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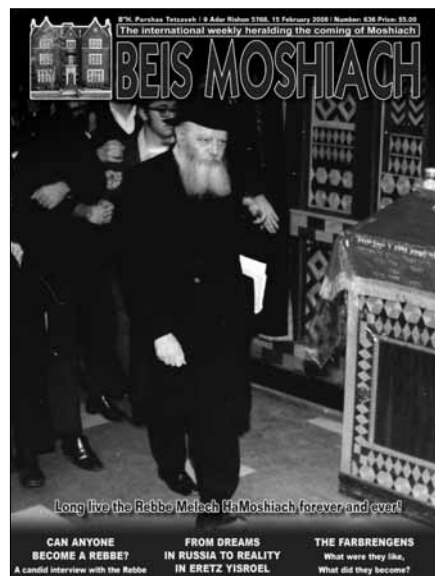
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WILL WE ALL DON THE EFOD IN THE FUTURE TO COME?

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

[Continued from last issue]

2. Thus, it appears that Rambam's intent is not (only) to answer the question that arises from the "words of the Prophets" but to discuss a matter of Torah law, as follows.

We may assert that by writing, "this *efod* was worn by the disciples of the prophets," Rambam's intent was to introduce a (category of) **law** regarding the disciples of the prophets (in donning a linen *efod*, thereby), "**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."

The latter will be understood in light of what Rambam writes in the Laws of the Foundations of the Torah¹⁵: "The prophet stands...to inform us of future events that will occur in the world ... He even provides information to an individual regarding his personal interests, such as the case of Shaul, who had lost some property and went to a prophet to discover its location." Thus, in order to enable the Jewish people to identify a prophet to whom they can turn for their needs, the disciples of the prophets would don a linen *efod*, "**attesting** that this person

has risen to the height of a High Priest, who is inspired with the holy spirit," for then all the Jewish people would be able to consult with him, etc.¹⁶

The above sheds light on Rambam's order of discussing the topic:

Rambam first clarifies the laws of [the parchment contained within the breastplate of the High Priest, called] the Urim V'Tumim¹⁷ [which, in certain circumstances, was used to enhance or facilitate the prophetic experience of the High Priest], writing, "How does one consult (the Urim V'Tumim)? The Priest stands, etc." and that "they are not consulted for the sake of a commoner, but rather, for the sake of a king, or the court, or for one upon whom the public interest depends." Then Rambam adds that there is another manner of [Divine] consultation: "a linen *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." Since "they (the Urim V'Tumim, the *efod*, and the breastplate) are not consulted for the sake of a commoner," therefore, the disciples of the prophets needed to gird themselves in a linen *efod* to "**attest**" to the fact that they had "risen to the height of a High Priest, who is inspired with the holy spirit," and every single Jew could consult with **them** regarding all matters, even matters of personal interest.

Accordingly, it is understood why Rambam did not cite the fact that **Dovid** wore a linen *efod*, for Dovid's wearing a linen *efod* was connected with the transfer of the Ark,¹⁸ not with the concept of **prophecy** ("attesting that this person has risen to the height of a High Priest, who is inspired with the holy spirit" in order that he could be consulted). Rambam brings his proof instead from the story of Shmuel the **Prophet**, to whom Shaul went to consult regarding finding his lost property, for such a concern [i.e., one of private interest] could not be brought before the Urim V'Tumim but to a prophet.¹⁹

[To be continued be"H]

NOTES:

15 10:3.

16 At first glance we may assert that the relevance of this law, even **prior** to the advent of Moshiach (see Section 7, below), is that even after the time regarding which it is said that the holy spirit has departed from the Jewish people, when the later prophets died – Chagai, Zecharia, and Malachi (Yoma 9b, Sota 48b, among others) – there were several individuals who were worthy of the holy spirit and prophecy, etc.* This law would, therefore, contribute to the discussion as to whether they ought to wear the linen *efod* (i.e., a special garment [that would identify them as prophets]), but this is not the proper forum for a thorough analysis of the matter.

*(See Rambam's *A Guide to the Perplexed*, where it elucidates the verse (Balak 23:23), "In time it will be said to Yaakov," as follows: "Prophecy will return to the Jewish people in the year

4976 from Creation." (See *Toldos HaOhr HaChayim* of Rabbeinu Margolis (Ch. 3 Haaros 25, 26) and his Preface to *Responsa from Heaven*, **where it is explained** that it is explicitly mentioned in several places in the words of our Sages, of blessed memory, that the holy spirit did indeed rest upon individuals ... throughout the generations [i.e., even following the departure of the holy spirit from the Jewish people].) Regarding all the above, see *Likkutei Sichos* Vol. 14, pg. 73 ff, **where it is discussed**.** There it says that this pertains to the law regarding the construction of an altar outside the Holy Temple **in our times**. See there for in-depth study. See *Seifer HaSichos* 5751 Vol. 2, pg. 788 ff.)

**In Rambam's *Seifer HaMitzvos*, at the end of the Sharashim, it explains that prophecy is only present in the time of the Temple, not in the times of Exile. (See also *A Guide to the Perplexed* Part 2 Ch. 36: "This is without a doubt the most acceptable, essential reason why prophecy was interrupted in the time of

Exile. Namely, on account of lethargy and being downtrodden, etc." See *ibid* Ch. 32.) However, there his intent is, at first glance, regarding prophecy in a manner that is constant and permanent and etc. Alternatively, there it is speaking about a lofty level of prophecy and not the holy spirit and the like, but this is not the proper forum for a thorough analysis of the matter.

17 10:11-12.

18 See commentary of Rabbeinu Yeshaya on Shmuel II *ibid*; the commentary of (attributed to) Rashi on *Divrei HaYamim* I *ibid*.

19 As emphasized in the wording of Rambam in writing "Shmuel the **Prophet**," notwithstanding the fact that in Shmuel I it is written regarding him that he was a "youth girded in a linen efod," without mention of being a "prophet," but that "Shmuel ministered before G-d." See Radak and Ralbag there.

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CAN ANYONE BECOME A REBBE?

Elie Wiesel – author, humanitarian, and Holocaust survivor – relates the following: “Whenever I would see the Rebbe, he touched the depth in me. That is true of every person who came to see the Rebbe. Somehow, when the person left, he or she felt that they had lived deeper and higher, on a higher level, on a deeper sense of life and a quest for life and meaning.”

**** What then is a Rebbe? What is the secret to a Rebbe? Can any human being become a Rebbe?***

The following is a question-and-answer session among a group of college students that took place in the summer of 1951, shortly after the Rebbe assumed the mantle of leadership.

* * *

Q: What is a Rebbe?

A: A Rebbe is one whose soul also includes the souls of his Chassidim. When a Chassid comes to the Rebbe with a problem, he tries to find in the Rebbe the part of his soul which is included in the Rebbe's and connect it

with his soul, and thus be connected with the Rebbe's soul. It is through this connection that the Chassid receives his material and spiritual life and needs. For example, let us take the bulb which gives off light. The bulb itself cannot give any light. However, there are electrical power plants stationed in some distant part of the city which generate the power of light. There must be some resemblance in the bulb which enables it to receive the power from the plant. Therefore, a wire which is connected to the power station is also connected to the bulb, and when this connection is opened by turning the switch, the bulb receives the power and will then function.

The same applies to a Rebbe and Chassidim. The Rebbe is the power plant which gives the necessary power to fulfill the commandments (spiritual), and he delivers the needs to live a happy and prosperous life (material). The channel through which the Chassid can receive these necessities is his soul, which is connected to the soul of the Rebbe. The function of the Rebbe is to deliver the above-mentioned necessities – spiritual and material – to his Chassidim.

Although the Rebbe is required to fulfill his bodily functions also, that is not his purpose or true function. It is only because his soul is bound with an earthly body which cannot exist without these functions. When one comes to a rabbi complaining of a headache and the rabbi gives him an aspirin, we surely won't say that this is the function of a rabbi. The same is with a Rebbe, when he must carry out the necessary functions of the body.

Q: Can anyone become a Rebbe?

A: Not everyone can become a Rebbe. One needs something from Above to fulfill this mission. It is easier when a Rebbe has inherited his position, just as it is easier for one who has inherited a talent to perform and develop his talents than one who has to develop them without immediate inherited talent.

Q: Is the function of a Rebbe like that of a psychologist? Can a Rebbe take the place of a psychiatrist?

A: When a psychiatrist speaks to his patient he

regards him as an object of study. Though he is interested in curing his patient and in helping him adjust to life, his approach is to derive not only a healthy being but an accumulation of information about human beings for his future knowledge.

A Rebbe gives himself over completely to the person. When one is seeking a solution, the Rebbe does not study him but is more emotionally involved with the person who comes to see him. Only a small part of a Rebbe's work is like that of a psychiatrist. That is not his primary function.

Yet when one needs aspirin for a cure, the Rebbe will tell him to go to the drugstore and buy some, and not try to substitute the prescription with something else. If he needs a psychiatrist to cure his ailment the Rebbe will not try to substitute his cure with another person.

Q: What is the difference between a Rebbe and a rabbi?

A: A rabbi is one who teaches his pupils when they come to him and will answer a question when it is brought to him. A Rebbe does not wait for you to come to him. He reaches forth among the people and tries to awaken them and inspire them, and tries to find ways and methods to bring them their religion.

Q: What is the difference between a "Rebbe" and a Rav?"

A: A Rebbe does not wait for you to come and ask him questions, but reaches forth among his people and tries to inspire them.

Q: What is the meaning of a "*bracha*" (blessing) which a Rebbe blesses?

A: The giving and receiving a "*bracha*" traces back to the times of our forefathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Since then, it has been the custom.

Q: What is the significance of a "*bracha*"?

A: In the words of my father-in-law, a *bracha* is like rain. If the soil is plowed and ready to be sown, and one throws seeds into the soil, the seeds will grow and blossom when rain falls upon them. If, however, the soil is unprepared, the seed finds difficulty in sprouting forth, even when there is an abundance of rain.

Rain can accomplish its function and be useful only when preceded by the plowing and tilling of the soil, planting of the seeds and preparing the soil for growing. However, should rain fall on unplowed and untilled soil, not only will it not accomplish its function – it may cause damage.

The same applies to a "*bracha*." The body (actions and desires of the body) must be tilled and plowed. Only then will the "*bracha*" be useful and help the blessed elevate himself to a higher standard.

When an individual comes for a *bracha* and he is emotionally and spiritually equipped, the *bracha* will help

him to grow and blossom into a meaningful individual.

If, however, one is in a coma-like state, and it is difficult to revive him, a good doctor would not give up his task of trying to awaken him. He would do his utmost to help this individual, even if it means "hurting" the individual for the latter's benefit. If necessary, he will even give shock treatments if he knows that the patient will be revived by that method and that method will help the individual.

Q: In Europe the Chassidim often travel to their Rebbe on Yom Tov (a holiday). Why was this so?

A: A Chassid finds in his Rebbe a connection between himself and G-d. He feels that when he goes to his Rebbe he will take back with him more holiness.

Q: When a Chassid goes away on Yom Tov to the Rebbe, there seems to be a spirit that leaves the household with his absence. There is a difference between when a man fulfills the mitzvot of Yom Tov and when he is not there to perform them.

A: A Chassid is not obligated to leave his family and go to the Rebbe. Yet if a wife is satisfied to have her husband go away to work for seven or eight hours a day,



in order to make a living, so too should she be satisfied to have her husband go away for a few hours to learn, and to make a spiritual life for both their lives and their family.

Q: Is the standard of learning for girls the same as for boys?

A: No. The reason for this is not because they lack the qualifications to elevate themselves to that standard of knowledge. It is because Almighty G-d awarded them



with a more important and higher responsibility, that they were relieved of this task of learning. This greater task and obligation is the preparation of the future generation, the education of our young boys and girls in the true Jewish spirit. It is the mother whom the Torah obligated to fulfill this highly important responsibility, and to enable them to do so they were exempt from the task of learning.

Q: Does Lubavitch provide schools of higher learning such as Gemara (Talmud) for girls?

A: It is obligatory for boys to learn Gemara but not for girls. Not because girls are inferior in any way, but because women have a harder task to do in life. They have to raise and educate future generations.

Q: Would you say that doing is more important than learning? If so, are you not bound to lead a life of blind faith?

A: When a child is hungry and wants to eat immediately, his mother does not explain to him all the processes which the foods go through in order that he be able to eat them. Rather, she gives him food immediately, for that is what will satisfy him. Then she

can proceed to explain the baking of the bread, etc., to the child if the child wants to know.

Just as one needs food for his physical life, so does one need food for his spiritual life. It follows the same process.

Q: Isn't one supposed to rationalize his thoughts and understand what he is doing?

A: Rationalization is a means by which one should strengthen his faith. Rationalization should make one believe more strongly.

Q: Does science contradict religion?

A: Science cannot be opposed to religion, nor religion to science, because religion is truth and science is seeking the truth. There can be only a temporary misunderstanding between science and religion.

Q: How can you explain scientifically the existence of G-d and the need for religion?

A: Let us take the Chumash (Torah) and open it. Before you are many words. Suppose you had never heard of a printer nor seen a printing shop. Would you then say, not knowing how these words were formed, that they developed from a bottle of ink that was spilled by itself and formed these words? Or would you not say that these words were made on purpose? You would have to say that there was some force that created these words and put them back in order. Just as a pencil which contains billions of atoms, has to have some law of order governing it to exist, so too do the words in the Chumash need an order governing it to exist and to be understood.

