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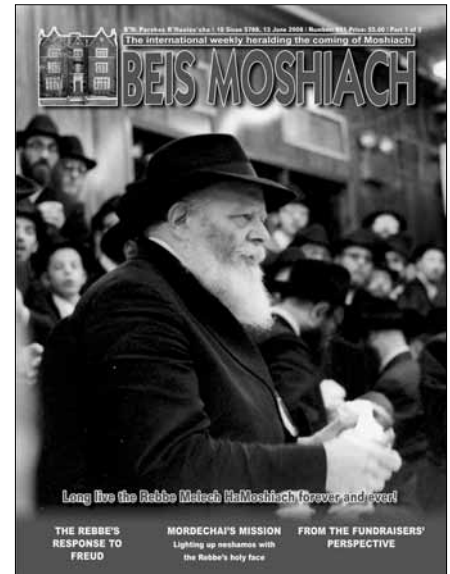
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PROPHECY

Translated and adapted by Dovid Yisroel Ber Kaufmann

Since in the times of Moshiach, all Jews will be as prophets, now, in the days preceding Redemption, we must prepare ourselves by learning what Torah has to say about prophecy.

A major theme of this week's Torah reading is prophecy. In two separate incidents, the Torah indicates the qualifications for a prophet and the uniqueness of Moses. These events serve as a lesson, a type of prophecy, for our own times, for in the days of Moshiach every Jew will perceive G-dliness prophetically. We will all be filled with *daas* – knowledge of G-dliness. Indeed, even the righteous gentile will reach a level of prophecy or Divine Inspiration. Isaiah declares that, "The glory of G-d shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see together that the mouth of G-d has spoken."

Belief in prophecy is a fundamental principle of Judaism, one obviously connected to the principle that Torah is eternal and true. Now it might seem that a belief in prophecy is subordinate to, or a subset of, belief in Torah. Maimonides, however, insists that belief in prophecy is a separate principle, independent of the belief that the Torah is eternal and true. In fact, he lists the two principles involving prophecy before the two principles involving the Torah. The sixth and seventh principles are: I believe with perfect faith that all the words of the prophets are true. I believe with perfect faith that the prophecy of Moses is absolutely true; he was the chief of all prophets, both before and after him. The eighth and ninth principles are: I believe with perfect faith that the entire Torah that we now have is that which was given to Moses. I believe with perfect faith that the Torah will not be changed, and that there will never be another Torah given by G-d.

Obviously, there is a reason why Rambam considers prophecy a principle of belief separate from belief in the immutability of Torah. To answer this, however, we must first look more deeply into the events of the Torah

reading, learning what they teach us about the nature of and qualifications for a prophet.

What two incidents in this week's Torah reading give us an insight into prophecy? The first concerns the bestowal of the Divine spirit upon the seventy elders. When Moses said he could not bear the burden and complaints of the Jewish people alone, G-d said He would appoint the seventy elders as assistants, so to speak. The Torah tells us that when G-d took from the spirit of Moses and put it upon the seventy elders, they prophesied. This transfer of Moses' spirit our Sages compared to lighting one candle from another: the first flame is not diminished by its ignition of a second. However, two of the elders did not join the rest at the

Tent of Meeting. Although they did not want to be selected, nevertheless, since G-d had designated them as two of the elders, they too began to prophesy. When informed that these two, Eldad and Meidad, were prophesying in the camp, Joshua tells Moses, "My lord Moses, make them stop." But Moses replies, "Are you jealous for my sake? Would that all the L-rd's people were prophets, that the L-rd would put His spirit upon them!"

The second incident concerns Moses, Aaron and Miriam. When Miriam discovers that Moses has separated from his wife, she wonders if this is appropriate. After all, she and Aaron are prophets and they have not separated from their spouses. G-d calls the three of them to the Tent of Meeting, and there explains the difference between Moses and all other prophets. First, however, the Torah tells us that Moses was the humblest individual on the face of the earth. Then G-d explains that He communicates with all other prophets in a vision or dream. But "My servant Moses is not so; in all My house is he trusted. Mouth to mouth I speak with him . . ."

In these days just prior to the coming of Moshiach, we must prepare for Redemption. That preparation clearly includes learning what Torah – in the broadest sense – has to say about the transformations that will occur. These transformations include not only an end to exile, a return of the Jewish people to the land of Israel and the rebuilding of the Temple. They include, as we have just seen, an elevation of the people. Divine inspiration, prophecy and knowledge of G-d will be the normal state of affairs. This obligates us to study the conditions of and qualifications for becoming a prophet. This also requires

us to prepare ourselves, doing those things necessary to qualify, to become a candidate for prophecy, as it were.

What, then, are the characteristics of a prophet? What traits must we strengthen and seek to instill within ourselves? These we learn from Moses, as outlined in the incidents above. First and foremost, a prophet must be wise – filled with an awareness of G-d's Wisdom. Prophecy reveals the secret, the inner, the esoteric; a prophet – and in the times of Moshiach, we will all reach the level of prophets – must be able to comprehend the greatness of G-d. Knowing that G-d grants prophetic inspiration, we must attain the knowledge that allows us to receive it. We must know how to sanctify ourselves, separate ourselves from the pursuit of the idle and transitory fashions of the time.

Second, a prophet must have strength – the strength

so much requirements as tools. Without them, a person cannot function at full capacity. Prophecy is knowledge – a special, spiritual knowledge. But our minds are not truly open, we do not comprehend fully, when limited by our financial situation or hindered by our physical condition. Good health and material abundance puts the mind at ease and makes it receptive to the Divine blessings and inspiration.

A prophet – and Redemption will make prophets of us all – has reached the heights of human wisdom, comprehending G-dliness. A prophet has conquered his inclinations, overcoming inner desires and external temptations. A prophet is humble, nullifying his ego, becoming a vehicle for G-dliness. And to facilitate all this, a prophet is complete, materially and physically.

Now that we have identified the characteristics of a prophet, we can understand why Maimonides emphasizes that belief in prophecy is itself a separate principle of faith, different than belief in the immutability of the Torah. We might think that the prophet himself is irrelevant to the process, that he is no more than a loudspeaker, as it were, transmitting G-d's instructions but himself remaining unaffected, as "human" as before. Maimonides therefore emphasizes that prophecy is an experience, a form of knowledge. Through prophecy, G-d brings His presence into the minds of some human beings. They know G-dliness and their minds become G-dly receptacles.

Prophecy occurs in such a way that the prophet becomes so unified with the Word of G-d that it actually

becomes clothed within his mind. Thus, it is a basic principle of Judaism, one of the foundations of our faith, to *know* – to experience, realize and understand – that G-d reveals His secrets, becomes unified with the *daas* – the knowledge of the prophet. G-d's Wisdom becomes enclothed in the mind of the prophet.

Thus belief in prophecy (the sixth principle) is a consequence of our belief in G-d and that we should serve Him alone (Maimonides's fifth principle). From this follows that Moses is the paradigmatic prophet (the seventh principle).

May our study of and preparation for the state of prophecy lead us immediately to the final Redemption, and the day when "the earth will be full of knowledge of G-d as the waters cover the ocean bed."

(Based on Likkutei Sichos 25, pp. 82-91)

Prophecy occurs in such a way that the prophet becomes so unified with the Word of G-d that it actually becomes clothed within his mind. Thus, it is a basic principle of Judaism, one of the foundations of our faith, to know – to experience, realize and understand – that G-d reveals His secrets, becomes unified with the daas – the knowledge of the prophet.

to overcome the temptations of the material world and the enticements of deceptive philosophies. This, too, requires knowledge. We must know our own spiritual weaknesses, which desire most tempts us, which false ideology appears most attractive. We must also know our strengths – that Torah and mitzvos and our Divine soul enable us to conquer, subdue and redirect our *yetzer ha'ra* – our evil inclination.

There are other characteristics which a prophet possesses: As Moses, a prophet must be humble. Regarding the arrogant and the conceited, G-d declares, "I and he cannot dwell in the world together." Humility and self-nullification are the pre-requisites to an open mind, one that perceives G-dliness and receives the inspiration and knowledge He bestows.

Finally, a prophet has health and wealth. These are not

BEIS RIVKA – YOUR 'ZAHIR T'FEI'

By Menachem ben Eliezer

*When R' Berel once asked the Rebbe in yechidus what his 'zahir t'fei' ought to be, what mitzva should he be extra careful in and 'shine' in, the Rebbe told him it was his work in Beis Rivka. "Through this, your home will naturally be illuminated." * We recently lost a Chassid of the previous generation with the passing of Rabbi Yisachar Dov (Berel) Gourevitch a"h. In his youth he studied Torah with mesirus nefesh and in great privation and he sat in jail and suffered greatly. Even when he emigrated to France he did not rest but devoted his life to spreading Torah and Chassidus with mesirus nefesh.*

"For nearly two months before I was released, in one of the first months of 5708, I dreamt that I was in a room with two other men. One man was tall and I knew that one was the Rebbe Rashab and one was his son, the Rebbe Rayatz, and one was getting ready to leave the room. I said, 'Rebbe, you're leaving me?' and

he answered, 'No, I am coming right back.' And that's what happened. He returned right away and when he entered the room, it filled with light. I said out loud in amazement, 'Rebbe, help me,' and then I woke up. I felt that it was foreshadowing my salvation."

This wondrous dream was

dreamt by the Chassid, Rabbi Yisachar Dov (Berel) Gourevitch, who passed away on Shabbos, Erev Pesach, about two months ago. With his passing, we lost a great Chassid of the previous generation, a man of chesed and action. His entire life was one of mesirus nefesh for Torah study and the fulfillment of mitzvos.

He was born in 1915, 93 years ago. His father was R' Sholom and he lived in Zhlobin, Russia. His father sent him to learn in Tomchei T'mimim, but the years of communist decrees were beginning and yeshivos were closed down. For the next ten years he wandered, as did his friends, from one secret yeshiva to the next. Despite the nonstop persecution and danger, R' Berel was educated to Torah, avoda, and Chassidus.

He was 23 years old when he was arrested for the first time along with his friends Shmuel Itkin and Elozor Mogilevsky. It was during the famous arrest of boys the night of 24 Teives 1938 in the underground yeshiva in Berdichev. R' Gourevitch was the one who taught the boys Chassidus and farbrenged with them the night of the arrest. Unlike the boys who were freed in a secret escape, he remained incarcerated for nearly a year and was released the night of Yud-Tes Kislev 1939.

He told of his mesirus nefesh not to become contaminated by forbidden foods, such as chametz on

Pesach, in his touching memoir:

“They retained the three oldest of us, myself included, and we sat in jail for about a year. It was very hard to sleep and sit on a cement floor. We were crowded like fish in a barrel. During interrogations they beat the prisoners mercilessly, though they generally did not strike us young people. The fear was tremendous.

“From the NKVD they transferred us to prison. We suffered from starvation since we ate only a

piece of bread from our daily rations. We exchanged the rest of our food for a day’s ration of sugar. This was the beginning of Shvat. It was a leap year and we began to worry about Pesach, so we didn’t eat the sugar. We saved up our sugar so we would have thirteen pieces for Pesach, having heard that sugar provides a good source of energy.

“We sat there in jail without being interrogated. Apparently that would have gone on for a long time, but we made a mistake due to lack

of experience. This is what happened.

“On Erev Pesach, early in the morning, when they gave out the daily bread, we ate it immediately, before the time it was forbidden, thinking it would be our last bread until after Pesach. Pesach night we recited the Hagada by heart, whatever we knew, and ate some sugar, having in mind that it was in place of matza and the four cups of wine. We had more than a kezayis of maror...

“On the morning of the first day of Pesach, we didn’t take bread because aside from being prohibited to eat it, it is prohibited to have any benefit from it, to exchange it for sugar. We didn’t even touch it as it was muktza. The one in charge of the room returned it to the guard and that was the big mistake, for if we would have told the prisoners that they could have it, there would have been no official notice. Returning the bread day after day was considered a hunger strike.

