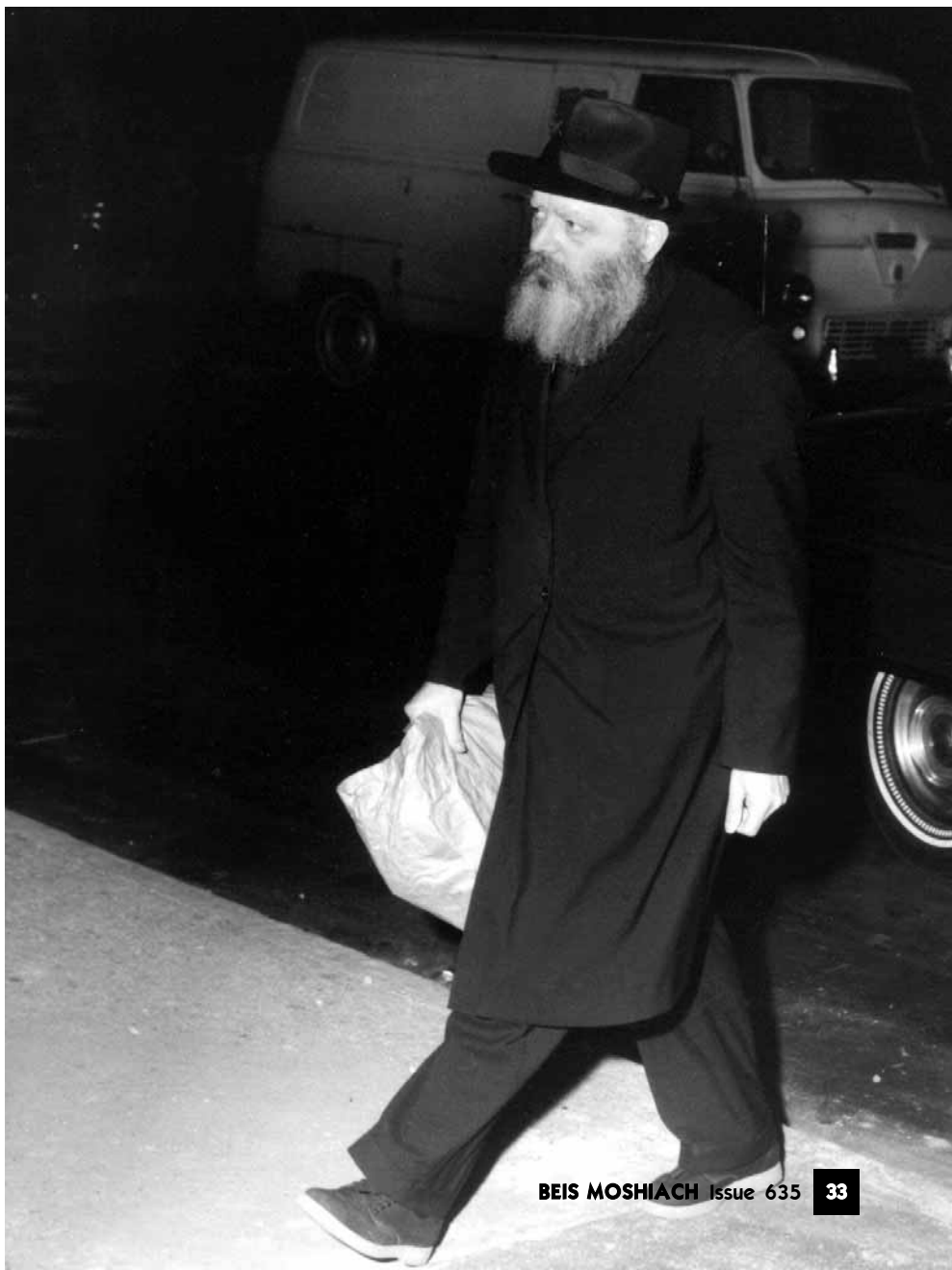
IT ADDS LIFE

Rabbi Shneur Zalman Garelik, the esteemed rav of Kfar Chabad, visited the Rebbe for the first time

in the beginning of 5721. When he was in yechidus, he asked the Rebbe permission to hand over the work of the big gemach that he ran to others since it took too much of his time and he was already old and weak.