We have established that the Chumash was made purposefully. When G-d gave the Torah to the Jewish people, they were given it directly from G-d and accepted it directly from Him. There were 600,000 Jews at Mount Sinai who heard what G-d said and who accepted the Torah. They passed on what they knew to be true from generation to generation. It is not very likely that a father in all his senses would tell his son a thing that is not so.

There have never been fewer than 600,000 religious Jews in Jewish history, and this chain of tradition has never been broken. There has never been an interruption in the constant regeneration of at least 600,000 religious Jews. In other religions, there is not to be found this unbroken chain of tradition.

Q: If all that is said above is true, what proof does one have that the Jewish religion is the true and only religion?

A: A scientific discovery is accepted when there is enough evidence or proof that the discovery is true. The more people who agree with the results of an experiment add support to that discovery. If 600 people performed an experiment using the same implements and 100 people performed the same experiment on the same

basis, and the results showed that the 600 people stated a belief on the basis of their experiments, and the 100 people disagreed with them on the basis of their experiments, you would believe the 600 people more readily than the 100 people.

The Christian religion has only 12 witnesses to affirm its origin and prominence. The Buddhists had three witnesses. The Muslims had only one witness. The Jewish people had 600,000 witnesses. On that basis you would say the Jewish religion has the greatest number of witnesses and therefore the greatest degree of truth.

Q: Was there only quantity or quality too at Mount

If a wife is satisfied to have her husband go away to work for seven or eight hours a day, in order to make a living, so too should she be satisfied to have her husband go away for a few hours to learn, and to make a spiritual life for both their lives and their family.

Sinai?

A: There was a great deal of quality. Jews from all walks of life were present, from all different occupations and professions (carpenters, bakers, scientists, philosophers). What greater quality of people can one assemble in one place?

Q: How can you say the Jewish people truly believed in G-d when immediately after Mount Sinai they made a golden calf?

A: The golden calf did not signify disbelief in G-d, but belief in many gods, including the Supreme G-d.

Q: Why do we need ceremonies and mitzvot? Are they not a burden on the person?

A: When one creates a thing, he wants the full benefit of what he creates. G-d is complete goodness. He would not create a thing that would be a burden to people.

Q: Some people would feel that being a good Jew does not necessarily mean adhering to all the precepts of the Torah. They feel they could be good Jews without doing all mitzvot, such as putting on t'fillin. How could this be explained to them?

A: When a doctor prescribes a medicine and the patient is reluctant and stubborn about not taking it, the doctor, if he is a good and honest doctor, would not lead him astray and tell his patient to take something else in its place that would not have the same effect. Instead, he would endeavor to explain to the patient why it is necessary to take this medicine and not relinquish the patient until he has exhausted all means of convincing him.

When there are ten people gathered in one place, the Divine spirit rests among them. Here, there are surely more than ten people, so it is certain the Divine spirit is present. This will help you to listen to what is being said and to understand what you hear.

The sound of the shofar on Rosh Hashanah has two meanings. When it is blown, it provokes within the individual a feeling of recognition and wishfulness. The one who hears the sound of the shofar recognizes who he is and wishes to do better. The shofar brings forth his innermost feelings and emotions of the longing to improve himself and to overcome, to be able to control his temptations. These feelings the shofar awakens within the individual. Yet one might want to do these wishes but does not feel strong enough within himself to do them. Therefore, when the shofar arouses these emotions in the individual it also strengthens him to carry them out. The shofar gives him support and encouragement to control his temptations and to become better.

Time is like a vacuum that has to be filled. Time is limited; and an individual must make sure to use every particle of time to the best of his abilities.

Youth has a great store of zeal and energy, and there are many things one accomplishes in his period of youth that he cannot do in later periods, because he lacks the exuberance of youth. This time is very precious. A youth should not waste these energies but develop them so that they will have full meaning and use. The way in which to use your time and the road that you should follow is indicated in the Torah.

Q: What is the purpose of life?

A: To bring light into this world.

Q: What is the purpose of light?

A: The purpose of light is to find a harmonious life. One can be in complete harmony only when he has received the truth.

Q: How does one know that he has found the purpose?

A: When one has light. Then he will have found the purpose. A person cannot feel what he lacks. One looks for what he does not possess. If he had what he was looking for, he would not search.

Arranged by Menachem M. Kirschenbaum
(www.portraitofaleader.blogspot.com)

אגרתא דנחמתא

With deep sorrow we send our condolences
to our dear Rosh Yeshiva

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Lipskier שיחי

on the passing of his beloved mother a true Aishes Chayil Mrs.

Taibel o.b.m.

May the Alm-ghty comfort you between all the mourners of
Zion, and in the merit of your shlichus and good deeds may we
witness the wish of Klal Yisrael, the coming of our righteous
Moshiach, And we will proclaim to him:

Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu V'Rabbeinu
Melech HaMoshiach L'olam Voed!

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THE FARBRENGENS

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 KINDLES THE FIRE OF FAITH

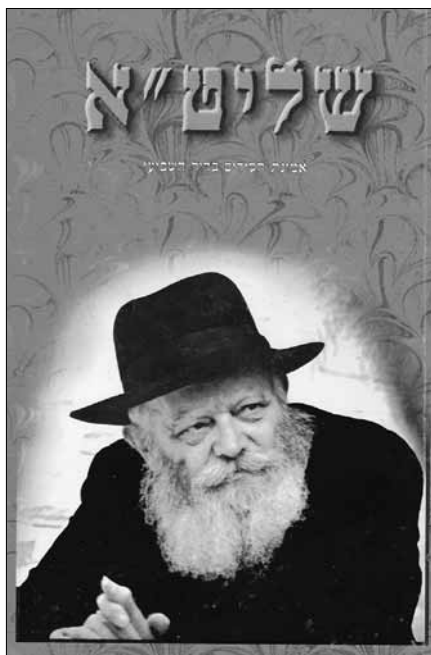
Anyone who reads the Rebbe's sichos delivered at his holy farbrengens during the latter years, particularly in 5751-5752, even a quick perusal, notices a unique style to these sichos in connection with the True and Complete Redemption. In particular, anyone who is familiar with the style of the sichos from the preceding years will immediately pick up on an interesting phenomenon, a sharp change that occurred specifically in recent years.

Many chassidim have already strived to meet the challenge of this marvelous phenomenon, in accordance with the Rebbe's wishes, to be precise in his holy words (as discussed at length in the second chapter of this seifer). However, what they have not done much of in this area is to describe the holy spectacle of the Shabbos farbrengens.

When we contemplate for a moment on the change that took place in the farbrengen ritual – the order and style of the sichos, the change in the order and type of niggunim sung, and the tremendous

overall experience that chassidim felt during the exalted moments of those farbrengens – we get a full, clear, and sharp picture of how things developed during the years 5751-5752.

While it's true that each of the Rebbe's farbrengens is a lofty, moving, and spiritual experience, we are liable to miss – particularly someone who was not actually present – the correct point of view



in relation to the farbrengens of the latter years.

In a nutshell, the Rebbe kindled the fire of faith among the chassidim, and afterwards, he directed all the resulting excitement towards a series of practical activities.

THE REBBE REFERS TO "THE NIGGUN THEY ARE SINGING NOW"

In the initial period after Chaf-Ches Nissan 5751, the farbrengens would begin with the niggun "*Zahl shoin zain di geula, Moshiach zahl shoin kumen*" ("There should already be the Redemption, Moshiach should come already"), something unaccustomed until then. As time passed, the words to the niggun changed to "*Es kumt shoin di geula, Moshiach kumt shoin!*" (The Redemption is already unfolding, Moshiach is already coming!) Such a scene in and of itself, even before all the marvelous words of Torah, already brought the assembled chassidim into a *Geula'dike* mood.

The Rebbe did not settle for just encouraging the singing that expresses the faith of the chassidim, he referred directly to "the niggun that they are singing now," "they sang this now about the Redemption," and with these words he opened the farbrengen.

THE ORDER OF THE FARBRENGEN CHANGES

Until then, this was more or less

When the Rebbe saw the flock getting excited and initiating practical activities, as a direct result of his holy words at farbrengens, not only did he find it inappropriate to cool off their enthusiasm, but on the contrary, the Rebbe would announce the following week a new and loftier stage of the revelation of Moshiach in the world.

the standard order at farbrengens: The Rebbe enters and makes Kiddush, and immediately afterwards, those assembled begin singing the niggun from “the Rebbe’s *kapitel*.” Then, the Rebbe delivers two (and sometimes three) general sichos on the unique quality of the time when the farbrengen is taking place (often the Rebbe explained at length the reason for holding the farbrengen). After some more general concepts, the Rebbe

said a maamer (in the form of a sicha), followed by the regular order of explanations in Rashi’s commentary, the writings on the Zohar by his father, HaRav R. Levi Yitzchak, the Rambam, and on Pirkei Avos (during the summer months) – first a sicha (or more) of questions on the aforementioned s’farim, and later a sicha (or more) of answers. Between the questions and the answers, the Rebbe would distribute bottles of mashke to chassidim holding various activities. At the conclusion of the mashke distribution, the Rebbe would begin singing the niggun “*V’Harikosi Lachem Bracha*.”

This was the general order of the farbrengens.

In the later years, this order was completely changed in a variety of stages. The niggun from “the Rebbe’s *kapitel*” was replaced, as mentioned above, with the niggun on the Redemption. Maamarim and the regular interpretative sichos on Rashi, Rambam, etc., were stopped. The Rebbe focused on one subject and one subject only: the Redemption.

(In a sicha from Shabbos Parshas Mikeitz 5751 (sec. 10), the Rebbe said, “In all the aforementioned, there is added above all the main subject: When a person is intensely absorbed with a certain concept, human nature dictates that when other concepts come along, first and foremost, he seeks and finds the common point with the concept that captivates him (even though there could be numerous concepts, and major concepts). In relation to the Jewish People, and in particular at the end of the time of the exile...they are guided and engrossed by, ‘I will await him every day that he should come,’ i.e., throughout the entire day (every day), they await and anticipate the True and Complete Redemption. And since the Jewish

People are involved with and focused on the coming of Moshiach, it is understood that first and foremost, they look in every concept for the connection with ‘I will await him every day that he should come.’”)

The discussion of any subject from the Tanach and the Midrashim of our Rabbis, of blessed memory, was immediately connected to the Redemption. After the mashke distribution, the Rebbe regularly began to sing a Simchas Torah niggun – the Hakafo niggun of his father, HaRav R. Levi Yitzchak, of blessed memory.

THE REBBE ADDS FUEL TO THE FIRE

We now come to a selection of the incredible sichos that we were privileged to hear, as we bring several excerpts from the sichos of 5751-5752 (in chronological order):

In the sicha from the night of Simchas Torah:

Accordingly, we can perhaps say that the explanation for the terrible delay of the Redemption is that there was lacking completeness in the level of avoda in a manner of “I was created only to serve my Maker,” specifically through which we attain the Redemption that it should be in this manner (of “There is nothing besides Him”). However, *this delay has now ended*, and thus “everything is ready for the seuda.”

In a yechidus with Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu, shlita, on the night of the 6th of MarCheshvan:

The rabbanim must publicize the p’sak din that “all the appointed times have passed,” and in relation to t’shuva (as the Gemara states, “the matter depends only upon t’shuva”) – they have already done t’shuva – (according to what my revered

teacher and father-in-law, the Rebbe, said many times) *they have already done t'shuva, and they have already completed all matters of avoda* – and now there remains only the matter of the True and Complete Redemption in actual deed.

In a sicha from Shabbos Parshas Noach:

Even when a person knows that as things stand, he has matters that require correction, this is no contradiction *ch"v* to the testimony of the leader of the generation that the avoda has already been completed...*the general avoda of the Jewish People* throughout all the generations that must be during the time of the exile in order to reach the culmination of the Redemption...*has ended and been completed...the matter depends only on Moshiach Tzidkeinu himself!*

In a sicha from Shabbos Parshas VaYeira:

There is (not only the existence of Moshiach, but) *also the revelation of Moshiach*, and now

we only have to greet Moshiach Tzidkeinu in actual deed!

In a sicha from Shabbos Parshas Toldos:

The main innovation in the coming of Moshiach is in the revelation of his existence, for all details in subsequent matters (his hisgalus for all to see through his activities to redeem the Jewish People and all matters of the days of Moshiach) come as an end result of the revelation of his existence.

In a sicha from Shabbos Parshas VaYishlach:

All matters have concluded and been completed...even "the polishing of the buttons," and everything is prepared for the coming of Moshiach. We understand from this that *the subsequent continuing avoda...is not the avoda of purification* (for the avoda of purification has already ended and been completed) but the special avoda to bring the actual revelation of Moshiach in the world.

In a sicha from Shabbos Parshas Mishpatim:

We already see (a semblance of and) *the beginning of the activities of Melech HaMoshiach upon the nations.*

We have here some positively amazing statements made by the Rebbe himself – **stage after stage**. In simple terms, when the Rebbe saw the flock getting excited and initiating practical activities, as a direct result of his holy words at farbrengens, not only did he find it inappropriate to cool off their enthusiasm, but on the contrary, the Rebbe would announce the following week a new and loftier stage of the revelation of Moshiach in the world. As the sicha quickly took hold among the chassidim, the Rebbe excited and encouraged the chassidim with even greater fortitude by announcing yet another new stage in the process, as we can see from the order and content of the aforementioned sichos.

