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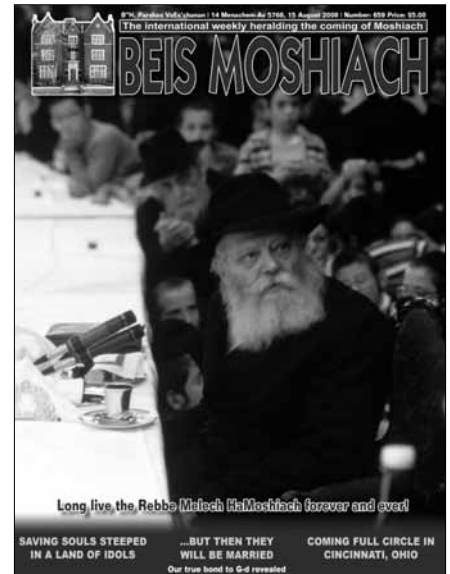
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Chinuch



USA

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

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:

M.M. Hendel

ENGLISH EDITOR:

Boruch Merkur
ed@beismoshiach.org

ASSISTANT EDITOR:

Dr. Aryeh Gotfryd

HEBREW EDITOR:

Rabbi Sholom Yaakov Chazan
editorH@beismoshiach.org

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COMFORT FOR THE FIRST, COMFORT FOR THE SECOND

Translated and adapted by Dovid Yisroel Ber Kaufmann

The Haftora after Tisha B'Av is always Nachamu, Nachamu – Comfort, Comfort. The doubled expression refers to the first Two Temples. As each possessed an advantage over the other, the Jewish people needed to be comforted for the destruction of each. These represent two forms of Divine service: actions inspired from Above, and actions inspired from within. In the times of the First Temple, the Jewish people were like tzaddikim; in the times of the Second Temple, they were like baalei t'shuva. This parallels the two times the Ten Commandments were given. The times of the Third Temple will have the advantages of both.

A section from the Prophets – the Haftora – is read each week following the Torah reading. The prophetic selection is based on the content of the weekly Torah reading. For example, the first Torah reading is

B'Reishis – the first section of Genesis which describes creation. The Haftora for that week is from Isaiah, chapter 42, which begins, “Thus says G-d, the Lord who created the heavens . . . who spread forth the earth.”

This general rule holds true until the 17th of Tammuz. From that date, which falls sometime in mid-summer, until Rosh HaShana, the Haftora is based on historical events. From the 17th of Tammuz until Tisha B'Av – the ninth of Av – the Haftoros concern punishment and the impending destruction of the Temple. After Tisha B'Av until Rosh HaShana – a period of seven weeks – the Haftoros offer comfort and consolation to the Jewish people, predicting the future rebuilding of the Temple, the coming of Moshiach.

Nevertheless, each of these special Haftoros, connected as they are to the historical theme of consolation and Redemption, occurs on a specific Shabbos. The Torah reading for the Shabbos after Tisha B'Av is always VaEschanan – the second portion of the book of Deuteronomy. The Haftora for the

first Shabbos after Tisha B'Av is always *Nachamu* – the prophecy of consolation from Isaiah, chapter 40. Therefore, it seems obvious that there must also be a

connection between the weekly Torah reading – VaEschanan – and the Haftora – *Nachamu*.

The Haftora begins with the words, “*Nachamu, Nachamu Ami*” – “Comfort, Comfort, My people, says your G-d.” In this moving prophecy, G-d offers consolation to the Jewish people for the destruction of the Temple.

Why is the word “*nachamu*” – “comfort” – doubled? The Midrash offers the following explanation: the verse begins “*Nachamu, nachamu*” – comfort, comfort – because of the two Temples. The first “*nachamu*” is for the first Temple, and the word is repeated to provide comfort for the destruction of the second Temple.

However, this doesn’t seem to quite fit with the idea of providing comfort. If an individual suffers two losses, one greater than the other, the comfort for the greater loss naturally includes and provides comfort for the lesser. For example, if someone loses a car, replaces it, and then loses the second car, to comfort

altar, the Divine Presence, Divine Inspiration, and the Urim and Tumim – the prophetic part of the high priest’s garments. These, of course, are largely spiritual in nature.

Nevertheless, the second Temple had two advantages over the first: it was greater in size and in years. The second Temple was bigger and lasted longer than the first. It had a physical superiority. There is thus a need to offer comfort for that which existed in the second Temple, but not the first.

Therefore, the prophet said, “*Nachamu, Nachamu,*” – “Comfort, Comfort.” In the Third Temple, both the spiritual advantages of the first Temple and the physical superiority of the second will be restored.