The Rebbe told him that the gemach did not take away time but added time. Rabbi Garelik was 80 years old and he lived another 15 years, to the age of 95.

On that occasion or perhaps another, Rabbi Garelik also asked about resigning from the



Before he could say anything, the Rebbe told him to change the buttons on his coat so they wouldn't close left over right and then he would be successful in earning a living. The astounded man decided on the spot to return to Eretz Yisroel.

rabbinate, since “Kfar Chabad deserved a better rav,” in his opinion. The Rebbe told him: It’s your choice to be a better rav!

MIRACLE WITHIN A MIRACLE

The late Admur of Tolne told me that when he lived in Montreal before moving to Eretz Yisroel, he had to undergo a complicated operation. He sent a note to the Rebbe and the Rebbe’s response was that since his name was Yochanan, as the Gemara says in Brachos, “miracles of miracles would be done for him.”

Indeed, he had a miracle within a miracle and he recovered.

WE NEED A REBBE

Thursday night of Parshas VaYikra 5727, elder Chassidim and mashpiim met with the Rebbe to ask him to take care of his health. The famous Chassidim, R’ Shmuel Levitin, R’ Berel Rivkin, R’ Nissan Telushkin, R’ Yisroel Jacobson, R’ Eliyahu Simpson, and R’ S.Z. Duchman complained that the Rebbe went to the Ohel too often and it was very cold there.

The Rebbe responded: Without it, it’s impossible! I must carry the burden myself?! You yourselves say that we need a Rebbe. As for the Ohel being cold, you can ask R’ Zalman Duchman, who goes to the Ohel often, and he will also tell you that it’s warm there.

IT’S NOTHING

Doctors diagnosed Rebbetzin Slavin, sister to the rabbanim of the Diskin family, with a serious illness and she went to the Rebbe for a bracha. The Rebbe told her it was nothing.

“What do you mean?” asked the Rebbetzin in surprise. “The doctors took X-rays and said so!”

The Rebbe insisted it was nothing and the Rebbetzin continued to express her concerns. The Rebbe finally got up and said, “How do they say it in Eretz Yisroel – ‘efsher hert ihr oif tzu nudjen’ (perhaps you will stop nudging)? I told you that you are not sick. Go in peace.”

The Rebbetzin lived another 23 years.

RIGHT OVER LEFT

A man from Eretz Yisroel who was not making a living accepted an offer to move to New York and open a store. On Sunday, he went to the Rebbe for a bracha during “dollars.” Before he could say anything, the Rebbe told him to change the buttons on his coat so they wouldn’t close left over right and then he would be successful in earning a living.

The astounded man decided on the spot to return to Eretz Yisroel.

HE DISMISSED IT

A Jew from Russia who lives in New York received a frightening letter from his daughter, who still lived in Russia, saying that her husband had received a draft notice for duty in Chernobyl (site of the nuclear reactor disaster). The young couple was terrified since this meant his imminent demise.

He went for a bracha for the Rebbe at “dollars.” When he told the Rebbe the details, the Rebbe made a dismissive motion with his hand and blessed him.

The son-in-law was drafted and taken in a truck full of soldiers to the area of the damaged reactor, but for some reason, unlike all the rest, he was sent from one official to another, to about 18 people, who examined him and interrogated him, until they decided he should be sent back home.

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

2 ADAR I: REDEMPTION IN THE MERIT OF SIMCHA

One of the Polish tzaddikim gave the following interpretation on the verse, **“Then they will say among the nations”** (T’hillim 126:2):

“Then they will say among the nations” – when Moshiach will come, the nations will say, **“G-d has done great things for them”** – G-d did great and wondrous things with the Jewish People.

And we respond to them that in fact, **“G-d has done great things for us”** – and why?

Because **“we were joyful”** – in the merit of the simcha.