It would be no exaggeration to say that the Rebbe **poured fuel on the fiery flames** of faith, anticipation, and action towards immediate Redemption!

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FROM DREAMS IN RUSSIA TO REALITY IN ERETZ YISROEL

By Rabbi Hillel Zaltzman

Prepared for publication by Avrohom Reinitz

*As Chamah's activities expanded, those involved began to dream about the work they could organize on the other side of the Iron Curtain, when they reached freedom. It turned out that reality was far different from their dreams, but with the encouragement of the Rebbe and his monthly support, R' Moshe Nisselevitz started the organization after he moved to Eretz Yisroel and began working with new Russian immigrants. * Part 2 of a series on Chamah.*

LEAVING SAMARKAND

After years of working in Samarkand, and in light of instructions that we received from the Rebbe to expand our work there, we came up with the idea of arranging learning programs in the cities and towns around Samarkand. Thousands of Jews lived in these towns and their children attended public school

and were ignorant of Judaism.

The task fell to R' Refael Chudaitov. We arranged with him that if someone were to ask where the money came from to fund the work he would say that a man had died and left a little money, and in his will, he asked that R' Refael arrange shiurim for children and pay the teachers with his money. We knew that the

Moslems of Uzbekistan considered a will sacred, and nobody would dare to try and stop him.

R' Refael went to the nearby towns and spoke with the local Jews who were happy for the opportunity to have their children taught Torah. R' Refael hired knowledgeable people from the Bucharian community and they taught the children either before or after public school.

Baruch Hashem, this worked out even better than we expected, and within a short time, we had a few hundred children in these Torah classes. Throughout the years, until 5731, more than 1500 students learned in our programs, in Samarkand and the surrounding towns. When I think about this today, I can't believe that we were successful with so many children, under communist rule no less. Although the government made no arrests at this time, it continued to instill fear into the hearts of all.

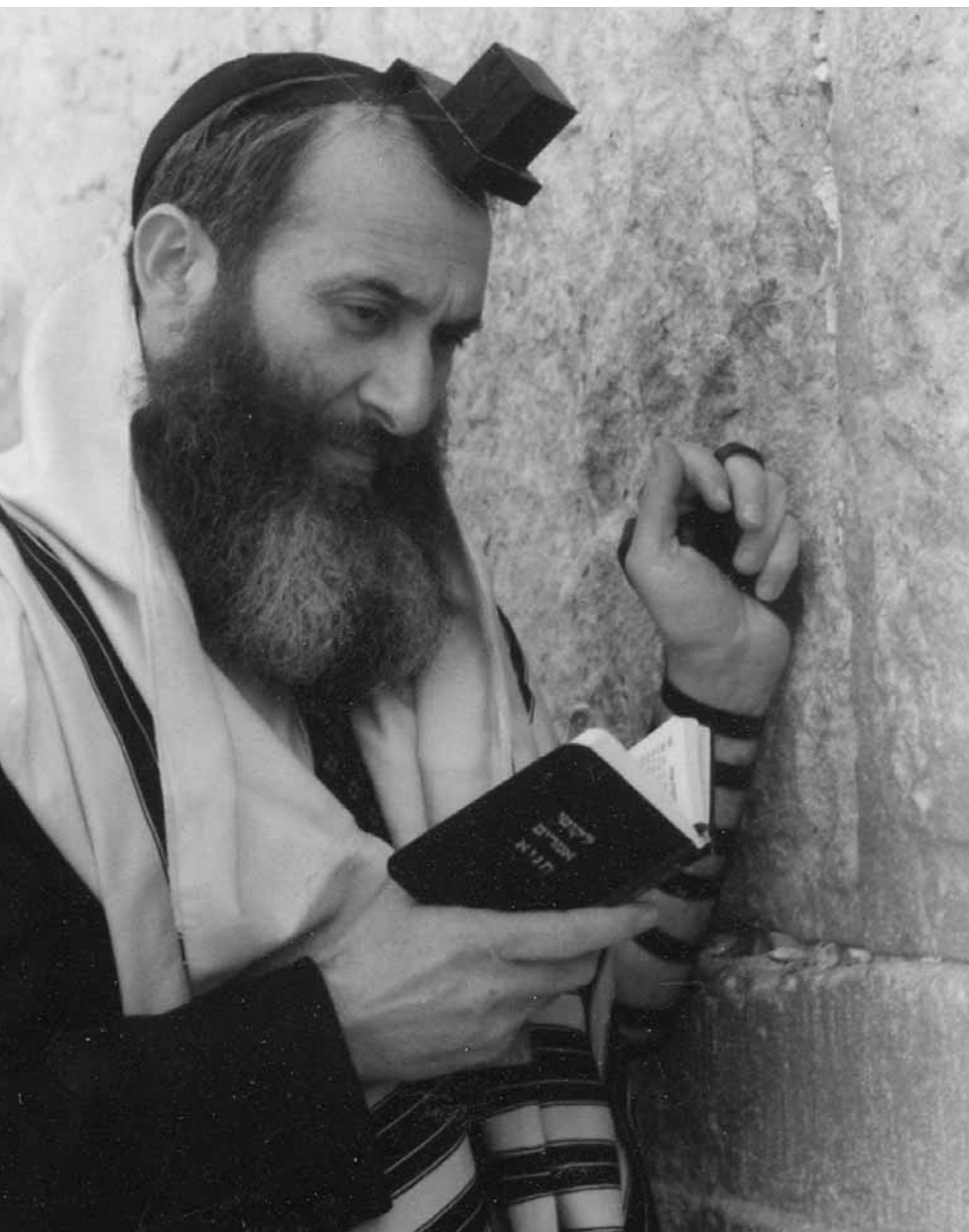
Where did the money really come from? Among the members of Chamah were some businessmen, including myself, and we were able to set aside



significant sums for the teachers' salaries. The practice in Samarkand was that a businessman donated 20% of his profits to tz'daka, as the Alter Rebbe in *Tanya* says to do, for in our generation we need to give a fifth and more. Naturally, in the months that we earned more, we were happy to set aside more than 20%.

Another source of funding came from the food packages that we received from Ezras Achim and the Joint. The packages from Ezras Achim were bigger and more valuable, and when we sold them on the black market, we received enough money to support a family for about ten months and more. Many of Anash needed these food packages, simply to have food to eat, but sometimes, some people received them that didn't really need them. They would sell the packages on the black market and give the money to tz'daka.

I remember that after I got married, we received a package from my father-in-law, who lived in Minsk. Since I had heard that the packages were from tz'daka money, I did not want to use them, but my wife opened the package, which was addressed to her, and saw a coat that she liked very much. I gave it to her and set aside the amount that it was worth to tz'daka. The rest of the package and the money for the coat, I gave to Chamah.



Top Left: Rabbi Yaakov Boroshanski with his students in the underground yeshiva: Top row rt. to left – Yair Ladaiov, ?, Moshe Chaim Cohen, Emmanuel Ladaiov, Markiel Ladaiov, Yair Aviov, Yehuda Aviov. Bottom row – R' Yaakov Boroshanski, R' Moshe Klein, Yair Niasoff.

Bottom Left: R' Hillel Zaltzman at the Kosel.

R' Berke wanted to return home since his brother-in-law was getting married the following week and the Aufruf and Kiddush were going to be in his home on Shabbos. R' Refael insisted on continuing their rounds and said: Don't worry, Hashem will help us be in Samarkand for Shabbos.

When my father-in-law heard about this, he said: Who gave you permission to sell my package? I received the package and sent it to my daughter!

What was the story of this package? My father-in-law, R' Efraim Fishel Demichovsky, was raised by his mother's brother, the Rogatchover, after his mother died on the day of his bris. At the age of 16, the Rogatchover sent him to learn in Lubavitch, and then he made a deal with Rabbi Shlomo Yosef Zevin that the latter would teach him sh'chita in exchange for ten gold pieces a week.

When Rabbi Zevin, who lived in Yerushalayim, heard that his

student Demichovsky had married off his daughter, he sent him the package to help him out. This is why my father-in-law wanted us to use the contents of the package and was disappointed to hear that we had sold it.

Occasionally I received a package from Ezras Achim. I didn't want to be enticed to use it, and so I took the unopened package and brought it to Chamah's headquarters so it could be sold to benefit the organization.

At that time, the custom among Anash in Tashkent was that when a couple got married, their friends helped them buy a house. I helped several of Anash to buy homes and in Samarkand too, I helped a number of people with homes. When it was my turn to marry and it turned out that I did not have enough money to buy what was needed for the wedding, never mind a house, my mother a"h said: You help others, and when it's your turn you have nothing?!

I told her: I help people who don't have regular jobs, who don't have the wherewithal to manage without help. I, however, am a businessman and Hashem will help me. Don't worry!

R' Moshe Nisselevitz, like many Lubavitchers, was a simple laborer whose salary wasn't enough to support his family. He truly needed the food packages. There was a long period of time when R' Moshe did not receive food packages and his financial state was terrible.

Suddenly, he received a package from Ezras Achim, which as I said, was worth a lot of money on the black market. We, who knew about his dire financial situation, were very surprised when R' Moshe decided to donate the entire package to the cause.

We protested, saying: You don't have food for your children!

R' Moshe said he knew that he would soon receive a package from the Joint with which he would support his family. We refused to accept this and said: Who knows if you will get it, and the package from the Joint is not worth as much as the package from Ezras Achim. Use this package for yourself and if you get a package from the Joint, you can donate that.

R' Moshe remained unconvinced by what we said, and brought the package to Chamah. I think he did not even tell his wife about the package.

Before the summer we had a special meeting of the members of Chamah to discuss other possibilities of funding so we could use the summer vacation from public school to expand our work. Naturally, the spiritual expansion necessitated monetary expansion and we needed a lot of money.

Except for R' Moshe Nisselevitz, the other participants at the meeting were businessmen; R' Dovber (Berke) Schiff, R' Mordechai Goldschmidt, my brother Berel and myself. We all knew that the summer was a special opportunity and each of us made large donations until we had amassed enough money to double our work.

AN OPEN MIRACLE ON THE FLIGHT

Over the years, the work so greatly expanded that we had to occasionally make the rounds of the towns to make sure all was going well. The supervisor was R' Refael Chudaitov, who organized the shiurim and knew when they were held and who was the teacher. Each time, a different member of Chamah joined him.

One time, I went with him to Tcharchin, a town near Samarkand. We arrived at the appointed time and were happy to see more than twenty children learning Torah. They had no desks or chairs but sat on the floor and leaned on the wall, like Uzbeks.

R' Berke Schiff once went with R' Refael to the city of Andijan, and after checking up on the classes there, R' Refael wanted to travel to other towns in the vicinity. R' Berke wanted to return home since his brother-in-law was getting married the following week and the Aufruf and Kiddush were going to be in his home on Shabbos. R' Refael insisted on continuing their rounds and said: Don't worry, Hashem will help us be in Samarkand for Shabbos.

They visited a few more towns and were happy to see that the classes were taking place as they were supposed to be. On Friday, they went to the airport to try and get tickets for a flight to Samarkand. R' Refael sat and

waited in the terminal and R' Berke went over to one of the clerks to buy a ticket.

A few minutes later, he returned disappointed. There were no tickets for Samarkand, only for Tashkent. R' Refael said: Buy a ticket for Tashkent and we will see what we do next. R' Berke did not agree: Why Tashkent? Who knows whether in Tashkent we will get a flight to Samarkand?

Having no choice though, R' Berke bought a ticket to Tashkent, in the hopes that he would make it to Samarkand before Shabbos. They boarded the flight to Tashkent and to their surprise, long before they landed there, the pilot said that since the weather was bad, he could not land in Tashkent and would have to land in Samarkand. You can just imagine how thrilled the two men were by this miracle.

When the plane landed in Samarkand, they grabbed their hand luggage and began walking to the exit. The pilot called out: Hey, where are you going? We

are continuing to Tashkent. Go, sit down.

They told him that they really wanted to go to Samarkand and only took that flight having no other choice, and their prayers had been answered and they had landed in Samarkand. Some of the passengers, who heard their conversation with the pilot, said: Now we know why we couldn't land in Tashkent.

CHAMAH'S DREAMS FOR LIFE AFTER RUSSIA

Until about 5729/1969, we had no information about the world outside of the borders of the Soviet Union. The individuals who received visas left and disappeared, like someone who fell into the depths of the sea. All the letters were extremely brief. They asked, "How are you," and we wrote, "Fine, thank G-d," and that was all. There was great fear of the censors.

We could only guess and imagine what life in the west and in Eretz Yisroel, was like. We heard rumors that olim had a hard time adjusting when they arrived in Eretz Yisroel and that afterwards it wasn't easy living there. Still and all, Lubavitchers had no doubt that they had to leave Russia because it was clear to us that there was no Jewish future for us in Russia.

The physical hardships did not frighten us, because that was not our goal in the west. We made a living in Samarkand and did fine. The tribulations we endured in our daily lives were of the spiritual sort, primarily regarding chinuch, Shabbos, etc. Therefore, nothing deterred us from yearning to leave the bitter exile of Russia because daily life was so very difficult.