Each of the Temples represent a different approach in the way human activity – a Jew’s performance of mitzvos – refines and purifies creation. In the first approach, an individual possesses the ability to elevate himself and his environment because there has been an illumination from above. For example, a teacher can instruct a student in such a way that he will be able to learn on his own afterwards. Still, he possesses that ability to learn because of the way he was taught; his future learning depends on his inspiration from the teacher.

The second approach comes from an inner illumination, so to speak. The individual is motivated not from above, but from within. For example, *t’shuva* – repentance – results from the innate nature of a Jew. An individual who has sinned has distanced himself from G-d and cannot receive a revelation of Divine Light. But, because the essence of a Jew is part of the essence of G-d, he inherently wants to fulfill G-d’s will, and so is instinctively compelled to do *t’shuva* – to return to G-d, perform the mitzvos, transform his sins into merits, and so elevate the world.

During the time of the first Temple, the Jewish people were in the category of *tzaddikim* – righteous individuals – and so followed the first approach. The Divine Presence dwelled in the Temple and Divine inspiration was clearly manifest and readily acknowledged. The Light of G-dliness filled the land, preparing the people to observe the commandments through *kabbalas ol malchus Shamayim* – acceptance of the yoke of Heaven. The people – more directly connected to the Divine Light – were vessels for G-dliness. The first Temple’s higher level of holiness reflected this.

When will the inner unity of the Jewish people be revealed? When will the advantages of both Temples be combined? When the Third Temple is built, with the coming of Moshiach, imminently and immediately.

that person, you only have to restore one car, the nicer and more expensive of the two.

In our situation, the comfort is an assurance that there will be a Third Temple, that of Moshiach, which will never be destroyed. This is the comfort for the destruction of the first Temple. Since the second Temple was inferior to the first, any comfort offered for the destruction of the first Temple will automatically include comfort for the destruction of the second. That is, once the prophet says, *Nachamu* – be comforted, for there will be consolation for the great loss of the first Temple, in the times of Moshiach when the third, permanent Temple will be built – there is no need for a second *Nachamu* – be comforted for the smaller loss of the second Temple. The comfort offered for the first Temple includes consolation for the second.

The second Temple lacked five things found in the first: the ark of the covenant, the heavenly fire on the

During the time of the second Temple, the Jewish people were in the category of *baalei t'shuva* – individuals who had sinned and returned. The transgressions of the people caused the destruction of the first Temple. These same transgressions broke their connection with the Light of G-dliness. Indeed, a transgression, a violation of a commandment, is the total opposite of *kabbalas ol* – the contrary to a complete submission to the Will of G-d.

In order to re-establish their connection with the Divine Light, the Jewish people had to act on their own, so to speak. They could not rely on Divine inspiration, for they had broken that channel. They had to do *t'shuva*. And when the Jewish people did do *t'shuva*, they were able to elevate not just themselves, but also their environment. This elevation included their transgressions. Through the *t'shuva* of the Jewish people, even deliberate sins were transformed into merits. Through *t'shuva*, the physical, with all its imperfections, became permanently imbued with the spiritual. The second Temple's greater size and duration reflected this.

The Third Temple will contain both advantages: the Jewish people will be vessels for and directly receive the Light of G-dliness and the world will be elevated,

permanently infused with holiness. Both aspects of the Jewish people, that of the *tzaddik* – the righteous individual – and the *baal t'shuva* – the one who has sinned and returned – will be openly revealed.

This difference is reflected in the Torah itself. The first time the Ten Commandments were given, the Jewish people were like *tzaddikim*. Indeed, the Tablets were made by G-d Himself. The second time the Ten Commandments were given – after the sin of the Golden Calf, when the first tablets were broken – as the first Temple was broken – the people were like *baalei t'shuva*. Then Moses made the tablets. But with the second Tablets came also the traditions, explanations and laws that have defined Judaism for the past three thousand plus years.

The first time the Ten Commandments were given parallels the period of the first Temple, and the second time the second Temple.

And now we can understand as well the connection between the Haftora – *Nachamu, Nachamu* – Comfort, Comfort – and the Torah reading of VaEschanan. For the Ten Commandments are recorded for the second time in the portion of VaEschanan.

The Ten Commandments recorded in the book of Exodus were said before the sin of the calf, when the Jews were in the category

of *tzaddikim*. In the portion of VaEschanan, the Ten Commandments are said not only after the sin of the calf, but also after all the other sins and transgressions that occurred during the forty years in the wilderness.

In fact, this Torah reading begins as a continuation of the rebuke of the previous one.

Nevertheless, the entire story of the giving of the Torah, just as it was before the sin, is retold in the portion of VaEschanan. Precisely in VaEschanan is the unity of both aspects of the Jewish people revealed. In this Torah reading, the people are both *tzaddikim* – the Ten Commandments are given again as they had been before any transgression – and *baalei t'shuva* – the Ten Commandments are given after the *t'shuva* for all the transgressions.