“This got them mad and they transferred us to the NKVD and the interrogations were very harsh. They were mainly at night and they beat us mercilessly. They would deliberately take people at night from their homes and bring them straight to the interrogation room and would throw them to the ground and beat them, stuffing their mouths with rags so their screams wouldn’t be heard. Then they would take the person down to the cellar where the other prisoners were. Sometimes they would keep the person in the interrogation room a few days without allowing him to sleep.

“One night I was being interrogated (I don’t remember which night of Pesach it was) and in the morning they brought a portion of soup and put it on the table. The chief interrogator wasn’t in the room at the time (sad to say, he was a Jew and he spoke a good Yiddish), just a plain policeman (and he also looked



Jewish) watched me so I wouldn't sleep.

"The interrogator entered the room and saw that the soup was still on the table when usually, prisoners would wolf it down in great hunger. He asked me why I didn't eat it, but I'm sure he knew the reason. I said it was Pesach. He became enraged, I guess because it proved that he hadn't succeeded in changing our views.

"You can understand his fury. Great men of high rank, generals and the like, deferred to him and his fellow interrogators and confessed to 'crimes' that they didn't do just so they would stop beating them and let them live. Every interrogator who succeeded in this was praised and made a career for himself. And here were boys who did not submit

(I did not consider whether it was permissible to eat or not, whether it was pikuach nefesh or not, it was simply obvious that I would not open my mouth and eat chametz, G-d forbid.)

"I don't remember precisely what he said in his anger, but it was something like: Have you still not given in and are you still standing by your foolishness? And he left the room in a hurry and within a few minutes he returned with a rubber truncheon and he said, 'Nu, now will you eat?' When I persisted in my refusal, he began to beat me on my back. With each blow I felt like I was going through hell.

"Then I remember sitting on the floor and he told the policeman to hold me and he took a spoon of soup to force it into my mouth. I coughed and it sprayed his face. He furiously said: I'm going to see whether Berele will also not eat, and if so, he will get it from me...

"Berele was an older man, a Boyaner Chassid, a dear Jew with elevated middos, one of our friends who helped a lot. On Shabbos he would stay to daven after the others left and he would daven at length and sing sweetly like a Lubavitcher Chassid, an oved. After they arrested us, they arrested another six or so important people, among them the distinguished Rabbi Sholom Friedman and Berele too.

"During Pesach, Berele and I sat in the cellar in a room together and the night they took me for interrogation, they took him too, under the supervision of my interrogator, to another room. So the interrogator quickly went from me to Berele. In the meantime, I didn't know how things went with him. Afterwards, they sent me back to the cellar and I found that Berele was there too.

"He saw that I had been beaten, though I couldn't very well see my own back. He picked up my shirt and said: Nu, ah, you got a large

'portion.' I asked him how it had gone with him since I knew that the interrogator was angry. He said that baruch Hashem he had been saved from a beating because when they brought him the bread he took a large piece and then told the guard that he needed to relieve himself and he threw away the bread without the guard realizing it. 'When the interrogator asked the guard whether I was eating what was given to me, he answered that I had eaten so quickly that he didn't even notice when I had done so, and he accepted this answer.'

"I had Divine assistance in that it entailed no more than just sitting in jail and scars on my back."

* * *

R' Berel did not complain about his arrest or the suffering he endured. On the contrary, he took it matter-of-factly, testifying to his Chassidishe hergesh:

"From the chinuch we got and from the influence of the holy Rebbeim as well as the example we were shown when we were young, we the bachurim-talmidim did not feel that we were baalei mesirus nefesh for Torah and Judaism. We simply felt that it couldn't be otherwise. We didn't think that we were suffering to fulfill Torah, but the opposite, that we deserved it, as it says, 'if you waste time from the study of Torah, there are many other ways that your time will be wasted,' and apparently we had not been careful with our time; we were negligent when it came to bittul Torah. We were not satisfied with eating only bread and went to the market to find other food, like salted fish or jam and other 'sins' of that sort.

"We decided that if we would merit to be set free we would be happy with only bread; we would not waste even a minute and we would learn b'simcha. When we returned to jail, I did not even eat the bread and there were usually leftovers. I don't

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Using every free moment to learn

know why I did that. I thought: Why do we need to eat altogether? We have to accustom the body not to eat – until I became very weak and I felt pains in my chest. Breathing was difficult and on one foot I had a black and blue mark which spread and made me walk like a cripple, until I was taken to the prison hospital.

“I suffered so much that I wondered whether I would survive. I was not too worried about it, but I thought about what would happen to my body since those evil ones didn’t respect the dead and probably would take my body with a horse and wagon and dump it in a pit with other bodies.

“In the hospital I asked the doctor to write a “prescription” that I needed butter in addition to the bread. They fulfilled my request and I very slowly regained my strength and the black and blue mark shrank until it disappeared. They held us until Kislev and took us to the NKVD.

“During this time the situation had changed slightly for the better and those who were not sent to

Siberia and remained alive were released. My two friends were released on 10 Kislev (an auspicious day) and they kept me until 18 Kislev in the afternoon. I hurried to R’ Levi Yitzchok of Berdichev’s Shul and found R’ Michele, a Ruzhiner Chassid, and my first request was to put on t’fillin.

“That day I went to the post office and sent a telegram to Moscow to the home of R’ Berel Kabilaker (Levertov) and wrote that I had left the ‘hospital’ and he knew what that meant.

“Afterwards I found out that he received my telegram the night of Yud-Tes Kislev, the Chag HaGeula, and there was a farbrengen going on in his house with the distinguished Chassidim of Moscow, including R’ Nissan Nemenov. This added to their simcha for it was a sign that there would be a Geula for more of the Anash prisoners who had been arrested earlier.”

R’ Gourevitch’s life behind the Iron Curtain was miserable with constant persecution for the Torah he learned and taught with great devotion. At every opportunity the

evil ones found reasons to go after him.

It was a few weeks before the outbreak of war between Russia and Germany. One day, as he walked down the street in Moscow, a man in civilian clothes approached him, took out a paper that proved he was an NKVD agent and told him to enter a car. He was taken directly to the main NKVD building, where he was held for several days for questioning.

The NKVD interrogators wanted him to tell them what he knew about the underground yeshivos and where certain boys were. They were mainly looking for Moshe and Sholom Levertov.

“I told them that I knew nothing and in the end, when they released me, they said it was on condition that I continue to go to shul and attend kiddushim and farbrengens and then tell them what I knew.”

R’ Berel was in a tight spot. He knew plenty about Anash that the NKVD would want to know, but of course he did not want to inform on anyone. He was afraid to flee from Moscow for that would only intensify the danger for those being sought.

“I hoped that I would stand strong and not reveal anything, even if by keeping quiet I would be in danger myself.”

After much deliberation he told Anash that they must be exceedingly careful because the police knew plenty about them. The distinguished members of Anash understood what this meant and they ordered R’ Berel to leave Moscow.

“Although this was against my position and what I thought was right, I accepted their order and went to my hometown of Zhlobin.”

There too it wasn’t quiet for long. He heard that someone had come to town on a mission for the NKVD who had inquired about him. R’ Berel immediately left for

Bobruisk to his cousin. A few weeks later the war between Russia and Germany began and all was chaotic.

During World War II his luck did not improve and he was drafted into the Red Army. This entailed great danger, as millions of soldiers were sent to the frontlines and most of them died or were severely wounded. For a period of time he served in one of the troops that trained to go to the front but he was wounded in one of the battles and miraculously survived.

At the end of the war, the military said he had to serve another two years, but thanks to efforts on the part of Chassidim, he managed to obtain false documents that exempted him from continuing his service in the army.

R' Gourevitch moved to Samarkand, where many Lubavitchers lived at that time. He married Chana Posner on Chamisha-Asar B'Av 1946. About half a year later, on 9 Kislev, they left with a group of Chassidim to cross the border with forged papers. Tragically, R' Berel was removed from the train at the Polish border. He had been promised that at the border he would get his papers but the one who was supposed to provide them did not appear. He was accused of attempting to flee Russia. The scene was heartbreaking as the newly wedded couple were forced to part.

"It was the middle of the night and freezing cold. All hearts beat in silent fear over what his lot would be," related the Chassid, R' Dovid Chein of Kfar Chabad. "I remember that before the train left, I stood in the doorway of the compartment and R' Berel cried out to me, 'Dovid, do something, they're leaving me here!' My heart broke, but what could I do? He had just gotten married and people feared that his wife would remain an aguna the rest of her life."

His poor wife had to decide

whether to leave Russia and leave her husband or retrace her steps and hope for the best. The Chabad rabbanim at the time who were on the train wanted to write a conditional divorce for them. In the end, she went to Poland, but wanted to return to Russia. She cancelled her plans when the Rebbe Rayatz said, "Better he should go to her than she should go to him."

R' Berel was taken to jail. He remembered his previous incarceration and was very fearful. "Once I fell into their hands I knew they would accuse me of two things: fleeing the army and the NKVD. I knew they had been searching for me quite a bit. I was terrified and mainly confused as I wondered what approach to take in the interrogations and how to answer their questions so they wouldn't know it was me."

R' Berel sat in jail for many days until he was sentenced to two years of hard labor in a prison camp. The legendary Mumme Sara found out where he was and she, with her cleverness and courage, worked diligently to help him. She sent him packages of food and did all she could to postpone his exile and forced labor. For this purpose she bribed officials with huge amounts of money and so he was sent to a labor camp in Lemberg under much better conditions. Not only that but she was granted permission to visit him and was able to talk to him and bolster his spirits.

R' Berel told a touching story about his mesirus nefesh and love for Chassidim in his memoir:

"Mrs. Kozliner, the wife of R' Chaim Zalman Kozliner, was also in the camp. She had been sentenced to ten years and since she was greatly downcast by this I would always console her that Hashem would help. She often told me that before she met me she had dreamt

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that she was talking to a man with a black beard who had been sentenced to ten years and he consoled her, saying she wouldn't be there for ten years.

"Mumme Sara gave me kosher food from time to time and sometimes she even obtained permission to visit. At one of these meetings she asked me – since there was an opportunity to get one of us released through bribery, by writing that the prisoner was sick and could not do forced labor and the prisoner would be released early, what did I think – should I be released or Mrs. Kozliner?

"I don't remember exactly how she asked the question, but I understood that it was up to me who would be released first (and later I found out that the money she had was mostly intended for me). I told her that since Mrs. Kozliner was sentenced to a much longer sentence, of course she should go first. Mumme Sara and her partners began to work on her behalf and some time later she was released.

"I looked out for her even though it adversely affected me but it actually worked out not only for her but mainly for me too. As I said, I

was separated from the entire family, from my wife, my mother, my brother, and from Anash by an iron barrier, and as far as I knew, the separation would be forever. My wife did not see it that way and she wanted to return to Russia in the hopes of finding me, but since this was dangerous it was decided between our family and Anash, who dealt with this question, to ask the question of the Rebbe Rayatz.

“Later on, Rabbi A.G., the one who brought in all the letters and questions to the Rebbe and then took out the responses, said that when he brought in this question the Rebbe said, ‘better he should come here than for her to return there.’

“Even though this seemed impossible, it happened. After I was there for about a year and a half, Poland made an agreement with Russia that Polish citizens in Russian jails for various crimes would be returned to Poland. The Polish government would release them upon their return.

“Since I was considered a Polish citizen, I was included. If not for the Rebbe Rayatz’s reply, my wife would have tried to return to Russia and it is very likely that she would have been caught. As for me, if they had tried to release me before Mrs. Kozliner, I would have remained in Russia because they only sent Polish prisoners to Poland and not prisoners who had been released.”

The dream mentioned at the beginning of the article occurred shortly before R’ Berel left Russia, and after difficulties and wandering he arrived in France. One of the first visits he paid was to the yeshiva in Brunoy, “for I always felt that my survival was only in the merit of Tomchei T’mimim.”