R' Ephraim Fishel Demichovski with his friend R' Berel Zilbershtein

In 5729, my sister Sarah and her husband, Eli Mishulavin received visas, along with my father a”h. Eli had heart disease and we thought that my sister could support them. She was considered a capable woman and we were sure she could fend for herself and the family.

We all waited to hear what really went on in Eretz Yisroel, and before she left we asked her not to disappoint us, but to send us detailed letters about life in Eretz Yisroel. A short time after she left, we got the first letter. We read about the special welcome they got at the airport in Lud.

In those years, aliya from Russia was rare, and the olim, especially Anash, were warmly welcomed. When I heard this, I hoped that it would be so commonplace when we got out that nobody would welcome us at the airport!

My sister’s first letter was emotional. She wrote it while sitting on a train, making its way through the winding roads of Yerushalayim. This is what she wrote: I am traveling by train and my heart is beating rapidly. Where am I going? To Yerushalayim, the Holy City! My heart races and before my mind’s eye I see the words, “Next year in Yerushalayim.” With what feeling we said this phrase every single year, and now I can say, “Next hour in Yerushalayim.”

The rest of her letter described how she arrived at the Kosel, remnant of our Mikdash, with tears coursing down her cheeks. How she caressed the stones of the Kosel and prayed from the depths of her heart for us all.

In her letters, she tried to emphasize the enormous difference between our lives in Russia, full of fear every day, and



The Zaltzman brothers: R' Berel with his niece Rochele Mishulavin and R' Hillel with his nephew Yosef Yitzchok Mishulavin

the free life in Eretz Yisroel. She wrote how she took a walk after the Shabbos meal, in Kfar Chabad, without any fear, and from the open windows one could hear singing, Jewish songs, Chassidishe niggunim, and Shabbos z'miros.

In another letter, she described how they invited bachurim from the yeshiva for the Shabbos meal, one from England, one from Holland, and one from Brazil. In Russia, we were afraid to meet with anybody from abroad, whereas in Eretz Yisroel, she was able to host bachurim from all over the world who learned in the Lubavitch yeshiva in Kfar Chabad.

Each time a letter came from my sister, we would gather together and read it. Her words touched us deeply and we greatly enjoyed reading her descriptions of the burgeoning spiritual life in Eretz Yisroel.

That is how it was, until the letter in which she described the difficulties the new immigrants had in adjusting to life in Eretz

Yisroel. After a brief period of acclimation, it was time to look for work and at this point, her letters took on a sadder tone. At first she tried to joke and she wrote that she found a job as a “senior assistant to the young janitor.” This was a Russian expression... Then she wrote the bitter truth: I work at the absorption center in Kfar Chabad. I...clean...the floor. The water is cold and dirty and when a bitter tear falls into the water, they become even more bitter and disgusting... The floor has to be clean and I try to clean it well. I even had occasion to scrape the floor between the legs of the tourists who come here.

We were shocked. How could our talented sister Sarah be a cleaning lady? When they were in Samarkand, my brother-in-law was in business and my sister never worked. Had things reached such a low point? Who would have believed this could happen?

[To be continued be”H]

A DAILY DOSE OF MOSHIACH & GEULA

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

9 ADAR I: LASHON HA'KODESH FOR EVERYONE IN THE FUTURE TO COME

In the Future to Come, there will be the destined fulfillment of “For then I will convert the peoples to a pure language that all of them call in the name of G-d, to worship Him of one accord” (Tz’fania 3:9). **A pure language: Lashon Kodesh** (commentaries on the verse).

“And it can be said that what is written, ‘For then I will convert the peoples to a pure language,’ means that everyone will know *lashon ha’kodesh*, and there will be no need for the aspect of understanding.

“Everything in the Future to Come will be in *lashon ha’kodesh*, which is the rock of Creation in the hands of Heaven.”

(Shabbos Parshas Mishpatim 5752)

10 ADAR I: THE TIME AND SIGNS OF THE REDEMPTION – WE ALREADY SEE THE BEGINNING OF MOSHIACH’S WORK UPON THE NATIONS

Since we are in the “*hechste tzait*” (the loftiest and most auspicious time) of the coming of Moshiach Tzidkeinu, “*Hineh Zeh (Melech HaMoshiach) Ba*,” we have already seen (a similarity and) a beginning of the work of Melech HaMoshiach upon the nations, “and he will judge among the nations, and reprove many peoples, and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, etc.,” by G-d placing in the hearts of the nations of the world (“the heart of kings and ministers in the hand of G-d”) to decide and proclaim together on the state of “and they shall beat their swords into plowshares.”

(Shabbos Parshas Mishpatim 5752)

11 ADAR I: THE TIME AND SIGNS OF THE REDEMPTION – THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD ARE ASSISTING THE JEWISH PEOPLE

(We see in the events of recent times that) the country of Russia has permitted departure from its borders, and is even helping Jews to travel to our Holy Land.

This resembles a preparation for the Future Redemption, when the nations of the world will assist the Jewish People to go out from the exile and go to Eretz HaKodesh, as is written: “And they shall bring all your brethren, etc.” (Yeshayahu 66:20).

(Shabbos Parshas Mishpatim 5752)

12 ADAR I: SIGNS OF THE FOOTSTEPS OF MOSHIACH AS AN ENCOURAGEMENT TO THE JEWISH PEOPLE

The Gemara states regarding the period of “the footsteps of Moshiach” (Sota 49a): “Every passing day is more cursed.”

Why does the Torah inform us in advance about the undesirable situation that will be at “the footsteps of Moshiach”? There’s enough anguish from the undesirable matters that already exist, so why add to a Jew’s sorrow the fact that the situation will be worse?

The answer is that the Torah’s intention is an instruction and command that every Jew should prepare himself and nullify this undesirable element by adding in matters of holiness. As a result,

this will not only avert a descent *ch”v*, but it will bring about an even greater ascent.

(Seifer Hisvaaduyos 5746, p. 621)

13 ADAR I: WE MUST UTILIZE EVERY MOMENT IN THE TIME OF THE EXILE

Even though it says regarding the generation of the footsteps of Moshiach, “for they will not go out in haste” (Yeshayahu 52:12), this refers to when the Redemption and the departure from the Exile will actually begin, as opposed to the final moments of the days of the Exile.

On the contrary, during the time of the Exile, its value grows more and more at every moment, so that “a little more, and the times will come when you will say, ‘I have no desire for these’” (Shabbos 151b). Therefore, we must utilize every moment in the most beneficial manner.

(Igros Kodesh, Vol. 13, p. 444)

14 ADAR I: THE SPECIAL STRENGTHS OF PURIM KATAN

Purim Katan relates to Purim Gadol, as is stated in Mishneh (Megilla 6:2): “There is nothing to distinguish between Adar Rishon and Adar Sheni except the reading of the Megilla and gifts to the poor.” We understand from this that they are equal in all other matters, and on the contrary, there is an additional quality in Adar Rishon – on the level of being “first.”

The general concept of the days of Purim (including Purim Katan) is the victory of the Jews and Yiddishkait, and in the words of the Megilla: “it was reversed, the Jews should rule over their enemies.”

May it be G-d’s will that everyone should utilize the special quality and special strengths that Purim Katan gives to increase in matters of Torah and Yiddishkait with greater vigor and greater fortitude in a manner of “*ad d’lo yada*” (until one cannot distinguish) as the instruction from the days of Purim, until we reach “the closeness of redemption to redemption” speedily in our days, mamash.

(Seifer Hisvaaduyos 5746, p. 608)

15 ADAR I – SHUSHAN PURIM KATAN: AVODAS HASHEM IN THE FUTURE TO COME – BODY AND SOUL TOGETHER

“He will revive us from the two days, on the third day He will set us up, and we will live before Him” (Hoshea 6:2).

The world of this physical world pertains to businessmen, as most of their occupation is in matters of this world, however, their conduct is according to Torah, and it is the avoda of the tribe of Z’vulun.

The World to Come pertains to Torah scholars and dwellers of tents, as most of their occupation is in the study of Torah, and this is the concept of the avoda of the tribe of Yisachar.

And on the third day, the avoda of both of them are together – i.e., the soul and the body participate with equal enthusiasm in Avodas Hashem, as in the way of Adam HaRishon before the sin, when there was no distinction between the body and the soul, as is written, “And they were not ashamed” (B’Reishis 2:25).

(Igros Kodesh, Vol. 4, p. 452)

COMPLETE JOY

By Nosson Avrohom

“We were happy with our lives, but as the years went by our joy was marred since we had no children. All our Israeli friends in the neighborhood were busy discussing where to send their children to school. We would just listen to them talk while praying that we too would have children.”

“My oldest child was born with a bracha from the Lubavitcher Rebbe,” said my taxi driver, Shlomo Elias, when he realized I am a Lubavitcher Chassid.

It was a very warm Friday and I had been on Mivtza T’fillin at the stores in the center of Eilat and was driving to the local Tomchei T’mimim yeshiva. I wanted to get there in time to immerse in the mikva before they closed for Shabbos. The long hours I had spent under the sun had worn me out and I just wanted to get to the yeshiva as soon as I could. The last thing I expected to hear from my taxi driver was that his son was born with the Rebbe’s bracha.

I could not listen to the story at that hour, so I asked him for his name and telephone number. I told him I would get back to him on Motzaei Shabbos since I wanted to hear his story. I added that I wrote for *Beis Moshiah* and I asked for permission to publicize his story.

Shlomo was very willing to have his story printed. He said that

years had gone by since he had last related the story and now that we were talking, he was reliving the moments he had spent in 770 and had seen the Rebbe. “You have no idea how moved I am now, to recall the special individual who is the Rebbe.”

When I called him on Motzaei Shabbos, his wife Orit came on the line and joined the conversation. She was the one who had received the bracha from the Rebbe.

“I married Orit two years after I finished with the army, and we decided, as many young Israelis do, to move abroad. We chose New York, a popular choice for Israelis. After the initial difficulties, we had the feeling that we had succeeded in making it in America. We had a house, a car, and good jobs. Who needed more than that?”

“In the early years of our stay in New York, I opened a hardware store on Utica and Eastern Parkway. Ironically, it was only a few blocks away from Chabad

headquarters. We lived in Canarsie.

“We were happy with our lives but as the years went by our joy was marred since we had no children. All our Israeli friends in the neighborhood were busy discussing where to send their children to school. We would just listen to them talk while praying that we too would have children.”

At this point, Orit chimed in. “Those were six years of an ongoing nightmare. We went to the best doctors and each appointment gave us hope. But as great as our hope was, that’s how great our disappointment was when the treatment failed. We went to doctors who used various approaches and they all made promises but nothing happened.

“We had spent a fortune and were down in the dumps. One day, we went to see an Israeli doctor by the name of Dr. Dov Goldstein. They say he is one of the top fertility specialists. In our first visits to him, he managed to raise our hopes once again, but as time passed, we experienced more disappointment.

“Shlomo had started attending shiurim at the local shul. The rabbi who gave the classes and heard what was on our minds, asked whether we had been to see the Lubavitcher Rebbe. When we told him we had not, he reacted with surprise. ‘In these situations, there is one Jew in the world who can help you and that is the Lubavitcher Rebbe. His brachos have enabled thousands of women to give birth.’

"According to what people told us, we understood that the Rebbe is not an ordinary rabbi but a holy man of G-d. I felt some bitterness about my friends, 'If you knew about him, why didn't you tell us sooner?' One day I sent a fax to the secretaries with our request.

"A few days later, on a Sunday, we went with thousands of Jews to see the Rebbe and receive his blessing. I went with my mother. I'll never forget how surprised I was when I saw all types of Jews there: great rabbis, ultra-Orthodox, religious, not religious, Sephardim, Persians, Ashkenazim, simple people, businessmen, etc. I could see them all there, including people I would not have believed would come to such a place.

"As I stood facing the Rebbe, I couldn't utter a word. I trembled, and this was something I didn't expect. In my life I had met many rabbis but never anyone like the Rebbe, I promise you. When I tell my friends about this today, they just don't understand what I'm talking about. The Rebbe isn't a man; he is an angel. The Rebbe's eyes are with me till today. They are unforgettable. You feel that the Rebbe knows everything about you, that he sees through you, like an X-ray.

"These thoughts raced through my mind in seconds. My mother nudged me and said, 'Nu, ask, this is your opportunity. Who knows if you'll have another chance?' I said to the Rebbe: Rebbe, I ask for a bracha for a son.

"The Rebbe looked at me with his wise eyes and I suddenly felt utterly calm. He gave me a dollar and blessed me that I should have good news to tell. He gave me another dollar and told me to give it to my husband.

"When I went outside and told one of the women that I had been given two dollars, one for my

husband, she said that the Rebbe had known that my husband had not come with me and was not in the men's line, and this was correct.

"I refused to take any more names of doctors. I had bitachon that I would have a son in the normal course of things. The Rebbe infused me with such bitachon and calm that I can't describe it. There is nobody who can tell me something that I won't quibble with, but the Rebbe gave me renewed hope.

"I kept on hearing more and more stories about the Rebbe and his brachos, how sick people recovered, about prophecies thanks to which people were saved, and the many children who were born.

"Just a few months went by from when the Rebbe gave me a bracha and I was expecting a child. A year later our son was born. That is what we asked and that is what happened!