Similarly, the opening words of the Haftora indicates the unity of the first Temple and the second Temple. *Nachamu* – Comfort – for the first Temple; *Nachamu* – Comfort – for the second Temple.

When will the inner unity of the Jewish people be revealed? When will the advantages of both Temples be combined? When the Third Temple is built, with the coming of Moshiach, imminently and immediately.

(Based on Likkutei Sichos 9, pp. 61-70)

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‘BUT IN THE MESSIANIC ERA THEY WILL BE MARRIED’

By Boruch Merkur

*In the Future Era (when there will be the marriage of G-d and the Jewish people), not only will the life of Jews then be eternal life, but even more, it will also be revealed that the prior concealment of life was only temporary and only superficial in nature.” * Tracing the Rebbe MH”M’s instructions on how to perfect our Divine service in the Final Era.*

[Continued from Issue #655]

OUR SUFFERING WAS NOT IN VAIN

In consoling the Jewish people for their suffering, G-d reassures us, saying,

“Don’t bemoan [the destruction, etc.],” for “the undesirable event is no more than ‘a short moment.’⁵¹ Afterwards, through this [suffering], an increase will be yielded. Indeed... an increase that is incomparably great.”

The consolation is that our suffering was not in vain; we will soon enjoy the fruits of our labor, which far exceed our efforts.

Even the great suffering associated with death and loss of our loved ones will be transformed into joy – “awaken and **sing**, you who dwell in the dust” – with the Resurrection of the Dead. Immediately following the period of mourning, there will be a celebration likened to the great elation of a bride and a groom⁵² on the day of their wedding:

“It says in the Midrash⁵³ that at the time of the Giving of the Torah the Jewish people were [only] ‘betrothed’ to G-d, ‘but in the Messianic Era they will be

married.”

OUR MARRIAGE TO G-D SHOWS THAT EVEN THE LAPSES DURING THE BETROTHAL WERE IMMATERIAL

The unique quality of marriage is that it is an eternal bond, “an everlasting edifice,” and a profoundly transformative bond at that, whereby two people become a single unit, as it says in B’Reishis,⁵⁴ “and they shall become one flesh.”

Betrothal establishes a commitment to a bond, the

bond of marriage, that is yet to be fully realized; it is a bond that is not openly expressed, giving rise to the possibility of this connection being concealed. Thus, the present era, prior to the true and complete Redemption, when our connection with G-d is only at the stage of betrothal, there is the potential for loss of life, the appearance of the severance of our connection with G-d, a connection that is synonymous with life, as it says, "You who cleave to G-d, your L-rd, are alive, all of you, this day."⁵⁵

"Whereas, in the Future Era (when there will be the marriage), not only will the life of Jews then be eternal life, but even more, it will also be revealed that the prior concealment of life was only temporary and only superficial in nature."⁵⁶ The marriage of the Jewish people with G-d in the Future Era will not only mark a new era whereby we will have a revealed relationship with G-d, an intimate relationship, as it were, of "cleaving and bonding [to G-d]"; it will demonstrate that the commitment of betrothal that preceded marriage was also an essential bond. Any appearance to the contrary is immaterial, for these lapses were only brief and superficial; a deep, eternal bond always persisted beneath the surface.

Thus, when we describe our relationship with G-d as one of marriage – a bond that is manifest at all levels, from the soul to the body, "and they shall become one flesh" – it means that even an event that occurs to our bodies that gives the appearance that our connection with G-d has been severed, G-d forbid, such as the loss of life, is an event that takes place only on the surface. There is an essential connection between even our bodies and G-d

that is eternal and immutable.

IT IS WITHIN OUR POWER TO MAKE IT HAPPEN

It is important to underscore the fact that we are not powerless to hasten the realization of this deeper reality. Rather,

"it is further precipitated and hastened by means of every Jew increasing in his faith in the coming of Moshiach and in the Resurrection of the Dead⁵⁷ and so on. Indeed, there are many who have the custom to openly proclaim verbally, 'I believe, etc.' And even those who do not say this verbally think about it every single day. [This faith ought to be] given particular emphasis in the blessing, 'May the siren of Dovid, Your servant, sprout forth speedily,' and 'for the entire day we hope for Your salvation,' illustrating that throughout the entire day we await the salvation, praying for it even on Shabbos and Holidays – and then even more than three times – "May our eyes behold Your return to Tziyon with mercy."

NOTES:

⁵¹ Wording of the verse in Yeshayahu 54:7.

⁵² See *Hemshech Samach T'samach* 5657, pg. 279 ff.

⁵³ Shmos Rabba 15, end; BaMidbar Rabba 12:8, end. See *Likkutei Torah Shir HaShirim* 48a-b.