R’ Berel met R’ Nissan Nemenov at the yeshiva as well as the mashpia, R’ Shlomo Chaim Kesselman.

“R’ Nissan spoke to me about this and that and I remember that one of the main questions he asked

me was whether I had suffered a lot from the criminals, the thieves and murderers who are usually in prisoner camps. I sensed that he himself had suffered a lot from them when he was in the prisoner camp in the frigid Russian north.

R’ Berel remembered this astonishing line:

“I remember that after the first conversations I had, I stood in the middle of the large room where they learned and R’ Shlomo Chaim stood in the northwest corner and looked at me. Then he began walking towards me and when he passed by, he said in my ear, ‘G-dliness is visibly apparent on you.’”

From there he went to Paris, where the Chabad Chassidim lived, and he reunited with his wife. At first he thought that France would be his temporary dwelling until he was told where to live, but he remained in France and began spreading Torah and Chassidus.

A short while later he was offered the position of running Beis Rivka in the city of Yerres. In those days it was a completely new concept to

educate girls to Torah study and hiskashrus to the Rebbe. He received the Rebbe’s consent and blessing in 1953:

B”H

26 Tamuz 5713

Brooklyn

... R’ Yisachar Dov, shalom u’v’racha!

I was pleased to receive your letter dated the Chag HaGeula, where you write about your involvement in the Rebbe, my father-in-law’s mosad, Beis Rivka, which is mekarev the hearts of Jewish girls to our Father in heaven. May Hashem grant you success to fulfill your role in this mosad in the proper way.

I enjoyed reading in your letter that you are arranging to accept girls of Anash as well as those from the city for the summer vacation. There is room for strong and great hope that there will be fruits and fruits of fruits even after the vacation. This is in addition to what the Alter Rebbe wrote in *Tanya* (chapter 25) – that this unification up above is eternal, but



Rabbi Gourevitch meeting his brother, R’ Yitzchok

down below it falls under the limitations of time and is only for that moment – see there. And great is the merit of your involvement in this to draw for you increased blessing and success in your personal matters too.

With blessing for success, I await good news.

From that point on, throughout the years, R' Berel received many instructions and much guidance from the Rebbe regarding his work in chinuch. R' Yisachar Dov and his wife devoted themselves to raising the girls, materially and spiritually. They married them off. There are dozens of families that they were involved with in preparing for the wedding, at the wedding, as well as afterwards, and kept up contact until the end.

“Zeide – on shlichus of the Rebbe for sixty years – educated thousands of girls in the holy mosad Beis Rivka of France, as a loving and concerned father, both pleasantly and firmly,” is what his son-in-law, Rabbi Yaakov Biederman, shliach in Vienna, wrote. “He was a role model for uncompromising truth. His humble and modest abode which barely changed in fifty years, was not only the home of his wife and children but also a refuge for dozens of refugee girls. There they found a warm and loving place and grew up to what they are today, mothers and grandmothers who established many kosher homes throughout the Diaspora.”

When R' Berel once asked the Rebbe in yechidus what his ‘*zahir t’fei*’ ought to be, what mitzva should he be extra careful in and ‘shine’ in, the Rebbe told him it was his work in Beis Rivka. “Through this, your home will naturally be illuminated.” Indeed, this is what he did all his life, spreading Torah and chinuch of girls in Beis Rivka. It was only when he turned 85 that he reduced his hours somewhat, but he still worked.

Despite his intensive workload, he was a Chassid of Torah study. He used every free moment for learning. Even when he returned home late at night he would keep his daily study schedule. In the morning he regularly learned Chassidus before davening. Every day, after davening, he learned Mishnayos. If he had to travel and he didn’t have the volume with him, he would make photocopies.

This elderly Chassid, who sat in jail for the “crime” of learning Torah in his youth, did not waste a minute,



Rabbi Gourevitch speaking at the Moshiach Congress

instead dedicating all his time to learning. Every day he learned Gemara and he had a shiur in *Shulchan Aruch Admur HaZaken* in which he was proficient (he once told his son when the latter was a boy that he had already gone through the *Shulchan Aruch* four times).

He would always have a Gemara or some volume whether at home or in his office or on the bus. “I can see him in my mind’s eye standing in the yard of his house waiting for someone to come to pick him up

and learning Gemara in the meantime,” said R’ Biederman.

“His learning was with such clarity that he would offer an explanation that would preempt any debate. As soon as the Rebbe said to learn Rambam daily, he didn’t budge without a tattered and well-used Mishna Torah in his hand. In his later years he learned a lot of Mishnayos and until the day before he died he said a lot of T’hillim, reciting the entire book two or three times daily. There were no idle moments; his lips were constantly moving.”

R’ Gourevitch was a model of a Chassid of a previous generation, a remnant of a generation of Chassidim who kept Torah and mitzvos secretly in Soviet Russia. There wasn’t a shred of *chitzonius* about him. He did all his great work as a matter of course, with great humility and no self congratulation. He served Hashem and feared Him, without any concern for himself. He was a Chassid. He did not know about fakery or exaggeration. He did not talk about truth; he was a walking example of truth. He was a straight person, wholehearted in his deeds. He did not speak too much; he spoke to the point.

He often walked from Yerres to Brunoy, many kilometers, in order to daven with the tzibbur. He would wake up at five in the morning and would immerse in the mikva despite his weakness and advanced age. On the last Shabbos of his life, Erev Pesach, he immersed twice, before Shacharis and before Yom Tov. While there in the mikva he slipped and the next day he returned his soul to his Maker.

His funeral passed by the yeshiva in Brunoy. His aron was placed in Beis Rivka, the mosad he ran, and then he was taken to Kfar Chabad and from there to Har HaZeisim in Yerushalayim, where he was buried.

THE REBBE'S RESPONSE TO FREUD

By Rabbi Yosef Karasik, Rav – Bat Chefer, Emek Chefer

*Many people are under the impression that Chassidus is all about emotion, dancing, smiles, and the like, but that's not what Chassidus is – not at all. * A fascinating look at the parsha in light of the Midrash, Kabbala, and Chassidus Chabad.*

THE REBBE RASHAB MEETS DR. FREUD

In the winter of 5663/1903, the Rebbe Rashab's health deteriorated and he felt a strong tremor in his hands. When his doctors despaired of healing him, he went to Vienna to a well known neurologist by the name of Professor Sigmund Freud.

Dr. Freud, who had only just begun his work in psychology and psychoanalysis, was very curious to meet the big rabbi, who founded Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim and developed the teachings of Chassidus into a comprehensive spiritual/practical educational system. At their meeting, a fascinating conversation ensued. We don't know much about what they discussed but we have the following from the Rebbe Rayatz (as printed in *Likkutei Dibburim* vol. 1,110):

Dr. Freud asked the Rebbe: What is Chassidus?

The Rebbe answered: Chassidus is about the mind enabling the heart to understand what it wants and about the heart bringing life into what the mind understands."

Dr. Freud asked: How do you do that when the mind and heart are two separate continents separated by a great ocean?

The Rebbe answered: The work lies in building a bridge between these two continents or at least suspending electrical and phone lines so that the light in the brain reaches the heart. (And the Rebbe added: Based on careful examination, I say that Chassidim, by birth, have the necessary talents for this type of work.)

Let us take a look at the Rebbe's answers, which are actually a summary of what

Chassidus is about. Many people are under the impression that Chassidus is all about emotion, dancing, smiles and hopping around, but that's not what Chassidus is – not at all. Chassidus is about knowledge, reason, and intelligence, but it doesn't remain there, in the intellect; it continues on to the heart. Nevertheless, the foundation is understanding.

The heart is needed to bring all the understanding of the mind to life, to action, as the Rebbe Rashab put it: To suspend a line so that the light in the mind reaches the heart. What does that mean and how is it done?

On the one hand, the mind and heart are two very different organs. On the other hand, since "the nefesh of man is one," as the Rambam writes, there is a connection between them. The way to create this mutual cooperation and to suspend "electrical and telephone wires" between them is through meditation, which in turn, leads to emotions in the heart.

LIGHTING THE MENORA IN THE MIKDASH

The Beis HaMikdash and its vessels are compared to the body of man. The Menora, which was lit in the Mikdash, is like the

brain and the intellect in one's head, which guides a person in life. The Altar, upon which fire burns and the sacrifices are brought, is like the heart, where feelings, warmth, and enthusiasm are to be found.

Just as man's avoda is to connect mind and heart, so too the Torah commanded that the Menora inside the Mikdash be connected to the copper Altar

that was in the courtyard of the Mikdash. This was done by taking fire from the Altar to light the Menora.

The obligation to take fire from the Altar is absolute and unchanging, to the point that if there was no fire on the Altar, then the Menora is not to be lit; it cannot be lit with fire from anywhere else. From this we see how important the connection

between the emotions and the mind is. A person should not use his emotions of love or fear unless they are guided by the mind and reason.

We learn that the Menora is lit from fire on the Altar from the verse, "a constant fire should burn on the Altar" in VaYikra 6:6. The "constant fire" refers to the light of the Menora, which is called "constant" (as it says "*ner tamid*") and this should "be burned" from fire on the Altar.

Although the verse does not actually mention the Menora, but only the Altar, and the simple meaning of the verse is that the fire on the Altar should burn constantly and not be extinguished, Chazal teach that the verse also refers to the Menora. Twice the verse mentions that a fire should burn constantly: 1) "a constant fire" refers to the Menora, and 2) "it should not be extinguished" refers to the Altar.

Yet the light of the Menora did not burn constantly, for the lights were lit only once a day (according to some opinions) and they were extinguished a few hours after they were lit and remained extinguished until the

Chassidus is about the mind enabling the heart to understand what it wants and about the heart bringing life into what the mind understands.



next day. There were many hours when the Menora was not lit, so what is meant by a “constant fire”?

The word “constant” has two meanings: 1) continuous, without a break and, 2) with regularity, and even though it stops from time to time, it is called “constant” because it is done on a regular basis. For example, something that is done every year on a certain date is called a constant practice insofar as it has a set date each year, even though it is not done continuously year round.

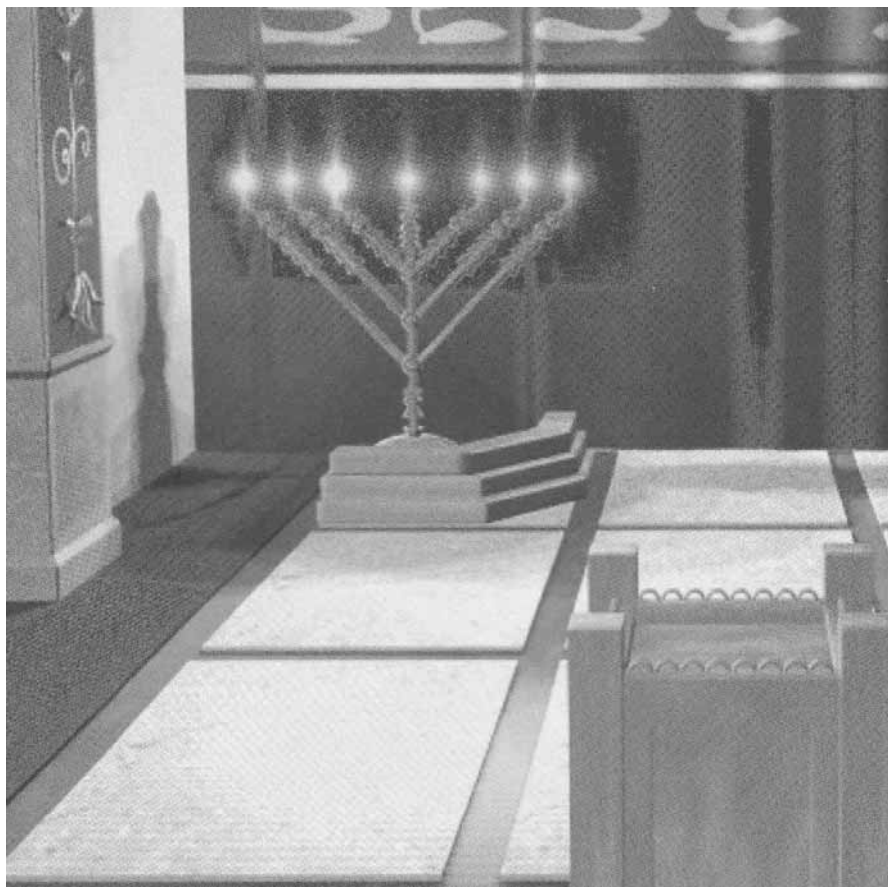
These two definitions of “*tamid*” (constant) apply to the Menora and the Altar: A constant fire burned without stop on the Altar, and the Menora was lit regularly although it did not burn all the time.