"I don't have to describe the bris to you. Everybody heard how our son was born thanks to the Rebbe's bracha. When the mohel asked my husband what our son's name is, we said Ohr-el, because we felt that he was our light from G-d who came to us after years of pain and despair.

"Unfortunately, there are people today who don't understand who the Lubavitcher Rebbe is. Just one glance of his is enough, and he changes your world view."

* * *

Shlomo ended the interview with another interesting story that he and Orit experienced a few years ago:

"I have been driving a taxi in Eilat for the past two years, but before that I worked the taxi stand at the Wolfson hospital in Cholon. One day, as I waited in my taxi, I saw someone run among the taxis, asking people frantically whether

they had a dollar bill.

"He needed a single dollar and he wanted to give shekels in exchange. Everybody told him they had no dollar, either because they didn't have one or because they didn't understand his urgency. I, however, called out to him and said: I have three dollars that I received from the Lubavitcher Rebbe. I am willing to give you one of them, but tell me why you need a dollar.

"He nearly fainted, but after he recovered he told me that his wife was about to undergo an operation and he had heard that if you place a dollar under the pillow, it's a segula for the success of the surgery, and it's even better if the dollar is from the Lubavitcher Rebbe. 'And here you are, offering me a dollar from the Rebbe!'

"I am not religious but it's clear to me that there is Someone in charge."

The rabbi asked whether we had been to see the Lubavitcher Rebbe. When we told him we had not, he reacted with surprise. 'In these situations, there is one Jew in the world who can help you and that is the Lubavitcher Rebbe.'

SHLICHUS

ONE ON ONE

A young couple went on shlichus to Brookline, Massachusetts and began working with the Israeli population and young adults there. Rabbi Yeshaya Lerner and his wife Chana tell about their shlichus and the people they've met.

I visited Brookline in the fall, when the colorful leaves filled the pavements and a cool breeze whipped them around. In Shayke (Yeshaya) Lerner's office though, it was warm and cheery. The interview soon turned into a Chassidishe farbrengen with mashke and cake.

Brookline is very different than the surrounding towns. Most of its population consists of young couples or students who attend the colleges in the vicinity. Many people are there to further their medical education in the famous hospitals in the area. So it's a transient population with many of them living there until they finish their studies, three to five years, whereupon they move elsewhere.

"15,000 Jews live here, out of a population of 57,000," says R' Lerner.

R' Lerner came to Brookline because of his wife Chanie, daughter of Rabbi Chaim Pruss,

shliach in Boston.

"When I arrived here, I noticed many Israelis. I decided to try and duplicate the success of the Chabad houses for Israelis throughout the US and to establish an Israeli community. I soon realized that my shlichus was different than I had thought it would be."

Shortly after R' Lerner arrived in Brookline, the high-tech industry went into decline. A large number of Israelis living there were in this industry and when it collapsed, many of them returned to Eretz Yisroel.

"Many of the Israelis who come to Brookline come from backgrounds that are quite estranged from Judaism. They are intellectually inclined and they want to assimilate into the environment. The Israelis here enjoy a high social status and to some degree even lead the pack. They have no problem participating in our classes and programs, but they will not join a

k'hilla, as I had thought of doing originally."

Since R' Lerner was unable to form an independent Israeli community, he began to work with the general young adult population while maintaining some special Ivrit programs. The focus of his shlichus is developing a personal relationship with mekuravim. He maintains a close connection with them through a series of shiurim on the parsha and concepts of Chassidus that he and his wife give throughout the week.

"Because of the intellectual bent of the people who come here, I do a lot of preparing for my classes, making sure I won't become stuck with a concept or topic that I won't be able to explain. I quickly realized that the classes have to be on a high level since they won't hesitate to ask me questions and challenge me if what I say doesn't sound logical or clear to them."

Once a month the Lerner's host a Shabbaton for young adults with a communal Maariv and Shabbos meal, followed by a farbrengen into the night. Likewise, once a month, they have a Chabad minyan.

"In the past, we tried to organize a minyan for every Shabbos, but it was impossible for people who live far away to walk in the freezing and snowy winters. Each of them lives in another corner of the town, so we decided that once a month they would make the effort to come."

CHANGING COMMUNITY

As mentioned earlier, every two or three years the population changes and the Lerner's have to begin again to make people's acquaintance. Not surprisingly, they don't often see the fruits of their labors. People begin to get involved and a shiur gets off to a good start, and then R' Lerner discovers that many of the



participants that he has seen for a year or two will be returning to Eretz Yisroel or moving to another state.

“Every so often we have some nachas,” says R’ Lerner with a smile. “This past Sukkos a guest, a local American Jew, showed up to the sukkah. We asked him how he knew to look us up and he said that he had become engaged to an Israeli girl who had spent a single Shabbos meal with us four years ago. When she knew he would be

in Brookline for Sukkos, she told him he has to visit us.”

One of the difficulties of working with a changing population, aside from not being able to form a community, is that it’s hard to establish the rest of the programs that a Chabad house usually has such as shiurim, farbrengens, and other typical activities.

“Over the years we have discovered that the key to starting a lasting shiur is to get one of the

people to take responsibility for it, being ready to invest his time and money into it. In one of our early years here, we organized a wonderful Yud-Tes Kislev farbrengen. The problem was that very people showed up. At first we were very disappointed since we had advertised so much and had put in a lot of money, but when it was over and we examined the results, we were so happy. Why? Because one of the longtime shluchim in the state who we

“Every year we would make a public seider only on the first night of Pesach. A few years ago, I saw a sicha where the Rebbe says to make a seider the second night too. I discovered this only two days before Pesach, but I decided to go ahead with it and advertise...”

invited to speak at this event, Rabbi Shmuel Posner, spoke passionately about the need to actually do something to strengthen one's Jewish connection.

“Two brothers participated in that farbrengen, Danny and Shlomo Sender. They decided to start a shiur and take responsibility for it. This shiur is ongoing and is hosted in the homes of various Israelis.”

EXPERTISE IN RELATING TO THE YOUNG

After six years of shlichus, R' Lerner has become an expert on relating to young Israelis. Most of them were given anti-religious education in Eretz Yisroel.

“You have to know how to approach them. If you pressure them or preach to them, they won't

come to you. You have to maintain a balance of not compromising, on the one hand, and being a nice guy, on the other hand. The main thing is, though, to simply be able to relate to them and understanding them and not come crashing down on them.”

When I asked R' Lerner to give me some examples, he had plenty.

“We had a guy who grew up on a kibbutz. When Rabbi Shmulik Rosenberg was on K'vutza, he became friendly with him and he was the one who connected him to us. He started coming to us for Shabbos and Yomim Tovim and eventually became one of our regulars. He felt very at home with us and he came to us nearly every Friday night. He eventually bought a pair of t'fillin to use them every weekday.

“On one of his visits to Eretz Yisroel, he got engaged and he came back with his fiancée to the US before Simchas Torah. We told him that Shabbos B'Reishis is very special and that we hoped that he would bring his fiancée so she could see an authentic Shabbos table. He said it was her first trip to

America and he had promised to take her touring. He said he couldn't postpone that.

“I gently pleaded with him to come anyway, but was unsuccessful. It crossed my mind that perhaps all the work we had put into him over a long period of time was for nothing. Perhaps we hadn't been stubborn enough; maybe we needed to push him more. Anyway, he went touring and we didn't see him for a few months.

“One day of Chanuka of that same year, someone told me that he was back in Brookline and was lying in bed at home with a bad cold and that for a long time he hadn't left his room and gone to work. If you know how cold it gets up here, you know that if you don't dress warmly you can easily get sick.

“I went to visit him with a menorah and doughnuts. After we lit the menorah and sang some Chanuka songs, he said, ‘Come, I want to show you something.’

“He opened a siddur and showed me the page of the Friday night Kiddush written out in his handwriting. He said, ‘You

A BRACHA FROM THE REBBE

In Brookline, people know that if they want to rent a house, it's best to do so at the beginning of September, because that's the beginning of the new semester and those who are leaving the city leave then.

Our first year here on shlichus was at the beginning of September and we found two apartments that suited our needs. One apartment was in the center of town but more expensive. We didn't know which one to pick. Time was pressing because Rosh HaShana was around the corner, and we had already advertised our presence. We decided to write to the Rebbe and ask for advice and a bracha.

In the answer we opened to, it was clear that we were supposed to wait. It was a letter that spoke about the Chazal that says that delays are good. So we decided to wait, and that Rosh HaShana we stayed with one of the shluchim in the area and walked a long way to the davening.

The day after Rosh HaShana we continued looking and found a nicer apartment than the first two we had seen. It was also cheaper than the other two!



Rabbi Lerner with a group of young mekuravim on a boat trip

remember that Friday night that I was touring and didn't go to you? Did you think I wouldn't make Kiddush? I took pen and paper and

wrote down what I remembered and bought a bottle of wine and made Kiddush. I can't describe how moved I was at the time.'

"This story taught me a big lesson. We don't always see immediate results. We have to do what we have to do and we are assured that our efforts aren't for naught.

"I'll tell you another story that illustrates this point. There's a guy here whose grandfather belonged to the Lubavitch k'hilla in Boston before World War II. Over the years, the family grew distant from Jewish life and the grandchildren grew up in Conservative homes or even less than that.

"This guy was very gifted and was quite a genius. At age 24 he was a professor of physics. He had known a Christian girl who, for the purposes of her work, had taken an interest in Judaism. For a number of years she was even active in Hillel at the university they studied in. She had had a Conservative conversion and was keeping kosher.



Rabbi Lerner dancing with the mekuravim

In conversations with other shluchim in the area, they referred to Mrs. Lerner's special classes. Many of the shluchim invite her to speak and say she is very successful with their mekuravim. Even a blizzard doesn't keep women away. She had full attendance at her monthly class, despite the snow, and some newcomers came too.

"When they came to us, we didn't know what to do. She wasn't Jewish but he was, and she seemed genuinely interested in Yiddishkeit. They became more and more interested in Judaism and began to be active in the Chabad house. She on her own came to the conclusion that she wanted an Orthodox conversion, but felt she was too busy to devote herself to it.

"One day, at the weekly *Tanya*

class, she let Mrs. Lerner know that they were engaged and asked if Rabbi Lerner would be able to officiate at the ceremony. We were forced to decline and were not sure how to approach the issue of conversion at this sensitive point. At the end the couple went through a difficult three-month separation so that she could undergo a halachic conversion followed by a true Chassidic wedding. Since her parents were unable to accompany her at the wedding, my wife and I led them to the chuppa. Today they are part of the Chabad Community."

THE REBBE'S KOCHOS

Along with his sensitivity, R' Lerner operates in the same spirit that characterized him as a bachur in 770. He is constantly coming up with ideas and following through with them.

"Every year we would make a public seider only on the first night of Pesach. A few years ago, I saw a sicha where the Rebbe says to make a seider the second night too. I discovered this only two days before Pesach, but I decided to go ahead with it and advertise. Despite the complications in renting a hall in a hotel and the expense, we did it for those who wanted to celebrate the second night.

"Just one day before Yom Tov, someone called and asked whether we were having a seider the second night too. When we said we were, he was very happy because he was only able to make it the second night.

"He came the second night and we became very close. After some time we went to 770 together and he bought t'fillin and began putting them on every day. Whenever I meet him, we have an agreement that I will tell him a new d'var Torah on the parsha. Today, he is one of the biggest contributors to

our work. I saw that when we do something with kabbalas ol, without hesitating, Hashem helps."

I must mention the mitzva tank that R' Lerner rented for Yud-Alef Nissan. The passersby were able to get in and hear about the Rebbe and about Pesach too, of course. The media made a big deal about the tank. I asked R' Lerner where he got the idea from and wasn't he afraid that people in Brookline wouldn't appreciate it? He shrugged and said, "Like every bachur who learned in 770, I knew that we need a mitzva tank for Yud-Alef Nissan.

"At first, yes, we were nervous about people's reaction, but considering how many Jews came in, it was a success. During the day a reporter noticed us and he came in and asked questions. The next day I was surprised to see a long article in the local paper under the headline, 'Mitzva Tank in Honor of the Lubavitcher Rebbe's Birthday.'"

EARLY ENCOUNTERS WITH CHABAD

R' Lerner told me the following story:

"There's an Israeli here who had a big company that marketed X-ray machines. I first met him on Chanuka when I went to his place of business with a menorah and a doughnut. I never had as bad a reaction as I did in that encounter. He rejected my overtures and made it clear that there was no point in my ever coming again since he and Judaism were two opposites. He made sure to tell me that when he lived in Eretz Yisroel there was one party he voted for — Meretz.

"I didn't give up on him though. Instead of his tone putting me off, it made me want to persist. I swallowed all his insults and continued to keep in touch with him. It was amazing to see how, over time, he softened up. One day

he even made a contribution to the Chabad house and got his friends to do the same.

“When he began donating money to our work, I knew that the wall he had put up had crumbled. One day, I went to see him and he said to me, ‘Come, I want to show you something that will interest you.’ He took a paper out of his desk on which his grandmother had written the family tree. I was surprised to see that his grandfather’s father had been a Chassid of the Rebbe Rashab. I told him, ‘You have Chabad blood long before me.’”