⁵⁴ 2:24.

⁵⁵ VaEs'chanan 4:4.

⁵⁶ See at length *Likkutei Sichos* Vol. 6, pg. 84.

⁵⁷ The 12th and 13th Principles of the 13 Principles of Faith.



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MIRACLE CHILDREN

By Rabbi Yaakov Shmuelewitz, Shliach, Beit Shaan

THE REBBE RAYATZ BLESSED YOU

It happened at the Chabad house of Hod HaSharon. The shliach, Rabbi Shimshon Tal had just finished Mincha and was about to leave when a woman came in and asked for a bracha from the Rebbe through the Igros Kodesh.

R' Tal showed her the s'farim in the bookcase and she told him her tale of woe. She was married for a number of years and had no children. She was being treated by a top doctor but thus far, she had not been helped.

The woman wrote to the Rebbe and put the letter at random in a

volume of Igros Kodesh and opened to an answer written in Yiddish. She asked R' Tal to translate it for her and he did so as follows, "I was sorry to hear that you stopped going to the doctor. It says that permission was given to the doctor to heal. Since the Rebbe Rayatz blessed you with children, you can be confident that the bracha will be fulfilled."

R' Tal looked up to see the woman sobbing. She said, "The Rebbe is right. I just got back from the doctor today and the doctor said he was sorry but this treatment did not work either. I decided to tell my husband that I have no more

strength for these treatments and Hashem will do as He sees fit. Now you are reading to me that the Rebbe says I should continue with treatments."

Faithful to the Rebbe's answer and encouraged by the Rebbe's bracha and promise, the woman and her husband went to another doctor and less than a year later their oldest daughter was born. Then they had twins and moved away from the area, after which they had a son. They are raising the children, born with the Rebbe's bracha, to Torah, chuppa, and good deeds.



A MIRACLE, THANKS TO A SHIUR IN FAMILY PURITY

This story took place in Atlit, a town on the road to Chaifa. The Maman family members are mekuravim and friends of the Chabad house in Atlit which is run by the shliach, Rabbi Moshe Akselrod. The father is the gabbai of the shul and is known for his influence and tz'daka and chesed activities throughout the city.

The oldest son moved to Yakne'am and he and his family are staunch pillars of the Chabad community there.

The second son, Yigal, got married eight years ago, lives in Atlit, but did not have children for six years even though they went to doctors, prayed, and went to Uman.

Yigal checked his two pairs of t'fillin and in the Rabbeinu Tam t'fillin there was a p'sul in the word "bechor" (oldest child). The letter *Reish* was missing. That explained why he didn't have an oldest child yet!

Mrs. Akselrod suggested that they arrange a shiur for women in the laws of Family Purity. The couple agreed and nine months after they started the shiur, their oldest daughter was born. Now they are waiting another birth.

IN THE MERIT OF 5000 SHEKELS

A shliach, who wants to remain anonymous, asks each participant on Simchas Torah to make a good resolution. Many stories about new baalei t'shuva and entire projects have been told, thanks to this initiative.

Among the members of the community there is a couple who were married for several years without children. Then, at the Simchas Torah farbrengen (four and a half years ago), the shliach suggested that he make a donation of 5000 shekels towards the building of a mikva in a location of their choice. In the merit of this decision, said the shliach, Hashem would bless them with children.

The man agreed and on Motzaei Shabbos B'Reishis the couple went to the shliach's house and gave him ten checks of 500 shekels each.

A story within the story: The couple wanted the shliach to take the money for his own project but the shliach did not want to take the money, even though he needed it. "This time, no; the money is to build a mikva."

They had just left the house when the phone rang and on the line was a woman who wanted to know the Chabad house's account

number so she could make a donation. The shliach asked her how much she planned on giving and she said 5000 shekels! The shliach found another shliach who was building a mikva and he gave him the ten checks. Nine months later, on the night of Tisha B'Av, the woman gave birth to a boy. May Hashem bless the parents with other children and with manifold brachos.

CHAIN OF BRACHOS AND CHILDREN

Rabbi Reuven Gol, shliach in Teveria, relates:

A mekureves of the Chabad house heard about asking for a bracha from the Rebbe through the Igros Kodesh. She came into the Chabad house and wrote a letter in which she asked for a bracha for a shidduch.

When the bracha was fulfilled, she came and asked for a bracha for children. Then she came and asked for a bracha for an easy birth.

The babysitter she hired for her daughter once cried about being married for seven years without children of her own. The mother told her about writing to the Rebbe and they both went to the Chabad house to ask for a bracha. Now the babysitter is waiting for an easy birth and good news!

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WE MUST REVIEW THE SOURCES!