Now we can understand how we learn from the words “a constant fire” that the Menora had to be lit from the fire on the Altar: “A constant fire” – the fire that regularly lights the Menora – “shall burn” – shall be ignited from the fire on the Altar.

The Menora represents the brain, which learns the light of Torah, and the Copper Altar represents the emotions of the heart and serving G-d with love and fear. The fire of the Menora needs to be taken from the fire of the Altar because Torah study has to be done with love and fear of Hashem. The mind must be joined with the heart. As the Rebbe Rashab put it, the two continents, the mind and heart, must be bridged.

CONNECTING THE MEN OF TORAH WITH THE NATION

The golden Menora which illuminated the Mikdash,



symbolizes the tzaddikim and men of Torah, who are completely involved in Torah study. The Altar in the yard outside the Mikdash, represents the simple people, who are outside the world of Torah and are involved in worldly matters.

There is a natural rift between the two, between those who are fully immersed in the beis midrash and those who spend most of their time outside the beis midrash. The Torah tells us that they must be connected. There must be a bond between the men of Torah, who are compared to the Menora, and the men of the world, who are compared to the Altar.

This connection is helpful not only for those outside the beis midrash (who are affected by the light of the Torah) but also for those within the beis midrash,

because it is possible that those involved in Torah and avodas Hashem with their intellects do so without enthusiasm (i.e., due to their constant involvement with Torah, they lack the excitement and freshness of something new).

When those who spend most of their time on material things enter the beis midrash to spend some time learning, they are enthusiastic and they have an effect on those b'nei Torah who are always there, infusing them with excitement for Torah and t'filla. Just as the Menora is lit with fire from the Altar, in order for the b'nei Torah to have a fire of love and fear for Hashem they need to connect with simple people. Those who are fervent in their service of Hashem have an impact on the g'dolei ha'Torah.

***In Yemos
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every Jew – i.e.,
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THE CONNECTION IN YEMOS HA'MOSHIACH

The secret of Geula lies in the connection between the understanding of the mind with the emotions of the heart. The way Hashem created man is that he can control his emotions, as the Alter Rebbe says in *Tanya* chapter 12, “the mind rules the heart from its birth and the nature of its formation.” Man can control his passions with his intellect, so that when he understands that something is good, he can immediately arouse love in his heart for that thing, and when he understands that something is bad, he can immediately arouse hatred for it.

However, in galus, we’ve gotten confused and a person can understand that sins and passion for things of this world are evil and nevertheless, he can feel love and pleasure for these forbidden things. Likewise, he can

understand that Torah and mitzvos are utter goodness and perfection, and he can still not take pleasure in them. This is because there is a break in the connection between mind and heart.

In Yemos HaMoshiach, the mind will fully rule the heart. At that point, we will all feel the fiery connection between the Menora and the Altar, and the Menora within every Jew – i.e., his mind – will connect with his heart.

In the future, the knowledge that Torah and mitzvos are Truth and goodness, will arouse love and enormous yearning within every Jew to avodas Hashem, and the knowledge that sins are against G-d’s will, will arouse a disgust and hatred for these things. With the true and complete Redemption, may it be now!

*Sources: Likkutei Sichos vol. 17, p. 50 ff.
Thanks to Elchanan Nir.*

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THE ESCAPE FROM RUSSIA

Prepared for publication by Avrohom Reinitz

*R' Hillel Zaltzman tells of his personal "Exodus" from Soviet Russia. * Part 1*

Much has been written about the hardships Jews experienced in the former Soviet Union and many stories describe attempts to escape from behind the Iron Curtain. Many Lubavitcher families have their personal memoirs about their exodus, but most of Anash left Russia in 1946-7 via Poland. They assumed fictitious marriages with Polish citizens and used the agreement signed after the war between Russia and Poland which allowed Polish citizens to return to their country.

For a short time, the government turned a blind eye, enabling Chassidim to leave the country, but in the winter of 5707 the group of Chassidim that was on its way to Poland was arrested and the government sought the organizers of the escape. Whoever remained free during those dark days rejoiced over not being arrested, on the one hand, but on the other hand, Jewish life became harder with every passing day. During the war, the government was concentrating on the front and this made it possible for life behind the lines to carry on without undue supervision, but after the war they began dogging the steps of religious Jews.

In the previous installment I described the terrible situation that peaked with the Doctors' Plot. As I recounted at length, after Stalin died and Khrushchev took over, most of the Jews who had been imprisoned in 1937, 1946, and 1953 were released, but nobody believed that there was a real change in attitude towards the Jews. The persecution continued under Khrushchev and they continued to check the ledgers in apartment buildings.

In the Soviet Union, the law was that every building had to have a ledger with information about all the tenants – when they moved in, the names of all family members, and other details. Nobody could stay in an apartment more than 24 hours without record in the ledger. That is how the government knew of every move every citizen made.

We once asked one of the officials who came to check the ledger, "What are you checking for?" and he said, "We have to know how you breathe."

OBTAINING EXIT VISAS

In 1956, my uncle R' Boruch Duchman received a letter from his brother, R' Yisroel Noach, who lived in Eretz Yisroel, offering to

send him an invitation to come to Eretz Yisroel. In Russia of those days, which was locked behind the Iron Curtain, you couldn't just ask for permission to leave the country. Only someone who received an invitation from abroad from a relative could ask to leave for the purpose of reuniting the family. Even after receiving this invitation you usually didn't get permission to leave, but there was a slim chance that your request would be approved.

My Aunt Rosa a"h was very afraid of the Russian authorities. When she saw a policeman she would cross the street, saying: Why should I pass by him? Who knows what he is planning on doing? No wonder then that when she saw the letter from Eretz Yisroel, she was terrified even before she opened it. A letter from Eretz Yisroel meant you had a connection with the West and in those days it was easy to accuse the recipient of the letter from abroad of spying and other serious crimes.

After my uncle opened the letter and read his brother's offer, my aunt said it wasn't worth dealing with the government. "What's so bad here? We are old people and nobody bothers us. Aside from that, other than your brother, all of my family is here. Why should I leave them all?"

My uncle maintained: It's twenty years now since I've heard from my brother and even now, I didn't write to him and ask him to send me an invitation. If he offered to do this and managed to locate us, it is a sign that Divine Providence is directing us to submit a request to leave. Aside from that, most of our family does not have relatives in Eretz Yisroel and they have no hope of leaving here. If we are able to leave, we will be able to send invitations to the entire family and with Hashem's



**R' Moshiach Chudaitov and
Hillel Zaltzman in Samarkand**

help we will be reunited in Eretz Yisroel.”

They agreed to accept the invitation from R' Yisroel Noach. A few months later, my uncle received an official invitation from his brother to come to Eretz Yisroel. At that time, it was very rare to receive an invitation from Eretz Yisroel, and my uncle was one of the few fortunate ones who could start the emigration process.

The emigration process was not

at all simple. Half a year went by until they finished preparing the documents and at the end of 1957 they submitted the documents to OVIR, the emigration office which was a branch of the KGB.

When they returned home, they heard on the radio that England, France, and Israel had jointly attacked Egypt. That was the beginning of the Sinai War. Since the Soviet Union was an ally of Egypt, the Soviet media began an

anti-Semitic, anti-Zionist propaganda campaign.

My uncle, and especially my aunt, regretted having submitted the documents. With the threat of Russia entering the war, they concluded that they had submitted their request at the worst possible time. If they had waited one more day, or even a few hours, and had heard about the outbreak of war, they certainly would not have made their request and this calamity

would not have befallen them. But now, after they had submitted their request, what were they to do?

Nevertheless, despite the tension due to the war, six months later, my aunt and uncle received their exit visas. Back then, when a Jew received an exit visa, the news spread like wildfire.

Since we hadn't heard about other Jews receiving exit visas, it is a reasonable assumption that in our area they were the only fortunate ones who were able to leave the country that year. The process of obtaining passports took another year. That was normal for those days, and in 1957 they left for Eretz Yisroel.

A FICTITIOUS MARRIAGE – A FAILED ATTEMPT

In 1957 Wladyslaw Gomulka became the premier of Poland. He proposed separating Poland from the Soviet Union. He organized a national convention for communist parties in Warsaw and invited representatives from some communist countries. He did not invite Russia.

Khrushchev, who did not like this new idea, decided to attend the convention even though he was not invited. When he and his entourage entered the hall, Gomulka left the dais, approached Khrushchev, and ordered him to leave immediately. Khrushchev said that this would cost him dearly and he would regret it.

It is not known precisely what took place behind closed doors, but after some discussion, Khrushchev entered the hall. In exchange, Khrushchev gave Gomulka a humanitarian concession and signed an agreement with Poland stating that any Polish citizens who had not left in 1946-7 could present a request to leave if they

It's twenty years now since I've heard from my brother and even now, I didn't write to him and ask him to send me an invitation. If he offered to do this and managed to locate us, it is a sign that Divine Providence is directing us to submit a request to leave.

explained why they hadn't taken the opportunity to leave after the war.

Anash rejoiced over this new opportunity to leave Russia but only a few managed to take advantage of it and leave for Poland. I was a young bachur and I didn't see a future for religious life in Russia. I always yearned to leave and when I heard about this agreement between Russia and Poland, I decided to take advantage of the opportunity.

In our neighborhood there lived a Jewish woman by the name of Luba Gubanda who did not look Russian. She spoke Yiddish with a Polish accent and I thought she might be Polish. I checked it out and yes, she was a former Polish citizen.

After I spoke to her, I learned that she had a good reason why she didn't leave Russia in 1946. She had an only daughter by the name of Genia and my idea was to have the government register me as married to Genia and then to submit a request for the entire family to leave for Poland.

When I brought up the idea to her and I said that I would pay her if she agreed, she gave her general agreement but said the problem was that her daughter was a member of the Komsomolsk, communist youth group. She

certainly wouldn't agree to leave Mother Russia. She didn't even agree to discuss it with her daughter lest her daughter's loyalty to the party supersede her family loyalties and she would snitch to the government. That was life in Russia. There were many instances in which children tattled on their parents to the KGB.

Having no other choice, I undertook the difficult and dangerous task of speaking to the girl directly. You can understand that if her mother was nervous that she would inform on her that I was apprehensive about talking to her, but I decided to take the risk. Hashem put the right words into my mouth and I managed to convince her. There was one little problem in that she was only 16, and according to law, you could not marry before 18. I managed to get her a false identity card saying she was 18.

Everything went according to plan but the mother was a chatterbox and she told people that Hillel Zaltzman was marrying her daughter and then they were all going to Poland. Of course she didn't tell anyone that this was a fictitious marriage but since she and her daughter were not religious, it was obvious. Word spread along with an explanation: What do you think – Hillel



Goodbye farbrengen for R' Boruch Duchman. From right to left: Berel Zaltzman, R' Boruch Duchman, Hillel Zaltzman, Dovid Mishulovin, Eli Mishulovin, Michoel Mishulovin, Avrohom Zaltzman

Zaltzman is marrying into a secular family! Obviously this is being done only in order to leave Russia!

You can imagine how scared my father and our entire family were when the news spread in the Jewish section of Samarkand. I canceled the deal before we would get caught.

A SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE IN KULASHI

The opportunity was lost and I remained behind the Iron Curtain. In 1961 we got an official invitation from Eretz Yisroel. We debated about whether to submit a request to leave. Very few people were actually allowed to go and the majority, those who were turned down, suffered afterwards. Some of them were called for interrogations in the offices of the KGB and many were fired from their jobs.

At that time, R' Mordechai Gorodetzky, who lived in Tashkent, paid us a visit in Samarkand. My brother-in-law, R' Eli Mishulovin a"h, spoke to him about the situation in Tashkent and asked him as though "by the way" (since he didn't want him to know we had gotten a visa from Eretz Yisroel): If you received a visa from Eretz Yisroel, would you submit a

request to leave?

R' Mordechai said he would. To a certain extent, this spurred us on to begin preparing our documents.

The spiritual situation was difficult in many respects, especially regarding chinuch. It was almost impossible to keep the children home and not send them to public school. Whoever didn't send their children to public school, where they would be indoctrinated to atheism and communism, feared his children would be taken away and placed in special schools. Obviously, under the circumstances, we wanted to get out of Russia as soon as possible.

The process of taking care of the documents took half a year and to our great disappointment, we were turned down. We had the right to contest the decision and we appealed directly to Uri Andropov, chairman of the KGB (who later became the president). A few more months went by until we received our answer which was No.

Since the visa we had received from Eretz Yisroel was valid for only one year, we had to start the process all over in order to try again. Once again, the process took a year and once again, we were turned down.

The years went by as we waited for the day when we could leave.

Although the red tape dragged on, we still lived as though we might be able to leave soon. Why buy furniture – an oven, refrigerator, couch, and other important household items – when we might get a positive answer in another few months? Our hope was always renewed as we thought, maybe *this* time we would be allowed to leave.

In the Soviet Union at that time, when a Lubavitcher met a fellow Chassid and wanted to know what was going on, they asked: How long have you been going already? In other words, how many years have you been submitting documents and been refused? I, for example, began the process in 1957 and I left in Elul of 1971!

* * *

We heard a rumor that in Kulashi in Georgia, the Jews got along with the emigration authorities and in exchange for a bribe, you could get a visa. I went to check this out and if the rumor proved to be true, the rest of the family would follow me in order to arrange visas. Uprooting our family from Samarkand and settling in a new place would be difficult, not only physically but politically risky, but what do you not do in order to leave Russia?

I went to Kulashi and was astonished to find a large Jewish community that lived as though they weren't under communist rule. I heard that there were 2000 people in the town, most of them Jewish and religiously observant. I arrived there on a Friday and I saw dozens of Jewish women going to the shochet, Chacham Yitzchok, for him to shecht their chickens for Shabbos.

HOW WE OBTAINED LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION FROM WORK

Preparing the documentation and presenting them to OVIR was a complicated process that took about half a year to execute. Some of the required papers had to be forged and some were simply difficult to obtain. One of the hardest documents to obtain was a letter of recommendation from work, where the manager of the factory had to testify that his employee was a decent individual and the factory recommended that he be allowed to leave Russia since the factory would not be harmed by his leaving.

If someone asked for this letter directly, it was likely that he would either be refused outright or fired. Managers were afraid that if they gave this letter of recommendation, they were likely to pay dearly for doing so. Many who submitted the paperwork lost their jobs and had to find menial jobs afterwards like being a watchman or janitor.

I ran my own business since I was twenty. It wasn't actually my own because in Russia everything belonged to the government. I went to a big factory that had various departments for different types of work, and I offered to open a department to design patterns for clothing. Since they didn't have space for another department, I offered to find a place and to hire workers and they would take financial responsibility for the new department. They agreed and that is what I did. I rented a building far away and took some Lubavitchers and taught them the work and we were considered employees of the big factory.

On another occasion I will write about the department I ran, about being able to help Anash in various ways thanks to this concern and about the KGB's raid on our department. At this point, I will only tell how I obtained letters of recommendation from the manager of the main factory.

In the department I ran, we designed patterns

for clothing based on orders we received from clothing factories all over Russia. I sent letters to hundreds of factories on the official stationery of the main factory and offered our services. Of course, the manager of the main factory had to sign these letters.

When I wanted to give a letter of recommendation to one of the workers, which stated that the factory approved of his request to

emigrate, I would wait until a pile of hundreds of letters had accumulated that needed the manager's signature. I prepared one sheet or a few papers, on the official stationery of the factory, on which I wrote, in the name of the manager, that he allowed the employee to present a request to emigrate and recommended him, etc. I put this paper within the pile of papers, after several dozen letters.

When the manager got this pile of papers, he looked at the first one and signed it, he looked at the second one and signed it, and so on, for several letters until he got tired and began signing sheet after sheet without examining them. So when he got up to the page that I had stuck within the pile, he signed it without knowing what he was signing.

After he finished signing them all and returned the pile of letters, I sighed with relief. I immediately put all the letters into my briefcase and quickly left his office.

I cannot describe to you how tense I was each time I gave him

a pile of letters and within them was a letter or several letters for his recommendation. If I had been caught I would have been severely censured and maybe fired, along with all my employees, but Hashem helped and I was able to arrange these letters for myself and for all the Lubavitchers who were registered as employees in the department I ran.

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This sight, of an older, bearded Jew wearing a long garment, moved me very much. In Samarkand this was dangerous, but in Kulashi it was done openly and fearlessly.

What I saw on Friday was nothing compared to the moving sight I saw Friday night in the big shul. The place was crowded with old and young and even children. Many of them couldn't get inside and had to stand outside!

I visited many places in Russia but had never seen young people in shul, and I certainly hadn't seen children. Hundreds of Jews

speak. He was a young rav in his thirties at the time and an excellent speaker. People flocked to hear him. The shul was full and Chacham Refael enthusiastically lectured on Torah, Midrash, and Agada for more than two hours.

I had a tremendous spiritual experience in Kulashi that made a deep impression on me, but as far as the purpose of my trip, I did not achieve anything. The rumor was just that and nobody was able to obtain a visa through bribery. I returned to Samarkand.

with his friend at the train station. I agreed to pay him 1000 rubles for his service.

We traveled together and of course, throughout the trip, we did not talk to one another, as though we were strangers. We didn't want anyone to think there was a connection between us.

We arrived at the train station in Samarkand at eight in the morning and met his friend. The Uzbeki introduced me and I gave him the 1000 rubles. He had barely put it into his pocket when suddenly a policeman appeared and grabbed each of us and led us to the police station in the train station.

The Uzbeki managed to put away the money after the policeman caught us and I don't know whether the policeman noticed the money that had exchanged hands or not. In any case, our fear at the moment is indescribable. We tried to remain expressionless and not reveal the turmoil we felt within.

At the police station we were told to sit down and we were asked where we were coming from and where we were going. They asked for our passports and I thought that maybe the Uzbeki would show them documentation that he was the superintendent of the jail in Tashkent and they would leave us alone. But he just handed over his passport and they continued asking questions.

Then they called him into an inner room and I remained alone in the outer room. You can imagine how I felt. After a long time, which seemed like forever, they released us. Afterwards, the Uzbeki told me that he understood from them that they were looking for someone who resembled me.

After this incident, the friend of the Uzbeki was afraid to have anything to do with me and this plan was shelved.

[To be continued with b'ezras Hashem]

She didn't even agree to discuss it with her daughter lest her daughter's loyalty to the party supersede her family loyalties and she would snitch to the government. That was life in Russia. There were many instances in which children tattled on their parents to the KGB.

filled the shul and davened loudly and sang. I couldn't restrain myself and I cried tears of joy. When it was time for Lecha Dodi, a young boy got up to sing it and the crowd followed his lead. I haven't forgotten the special niggun for this liturgical poem till this day. I felt it was worth going to Kulashi just for this.

The next day, Shabbos, Chacham Yaakov addressed the crowd. He spoke for a long time and all listened closely. After the davening I was told to visit the other shul in the afternoon, where Chacham Refael would

INCIDENT AT THE TRAIN STATION

The Klein family of Tashkent told us that they had good connections with the superintendent of the jail in their city, an Uzbek, and he told them that he used to live in Samarkand and was a close friend of the person who gave out visas. He hinted to them that in exchange for a bribe, of course, he would be the go-between.

I immediately traveled to Tashkent, where R' Moshe Klein introduced me to the superintendent. We made up to travel together by train to Samarkand, where we would meet

NASI IS SHLITA!

By Rabbi Zalman Hertzfel

Translated By Michoel Leib Dobry

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

AN IMAGE OF “ECCENTRICITY”

We will now address another claim (raised in the first chapter): This conduct of writing “Shlita” could be perceived as being “eccentric,” something that is liable to drive people away from Lubavitch. Where’s the minimal sense of responsibility?

Those who maintain this position say: We agree with what has been written so far. It’s true that the Rebbe rejected the writing of terms of histalkus, etc.; the Rebbe saw the positive light in the conduct of a chassid who wrote “Shlita” regarding the Rebbe Rayatz after Yud Shvat 5710; and it is true that the Rebbe encouraged the use of the title “Shlita” in reference to the Rebbe Rayatz, in writing and in speech. However, what are we talking about here? The private/personal framework of a personal letter to the Rebbe, or (if we want to push it, even) at an intimate chassidic farbrengen, as the Rebbe expressed himself in this style at farbrengens before the assembled chassidim (when there was no concern of

“nourishing the external forces”). But where is there derived the mode of conduct to speak and write in this fashion with people from the outside?

(The fact is, however, that those who murmur about the problem in relation to “outsiders” are also affected by shortcomings with regard to “insiders.” At

internal chassidic farbrengens, we won’t hear these complainers even whisper things in the style of the Rebbe (as mentioned above). Even in a private letter or pidyon nefesh that they write to the Rebbe, when there is surely no concern about driving the masses away from Lubavitch, you won’t find them sneaking in any “Shlitas,” not even by mistake. But this does not exempt us from providing a response to the very heart of this excuse, as the Rebbe did when he referred to those who are “looking for an excuse.”

(The essence of this topic requires a whole book unto itself. The matter of the publicity and spreading forth of the teachings

NASI IS SHLITA!

In connection with what is brought in this article about the unique relationship and the amazing hiskashrus of the Rebbe towards his teacher and father-in-law, the Rebbe Rayatz, to the point that throughout the years, he called him “n’si doreinu” (leader of the generation), there is a page that appears at the end of the *T’hillas Hashem* siddur, printed in 5711. We can see here the title the Rebbe attributes to the Rebbe Rayatz **in print** after Yud Shvat 5710.

On the left side, there appears the “*Roshei Prakim*,” which brings the highlights of the Rebbe Rayatz’s life and mention the fact of his passing, including terms of histalkus. Right next to them on the right side, the Rebbe Rayatz’s name appears with the title “Shlita.”

This siddur was printed during the period before the Rebbe shlita officially accepted the leadership, and it seems that for this reason, the Rebbe Rayatz is still listed as nasi (not as it was in the years that followed, when the Rebbe shlita’s name appeared in the space reserved for the nasi). However, to everyone’s surprise, the title “Shlita” still appears: “K’vod K’dushas Admur Yosef Yitzchok **Shlita** Schneersohn – **Nasi**.”

We thereby draw the clear conclusion – **Nasi is Shlita!**

of chassidus in general and of the Rebbe in particular is a whole subject on its own: What are the “wellsprings,” what is “outward,” how do we spread the “wellsprings outward,” where, when, and how do we have to be careful, etc.? Nevertheless, in order to complete the picture, we will bring here one episode from the conduct of the Rebbe himself.)

If we try to be precise in the Rebbe’s words from the latter years, we find some interesting and amazing words on this subject.

HOW DID THE REBBE HIMSELF ACT?