(sicha of the Rebbe shlita)

3 ADAR I: THE HALACHIC IDENTITY OF MELECH HA'MOSHIACH

“If a king will arise from the House of Dovid who is learned in Torah and involved in mitzvos as Dovid his father, according to the Written and Oral Torah, and will compel all Israel to walk [in the ways of Torah] and strengthen it, and fight the wars of G-d, it may be presumed that he is Moshiach” (Rambam, Hilchos Melachim)

The Rambam’s seifer of halachos is the only halachic source that relates clearly to the subject of Melech HaMoshiach; in everything connected to the identity of Moshiach, no one differs with the Rambam.

We are talking then about a clear and absolute halachic ruling that when a Jew is found whose activities are identified with this process, he is “presumed to be Moshiach,” and we are to believe in him and anticipate that he will build the Beis HaMikdash and gather in the Exiles of Israel to Eretz Yisroel.

(Likkutei Sichos, Vol. 3, Yud Shvat)

4 ADAR I: THE APPOINTMENT OF MOSHIACH HAS ALREADY TAKEN PLACE

And since the appointment of Dovid Malka M’shichei has already taken place, as it is written (T’hillim 89:21): **“I have found Dovid My servant, I have anointed him with My holy oil,”** there only must be the acceptance of his sovereignty by the people, and the connection between the king and the people in complete revelation.

...Moshiach Tzidkeinu, (he is) the shliach referred to in, **“Send, I pray, by the hand of the one You will send,”** my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe, and as continued afterwards by his successor.

(Shabbos Parshas Mishpatim 5751, Shabbos Parshas Chayei Sara 5752)

5 ADAR I: MELECH HA'MOSHIACH – KING AND NASI

“And My servant Dovid shall be king over them, etc., and My servant Dovid shall be a prince to them forever.” (Yechezkel 37: 24-25)

The verse speaks about the two duties of Melech HaMoshiach: Moshiach will be a king fighting the wars of G-d (Rambam, Hilchos Melachim, Chapter 11), and a nasi teaching the people the way of G-d (Rambam, Hilchos T’shuva, Chapter

9).

It is thus understood that regarding a king, it says “over them,” while regarding a nasi, it says “to them.” The conduct of kingship is by rising above the people – “over them,” whereas the influence of the nasi comes by drawing them close, as he tries to get the people to grasp and understand his words – “to them.”

(Likkutei Sichos, Parshas VaYigash 5751)

6 ADAR I: THE AVODA OF MOSHIACH

“If a king will arise from the House of Dovid who is learned in Torah and involved in mitzvos as Dovid his father...and will compel all Israel to walk [in the ways of Torah] and strengthen it, and fight the wars of G-d, it may be presumed that he is Moshiach.” (Rambam, Hilchos Melachim)

We learn three main points from this halacha in the avoda of Moshiach:

“learned in Torah” – the avoda of Moshiach with himself.

“and will compel all Israel” – the avoda of Moshiach with others.

“and fight the wars of G-d” – the avoda with his portion in his world (victory over all the nations around him).

(sicha, 13 Nissan 5745)

7 ADAR I: MOSHE RABBEINU WILL ENTER ERETZ YISROEL TOGETHER WITH THE GENERATION OF THE DESERT IN THE FUTURE TO COME

Our Rabbis, of blessed memory, have said (BaMidbar Rabba 19:13) that at the Future Redemption, Moshe Rabbeinu will enter Eretz Yisroel, heading the entire generation of the desert.

According to the abovementioned Midrash, it is understood that the Redemption of the entire Jewish People in its truest and most complete sense (when not even one Jew will remain in exile) can only be specifically with the Future Redemption, and not the Redemption from Egypt.

For the ultimate purpose of the Exodus from Egypt was coming to Eretz Yisroel, and the six hundred thousand Jews who went out from Egypt remained in the desert and were not privileged to reach the land, and only at the Future Redemption will they arrive there.

(Seifer Hisvaaduyos, 12 Sivan 5744)

8 ADAR I: ALL THE WANDERING AND QUESTIONS WILL BE NULLIFIED IN THE REDEMPTION

At the time of the Redemption, the wanderings of the exile and the opposite of rest in the inner exile in Avodas Hashem will be nullified.

This includes in its simplest sense the nullification of all the concealments and hiding of the exile, and all the questions (and particularly on the Redemption and on Moshiach Tzidkeinu) that derive from the exile itself.