R’ Lerner went on to tell me about some of his mekuravim who were born into religious families and had even attended yeshivos, but had subsequently gone off the derech. The Chabad house awakens feelings of nostalgia in them and brings them back:

“There’s a math professor here who was raised in a religious family in Kfar Atta (today called Kiryat Atta). I met him as I was filling my car up with gas and he asked me: Where’s the davening on Rosh HaShana? I told him that we hadn’t found a place yet since we didn’t have the money to rent a hall in a hotel for the t’fillos and holiday



Lighting the Chanuka menorah at a Chanuka party

meals. He immediately said that he would cover the expenses of the first day.

“He came on Rosh HaShana but then he stopped coming. I once called him on Friday and asked him to come complete the minyan that Shabbos. That was an excuse to draw him into the Chabad house activities and baruch Hashem, it worked. Since then, he comes to all our programs.

“In general, I’ve noticed that those who contribute towards a

program get involved more rapidly than others because they feel a part of it. Our friendship reminded him nostalgically of the time he was religious, and in recent years he has been taking giant steps back to his traditions. He comes to all the t’fillos and doesn’t miss a shiur.

“At the recent Yud-Tes Kislev farbrengen, before we sang ‘Pada V’Shalom,’ I explained what the niggun is about. As I did so, one of the people sitting near me began to sing it quietly to an Israeli tune. I told him that we have a different, Chassidic version. When we began singing it, I noticed that he joined in.

“When we finished singing I asked him where he knew the Chassidic version from and he said, ‘I was a student in one of the schools of the Reshet in Lud, as a child, and every Yud-Tes Kislev we would walk to Kfar Chabad via the *pardes* and join the main farbrengen.’”

* * *

In Brookline there is an Israeli consulate which R’ Lerner visits before every Yom Tov to enable the employees there to do the mitzvos of the day.

INTRODUCING THE INNER DIMENSION OF JUDAISM

When R’ Lerner’s cell phone began to ring, we glanced at the time and were astonished to see that two hours had gone by. On the phone, R’ Lerner arranged to learn with an Israeli to prepare him for his wedding.

R’ Lerner smiled and took out a bottle of Absolut vodka and offered to pour us a l’chaim while blessing us with a good trip – we had a four-hour drive back to Crown Heights.

Young people are a tough group to reach, all the more so



The Chabad House Purim event

when these are intellectually inclined individuals who think they know it all. Yet, you focus your work on young people and are successful with them. How do you do it?

“Young Israelis have a combination of intellectual curiosity as well as a desire to follow Jewish tradition. They are interested in spirituality and tradition. The problem is that lately, in Boston, new communities have sprung up that try to offer everything. They take some things from Reform, some from the Conservative, and even some things from the Orthodox, and present a mishmash of ideas. Many young people, who really want the truth, think they can find it within these communities.

“I’ll give you an example. A couple came to us who had been married in a community like this. They said that the ‘rabbi’ who had officiated at their marriage had told them that in Judaism the bride circles the groom seven times under the chuppa, but in their egalitarian

community, the groom also circles the bride seven times.

“What we do is present the inner dimension of Judaism. When someone comes to the Chabad house for a farbrengen or shiur in order to get a glimpse into the world of Judaism, he will hear the Chassidic understanding of the parsha or the meaning of life. He will soon realize that there is a deep understanding here and this speaks to him. We know that Chassidus is the ‘medication’ for the generations directly preceding the coming of Moshiach. It is only Chassidus, particularly the teachings of the Rebbe, which can provide a genuine alternative.”

Earlier, you told me that you give classes on inyanei Moshiach and Geula. What do your mekuravim think about this topic?

“In order to present the material so that people get it, you have to explain it in shiurim. You must **explain** why we think the Rebbe is Moshiach.

“There are different categories

of people. Some are impressed by the shiurim, while others are impressed by the *emuna p’shuta* (simple faith). During Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur I went to 770 with one of our mekuravim. He was captivated by the singing of ‘Yechi’ before and after davening. Our visit followed numerous shiurim which he attended and so he already had a deep understanding of it.

“In contrast to that, when I first came here, some people came over to me and told me that they had been in 770 and saw how Chassidim prepare the Rebbe’s *shtender* and chair and they did not understand why this is done. Of course, after I explained it to them, based on the Rebbe’s sichos, they looked at it completely differently.

“Another example – before Purim I gave a shiur based on the Rebbe’s sicha about the special quality of the month of Adar, the month in which Moshe Rabbeinu was born. In that sicha, the Rebbe explains at length the idea that Moshe did not die, which I elaborated on.

“When the class was over, one of the participants (a serious guy who produces movies) got up said, ‘Now I understand why Lubavitchers say the Rebbe is *chai v’kayam*.’ You have to find ways of explaining it so that people can understand it and digest it intellectually, especially intellectually.”

THE SECRET WITHIN THE SHIURIM

As we spoke in the office, Mrs. Chanie Lerner was giving a shiur to women, which was followed by a workshop on challa baking with a professional baker.

“In order to attract as many women as possible, we have a workshop after the shiur. Last month it was flower arranging and

IT’S A SMALL WORLD

We know a nice Israeli by the name of Sharon Cohen. He worked for a large computer firm here and since he was good at what he did, he was sent to work at their branch in S. Francisco. He was one of our regular guests at our Shabbos meals, farbrengens, and shiurim, and we had an excellent relationship.

A while ago, he was sent to work in India. He started out in Poona where R’ Betzalel Kupchik is the shliach. When he passed the Chabad house one day and saw the sign, “Baruch HaBa Melech HaMoshiach,” he went in and was surprised to discover that India also has a Chabad house, more than ten, in fact.

It so happened that some event was taking place at the Chabad house at the time, and there were many backpackers and guests, including my brother-in-law and sister who are on shlichus in Pushkar. They were there in order to arrange extensions for their visas and in the meantime they were helping the Kupchiks.

He got into the swing of things and enjoyed it very much. At a certain point during the meal, he told everyone how in the town he lived in, Brookline, there is a Chabad house too and he highly praised the Chabad house and the shliach’s family. When he finished talking, my sister said: The shliach you are talking about is my brother!



Rabbi Lerner with a mitzva tank on Chanuka

next time it will be making pastries. Some of the women are members of other modern communities”

In conversations with other shluchim in the area, they referred to Mrs. Lerner’s special classes. Many of the shluchim invite her to speak and say she is very successful with their mekuravim. Even a blizzard doesn’t keep women away. She had full attendance at her monthly class, despite the snow, and some newcomers came too.

Rabbi and Mrs. Lerner work on convincing young couples to marry according to halacha.

“We prepare many couples before they marry and my husband is the *mesader kiddushin*. Even though in some cases couples will have their weddings within the Reform or Conservative communities, some of them come to us to prepare for their wedding. Our connection begins with that and it continues when the couple joins our other activities. Our publicity is word of mouth.”

Even couples that will be marrying in Eretz Yisroel prefer the personal connection with the Lerner. “There is a couple that we

are working on, to convince them to marry according to halacha. He is a traditional Jew whom we met when he lived here and was a regular participant in our classes and programs. He was convinced to put on t’fillin daily and to keep Shabbos.

“He recently went abroad and after a few months, he returned to Brookline with his wife, a nice local American girl. We knew that he married her without chuppa and kiddushin. We renewed our connection and began to speak them. His wife is getting involved in Judaism more quickly than he is. She comes to classes and enjoys them very much.

“I recently gave a series of classes on inyanei Moshiach and Geula. She loved it and asked me to bring from home all the books I had on the subject because she wanted to learn more about it. It has reached the point that although they were living in a nice apartment outside the city, they have decided to rent an apartment in Brookline in order to be closer to the Chabad house and the other young couples they have become friends with.

They feel like this is their community. We hope they will marry soon according to halacha.

“When people attend the classes regularly, the messages sink in eventually. We see it happening. We have the best connections with those who attend classes regularly. They ask questions and get answers, and they get to delve deeply into Judaism.

“There is a girl who regularly attends the classes. By joining our shiurim, she became part of our family. There was a conference here of the Jewish Federation and those organizing the conference asked each organization in the city that works with young people to send a representative. We sent her.

“At the conference, each representative was asked who they most admired as a leader and why. Our representative said that she admired the Lubavitcher Rebbe and she explained why in such a convincing way that the audience was greatly moved.

“When I heard about it, I was surprised to see what an effect the shiurim had had on her.”

* * *

When I asked the Lerner about their plans for the future, until the hisgalus of the Rebbe, Mrs. Lerner said, “We are big believers in developing relationships with our mekuravim. In our work with young people at Shabbatons and shiurim, we hope to double and triple the number of participants.

“We hope that we will soon have our own building for the Chabad house so that we won’t have to rent a different place each time.

“At my husband’s ongoing shiur, there is a core group of more than ten people. They are ready to come to minyanim every Shabbos and so we really want to expand and grow and give the Rebbe much nachas.”

RAV, CHASSID, MEKUSHAR AND A TAMIM HIS WHOLE LIFE

By Avrohom Reinitz

*The gaon and Chassid, Rabbi Yitzchok HaKohen Hendel a"h, who was appointed by the Rebbe Rayatz as rav of the Chabad community in Montreal, and served as Av Beis Din in Montreal, was a personality the likes of which we don't find nowadays: a smart and firm rav, a sharp and knowledgeable scholar, an oved Hashem and a man of truth, a Chassid and mekushar to the Rebbe MH"M. * We present this overview of his life to mark his yahrtzait on 12 Adar. * Part 1*

The gaon and Chassid, Rabbi Yitzchok HaKohen Hendel a"h, was born on 8 Kislev 5677/1916, 91 years ago, in Komerov, Poland. His parents were

Rabbi Yisroel Yosef and Yente Leah a"h. His father was a Hosiataner Chassid and his mother came from a family of Chassidim of the Maggid of Trisk.

His mother was very knowledgeable in the halachos one needs to know to run a Jewish home. Rabbi Hendel related that a woman in the community, who was close with the Hendels, asked his mother a halachic question and she said that it was permissible. Afterwards, the woman asked the rav the same question and he paskened it was forbidden. The difference of opinion reached the dayan of the community and after researching the subject he said that Mrs. Hendel was correct and he also paskened that it was permissible.

In his youth, the family moved to Chelm, where he learned in the local school. When he finished there, he yearned to study more and despite his young age he left home for yeshiva. His father, who wanted his son to have a Chassidishe chinuch, sent him to learn in Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim in Warsaw.

At that time, young talmidim were not accepted in Tomchei T'mimim, but Rabbi Hendel's

The Rebbe Rayatz told them that his coming to Poland entailed mesirus nefesh, not only physically but spiritually too. He said he would not describe the mesirus nefesh involved but that the goal of the mesirus nefesh was to open a Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim there that would be like the one in Lubavitch.

abilities – he already knew several tractates of Gemara by heart – helped him get accepted into the yeshiva. His good friend, also from Chelm, Rabbi Aryeh Leib Kramer (later to be the menahel of the yeshiva and mosdos in Montreal), was also accepted.

The Rebbe Rayatz lived in Riga and he would go to Poland for brief periods. The Rebbe went to Warsaw to celebrate Yud-Beis Tamuz 5691/1931, and that is when he saw the Rebbe for the first time.

The Rebbe came back to Warsaw for the Yomim Nora'im. The Rebbe's davening on the night of Rosh HaShana made a deep

impression on Rav Hendel. The davening began at six and the Rebbe davened with copious tears until twelve at night. All stood in the zal as the Rebbe davened there and they listened to his t'filla.

Rav Hendel spoke yearningly about Tishrei 5692/1931, when for the first time, he saw and heard the Rebbe MH"M, who was known as Ramash. Rav Hendel said that the Rebbe-to-be came out and began to dance with them with tremendous vigor. Some of the facing doors of the rooms of the yeshiva were opened wide, and they danced through them in a circle, even through the yeshiva office. The Rebbe conducted the dancing with both hands and he danced himself.

IN A SUDDEN YECHIDUS FOR OUTSTANDING BACHURIM

When one year, his class broke up after some of the talmidim did not return to yeshiva after intercession, R' Yitzchok said it wasn't his fault that the class had broken up and he asked to be allowed into a higher class. The rosh yeshiva agreed and R' Hendel soon proved that he could not only keep up with his older classmates...

In addition to his own learning, R' Yitzchok helped other talmidim. In line with the Rebbe Rayatz's instruction, the outstanding bachurim learned with and guided the younger bachurim. His good friend, R' Yosef HaLevi Wineberg, who came to the yeshiva three years after him, related that R' Hendel was the one who encouraged him in his learning of Chassidus when he first came to yeshiva, and before Purim, R' Hendel even gave him a maamer Chassidus by way of mishloach

manos.

In Tishrei 5695/1934, the Rebbe MH"M was appointed by the Rebbe Rayatz as acting dean of the yeshiva. However, since the Rebbe could not obtain papers to enable him to live permanently in Poland, he returned to Paris after Tishrei. In this brief period, the Rebbe demanded that the bachurim learn the Rebbe Rayatz's maamarim by heart and even tested them. Among the bachurim who could review the maamarim by heart was R' Hendel.

At the end of 5693/1933, the Rebbe Rayatz moved to Warsaw and R' Yitzchok became greatly mekushar to him. Thanks to his excellent memory, he was included among the chozrim. The primary and official chozer was Rabbi Mordechai Mentlick, but he had a group of assistants. The way it worked was the Rebbe said a maamer on Friday night. The chozrim reviewed it that night and in the morning they went to the Rebbe to review it. The Rebbe corrected them and added things. R' Hendel was part of this select group on many occasions.