Interview by Avrohom Reinitz

The Rebbe said that the “straight path” to bring the Geula is to learn inyanei Moshiach and Geula from the sources. * Likkutei Mekoros contains photocopies of Jewish and Chassidic sources about the eternal life of the Nasi HaDor. * The compiler, Rabbi Shloma Majeski, a popular lecturer and mashpia and dean of Machon Chana, explains the purpose of his compilation and responds to questions about hafatza of the Besuras HaGeula. * Part 2

[Continued from last issue]

Perhaps when considering the possible repercussions it makes more sense to focus on other topics that are easier to explain?

That’s a big mistake since we’re talking about fulfilling the Rebbe’s instructions. It’s not possible to lose out when fulfilling the Rebbe’s horaos.

If certain topics are hard to explain, the fault lies with those who make a mockery of the belief of most Lubavitchers, which is based on explicit things the Rebbe said; those who pervert what the Rebbe said and claim that the Rebbe never said

he’s Moshiach; those who publicize ridiculous claims that are painful to even mention. However once these things have been printed in the name of Lubavitchers, we must issue a public rejection and protest. These public distortions are the only reasons that it’s difficult to carry out the Rebbe’s instructions in inyanei Moshiach and Geula. We have heard this from the very people who have a hard time accepting the message, as they are under the impression that it is against the Rebbe’s sichos, heaven forbid.

What is important to clarify time and again is that all the mivtzaim,

without exception, need explaining. The explanations are readily accepted since the Rebbe prepared the world to accept his horaos. Back in 5747 the Rebbe said that the world is ready to accept the B’suras HaGeula and even the idea that “Yaakov Avinu did not die.”

Today we see, and this is a fact, that shluchim who follow the Rebbe’s instructions and publicize all those things that the Rebbe said to publicize, are very successful shluchim who bring dozens of Chassidim to the Rebbe every year. Not only do their mekuravim accept what they have to say, it adds a chayus in their religious observance.

Generally speaking, does it make sense to weigh “profits” and “losses” when it comes to outreach?

Only the Rebbe has the authority to decide what constitutes a “profit” and what constitutes a “loss.” There were times that the Rebbe considered a project a loss. There were years that he considered publicizing his identity as Moshiach as a “loss” even though it was obviously true. It wasn’t the time for it.

But after the Rebbe prepared the world to receive this true revelation, and on Simchas Torah 5746 he said that Nasi Doreinu is the Moshiach Doreinu and he doesn’t care if people will interpret it as literally referring to Moshiach; And after the Rebbe said on Shabbos Parshas

VaYigash 5747 that the world is ready to accept that Moshiach is about to be revealed any minute; And after dozens of responses in the 90's in which the Rebbe accepted and blessed those who signed on Kabbalas HaMalchus and personally publicized his identity as Moshiach and in the newspapers too; And above all else, after a year and a quarter of encouraging the singing of Yechi, even in front of the television crews who broadcasted it live to millions of people –

After all that, only someone with their eyes closed, who is utterly denying reality, only he can even *suggest* that it's impossible to publicize that the Rebbe is Moshiach.

In general, the way the Rebbe did things over the years was through publicizing. That which the earlier Rebbeim said, even those things that throughout the generations spread by word of mouth only – the Rebbe publicized nearly all of it. Even things the Rebbe Rayatz told him in yechidus the Rebbe repeated, and he

said that since the Rebbe Rayatz knew he would publicize it and told it to him regardless, that proved that it was meant to be publicized.

We can derive clear instruction *a fortiori* from this. If those things which were said in yechidus, with the knowledge that the listener would publicize them, could be publicized – then certainly those things said in public, that were edited by the Rebbe and given to be publicized in the newspapers, can and should be publicized wherever possible.

Furthermore, since there were times that the Rebbe negated the publicizing of his identity as Moshiach, saying it would turn people off from learning Chassidus; that proves very powerfully that when the Rebbe approved dozens of activities that publicized his identity as Moshiach, it was because the world *is* ready. Now, publicizing it does not turn people off from learning Chassidus; on the contrary. And I'm not saying this merely theoretically. The reality is that those

who spread the B'suras HaGeula are mekarev dozens and hundreds of Jews to the Rebbe.

In the activities of those involved in publicity, two topics are focused on: 1) B'suras HaGeula including publicizing the identity of the Rebbe as Moshiach, and 2) the Rebbe's eternal life, physically. The question is, should they be treated equally or is there an order of priorities in what should be publicized?

There is an order of priorities but not because we decided on it but because the Rebbe himself did. Whatever is brought in the sichos is meant to be publicized, yet there are specific points that the Rebbe explicitly asked be publicized to all members of the generation.