On the 6th of Cheshvan 5752, the Chief Rabbi of Eretz Yisroel, Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu shlita, came to visit the Rebbe, and was privileged to go in for a lengthy yechidus. During that yechidus, when the Rebbe mentioned the previous Rebbe, he spoke these words (quoted from the audiotape):

All the matters have already been completed and there is no reason to wait. The Jewish people have even done t’shuva already, true t’shuva. As the Rebbe shlita, the Rebbe, my teacher and father-in-law, said many times – that all the present avoda has already been completed, and the matter depends only upon the coming of Moshiach himself.

See for yourself:

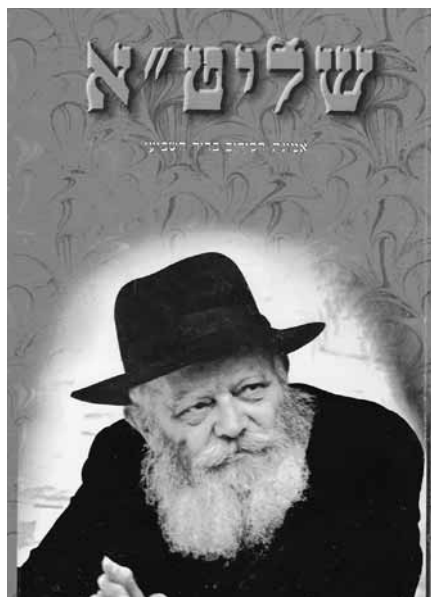
1. We’re talking about forty-two years after the passing of the Rebbe Rayatz!

This is something that totally refutes the ridiculous claim that only during the initial period after the previous Rebbe’s histalkus did the Rebbe say the “habitual” expression “Shlita.” Heaven forefend to relate to the words of

the leader of the generation in a negative manner, when the Rebbe himself specifically said that the Rebbe’s words are **“the spirit of G-d [that] spoke within me and His word is upon my tongue.”**

No need to elaborate here.

(NOTE: This is particularly so when the Rebbe wrote several letters encouraging this conduct (as mentioned in the previous chapter). Similarly, there appears in this chapter a copy from a sicha discussing this matter, with the Rebbe’s notations, demonstrating that the Rebbe



deemed it appropriate to invest considerable time in the editing.)

2. We’re talking about someone who is not a Lubavitcher chassid, an honored and respected Torah personality, a person in a most influential position of authority to issue halachic rulings. Yet, the Rebbe did not refrain from referring to the previous Rebbe by the title “Shlita.”

3. Throughout the yechidus, there were audio and video recording devices in operation.

These devices were capable of transmitting the Rebbe’s words anywhere in the world, either via live or delayed broadcast (as actually happened in this case). Nevertheless, this did not prevent the Rebbe from expressing himself in this fashion. *(NOTE: At a Sunday dollars distribution on the 10th of Sivan 5750, the Rebbe said to Rabbi Y. Kahana a”h, as he turned and looked in the direction of the video cameras (not verbatim): “I say this here publicly and I don’t care if they publicize it.” In a sicha from Purim 5712 (Hisvaaduyos B’Lashon HaKadosh 5712, pgs. 47): “We must recall the words that my revered teacher and father-in-law, the Rebbe, once said regarding preciseness, that “we must learn even from the mundane talk of Torah scholars, and all the more so from a sicha from a leader in Israel said with the knowledge that the words will be publicized.”*

4. Furthermore, faithful to the approach that the Rebbe taught us regarding the need to be especially precise in those things done recently, and “*der Rebbe haht altz bavahrent*,” there is something else: Specifically in those last months prior to Chaf-Zayin Adar 5752, the last opportunities (for the time being) to hear the Rebbe speak prior to Gimmel Tammuz, the Rebbe expressed himself in this fashion, as in the aforementioned situation, despite the fact that he had not done so for many years.

That’s just it! This could be an allusion, perhaps more than an allusion, to the mode of conduct demanded of the chassidim in these times.

“THE SITUATION HAS ALREADY CHANGED”

As we bring this chapter to a

“As the Rebbe shlita, the Rebbe, my teacher and father-in-law, said many times – that all the present avoda has already been completed, and the matter depends only upon the coming of Moshiach himself.” See for yourself. We’re talking about forty-two years after the passing of the Rebbe Rayatz!

close, it is impossible not to mention an interesting (“historic”) phenomenon: Those who openly publicize the announcement of the Redemption, the identity of the Redeemer, and the eternity of his life, reveal a wave of the most enthusiastic responses. They actually see how “the world is ready for Redemption,” as brought in the Rebbe’s holy words. However, those who refrain from publicizing for various reasons notice how their tight facial expression drives thousands upon thousands of people away from Lubavitch...

In fact, we have also found this phenomenon in relation to the Rebbe’s teachings. In a sicha from Acharon Shel Pesach 5732, the Rebbe said (as printed in *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. 7, pg. 274):

There are those who claim that not every intellect is capable of accepting the aforementioned concept – that there radiates within everyone the illumination of Moshiach, and on the contrary, through hearing such a concept, people get confused, etc.

However, in truth, this is not so, for the situation has already changed, and the time has already come that the “outside” can accept this concept. We only have to bring this matter to the “outside,” and when they state the matter simply (without any hesitation) – by strengthening their own faith – the words will be accepted by those listening and will have their effect. (NOTE: See there, note 9, regarding saying things “forcefully and simply (even though they were then still in the *exile* of Egypt), they worked that it would be accepted.”)

In the words of the Rebbe, the solution is linked – not to preventing the transmission of the message to the outside, but through **strengthening their own faith**, and then when they state the matter **without any hesitation**, the words are accepted and they will have their effect! (NOTE: *It is simple and understood that despite the fact that the words in this sicha relate to the illumination of Moshiach on Acharon Shel Pesach, they apply in even greater measure to the publicity of the announcement of the Redemption, the identity of the Redeemer, etc., regarding which the Rebbe said not only*

that “the world is ready,” etc., but he also took part personally in publicizing his identity as Moshiach.)

THERE ARE SOURCES!

We now conclude this series by calling the reader’s attention to the following fact:

This custom of writing “Shlita” regarding someone who before our flesh eyes appears to have departed from the world is not something initiated by our eternal leader, the Lubavitcher Rebbe shlita. Rather, we have found similar instances among other Torah giants, including Chabad Rebbeim. We now bring an example of each:

In the seifer *Ohel Yitzchok*, printed in 5673, it is related that the holy gaon, R. Chaim of Sanz, of righteous and holy memory, author of *Divrei Chaim*, wrote about the holy R. Dovid of Lelov, of righteous and holy memory, after his passing, “Our teacher Dovid, shlita,” and when he was asked to explain this, he replied, “*Dovid Melech Yisroel Chai V’Kayam.*”

The following section appears in the seifer *Ohel Yitzchok*:

Our grand teacher, Rabbi Yehuda Rubinstein from the Holy City of Yerushalayim, may it be rebuilt and reestablished, who heard from our teacher, Rabbi Yerucham Fishel Bernstein, son of the gaon, our teacher, Betzalel Bernstein, *dayan* and *moreh tzedek* in Yerushalayim, may it be rebuilt and reestablished – that the holy gaon, our teacher, Rabbi Chaim Halberstam, may his merit protect us, *av beis din* of Sanz, author of *Divrei Chaim*, once wrote a letter to my sons, the holy Rabbi Moshe of Lelov, may his merit protect us, son-in-law of the holy Jew of Prshiskhe,

may his merit protect us, the tzaddik Rabbi Elazar Menachem Mendel, and the tzaddik Rabbi Yaakov Dovid, of holy and blessed memory, as “the grandsons of our teacher Dovid, shlita,” and they said to him that the holy Rabbi Dovid of Lelov was already in the World of Truth, whereby the holy gaon of Sanz replied to them in these words: ‘*Dovid Melech Yisroel Chai V’Kayam,*’ and it’s a wonder.”

In an account of the Rebbe Rashab’s sicha from Simchas Torah 5663, recorded in the holy handwriting of his son, the Rebbe Rayatz, there appears the following section (printed for the first time in the *Beis Moshiach*

Magazine, Issue #340, pg. 26):

There is a well-known story from the Alter Rebbe, of righteous and holy memory, about how R. Yaakov ben R. Yosef of Shklov told him that things are not so good for him in the material sense, the pressure and the strain, to the point that he had to borrow someone’s money (*farnemen fremde gelt*), giving out a few groans on the matter, etc. Then, my father, the Rebbe shlita (the Alter Rebbe, of righteous and holy memory) made a proper accounting for him on what should be done in the spiritual sense. When he heard this, he began to cry bitterly, sobbing and lamenting in a frightful

voice from the depths of his heart.

Thus, we have a sicha given by the Rebbe Rashab in 5663 – ninety years after the histalkus of the Alter Rebbe – and he mentions the Alter Rebbe with the bracha and title “Shlita” – may he live many long and good years!

Here, we see again for the umpteenth time how vitally important it is to properly learn Torah in general and the teachings of our Rebbeim in particular. As we study with great intensity, we reveal that every word from the Rebbe’s mouth is the ultimate holiness.

Thus, when we learn – we know!

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LIGHTING UP NESHAMOS WITH THE REBBE'S HOLY FACE

By Nosson Avrohom

R' Mordechai Brown's life was looking empty until he arrived in Cleveland, where he encountered Lubavitch and the Rebbe MH" M and became a Chassid. For a while, he was a photographer in 770 and he took countless pictures. Since then, he has produced numerous original products with the Rebbe's picture and depictions of the mivtzaim on them. The Rebbe encouraged Mordechai's work and gave him advice on some minute details.

R' Mordechai Brown is a colorful Chassid and is a walking model of mivtzaim and faith in the Rebbe MH" M. You can meet him regularly at gatherings of Anash in Eretz Yisroel or elsewhere as he offers his original products for sale to the participants. They already grace the homes of many Lubavitchers



worldwide.

Who hasn't seen the wall clock with the Rebbe's picture in the background, or the laminated T'fillas HaDerech with the Rebbe's picture, or the poster with the picture of all the Rebbeim? Mordechai has produced dozens of products and his mind is always thinking up new

things.

Mordechai sees his unique creations as his shlichus in life. The basic idea is to take items that people use daily and turn them into something with a Chassidishe message. For example, he made a ruler for students which has the ten mitzva campaigns on it, with a

reminder about a letter in a Torah scroll and the Tzivos Hashem emblem. Even a napkin becomes something unusual since it has the Rebbe's mitzvaim embroidered on it, and the same goes for watches, pocket-sized cards and more.

He designs his products himself and puts a lot of effort into them. "I



***All the other shuls
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that welled up
from within.***

would send in everything I made to the Rebbe and sometimes I got the Rebbe's feedback. There were some products that did not come back from the secretaries and I understood that the Rebbe did not approve of them."

HIS FATHER'S FINAL REQUEST: KEEP SHABBOS

Mordechai's life story is no less interesting than his work. He was born in 1942 in Ulyanovsk, Russia. In 1949 he emigrated to Eretz Yisroel with his parents after wandering about Europe for several years. They settled in Ramle and Mordechai was sent to the HaMizrachi school. Since this school did not provide enough in the way of Jewish studies, he was sent in the afternoon to study with a Chassid, Rabbi Moshe Beitsh a"h, who came to town to shecht and to learn with the boys.

Unfortunately, Mordechai went through the same process as did most of the boys. A life of freedom drew him away and when he finished his studies in the religious high school, he was drafted. He was assigned to a unit whose job it was to escort high ranking guests who visited Eretz Yisroel. For a year he worked in President Yitzchok Ben Tzvi's office and participated in various ceremonies.

When he finished his army duty,

he took a course given by the Security Service, where he worked for another two years. One day he got fed up with his life and its emptiness and he decided to fly to America, for a change.

"I ended up in Cleveland, where I stayed with some Israelis my age for three years. Spiritually, I went steeply downhill. Our Jewish identity meant nothing to us and we didn't even use our Jewish names. I worked in photography, which I have enjoyed since my childhood.

"After three years of this, due to my father's illness, I returned to Eretz Yisroel and met Nechama, later to be my wife.