When the yeshiva moved from Warsaw to Otvotsk, Rabbi Yehuda Eber (may Hashem avenge his blood) was appointed as rosh yeshiva. He liked R' Yitzchok very much, to the point that they said that the rosh yeshiva wrote three copies of his shiurim – one for the Rebbe Rayatz, one for himself, and one for R' Hendel for the T'mimim.

In addition to his study of Nigleh, R' Yitzchok progressed in his study of Chassidus and his avodas ha't'filla. He had special permission from the rosh yeshiva to daven at length even as it infringed on the time for learning Nigleh.

In 5696, related Rabbi Wineberg, R' Hendel was chosen



Rabbi Hendel (third from the left in the bottom row) with his fellow talmidim in Shanghai

as one of three bachurim who were called for a sudden yechidus with the Rebbe Rayatz. In this yechidus, the Rebbe asked them to strengthen the learning of Chassidus in the yeshiva until it was like Tomchei T'mimim in

Lubavitch.

The Rebbe Rayatz told them that his coming to Poland entailed mesirus nefesh, not only physically but spiritually too. He said he would not describe the mesirus nefesh involved but that the goal of

the mesirus nefesh was to open a Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim there that would be like the one in Lubavitch.

When R' Hendel was drafted, he asked the Rebbe Rayatz in yechidus what to do to avoid it. He wrote to the Rebbe that he was advised to lose weight and thus be exempted, but the Rebbe told him to go for the exam without his glasses. His glasses were not particularly strong, but when he got to the draft office, they decided he did not see well and gave him an exemption.

In the summer of 5699/1939, the Rebbe Rayatz sent him to Warsaw to serve as the Menahel Ruchni and Maggid Shiur for the Mechina group which consisted of 13-14-year-olds. They had remained in Warsaw and did not move to Otvotsk with the older bachurim.

R' Hendel absorbed these years in Tomchei T'mimim into his blood and he lived with them until his



Rabbi Hendel teaching talmidim in the yeshiva in Montreal

He asked what had happened to the rest of the material and she gave him a chilling answer, "You my son, will still live a long life, with the help of Hashem, but we will remain here and use this material for shrouds."

final days. Someone in Montreal who saw R' Hendel early in the morning in the mikva, asked him why he got up so early. R' Hendel answered: Since the days I learned in Tomchei T'mimim, I am particular about keeping the same schedule as in yeshiva, including immersing in the mikva at this time and learning Chassidus before davening.

SMICHA CERTIFICATE FROM THE RAV OF WARSAW

World War II broke out in Elul 5699/1939 and after the Germans began to bomb Warsaw, the Rebbe said all the talmidim should go home. R' Yitzchok immediately set out for Chelm, where he found out that his parents had left for Ludmir.

On his way to Ludmir, Nazi

soldiers caught him and made a mockery of him. They brought him into the shul and told him to put on t'fillin and to sing for them. When they discovered his certificate of ordination for rabbanus in his suitcase, including smicha from the rav of Warsaw, Rav Kahane, their mockery increased. It was only by a miracle that he was able to extricate himself from them.

Later that night, he returned to the shul to retrieve his suitcase and other belongings. He did not find the certificate of smicha and his clothes had also disappeared. A local Jew, who owned a fabric store, had pity on him and gave him material enough for ten shirts.

He continued on his way and when he met his parents he gave his mother the roll of material and asked her to give it to a seamstress to sew him some shirts. A day later, his mother gave him five shirts. He asked what had happened to the rest of the material and she gave him a chilling answer, "You my son, will still live a long life, with the help of Hashem, but we will remain here and use this material for shrouds."

In the meantime, R' Yitzchok heard that the Rebbe Rayatz had told all the talmidim to try and get to Vilna in Lithuania, which was still independent. He parted from his parents and told them that his plan was to travel together with the Rebbe Rayatz.

His mother's bleak prognostication quickly came true and on 9 Adar 5701/1941, she died of an illness after being unable to obtain the necessary medication. The shrouds were prepared from the remaining material. Since the family thought that R' Yitzchok had traveled with the Rebbe Rayatz and the Rebbe Rayatz was already in Brooklyn, they sent word of his mother's

passing to 770.

In Vilna, the bachurim continued with the yeshiva schedule under the guidance of the mashpia, R' Yehoshua Isaac Baruch. The older talmidim, including R' Yitzchok, helped the younger boys and in the proper running of the yeshiva, to the extent possible.

The Brisker Rav, Rabbi Yitzchok Zev (Velvel) Soloveitchik z"l was in Vilna at this time. R' Hendel and some of his friends arranged to meet him and they told him that since they had no rosh yeshiva, they would be happy to have him come occasionally to give them a shiur. The Brisker Rav answered: Here, I don't belong to any yeshiva and if I start to say shiurim, there will be no end to it. However, since my father, R' Chaim, was friendly with the Lubavitcher Rebbe, I will come to visit you.

And that's what he did. He came in the evening, as the boys learned Chassidus. Most of the people present did not know who he was, but as soon as R' Hendel noticed him, he motioned to his friends and they all stood up in his honor. The Brisker Rav looked at the Chassidus s'farim that the bachurim were learning and he looked surprised. If they had been learning Nigleh, he would have "talked in learning" with them, but since it was Chassidus, he didn't know what to do.

R' Hendel said: Thank you for coming. Perhaps you would like to learn with us. The Brisker Rav learned a maamer of the Rebbe Rayatz on inyanei avoda with R' Hendel. When they were finished, the Brisker Rav said: There's no question that this learning is inspiring but, as you know, we are not used to this style.

When R' Hendel told this story he would say that this was

probably the only time in the history of Chassidus that one of the Brisker gaonim learned a maamer during the Chassidus class in Tomchei T'mimim.

A MOVING MEETING IN MOSCOW ON THE WAY TO JAPAN

When the accursed Nazis advanced towards Vilna, the Rebbe Rayatz tried to obtain visas for the T'mimim for countries not under Nazi control, so they could eventually reach the US. In the end, he managed to obtain entrance visas for a small country in South America and they took this document to the Japanese consul, who was known as a righteous gentile. He gave them traveling visas for Japan.

R' Yitzchok and the group of T'mimim traveled to Japan via Russia. As they passed through Moscow they met Lubavitcher Chassidim, but since they were afraid to talk to them, they began singing Chabad niggunim together. They took the opportunity to leave

them some of the recent maamarim of the Rebbe Rayatz.

After a long and difficult journey, they arrived in Japan and after their travel visas expired, they sailed to Shanghai, China. At that time, this city was an international zone and anybody could enter or exit without permits.

One Friday, 35 T'mimim left Japan and arrived in Shanghai before Shabbos. With them were many Mirrer yeshiva bachurim with their rosh yeshiva, Rabbi Chaim Shmuelevitz z"l, and their mashgiach, Rabbi Yechezkel Levenstein z"l. They were several hundred bachurim. Rabbi Meir Ashkenazi, the rav of the community in Shanghai, warmly welcomed the T'mimim for he was a true Chassid who was mekushar to the Rebbe.

The T'mimim spent many months in Shanghai and it was only in Tishrei 5702/1941 that nine of them were allowed to sail for Canada. This was after the Rebbe Rayatz exerted effort on their behalf. The ship arrived in S. Francisco at the beginning of

Cheshvan, and on 2 Cheshvan, after a trying and dangerous trip, they finally arrived in Montreal.

The day the T'mimim arrived in Montreal, the Rebbe Rayatz sent a letter greeting them and instructing them to open a Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim. They did so immediately even though the Jews of Montreal offered to sponsor a trip to the mountains, as they did for other refugees, after their difficult travels, to rest up. The talmidim of other yeshivos were glad to take them up on the offer.

At first, the T'mimim were housed in the shul of Anash in Montreal, known as the Nusach HaAri Shul. They began to learn a regular daily schedule again and there were forty talmidim in the first weeks. Most of the talmidim had not grown up in Chabad homes and at first, some of them even came from almost irreligious homes, but their parents wanted them to learn in yeshiva.

In a letter that the Rebbe Rayatz wrote at that time, he described in amazement how the nine bachurim who arrived in Montreal had made a big impression on the city. Indeed, the number of talmidim in the yeshiva continued to grow. Each day, more bachurim came so that they had to find a new, larger building for the yeshiva.

In his letter to the group of bachurim the Rebbe wrote that they had the task of turning Montreal into "holy land," a sacred place where Torah would be learned with fear of Heaven.

Rabbi Hendel was appointed the rosh yeshiva and Rabbi Menachem Zev Greenglass was appointed the mashpia. In the 60's, the famous gaon Rabbi Pinchas Hirschprung, Av Beis Din of Montreal, joined the yeshiva's staff.



Rabbi Hendel (right) with his brothers-in-law, Rabbi Tenenbaum and Rabbi Borenstein at a family simcha

[To be continued be"H]

WHY THE SAYING OF ‘YECHI’ WAS ESTABLISHED

By Rabbi Naftali Estulin, Shliach, Los Angeles, California
Translated By Michoel Leib Dobry

As with Chanuka and Purim, designed to strengthen our faith in the One Who commanded us the mitzvos and in the truth of His words, similarly, we find in the vitality and “koch” in the faith that the Rebbe is chai v’kayam, including the proclamation of “Yechi Adoneinu” and the like, in which we reiterate again and again the truth of what the Rebbe promised us, and nothing he says is for naught!

At the conclusion of the Rambam’s enumeration of the 613 mitzvos of the Torah in the Preface to *Mishneh Torah*, the Rambam explains the nature of the Rabbinical mitzvos and how it does not pose a contradiction to the Torah warning of “You shall neither add nor detract.” This is what he writes:

These are the six hundred thirteen commandments that were said to Moshe Moses on Sinai, together with their general

principles, detailed applications, and minute particulars; all these principles, details, and particulars as well as the explanation of each and every commandment are the Oral Law, which each court received from its predecessor.

There are other commandments that were enacted after the giving of the Torah, which were instituted by prophets and sages and became accepted by all Israel—such as the reading of the scroll of Esther, the

lighting of Chanuka candles, the fasting on the Ninth of Av, the washing of the hands, and the making of eruvin. For each and every one of these commandments, there are commentaries and details; and all of them will be explained in this work.

We must accept and observe all of these enacted commandments, as it is written “thou shall not turn aside from any of the sentences...”

(see Deuteronomy 17,11); and they are not an addition to the commandments of the Torah. The point of the Torah’s warning “thou shall not add... nor diminish” (Deuteronomy 13,1) is that no prophet is allowed to make an innovation and say that the Holy One blessed be He had commanded him in this commandment to add it to the commandments of the Torah, or to take away one of these six hundred thirteen commandments.

But if the Great Rabbinical Court with the prophet living at the time institutes a commandment as an affirmative legislation, or as an instruction, or as a negative legislation, this is not an addition: for they have not said that the Holy One blessed be He commanded to

make an eiruv or to read the scroll of Esther at its appointed time. And if they had said so, they would have been adding to the Torah.

Rather, we say that the prophets with the Great Rabbinical Court legislated and ordered to read the scroll of Esther at its appointed time to recall the praises of the Holy One blessed be He and the salvation he did for us, and that He was ever ready when we cried to Him, and that we should therefore bless and praise Him, and inform future generations how true is what is promised in the Torah “for what great nation is there that hath God so nigh unto it” (see Deuteronomy 4,7; Deuteronomy 4,8). In this way is to be seen each and every rabbinical commandment, whether affirmative or negative.

(Translation: www.mechon-mamre.org)

We derive from the words of the Rambam that while the Rabbinical mitzvos are not actual commandments, nevertheless, they strengthen our faith in the **One Who commanded the commandments!**

During the generation that experienced the miracles of the holidays of Purim and Chanuka, everyone felt the miracle in an actual sense, and they saw how G-d heard our cries, and it was true what the Torah promised that G-d will always be close to us.

For us, however, in the generations that followed that did not experience the miracles and are liable to reach an unhealthy state of affairs, to the point of uncertainty regarding G-d’s closeness to us, the Sages commanded the celebration of the holiday of Chanuka, in order to arouse and strengthen the faith in G-d Himself.

This may be the reason why the words of the Sages are sweeter than the mitzvos of the Torah, because while the mitzvos of the Torah deal with the mitzvos themselves, the

words of the Sages deal with the One Who commanded the commandments!

WE, WHO MERITED – BELIEVE!

The marvelous language of the Rambam is perfectly suited for our situation, in the final generation of exile and the first generation of the Redemption.