(Shabbos Parshas BaMidbar 5751)

THE WALLS BREACHED

By Sholom Ber Crombie

*Armed terrorists used explosives to break the security wall that separates Gaza from Egypt. Thousands of people from Gaza crossed into Egypt to get food and other items, but amongst them were also dozens of terrorists who trained in Iran, as well as weapons. * Beis Moshiah spoke with General (Res.) Motti Yogav, who served as commander of the Gaza forces and who warned that this would happen if Israel demolished Gush Katif.*

Even before the Disengagement, you appeared before the Foreign and Defense Committees of the Knesset and forewarned about what is going on now, but nobody listened to you. What do you feel today?

What we see is that falsehood doesn't have legs to stand on. Before they destroyed Gush Katif, we appeared at many discussions that took place in the Knesset, including the Foreign and Defense Committees, and we warned that destroying the settlements in Gush Katif would lead to a deterioration of security in that area. The Defense

Minister at the time, Shaul Mofaz, tried to explain to us that the security situation would improve, but that illusion has dissipated.

This situation reflects the illusion that those leading our country are living in. The foolishness of the destruction of Gush Katif was a result of a spiritual distance from the Torah and Eretz Yisroel, and now we see what happens when there is a spiritual disconnect. A disconnection from Torah caused the leaders of the State of Israel to bring tragedy upon millions of Jews and abandon their security.

I was not at all surprised by what

recently happened, for it was obvious to any rational person that the security situation in the Gaza Strip would deteriorate at some point and would compel Israel to take action.

Israel's current siege on Gaza is being carried out as part of the pressure on terrorist organizations in order to stop the Kassam missiles. Although this is not necessarily the most effective step, better this than not reacting at all. The Defense Minister prefers not to attack the terror sites themselves. Rather, he has taken ineffective steps that impact the population at large.

Hamas' demolition of the wall between Gaza and Egypt must be a signal to those that lead our military that the same thing can happen to us, G-d forbid. The IDF must be prepared for the day that Hamas will try to break the border with Israel. If we aren't prepared, an irreversible tragedy can take place.

What is your opinion about the situation in the Gaza Strip?

The Gaza Strip is total chaos. Nobody has control over what is going on there. Aside from the innocent goats and the cement that is bought in Egypt and transferred to the Strip, much advanced weaponry is also getting in, as well as many terrorists who were trained in Iran. This places Gaza on a higher level of terror threat. If until now it was just about Palestinian terror, the breached border has increased the capacity for terror because of the well trained terrorists and their sophisticated weapons.

The fact that terrorists in Gaza have placed Israel on a front with Iran can be felt already, and is the reason why Israel has recently limited touring in the western Negev.

What do you think should be done?

We need to pray for the return of all the settlements that were

destroyed in Gush Katif and demand a renewed Jewish settling of the area. From the perspective of security, we must take responsibility for our security and not rely on Abu Mazen or any other "Abu." Guns are the only things that speak to terrorists, and we certainly shouldn't put the fate of millions of Jews into their hands. The minimum we are required to do now is to regain the security of the western Negev and prevent the spread of terror. Only then can we deal with the general terror that comes from the Gaza Strip.

Israel must isolate the Gaza Strip from Egypt by way of establishing a defensible strip. I am not talking about a defense line on the Philadelphi Corridor, because the Corridor between Egypt and Rafiach is more important at this point. We must create a sovereign border between us and the Egyptians on the Sufa Corridor north of Rafiach, along the area where Morag used to be, as well as on the sea from the north to Tel Sultan.

This isolation would leave Palestinian Rafiach and Tel Sultan to Egypt and isolate Egypt and the Sinai from the Gaza Strip. This is absolutely essential. This is an opportunity to create lines of

defense that will protect Israel and prevent the supply of weapons to Gaza via Egypt.