"When I went to visit my father, who was on his deathbed, our meeting was very emotional. Before we parted, my father said, 'I ask that you not work on Shabbos because you won't see a blessing in your work should you do so.' He also asked me to keep kosher. What he said made an enormous impression on me."

Mordechai returned to Cleveland and tried to do as his father asked. Since he was self-employed, he did not have to work on Shabbos and he



THE REBBE READ MY THOUGHTS

There was an incident in which I felt the Rebbe's ruach ha'kodesh. It was when the Rebbe gave out kos shel bracha in 5745. I stood, as usual, near the Rebbe and took pictures.

I noticed that for some people, the Rebbe poured from the cup and others who also got a bottle of mashke. I thought how I also wanted a bottle of mashke. Without further ado, I got in line. When it was my turn, the Rebbe took a bottle and gave it to me. I could see how the Rebbe read my mind.



made sure to eat only kosher food.

HIS FIRST TRIP TO THE REBBE

When his two sons were born, he decided that they must be given a Jewish education so they wouldn't lose their Jewish identity, but he did not know where to send them. Mordechai began attending various shuls on Shabbos in order to see the various Orthodox groups, but he was disappointed. Even when he liked the Young Israel congregation, he quickly observed that the freedom of choice the children were given certainly did not give any guarantee that they would continue being religious.

"The turning point happened the

first night of Pesach. I was davening in a Mizrachi-type shul, when a young man with a beard came in. He asked the gabbai permission to speak and then he spoke about the significance of the Holiday of Freedom. I had never heard divrei Torah that were so true and so special and deep before. I loved it. When he was finished, he said he was an emissary of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, and I decided to look into it. After the davening I went over to him and asked him about the Rebbe, explaining that in the past I had only a passing acquaintance with Chabad.

"The young man's name was Chaim Dovid Laine and he introduced me to his father-in-law, Rabbi Shneur Zalman (Katzenellenbogen) Kazen, who

lived nearby. He brought me shmura matza and invited me to visit whenever I wanted. I felt that I had found what I was looking for.

"One Shabbos, my family was his guest and it was an unforgettable Shabbos. His graciousness, the wonderful Shabbos atmosphere, and the special things he said, won our hearts. As time went by, I became more involved with Chabad. All the other shuls I visited were overly formal and little children were not allowed to attend, but in the Chabad shul there was a terrific atmosphere of unity and t'filla that welled up from within.

"Despite my enthusiasm, it was hard for me to make a change in my life and become a Chassid with that outward appearance."

In the early years, many people did not approve of his work or of the fact that the Rebbe's picture appeared all over the place. He had to remain tough in order to bear the insults and to continue his work.

Mordechai attended Rabbi Kazen's shiurim for about a year and learned a lot about the Rebbe's outlook and teachings. Then he felt ready to make a trip to 770. It was 1970.

"Before the trip I went through something very difficult, which connected me more to the Rebbe. I suddenly felt terrible pain in my legs and I couldn't stand for three months. The doctors I went to could not find a reason for the pain. I consulted with R' Kazen and I wrote to the Rebbe. Not a week went by and the pains stopped! After that miracle I stopped sitting on the fence and I went to the Rebbe to become mekushar to him."

However, his first visit, which took place on Simchas Torah 5731, nearly halted his journey towards Chassidus. Maybe it was because he wasn't prepared enough for the trip. He was pushed around during the davening and the hakafos and couldn't find a place for himself. He was very disappointed. He promised

himself that he would spend Simchas Torah 5732 in a shul near his house.

Mordechai's spiritual growth over the following year caused him to change his mind. This time, he went prepared not only spiritually, but physically. He took a camera along.

"When I began taking pictures of the Rebbe, some Chassidim told me that I should ask permission from the Rebbe first. I didn't know how to go about this, but I can tell you that hours of work went to waste when I discovered that the film had all been overexposed. Someone referred me to Rabbi Leibel Groner and I asked him to ask the Rebbe for permission for me.

"Rabbi Groner returned with a positive answer. I was excited and I photographed the Rebbe many times

and needless to say, the pictures came out fine. After that Simchas Torah I changed my way of dress, both outwardly and inwardly, and I devoted myself to the Rebbe."

THE REBBE WAS ENCOURAGING

In 5740 Mordechai began spreading the wellsprings in his own unique way. He was living in Kfar Chabad and he took pictures at events and Kinusim for a living. One day, his daughter came home from school and said that they had learned about the Rebbeim and she wanted his help with her homework.

Mordechai decided to do something special. When he finished designing a beautiful poster, he sent the original sketches to the Rebbe.

In the early years, many people





did not approve of his work or of the fact that the Rebbe's picture appeared all over the place. Many castigated him about it and he had to remain tough in order to bear the insults and to continue his work.

After the poster, he made the clock with the Rebbe's picture on it. It began with a visit to a mall in the United States, where he saw someone selling a clock with the president on it. That's when he decided to do the same thing with the Rebbe's picture. After he made a sample he sent it to the Rebbe and received his bracha: **Received and thanks. A timely thing – close to Lag B'Omer, the day of great rejoicing of Rashbi and "Rabbi Shimon can be relied upon, etc." I will mention it at the gravesite.** Then he began selling his clocks.

"It was a different era back then. Many had criticisms and said that it was a chilul Lubavitch and a desecration of the Rebbe's honor. I had gotten the Rebbe's positive response, but they discounted it, saying that the Rebbe did not want

to offend me.

"On Hoshana Raba in the middle of the 80's I nearly caved in. I figured – I wasn't making big money out of it; I was standing outside 770 in the cold and then had to endure people's insults? I decided to stop.

"A few minutes before I gave up, Rabbi Moshe Nisselevitz of Nachalat Har Chabad passed by and asked me how things were going. I told him I had given up and explained what had happened. When he heard the answers and encouragement I had received from the Rebbe, he said that I did not have the right to stop. 'If the Rebbe approved it, that is your shlichus.'"

One idea followed another and after clocks, Mordechai moved on to an original puzzle with the words "Moshiach Now" on it. When he submitted the puzzle and some other posters to the Rebbe, the answer was: **Received with all the attached and it makes a strong impression. May Hashem give you success in everything. I will mention at the gravesite all the above and may**

you have a good, sweet year.

"As time went on, I saw how the Rebbe carefully looked over the items I sent him. For the Rebbe's 80th birthday, I prepared a nice sign (see illustration) and in the shape of a seven I put the chain of the leaders of Chassidus and Chabad, with the Rebbe appearing at the end. On the bottom were the mivtzaim and a map which said 'U'faratzta.' I submitted it to the Rebbe and after a few days the Rebbe replied:

Received and thanks. 1) A good and powerful impression; 2) I will mention it at the gravesite for all the aforementioned and good news; 3) in the next printing: V'Hisgaluso – leave out the letter Vav. Hilula of the Baal Shem Tov – 6 Sivan. The quotes from the verses in Daniel and T'hilim are missing? In the crown, eliminate the words "pure gold." Neshek – add "and Yom Tov." In the t'fillin shel rosh – lines to mark four compartments.

One of Mordechai's popular

items is the T'fillas HaDerech with the Rebbe's picture on it. He produced it in ten languages and added the Rebbe's horaa about the importance of saying Chitas along with some answers of the Rebbe. When he submitted the card to the Rebbe, the answer was: **The enclosed was received and many thanks. May it be with great success. I will mention it at the gravesite.**

Aside from answers, he also received great encouragement from the Rebbe. Every time the Rebbe arrived at 770 and Mordechai was standing near the entrance, the Rebbe waved his arm strongly as a sign of encouragement.

The number of products grew.

“22 years ago I went to Cairo, where I organized a printing of the Tanya in the Rambam’s shul. At a certain point I gave out pictures of the Rebbe to those who were there. The Arab guards wanted it too. When I asked them if they knew who the man was, they said, ‘It’s the Rambam from Brooklyn.’”

When the Rebbe came out with the pushka campaign, Mordechai quickly designed a unique device. When someone pointed out to him that Chassidim should always go about with coins from the Rebbe, he made a special pouch for coins with the Rebbe's picture. When the Rebbe started giving out dollars, he made a holder for them.

“I lived and continue to live, twenty-four hours around the Rebbe and around his instructions and mitvzaim. That is my shlichus.”

DREAMING OF CLOCKS

In Tishrei 5751 at “dollars,” Mordechai gave the Rebbe a map of the world (see photo) with eight clocks that told the time in eight Chabad centers around the world, with 770 in the center. He told the Rebbe it was a gift for the New Year and the Rebbe said: **May it be with great success.**

Mordechai was very excited and he took the opportunity to tell the Rebbe that two days earlier he had dreamt that he was asking the Rebbe how to design a clock “L’Kabbalas p’nei Moshiach.” The Rebbe’s face lit up and he answered: **May Hashem help you come up with all the good ideas, as you have until now. May there be good news.** The Rebbe gave him another dollar and said: **Give it to tz’daka for double success in all necessary things.**

This clock remained in the Rebbe’s room for about half a year. R’ Binyamin Klein, the secretary, asked for a similar clock which would help him in his work as he spoke to people around the world.

There were also items that did not garner the Rebbe’s blessing, like a puzzle with a picture of 770 and the Rebbe’s picture. But another puzzle of 770 which said, “We want Moshiach now,” in 24 languages, did get the Rebbe’s approval.

A wood engraving that Mordechai put a lot of work into



with the words, “We want Moshiach now,” did not get a response from the Rebbe, but a similar thing with the emblem of Tzivos Hashem got a positive response: **many thanks and I will mention it at the gravesite for everything you need.**

“It was interesting to see how the Rebbe devoted his precious time to pointing out little details. In 5740 I submitted a picture of the Rebbe with fifteen different pictures of the Rebbe around it. It came out a few hours later with the Rebbe’s instruction to add BS”D (b’siyata d’Shmaya).

SHIR LA’MAALOS

One of his most popular items is a Shir LaMaalos card that the Rebbe said that women giving birth should have with them and should be placed in the baby’s crib. On one side of the card there is a colorful rendition of the chapter of T’hillim as well as verses of protection. On the other side is a picture of the Rebbe with a quote about the importance of a woman giving birth having the card, and its influence on the baby.

“This card became very popular because of some miracles I witnessed that showed that the card



is a segula even before the birth. I was visiting the Graphic Laminating Company in Cleveland, where I buy the plastic laminate for my cards. It's a family business and every time I went I met another family member and we became very friendly.

"One day, one of the daughters told me that she was married for five years and still had no children. I gave her a Shir LaMaalos card that I was producing at the time. I thought if it didn't help, it wouldn't hurt.

"A year later I returned to the company and I met the brother who told me, 'You don't know what you

"THE" PICTURE

R' Mordechai took thousands of pictures of the Rebbe over the years. When I asked him to tell me about a special picture that he took, he took out a picture from Hoshana Raba 5738, where you see the Rebbe leaning on the shtender and looking at the camera.

"I felt that the Rebbe posed for me."

A few hours later, the Rebbe had a heart attack.

did with that miracle card!’ His sister was about to give birth and they were all saying it was thanks to the rabbi’s card.

“I have seen that a number of couples, after having the card, had a child and many people order the card as a segula for children. When I returned to Kfar Chabad, I remembered a couple who had been married for seven years without children. I told them the story and asked the woman to keep a card on her. They have a number of children now.

“A few years later, I was in Los Angeles, where I met a Lubavitcher family with three children who wanted more but did not have any for ten years. I gave them the card and a while ago, when I met the family again, the woman pointed at one of her children and said, ‘He was born thanks to the card.’”

THE RAMBAM FROM BROOKLYN

Mordechai can go on telling stories for hours. It’s exciting when his products help him in spreading the wellsprings. He told me about an American from Texas who became interested in Judaism after he came across a poster of the Rebbe and decided to find out who he is. Today he is a Lubavitcher Chassid.