We must first publicize those things which the Rebbe said explicitly that we should publicize (like there being a Prophet of the generation and the main prophecy of "hinei zeh Moshiach ba," etc.) as well as those things which the Rebbe himself publicized (like the identity of Moshiach which the Rebbe did in sichos and in the newspapers and he encouraged the Chassidim in the singing of Yechi in front of millions of television viewers).

Then you publicize the rest of the things which the Rebbe didn't explicitly say to publicize but since he included them in sichos which were publicized in newspapers, his intention was obviously for us to publicize them too.

So the short answer to your question is that those things which the Rebbe said we should publicize are top priority. The rest are in the Rebbe's sichos but are not on the same level of importance to publicize.

Is the belief that the Rebbe is chai v'kayam connected to the B'suras HaGeula or not?

If both publicizing the identity of Moshiach and kabbalas ha'malchus,



are part of the B'suras HaGeula, it makes sense to say that Moshiach's eternal life is connected with the B'suras HaGeula. The B'suras HaGeula is based on what the Rebbe said. For those to whom the Rebbe is past tense and not *chai v'kayam*, his instructions are also past tense. In the sicha I mentioned earlier, of VaYigash 5747, the Rebbe brings both things – the world's readiness for Geula and the world's readiness to accept the idea of “Yaakov Avinu did not die” – together, and so apparently there is a connection between them.

Regarding Rabbeinu HaKadosh who went to his home every Friday night after his passing, it says that the reason he merited this is because his students did not make peace with his passing to the point that they said, “Whoever says that Rebbi died, should be pierced with a sword.”

The same is true for us. The more we hold on to the belief that the Rebbe is *chai v'kayam* and we don't agree to accept the physical reality as the true reality, the quicker and sooner we will see the hisgalus of the Rebbe.

You are a sought-after speaker even for non-Lubavitcher circles. Who arranges those lectures?

The lectures are usually arranged by a certain Lubavitcher who has ties with non-Lubavitchers who are interested in listening. There are Litvishe, Polish Chassidim, and just “plain” good Jews. The lectures focus on sources. There are many things that the opposition hears them from Lubavitchers, that upset them because they're sure we made it up.

When they finish with all their accusations about Lubavitch inventions, and you show them the sources in the s'farim of the Chafetz Chaim and other s'farim, they suddenly understand that their views are founded on ignorance.

If you analyze the Rebbe's messages about the B'suras HaGeula, there are the basic points, most of which are mentioned in non-Chabad sources. Then there are the Rebbe's chiddushim which concentrate on more current and practical issues. Take for example “the time for your redemption has arrived” - the beliefs that Moshiach is in our generation and we are the generation of Geula are found in *Pirkei T'shuva V'Geula* in the name of Rabbi Moshe Feinstein. The Rebbe's chiddush is that the Geula has started already and we already

acquaintance who said that we can't speak like this and that it was like Shabsi Tzvi, heaven forbid. A few months passed in the course of which he saw some of the sources on inyanei Moshiach and Geula and he changed his tune to: It's one thing if you say that a person in our times is Moshiach, that's okay. Saying that the Rebbe is Moshiach doesn't go against Jewish belief, since we see in the Gemara that talmidim believed that their teachers were Moshiach. But why do you try to compel everybody to believe that the Rebbe is Moshiach?

We can derive clear instruction a fortiori from this. If those things which were said in yechidus, with the knowledge that the listener would publicize them, could be publicized – then certainly those things said in public, that were edited by the Rebbe and given to be publicized in the newspapers, can and should be publicized wherever possible.

have the hisgalus of Moshiach.

Lately there are Litvishe organizations that are involved with inyanei Moshiach.

A big change has taken place among all circles on the topic of Geula. In my opinion, this change is a result of publicizing the sources. When a frum Jew sees the sources, he can't continue repeating the nonsense he heard which goes contrary to Torah sources.

Before 27 Adar, when we spoke openly about the Rebbe as Moshiach, I met a Litvishe

What did I learn from this story? That when we publicize the sources, it works. It takes a month, two months, but in the end they realize that if it says so in the Gemara, they can't disparage it.

Generally speaking, is the world more open to accepting Chassidus?

Definitely. The Rebbe is waging his wars in such an amazing way that even Misnagdim are occupied with the Rebbe's mitzvaim nowadays. They are so involved in kiruv and it's all a result of the Rebbe's influence.

I once met someone who found the inyan of a Rebbe hard to accept. He said that it's like idol worship. I asked him what his reaction would be if I said that a Chassid who doubts his Rebbe is just like someone who doubts Hashem. He declared that this was avoda zara. I asked him how he would react if I said that someone who fights his Rebbe is like someone who fights Hashem and he lost it and said we are playing with fire and this is heresy.

I went to ask him what his

are way-off!

How do you explain the fact that among Lubavitchers there are those who oppose publicizing the B'suras HaGeula. Do they not know the sources?