The second thing Israel needs to do immediately is to retake the northern part of the Gaza Strip up till where Netzarim used to be. The size of northern Gaza is only a quarter of the Gaza Strip, but more than half of the residents of Gaza live there. This is the most crowded area and it includes the Jablaya refugee camp. This area threatens Ashkelon and Sderot and this is where they are shooting missiles from into our country. So it must be conquered first, not before isolating the Gaza Strip from Egypt. The politicians talk about the Gaza Strip, but there is no such thing as the Gaza Strip as one entity. Each section has to be dealt with separately.

The situation is complicated and small focused operations will not help dismantle the explosives keg which is Gaza. We need to undertake big operations that will take several months and only then can we clean up the terror nests.

Can this be done without endangering the lives of our soldiers?

An operation like this requires the proper preparedness. This

includes intelligence from the area, blockades, attacking terror leaders and their command posts, and eradicating their weapons caches as much as possible. Then we will be ready to enter Gaza and carry out a major operation.

The operation must return security and humanitarian control of the Strip to Israel. Following an operation like this, we can continue with an operation on the center of the Strip, like Khan Junis. Even if the IDF stops a military operation after conquering the north of the Strip, things will change in the center of the Strip because the area will be isolated and weak.

Do you think we can return to Gush Katif?

This is the best opportunity to do so, but I think that returning to all the settlements can only take place at a later point. In order to do so, we need to prepare the Israeli public. They need to know that every inch of Eretz Yisroel that we do not control is a security threat. Aside from that, from a spiritual perspective, it's a great Chilul Hashem that this area is abandoned to terrorists.

Practically speaking, the IDF needs to isolate the Strip on the south, thus establishing a permanent



Hamas' demolition of the wall between Gaza and Egypt must be a signal to those that lead our military that the same thing can happen to us, G-d forbid. The IDF must be prepared for the day that Hamas will try to break the border with Israel. If we aren't prepared, an irreversible tragedy can take place.

defense line, and retake the north of the Strip.

The fear is that after the IDF conquers the area, it will be transferred to Abu Mazen's control.

Any conquering that is not for the purpose of eternal sovereignty is a waste of resources and is simply suicidal. We are talking about the unnecessary endangering of our precious soldiers, for it has no purpose. This idea is coming from those who are having a hard time admitting that the Disengagement was a failure, so it's hard for them to think about returning to it. They realize that they do not have an effective response through large scale military operations, because

the terrorists will immediately return to the vacuum that remains.

Nevertheless, we should not drop our demand that they retake Gaza because this is the only option now, and perhaps, while conquering it, our leaders will come to their senses. The IDF understands the situation and wants to do the right thing. The problem is that the politicians tie their hands and the courts have imposed a twisted morality on the IDF. The court wants to defend the people living there instead of defending our soldiers, and thus it strips the IDF of the ability to act. This comes from being distant from the way of the holy Torah and our Jewish values.

The situation today is that the

right hand chains the left. The army is chained by the court. I must mention Minister Friedman, who is working on limiting the authority of the court and perhaps, because of his efforts, the army will be able to take action based on security concerns and not on a corrupt morality that the court dictates.

Unfortunately, in the previous wave of terror, the heads of state waited until the massacre in the Park Hotel and the Dolphinarium, in which nearly fifty Jews were murdered, and only then did they agree to the operation Defensive Shield. Now we want to take action and not wait for more coffins, G-d forbid.

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PROTOTYPE FOR THE JEWISH HOME

By Rabbi Yosef Karasik, Rav Beit Chefer-Emek Chefer

The Mishkan and its vessels symbolize Torah and mitzvos and the earth represents the physical body. The pegs that connect the Mishkan to the ground represent the connection of Divine holiness and the physical body of a Jew.
** A fascinating look at the parsha from the perspective of Chazal, Kabbala and Chabad Chassidus.*

CURTAINS AND PEGS

The Mishkan which the Jewish people were commanded to construct in this week's parsha, "and they shall make Me a sanctuary," was erected by Moshe Rabbeinu in the desert and it accompanied the Jewish people on their journey. The Mishkan entered Israel with them and was rebuilt in Gilgal. From there it was moved to Shilo, Nov, and Givon, for a total of 480 years, until the Beis HaMikdash in Yerushalayim was built and the Mishkan was dismantled and hidden on the Temple Mt.