Mordechai’s briefcase was once stolen. Three hours went by until he found it thrown in a side corner. Those were three hours of great anxiety for him and when he wrote to the Rebbe, the answer was: **He writes for blessing in all matters?! It is necessary that the service of Hashem be with joy and goodness of heart. You weaken your health by doing this (the opposite of Torah – and you shall carefully guard [your health]) and also (naturally) the work of spreading Judaism. The attached item was received and many thanks. May it be with great success. I will**

mention it at the gravesite.

During his trips around the world, Mordechai has had many adventures.

“Twenty-two years ago I went to Cairo, where I organized a printing of the *Tanya* in the Rambam’s shul. At a certain point I gave out pictures of the Rebbe to those who were there. The Arab guards wanted it too. When I asked them if they knew who the man was, they said, ‘It’s the Rambam from Brooklyn.’

“On another occasion, as I waited for a bus on my way to Cleveland, a black fellow asked me whether I am a Lubavitcher. I could see he wasn’t a local and I asked him where he was from. He said that in Ghana in Africa he learned about the Rebbe as the Jewish leader who had an impact on all of humanity.

“Another time, as I caught a ride with someone on the way to one of my flights, the driver, who looked Litvish to me, surprised me when he said, ‘You don’t have any idea what kind of Rebbe you have.’ When I asked him what he meant, he told me that he was not a Chassid but his sister, who lived in Boro Park, yearned for children as it was many years since she married. She went to the Rebbe for ‘dollars’ and before

she could say anything, the Rebbe gave her an extra dollar for her child. A year later she had a boy.”

IF THE REBBE ENJOYS IT, THAT’S ALL THAT MATTERS

One story followed another. Mordechai is not the kind of person who rests on his laurels. He is always thinking up new projects. He is not a young person but if only we all had his young, dynamic spirit. Every item he makes requires lots of work to turn the idea into a finished product.

He recently made signs for businesses with the Rebbe’s picture in the center and letters from the Rebbe on the side about *parnasa*. He also made a “Birkas HaBayis” in the same format. At the time of the interview, he was working on a new 770 clock with the Rebbe’s picture and *mivtzaim*.

“The last product that I made that the Rebbe saw was the Chassidishe Ushpizin with ‘Yechi’ on it. I made it for the Yomim Tovim of 5753 and Rabbi Groner called me to say that the Rebbe liked it. If the Rebbe liked it, that’s all that matters.”

THE EFFECT OF THE MENORA

When I lived in Cleveland, I had some amazing stories. I’ll tell you one of them. It was the last day of Chanuka and I saw that I had plenty of candles and menoros left. I decided there was no reason to keep them in my house until the following year and that I had to distribute them.

In my effort to find Jews who would take the menoros I went to a friend, a Holocaust survivor who was very antagonistic towards religion after the war. I asked him to light the menorah. After all, it was a pity that I had all these candles left over...

He felt uncomfortable, but because of our friendship, he agreed to do it. He called his wife and his five children and lit the menorah. I think it was the first time in their lives. Dozens of candles were lit to the point that he began to yell at me that my craziness was about to burn his house down.

I said goodbye and didn’t see him again until one day, I got a phone call from him. “Mordechai, come kasher my kitchen.” I asked him what happened and he said that the candles he lit had lit up his *neshama*.

THE FUNDRAISER'S BREAKFAST OF CHAMPIONS

By Rabbi Yaakov Shmuelewitz, Shliach, Beit Shaan

*How do shluchim deal with the unavoidable challenge of fundraising? * Sometimes, you go fundraising and you don't know what will happen, but Hashem sees your efforts and help comes from an unforeseen place. * Stories about fundraising from the fundraisers' perspective.*

Fundraising is not exactly every shliach's favorite activity. In the parsha that talks about donating to the Mishkan, the word "take" is mentioned time and again, "take for Me a donation," "this is the donation you should take from them," etc., to teach us that although giving is very important, knowing how to take is even more important.

In this chapter I will share some fundraising secrets with you, about how shluchim deal with the unavoidable challenge of fundraising. I am sure that most readers of *Beis Moshiach* have donated numerous times towards

the Rebbe's work, but here we will share stories from the fundraisers' perspective.

Many shluchim, including myself, have taken courses in which we learned that the way to successfully fundraise begins the night before with the bedtime Shma. In other words, it's not enough to put on a suit and tie and come prepared with an album of pictures of your work. You need to approach it with spiritual force, and sometimes that is worth more than all the albums and sales pitches.

A fellow shliach told me that he once went to a wealthy

businessman in Manhattan to fundraise. My friend knew the businessman for several years and now he wanted to ask for his help in supporting his Chabad house in Eretz Yisroel. The wealthy man apologized and said that just half a year earlier another shliach had come and he had given him a large donation, so he couldn't give anymore. He mentioned the name of the other shliach, a shliach known for his naiveté and for his inability to communicate effectively.

"I saw that he doesn't even know how to explain the work he does, so I decided that it's a mitzva to help a person like that and I gave him beyond my means."

This story goes to show us that sometimes, without a polished presentation, if you are dedicated to the Rebbe and his shlichus, the donor will give you a generous donation.

* * *

The typical wealthy person, the well-organized businessman, wants to see a well-organized shliach: *mesudar* in his dress, *mesudar* in his speech, *mesudar*

in how he runs his operation, and *mesudar* in his presentation. The businessman did not get up five minutes before the meeting with the shliach. He woke up on time, drank a cup of coffee, read the headlines in the business paper, and maybe exercised for a half hour. Now he's ready for a meeting.

If you, the shliach come looking like you just woke up and hurriedly went to the mikva and davened, it's almost a sure thing that you won't impress the man you made an appointment to meet. On the other hand, if you began the day the night before with a proper Krias Shma, you woke up early, you learned Chassidus, and davened as a Chassid should, and now you came to the meeting, the person will sense the power you radiate. He will see that you represent something you believe in and as a result, your pitch will be more effective and you'll see the results.

A PUSHKA WITH ONE SHEKEL AND FORTY AGUROT

One of the ways a Chabad house raises money is with pushkas. In Nes Tziyona there is a system for distributing and then collecting pushkas from hundreds of homes and businesses throughout the city.

Behind every pushka is a family, a business, and a businessman. Rabbi Sagi Har Shefer, a shliach there, tells us about one of these pushkas:

We have a friend, an owner of an exclusive business in the center of town. The majority of his customers pay with a credit card so the pushka is hardly ever filled up with change. Each time the pushka collector made his

rounds he would find amounts of eighty agurot or maybe a shekel and change in it, no more.

I am particular about sending a receipt for every donation, no matter the amount. So every month, our friend the exclusive shop owner got an envelope in the mail with an official receipt of eighty agurot, 1.20, 1.40.

One day, the store owner called and asked to meet with me. I invited him to the Chabad house and when he came he said: "I am embarrassed. Every week you write a receipt, put it in an envelope, stick on a stamp, and it's all for a shekel or two. It's simply embarrassing, so I decided to give a regular donation to the Chabad house and I'll ask you to leave the pushka too."

I asked R' Har-Shefer whether his monthly commitment covered the costs of the envelope and stamp and he told me not to worry. "It covers many programs of the Chabad house throughout the year."

And another little story from Nes Tziyona which R' Har-Shefer told me:

We recently rented a huge lot with a big building for a Chabad house. At the opening, I suggested that friends help pay the renovation costs. One of them got up and announced that he wanted to pay for the renovation of the shul and he donated 90,000 shekels. A few days later he said that he didn't think it was right for the Chabad house to have only two Sifrei Torah (because sometimes you need three) and he was also going to donate a Torah to the Chabad house."

"ARE YOU THE LETTER NUN OF CHARAN?"

I heard this story a few years ago from a fellow shliach who

said it happened to him. This is what he said:

When I went to the banquet of the Kinus HaShluchim, I met a friend who said, 'It's worth your while to come to table X (he specified which) because there is a rich guy from California, a former Israeli, who will be there.'

I sat down at that table and listened to the conversation. Then Rabbi Yisroel Butman, the shliach in Nahariya, came over. A conversation ensued and the rich man said to R' Butman, "Are you the letter *Nun* of Charan?"

R' Butman didn't know what he meant and the man explained that he knew that in Eretz Yisroel there were three brothers, shluchim from the Butman family. The first letters of the names of their three cities form the word Charan: Chadera, Ramat HaSharon, and Nahariya. "If you are the Butman from Nahariya, you are the '*Nun*' of Charan..."

The man said that he had lived in Ramat HaSharon and he visited there occasionally and had heard nice things about the shliach. He was especially impressed that the shliach aided children, students, the old, and the needy.

My friend ran to find Rabbi Butman from Ramat HaSharon and told him to come over to that table because there was a wealthy man from California who knew about him and was praising him to the skies. "Ask him for money so you can help children, students, the old, and the needy!"

The meeting was brief as the shliach knew precisely what to say. The wealthy man took out his checkbook and gave him \$18,000.

Those in the know say that if at the first and brief meeting you get that amount, there's a good chance that if you keep in touch,

you will get even larger amounts.

A CAR OR \$400?

Sometimes you go to a potential donor and you don't know what will happen but Hashem sees your efforts and the help comes from an unexpected source. A shliach told me that a few years ago he had two meetings arranged with two wealthy people. From one of them he planned on asking for a car and from the other one he expected to get \$200-\$300.

At the first meeting he explained his urgent need for a car for the Chabad house. The man said it was a bit much for him but he was willing to make a donation. In fact, he gave him \$400. When he went to the second appointment, he told the man about the Chabad house budget and asked for a donation. The man surprised him by asking whether he had a need for a car since he had a few cars and was willing to donate one of them.

The shliach said Yes, of course. The man pointed at one of his cars and told his secretary to transfer ownership to the Chabad house.

Which goes go to show us that if you make your effort, Hashem will send you what you need!

EVENINGS WITH CHABAD FUNDED BY THE LOCAL SCHOOL

In Beit Shaan there are special

Rosh Chodesh gatherings for women. Every month we look for a speaker and a performer who will interest the crowd and who has a Chassidishe message and – won't cost too much. Every month we have to buy refreshments, advertise, get the hall ready, organize a sound system, etc. It's not easy and we always have to struggle with the financial end of things.

We recently had a miracle take place. The local high school occasionally has programs for parents with a lecturer, entertainment, refreshments, etc., but the administration was not pleased with the number of participants. We ended up collaborating: the Chabad house and the school invite the public to a special evening. The Chabad house arranges all the details and the school pays for it!

This enables us to invite a larger crowd, to buy ample refreshments, to use the biggest hall, to invite professional performers, to advertise in the newspapers and distribute thousands of flyers and the public enjoys interesting, wonderful Evenings With Chabad.

ARABS DONATE FOR 7 MITZVOS B'NEI NOACH

Rabbi Boaz Kali, shliach in Chaifa and Kiryot, works on behalf of mosdos Chabad in Kiryot as well as on publicizing the Sheva Mitzvos B'nei Noach. He works with the shliach in

Chaifa, Rabbi Leibel Schildkraut, and they have already put up several beautiful buildings in Kiryat Shmuel and Chaifa for their schools.

According to Rabbi Kali, "We will soon open a Sheva Mitzvos B'nei Noach center in Chaifa." He is referring to an old shul that he renovated, where he wants to host groups of Arabs from Chaifa and the area to come and learn about the Sheva Mitzvos, just like in the Beis HaMikdash, "for My house [the Mikdash] will be called a house of prayer for all the nations."

"I looked for a donor to pay for advertising the shiur in Arabs newspapers. You won't believe who donated the money. It was a rich Arab who, in the past, nearly stopped all the renovations at that shul. What happened? He heard the noise and came to stop it. He even threatened to call the police and the newspapers."

R' Kali told him that he should know that in our sources it says, "And for informers there should be no hope." The Arab got the hint and disappeared for a few minutes and then returned with a bouquet of flowers which he gave to the man doing the renovations. He asked him to give it to the rabbi, "He just shouldn't curse me anymore."

This Arab who gave the bouquet is the one who paid for the newspaper advertising of the shiurim about the Sheva Mitzvos!

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