Most of them don't know the sources. There's a reason that the Rebbe said that the quickest and easiest way of bringing the Geula is by learning inyanei Geula and Moshiach. If all Chabad Chassidim would learn the Rebbe's sichos on inyanei Geula, especially the sichos

either.

I encounter this a lot outside of Chabad. Litvishe b'nei yeshiva never learned inyanei Geula as it is sourced in Torah, Gemara and the Midrash. Where do they get their ideas from? From what they heard as kids and comments that people make to one another? That's how they take a position on such an important issue?! It's no wonder then, that when they hear that Lubavitchers say the Rebbe is Moshiach that their immediate reaction is: It can't be that someone in our time is Moshiach. Only someone ignorant of the sources can say that.

So it's very important to publicize the sources both within the chareidi community and in the Chabad community. If we would learn inyanei Geula and Moshiach, everything would change.

The problem is that the Evil Inclination is aware of the importance of learning inyanei Geula and Moshiach and so he uses various disguises and tactics to stop us from learning. We need to know that the approach which negates learning inyanei Geula is sourced in the Evil Inclination.

What about the Lubavitchers who say the Rebbe was talking in spiritual terms or in terms of hoping and wishing?

The only one who can say this is someone who is not learning the sichos. The Rebbe used terminology that emphasizes that he meant what he said literally; "Pointing with his finger and saying this," "literally, mamash," "mamash, mamash, mamash," "below ten handbreadth," etc. What else could he have said to make it clear that he meant what he said literally?

The Rebbe said several times that when he speaks in public, especially when he gives what he said to be printed, it pertains to everyone. Whoever learns the sichos



reaction would be if I said that a person who had complaints against his Rebbe is like he has complaints against Hashem. At this point he couldn't stop himself from calling me all sorts of uncomplimentary names.

Then I took out a Shulchan Aruch and a Rambam, Hilchos Talmud Torah and showed him how it says that one who doubts his teacher, is like he doubts the Sh'china, and so on. I showed him how, if you don't know the sources, you can arrive at conclusions that

of the 90's where the Rebbe addresses the actuality of Geula in our generation – all the opposition would have faded away a long time ago, since people would understand that this is what the Rebbe wants.

The problem starts when people don't learn. A person naturally wants to have a position on important topics, and since he doesn't know anything about it, he bases his position on what so-and-so said. He doesn't consider that so-and-so's opinion is not based on the Rebbe's sichos since he didn't learn them

I went to ask him what his reaction would be if I said that a person who had complaints against his Rebbe is like he has complaints against Hashem. At this point he couldn't stop himself from calling me all sorts of uncomplimentary names. Then I took out a Shulchan Aruch and a Rambam...



understands that the Rebbe meant what he said b'gashmius.

There are Lubavitchers who don't want to write "Melech HaMoshiach" as the Rebbe's title but write "Nasi Doreinu." In your experience, are people more receptive to Nasi Doreinu?

Not at all. I once attended a lecture given by a shliach who began by reading a letter from the Rebbe. The shliach said it was a letter that the Rebbe sent "when he was alive," a most unbecoming expression. Why did he say that? Because he thought that otherwise, people wouldn't be receptive. Surprisingly, later on he said in the name of the Alter Rebbe that tzaddikim after their passing are more influential than in their lifetimes. My question is: And that we *can* understand?!

The same logic that says that identifying Moshiach and the idea of eternal life won't be accepted, should lead to one to conclude that the title "Nasi Doreinu" won't be accepted. If the Rebbe is not alive, how can he be Nasi Doreinu?

They quote things the Rebbe himself said about the Rebbe Rayatz that Shimshon was considered the leader twenty years after his death.

If we're quoting the Rebbe, in those same sichos the Rebbe says his father-in-law is alive and the Rebbe is Moshiach!

So you are saying that they are simply deluding themselves?

Exactly. A fellow who got involved with Chabad at university and heard someone say that publicizing about Moshiach puts people off told me: Believe me, when a Chabad rabbi came over to me and asked me to put on

those black cubes on my hand and head – that was a whole lot weirder than telling me that the day will come when the world will be at peace!

In conclusion, what is your message to the readers of Beis Moshiach? Most of them are not lecturers but they want to do the Rebbe's ratzon. How should they do that?

Simple: You do that by listening to the Rebbe. Get ten people together and learn inyanei Moshiach and Geula together. If each of us gathered ten people to learn together, the world would be ready for Geula. This is what the Rebbe wants us to do: prepare ourselves and our environment to greet Moshiach.

Sometimes you can see how a little thing you do has a big effect. Someone told me that he had a Moshiach bumper sticker on his car for years, but he only uses the car inside a limited radius. One day he showed up at a certain event and the television crews that came to cover the event caught the bumper sticker on his car in the camera view and publicized the image to millions of viewers.