The Mishkan was a magnificent edifice, made of gold, silver, copper, acacia wood, etc. It was about 75 square meters and about 15 meters high. Its beams were made of acacia wood covered with gold and the ceiling was made of beautiful curtains, constructed of wool, linen, silk, and hides, and

decorated with embroidery.

Not only the ceiling was made of curtains but also the walls, so that someone looking at the Mishkan from the outside did not see wooden beams but only the curtains.

On the edges of the curtains were copper pegs. The verse says, "its pegs ...were copper," and Rashi comments: pegs – a sort of copper nail that was attached to their edges so that the wind wouldn't lift them [i.e., the curtains] up.

Rashi is doubtful whether the pegs were wedged into the ground or merely rested on the ground since the weight of the curtains and the pegs were heavy enough to keep it in place even without the pegs being wedged into the ground.

The curtains were thick and long, 15 meters in length and the width 20 meters. Add to this the weight of the copper pegs and the

fact that the curtains rested against the beams, and it's reasonable to assume that even without wedging the pegs into the ground, the curtains did not move in the wind.

In addition, the ground in a desert is hard and it's not easy to wedge pegs into it. Furthermore, the Mishkan was not a permanent structure as it was dismantled and moved from place to place. In some places it stayed up for one day, so one would think that it would be more feasible to forgo wedging the pegs into the ground during a temporary stay.

Rashi concludes that the pegs were wedged into the ground, "I say that their name demonstrates that they were wedged into the ground which is why they are called pegs."

WHY WEDGED?

The discussion as to whether the curtain pegs were wedged into the ground or lay on the ground reflects a Jew's service of Hashem.

The Mishkan and its vessels represent the Divine Holiness, Torah and mitzvos. The earth represents the physical body, and the pegs, which connect the Mishkan to the ground, represent the unification of G-dliness with a Jew's physical body.

There are two possible connections: 1) that Torah and mitzvos rest on a Jew's body, i.e., they are external to him, and are not wedged within him and do not become a part of him. 2) that they are wedged within him and become part of him, i.e., Torah permeates him and changes him.

We see this idea in the halachos concerning the Mishkan, in that the earth of the Mishkan absorbed the holiness of the Mishkan (as it says in Parshas Naso 5:17), even though it was in the Sinai desert, which is not part of Eretz Yisroel. This is because the wedging of the pegs into the ground infused it with



Attaching the pegs of the Mishkan to the ground
(illustration from Machon HaMikdash)

holiness. So too, a Jew ought to toil to connect the holiness to his innermost self.

PEGS AND COUPLES

The holy Zohar explains the function of the pegs in the supernal worlds – that they connect the Jew to Hashem and strengthen the peace in the home between a husband and wife. The Zohar says as follows:

There is a supernal chamber in heaven that has four angels in its four corners: Michael, Gavriel, Refael, and Uriel. In the center, Hashem amuses Himself with the souls of tzaddikim. Towards this chamber rise all the prayers, desires, and praises that a Jew does with love and from the depths of his heart.

This chamber is supported by eight pillars, two on each side of the four directions – east, west, north, and south. The eight pillars of this supernal chamber are the eight pegs of the Mishkan. Just as they connect the curtains of the Mishkan, so do they connect a Jew's prayers to the Mishkan of Hashem in the supernal chamber in heaven. When the supernal King, Hashem, enters this supernal chamber, the pegs are

uprooted from their place outside the Mishkan and they enter the chamber of Hashem.

Each of the eight pegs has a special function: the pegs on the eastern side and on the two sides – north and south – are in charge of sustaining the world, endowing the world with life. Likewise, these pegs weigh males and females on a scale so that they marry one another, regarding whom it is said in T'hilim, "going up on the scale," for they balance one another, the male versus the female. When one does not weigh more than the other, they rise up and join one another and the two of them, male and female, unite as one.

For the male is the right side and the female is the left side and if the left is greater than the right, there is dissent among them and they are not suited to join. If the right is greater than the left, there is no dissent and they can unite.

The two pegs on the western side are the ones that shed tears for the husband and wife who did not cleave to one another and divorce, thus not giving permanence to the Sheva Brachos with which they were blessed under their chuppa.