We, who were privileged to see the Rebbe, the king in all his glory, and hear the Rebbe proclaim openly the announcement of the Redemption, promising “Humble ones, the time of your Redemption has arrived,”

We, who were privileged to hear



with our very own ears the Rebbe say that the world is already prepared, and all we have to do is open our eyes and see that Moshiach has already begun his activities in the world from his place of dwelling in New York City,

We, who were privileged to work for the acceptance of the Rebbe’s sovereignty and to receive encouraging replies from him – N’shei U’Bnos Chabad in Crown Heights and beyond, the “Tankistin”

in Eretz HaKodesh, Chabad communities that held conferences on the subject, and shluchim who were involved in the matter with great fervor,

We, who were privileged to hear dozens of times from the Rebbe that our generation is the generation of the Redemption, and we will merit to pass immediately into a state of eternal life “without any interruption,”

We, who were privileged to hear from the Rebbe about the innovation of this generation, unlike the previous generation with its concept of histalkus – our generation will pass immediately into a state of eternal life, without any interim period of histalkus,

We, who heard from the Rebbe that there is no generation that does not have someone comparable to Moshe Rabbeinu, in a physical body, influencing the whole world,

We, who were privileged for over a year to see the Rebbe sitting and forcefully encouraging the chassidim singing and proclaiming “*Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu V’Rabbeinu Melech HaMoshiach L’olam Va’ed*,”

We, who were privileged to see the Rebbe come out for the worldwide event of Yud Shvat 5753, despite those who suggested to the Rebbe that he shouldn’t go out because media crews from all over the world had come to broadcast his encouragement of “Yechi” live and in color – yet, we were privileged to see how he agreed to come out and encourage the singing of “Yechi,” publicized on all the television networks in the United States and beyond,

— We believe with pure, simple, and actual faith that the Rebbe MH”M had already begun the process of his hisgalus in 5751, as he proclaimed that this is the year that “Melech HaMoshiach has been revealed,”

— We believe with steadfast faith

***Regarding the
Moshiach
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initiates the
campaign.***

that the Rebbe MH”M, leader of the final generation of the exile, is the leader of the first generation of the Redemption, with no interruption in between,

— We believe with pure faith that despite the trials that we see before our physical eyes, the Rebbe MH”M is *chai v’kayam* in a physical body, influencing the world and giving vitality to the entire generation.

**AND FOR THOSE
CHASSIDIM WHO DID
NOT SEE...**

Therefore, specifically because we believe in all this, we understand that we must pass this faith on to the entire Jewish People, even to those

who didn’t merit to see for themselves...

In comparison to the Sages of Israel during the time of the miracle of Purim and the time of the miracle of Chanuka, all the Chabad rabbanim established in the period after Chaf-Zayin Adar Rishon 5752, when the hiding and concealment started, that the chassidim must demand the revelation of the Rebbe, and to awaken and strengthen this faith with the proclamation of “*Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu V’Rabbeinu Melech HaMoshiach L’olam Va’ed.*”

Then, after Gimmel Tammuz 5754, when the hiding and concealment intensified, the elder and leading Chabad rabbanim gathered together and established that despite the hiding and concealment, there should be no titles of *histalkus ch”v* written in reference to the Rebbe.

For as long as we are in this frightful exile, and as long as there are people – our children, our close friends, and even certain people within our own ranks – who merited neither to see nor to hear the prophecy and the announcement of the Redemption, the faith is liable to weaken *ch”v*.

Therefore, based upon the words of the Rambam, in order to inform others how true what the Rebbe promised us is, it was established that we must proclaim and publicize about the sovereignty of the Rebbe, proclaiming again and again the acceptance of his kingship – “*Yechi Adoneinu*” – which awakens and constantly reminds us of the Rebbe’s promises and his prophecy.

**THE MITZVA CAMPAIGNS
AND HE WHO
COMMANDED THEM**

As there is the difference between the 613 mitzvos of the Torah, which were designed for mitzva fulfillment, and the Rabbinical commandments,

which were designed to remind us of the One Who commanded them, so can we say regarding the Rebbe’s holy mitzva campaigns in contrast with the acceptance of the Rebbe’s sovereignty and the proclamation of “*Yechi Adoneinu*”:

When a chassid is busy with the Rebbe’s holy mitvtzaim, his main involvement is in the mitzva itself. For example, when he is putting t’fillin on people, his main objective is to give another Jew the privilege of putting on t’fillin.

(Naturally, after the Rebbe’s clear instruction in the sicha from the 5752 International Shluchim Conference that each mitzva campaign must be instilled with the central point of how it leads to the greeting of Moshiach, we find that even the T’fillin, Mezuzah, Tz’daka, and Chinuch Campaigns must all be instilled with the nekuda of Moshiach. However, in the final analysis, the primary involvement is in the mitzva, not the one who gave the order.)

In contrast, regarding the Moshiach Campaign, even when we only focus on the Redemption, and not on the identity of Moshiach, it is inevitable that the conversation will often turn to Melech HaMoshiach himself, the commander who initiates the campaign.

To be more specific, when we talk about and are involved in the proclamation of “*Yechi Adoneinu*” with a unique “*koch*” (fervor), we become completely engrossed with the campaign’s commander, the Rebbe MH”M himself, strengthening faith in his words and declaring that truth is what the Rebbe promised us.

The amazing fact is that even among the mitzvos of the Torah, there is one mitzva that is relatively similar to the Rabbinical mitzvos – the mitzva of Shabbos. This mitzva is designed to strengthen faith in the Creator of the World, as is written in *Seifer HaChinuch*: “Among the

foundations of this mitzva is that we should be free of our mundane pursuits in honor of the day, in order to establish within our souls the faith in the renewal of the world...for when everyone rests one day a week, and a person asks, 'What is the reason for this rest?' and the reply is that "six days G-d made, etc.," everyone thereby strengthens themselves with true faith."

It is also interesting to note that among the seven Rabbinical mitzvos, the Rambam chose to explain their nature specifically through the mitzvos of Chanuka and Purim, emphasizing that they are designed to strengthen one's faith in the Creator of the World, as the common link between Chanuka and Purim is the concept of the Redemption. And we see clearly that when the Jewish People are in need of the Redemption, we come to the times of the difficult situation of hiding and concealment, when we are in need of the constant reminder of how true what the Rebbe promised us is.

770: THE MAIN VITALITY IN THE CONCEPT OF "YECHI ADONEINU"

Chassidus explains that everything possesses the concept of "world," "year," and "soul." The concept of proclaiming "Yechi" to arouse and strengthen faith must be

in every place, at every time, and in every spiritual situation. However, there are times and situations that are more fitting for a strengthening of faith.

While we see that this applies regarding "world" – that the proclamation of "Yechi" in every location brings about a strengthening and awakening – nevertheless, there is one unique location where the proclamation of "Yechi" causes a double-fold strengthening, namely, the *Daled amos* of Moshiach Tzidkeinu, "Beis Chayeinu" – 770.

This is the place where we heard the Rebbe proclaiming the announcement of the Redemption, where we saw the Rebbe encouraging the singing of "Yechi," the place that arouses and strengthens, more than any other, the pure faith of all Lubavitcher chassidim throughout the world.

People come to 770 to draw vitality in the concepts of Moshiach and the Redemption, and to strengthen themselves in their faith "in [h]im," in Melech HaMoshiach himself, and in the words of the Rebbe during the time of the Rebbe Rayatz, even when we neither see nor hear the Rebbe: it is possible to take from the walls of 770.

Therefore, when people rise up and undermine 770 – as with those who claimed during the court case over the s'farim that the Rebbe's words are irrelevant *r"l*, and that

they are not subject to the instructions and guidance of the Rebbe over the years, and particularly when they don't hide their intention to uproot *ch"v* the pure faith in the Rebbe MH"M flowing in "Beis Chayeinu" – this must bring everyone within the community of chassidim to an increase and strengthening in spiritual matters connected to "Beis Rabbeinu Sh'B'Bavel."

This begins with the study of the kuntres issued by the Rebbe, "Beis Rabbeinu Sh'B'Bavel" to remind everyone of the Rebbe's wondrous sayings in reference to this holy place, the place of the Future Mikdash, where the Beis HaMikdash will first be revealed, returning from there to Yerushalayim.

We learn from the conduct of the Rebbe himself, for after the kuntres was published, he always held it within the pages of his siddur. By the same token, we must be guided at all times by those concepts presented in this kuntres.

Thus, particularly after the kuntres was published in recent years with all the interpretations, each person can learn it extensively and in greater depth, with all the marvelous explanations, footnotes, and cross-references – until the imminent revelation of the Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach, in Beis Rabbeinu Sh'B'Bavel, returning from there to Yerushalayim with the Third Beis HaMikdash. Amen!

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HOW TO SPREAD THE WELLSPRINGS OUTWARD

By Rabbi Yaakov Shmuelevitz, Shliach, Beit Shaan

In order to be successful in “spreading the wellsprings,” you need to be creative to get people’s attention.

One area that nearly every shliach has to deal with is that of publicity and marketing. On a daily basis, the shliach communicates with individuals, gives classes to groups, and may even lecture to large audiences, but in order to attract really big crowds, you have to use the media, radio and television, and the local papers.

In Beit Shaan, throughout most of the years, the editors of the local papers were on good terms with us and they asked me to write a weekly column on Jewish topics. Rabbi Shlomo Halperin wrote it for a while and then I took over. The column quickly became a hit and every week, numerous people read a Chassidishe d’var Torah or story.

Even earlier on, before there were local papers in Beit Shaan, Hashem sent me an educated retiree who was looking for employment. Together we published a weekly paper. This was 17 years ago when there were hardly any computers in Eretz Yisroel and the

editing took entire nights and entailed using a measuring table and a paper cutter (for those of us old enough to remember). Each week we distributed 2000 copies of this paper in which we publicized divrei Torah, shiurim and day camps, stories and Chassidic concepts.

We sent a copy of every edition to the Rebbe and we received encouraging responses. Sometimes we published it in color (in honor of 11 Nissan, etc.) and every resident of Beit Shaan knew about our Chabad house, our programs, and the main thing – the instructions the Rebbe publicized at that time.

BEING CREATIVE

In order to be successful on shlichus and in nearly every field, you have to be creative. You have to attract people’s attention through new ideas without compromising, in any way, Chassidishe principles

and customs or the Rebbe’s horaos.

I’ll give you some examples. As many of you know, the school system in Israel is divided into various categories. The biggest ones are public education (with no religious instruction) and government-religious education. In the government-religious system, there are standards that must be met to serve as rabbis of the schools, and some shluchim have managed to be accepted as rabbis of schools. In this position they are able to be mekarev hundreds and thousands of children and their families and expose them to ideas of Chassidus, the Rebbe’s horaos, and the Besuras HaGeula.

I am a rav in three schools in Beit Shaan and every week I encounter 900 children. They hear me discuss a Chassidic idea, tell a Chassidic story, and most importantly, they have a connection with a rabbi, a connection that is usually ongoing for years to come.

Whenever I travel to the Rebbe, I tell them in advance and they write letters. When I return, I give each one a “surprise from the Rebbe,” a dreidel, a picture with T’fillas HaDerech, etc.

Unfortunately though, there are

also hundreds or thousands of children in public school. What about them? Sometimes, before a holiday perhaps, they invite a rav, but that is not enough. So we came up with an idea. It was at the farbrengen last 3 Tamuz that R' Shmuel Reinitz thought of it, that there should be a "rav of a school" in the public school. We waited until the end of the summer vacation to implement his idea.

R' Reinitz met with the principal of the school and before he could say anything she said to him, "Rabbi Shmuel, I've wanted to speak to you for a while now so that you would come to our school occasionally, visit the classrooms, and enrich the children's knowledge of Jewish ideas. They really need this..."

R' Reinitz agreed, of course, and thus, unofficially, without any formal title and without a salary, we have a rav in a public school. The principal asked him to adopt the school for the rest of the year and we hope that more and more shluchim will do the same.

Another example. A few years ago we made a Chabad day camp, in which we invested a lot of effort and money. The year before that one, we were faced with tough competition and our registration went down, so we decided that this time nobody would be able to compete with us. We advertised a very inexpensive day camp with an airplane excursion. We hired an Arkia plane (setting aside money for this all year) and we had a trip which included a flight from Chaifa to Yerushalayim and back. The boys flew going and the girls on the return trip. The rest traveled by bus.

The entire city talked about this day camp and registration ended within two days. All the children of the city divided into two groups: those registered for the Chabad

camp and those who were not. There were some threats from parents whose children we could not accept, but I don't want to talk about that.

The camp program was nearing the end and we began planning a farewell party. I wanted to make the airplane trip a centerpiece of the event and I wanted each camper to get a Chitas as a gift. We could have simply thanked Arkia, but we wanted to do something more creative.

In the middle of the party, as I was addressing hundreds of children and their parents, I made believe that my cell phone was ringing and accepted the call. Everybody was given to understand that it was the pilot on the phone because he had found a thick, brown book, which said Chitas on it. The pilot said he was coming to Beit Shaan to return the book and I told him that we were in the sports stadium and he should come there.

I had asked a friend from Beit Shaan (who is also a licensed pilot) to put on his jacket with its medals,

and to wear sunglasses, and I told him what to say to the children.

The entire crowd was excited and as we waited for him to come, I shouted: who dared to forget a Chitas on the plane? I told them that a Chitas is something that you have to take with you wherever you go and learn in it every day! Then I asked for quiet because the pilot had arrived.

The pilot slowly went up on stage. Nobody recognized him (two mothers who were his sisters-in-law, said his voice sounded familiar). He took the microphone and said he really enjoyed the flight because Chabad kids are well-behaved. Then he said he was happy to find a very important book that contains Chumash, T'hilim, Tanya, as well as a siddur and HaYom Yom.

In short, instead of my complimenting Chabad and promoting Chitas, the pilot did it for me. As I said, you need to be creative to achieve the goal of spreading Judaism and the Besuras HaGeula.



The newspaper produced by the Chabad house of Beit Shaan