THE JOINING OF PHYSICALITY IN THE ERA OF GEULA

As opposed to the Mishkan, where the ground was only temporarily sanctified and as soon as the Mishkan was moved the holiness departed from the ground the Mishkan had been on, the holiness of the Mikdash is eternal.

This will be manifested particularly in the third Beis HaMikdash, whose structure is eternal, for the third Geula is an eternal Geula that is not followed by galus. This is because the G-dly sanctity will permanently permeate the physical earth of the site of the Mikdash.

The uniting of the physical and the spiritual in the days of Moshiach, in the Mikdash and in the world at large, will be complete, as Chazal say, "In the future, Yerushalayim will spread out throughout Eretz Yisroel, and Eretz Yisroel will spread out to other lands." Holiness will spread throughout the world in the true and complete Redemption with Moshiach Tzidkeinu, who will soon come and redeem us.

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FARBRENGEN MARKS THE 120TH YAHRTZAIT OF REBBETZIN MENUCHA ROCHEL ON 24 SHVAT

By Aliza Karp

Wednesday evening, Ohr L'Chaf-Daled Shvat, Mrs. Miriam Rhodes, co-founder and director of the Woman's Kollel at the Chabad cemetery in Chevron, led a Farbrengen in honor of the Yahrzeit of Rebbetzin Menucha Rochel. The Farbrengen was hosted by Mrs. Chana Rosen in Crown Heights.

Rebbetzin Menucha Rochel is the legendary daughter of the Mittlerer Rebbe who was the Matriarch of the Chabad community in Chevron during the 1800's. In addition to leading her community, rabbis and scholars from Yerushalayim would seek her advice and brachos.

Rebbetzin Menucha Rochel's Kever is in the Chabad cemetery together with other venerable Chassidim, including Reb Moshe Meisles. The cemetery is located on a strategic hilltop overlooking the metropolis of Chevron, separated from other segments of the contemporary Jewish community.

The Farbrengen in Crown Heights brought together supporters and friends of Kollel Eliezer Elimelech (an organization founded and directed by Meir and Miriam Rhodes), young women who have visited the Rhodes's Beis Lubavitch Bat Ayin (located half way between Yerushalayim and Chevron), girls who were pioneers in the process of re-opening the Chabad cemetery as a place for davening and learning, and other interested parties who heard about the event through word of mouth.

In honor of the Yahrzeit the women spoke about Bubby Marthas' Woman's Kollel at Menucha Rochel

which meets every other Tuesday. Most women are picked up by a van at designated spots along the way from Bat Ayin to Chevron. A car comes from Yerushalayim. Local women join and women from abroad make it one of the 'musts' on their agenda. The seder begins with individual davening and meditation. The location lends itself to spiritual



expression. Women of various ages at the Farbrengen agreed that there is an encompassing feeling of Menucha, inner peace, at this location. It is a wondrous sensation to be near Menucha Rochel – with the open sky above and Chevron just below. But it is more than then material setting. This is also a location surrounded by hostile

Arabs. And yet it is the Menucha that permeates the location.

The women discussed fear. Miriam told her own story of the first time she toured Chevron twenty two years ago with Boruch Nachshon and Yehudis Goldstein. In those days the streets were teeming with Arabs. Today the streets of the Jewish areas of Chevron have very few Arabs and they don't linger, they hurry to their destination. But twenty-two years ago it was different. Miriam admitted her heart palpitating and her sheer wonder at how her guides were so relaxed. "When you are with brave people, it rubs off," said Miriam. The others agreed.

Someone made a joke about Miriam's years teaching in Beis Rivkah High School as being more frightening than being in Chevron.

One young woman asked how it would be possible to "Mach Da Eretz Yisroel" and bring that feeling of Menucha to Crown Heights.

As per Farbrengen style, one story led to another. One story told of a girl who felt fear and was comforted by singing HaMalach HaGoel. Another story was told about a woman saying a Pasuk and actually being saved because the perpetrator perceived her as having escorts. From across the table another woman knew the sister of the women who was saved and added that the Pasuk that she had said was also HaMalach HaGoel – and that the Lelover Rebbe said regarding HaMalach HaGoel, "The words of Torah are alive. Use them and they will protect you."



The women then joined in singing HaMalach HaGoel. (It was beautiful.)

In attendance at the Farbrengen were three of the six girls who rescued the cemetery from neglect and danger in the summer of 2001. Although many previous efforts to restore the site were valiant and valuable, its separation from the community made it difficult to guard and maintain.

Meir and Miriam Rhodes, acting as directors of Kollel Eliezer Elimelech, brought the group of six girls to Chevron at a time when tourists had stopped visiting the holy city. The Intifada which began in the fall of 2000 was targeting Chevron in the summer of 2001 as Arabs shot into the Jewish community from the surrounding hills. The local Jewish residents were not running away. Their Mesirus Nefesh during that time has allowed for the crowds of Jews to return to M'aras HaMachpella. Had the Chevron community run, it would have meant the end of Jewish visitation to the patriarchs and matriarchs of our nation. During that summer, the absence of support from Jews living elsewhere was very discouraging for the local Jews. Having the girls from Crown Heights come and stay for a few weeks was inspiring for the community and greatly appreciated.

While in Chevron the girls took

upon themselves to clean up the cemetery near Menucha Rochel, to scrub down the gravestone which was black from the soot of Arab vandalism and to clean and straighten up the small building, known as Beit Tahara, on the higher level of the cemetery. There was no running water available at that time. It was hard work.

The girls recalled their last day in Chevron. They were proud of their work to bring the holy resting place of Rebbetzin Menucha Rochel to a respectful condition, but they were not satisfied. This was the location a unique Rebbetzin in Jewish history and Chabad history in particular. They wanted to do more. It seemed unrealistic, but they dreamed of establishing an international learning institute for women at this site. Although they would be leaving the next day, they decided to hold the first day of classes.

On that last day, from the mosque nearby came gunshots. It was in close range. Two of the girls at the Farbrengen joked about how they had stood there discussing if the flying bullets were from the soldiers or the terrorists. From their experience the loud gunshots were the soldiers shooting back and the distant shots were the enemy. This time the enemy was so close, it was enemy gunshots that were frighteningly loud. As the girls stood outside trying to decide whether the bullets were 'ours' or 'theirs,' a soldier insisted they get inside the Beit Tahara and figure it out behind stone walls.

One of the teachers who had joined the girls, Miriam Wolfson from Bat Ayin, was saved by a millimeter as shrapnel grazed her forehead.

The girls recalled the excitement and then the let down. The girls thought they would not be allowed back to the location. But sadness turned to joy when they learned that

because of their experience a guard post was being established at Kever Menucha Rochel.

Today the woman's Kollel at Menucha Rochel meets once in two weeks. It has taken root and it is growing.

The Farbrengen ended as everyone joined in singing the Niggun "When you go out with Simcha, you will come back with peace..."

NEWS FLASH FROM KEVER MENUCHA ROCHEL SENT BY ELCHONON HELLINGER:

At the Kever today I was busy Davening and dodging snowballs from Danny's kids and trying not to freeze... See summary below:

On the 22nd of Shevat, thousands traveled to NY to Daven at the Rebbetzin's Kever on her Yahrtzait. The 24th of Shvat (today) marks the 120th Yahrtzait of the mother of Chevron, the holy Tzadeikes, miracle worker, daughter of the Mittlerer Rebbe and granddaughter of the Alter Rebbe. She is buried in the Chabad burial plot in Chevron, also known as "Chevron Heights," as it is the highest point in Chevron.

Due to the forecast of snow, the Aliya (ascent) to the Kever and the Farbrengen were postponed until next week. But we faithful, we Jews of Chevron will not forget our mother!

Despite a foot of snow, dozens of us trekked out to the Kever of Rebbetzin Menucha Rochel.. getting there was a challenge, we had to go from Beit Hadassah to the Tziyon by 4 wheel drive jeep. At the end of the road we plowed by foot thru knee high snow from the gate to the Kever, we said T'hillim, drank L'chaim, and danced in the snow.

It is my firm belief, that the Rebbetzin and our holy Rebbeim guard and protect those of us who Daven and maintain the Tziyon.