The truth is that when it comes to ruchnius, everything has an effect. Only sometimes do we get to see how a small action has an enormous effect b'gashmius.

In the sicha of Parshas Pinchas 5751, the Rebbe spoke about "making Eretz Yisroel here," and said that if everyone took care of his own little "space" the world would change! The same is true for preparing the world for Moshiach. If each person thought about his immediate surroundings and prepared it to greet Moshiach, the entire world would soon be ready.

SAVING SOULS STEEPED IN A LAND OF IDOLS

By Shneur Elias

When you work in India, essence of the East, there are constantly new “soul stories.” As shlucha Mrs. Zelda Goldstein puts it, “These are things that happen here every day.” I myself witnessed some of these stories.

At the Chabad house in Pushkar, “Chabad’s empire in India” as tourists call it, there is a daily Chassidus class at 7:00 in the evening, followed by supper. A Chassidishe farbrengen usually ensues when heartwarming Chassidic stories are told.

One morning, I noticed a young Israeli who had been at the class the night before, as he got ready for davening. I figured he was probably a knitted yarmulke type who was touring India like lots of other people, and I didn’t attribute much significance to his serious demeanor. He surely seemed like an old hand at mitzvos as he learned Tanya afterwards with the shliach, Rabbi Shimi.

It wasn’t until two weeks later that I discovered this man’s story. His name is Roni and he grew up

with a religious background in Eretz Yisroel. At a certain age, due to a crisis in faith, he threw off the yoke of Torah and rejected everything Jewish. He lost nearly all feeling for t’fillin, Shabbos, Yom Kippur and other holidays.

Nearly four years passed before Roni decided to go to India. He had money since he had worked and saved the money he earned.

At the start of his trip, Roni made a firm decision not to enter any Chabad houses, come what may! He had heard about Chabad and the Rebbe and he knew that in a place like that he was liable to change direction and there would be no way back.

When Roni arrived in Pushkar, on his way from the bus to the guest houses he passed the Chabad house and on the spur of the moment he

went inside, “just to see what goes on there.” Obviously, it didn’t end with that.

Roni walked in just as Rabbi Shimi was giving a Chassidus class, a shiur that quickly turned into a fascinating marathon on the topic of Judaism and faith. He just listened on the side, trying not to get swept up, trying not to get drawn into the captivating atmosphere. But he was drawn in anyway, as yet unaware to what extent ...

When he went to his room at night he couldn’t fall asleep. His thoughts didn’t let him. His entire life passed before his eyes and heart. His tortured soul began to boil up. He suddenly felt tears welling up and he spent the rest of the night wiping away tears that refused to stop flowing.

The next day marked a turning point in his life when he began putting on t’fillin, went back to keeping kosher and Shabbos and arranged to learn Chassidus with the shliach. Only after several weeks of learning Chassidus did he continue to the next Chabad house in the north of India. There too, he did not neglect his shiurim in Chassidus and he progressed in his observance and became an ardent Chassid of the Rebbe.

WHEN THE CHEVRA CAME TO HELP

R' Shimi Goldstein related:

One day a young Israeli showed up at the Chabad house. After he inquired about the Rebbe and Chassidus, I suggested that he come along with me on mivtza t'fillin opposite Pushkar's famous lake. At sunset, all the tourists gather at the hillside ledges opposite the lake to watch it. It's the best time to put t'fillin on with people, and this itself has become part of the tourist attraction.

Our agreement was that I would stand up on the higher ground, and he would go down among the chevra and ask them to come up and put on t'fillin. Not a minute went by and I saw guys coming up to me, one after the other.

I was flabbergasted. How did this young guy, doing this for the first time in his life, convince them to put on t'fillin so easily while I had to work at convincing them and sometimes get into debates?

The mystery became all the

greater as I went over to put t'fillin on them. They didn't know what I was talking about. I looked down toward my partner and saw more and more people heading up to me, while the ones standing with me didn't know what I wanted from them.

I motioned to him to come up quickly and to explain what was going on. He came running and then he asked me, "How come you're not putting t'fillin on with them?"

The chevra gave him a look as though he had pulled a fast one on them. "You told us that help was needed, didn't you?"

"Of course help is needed," he said with utmost sincerity. "We need help to bring the Geula! Don't you want to help us?"

In time, that young man established a fine Chassidic home. When I reminded him about the incident, he told me:

"The first one who went up to 'help' did not put on t'fillin that day,

but a few weeks later I met him again and he told me that since then, he felt bad that he hadn't helped bring the Geula. His conscience bothered him until he went to a Chabad house up north where he put on t'fillin, apparently for the first time in his life."

OUT OF THOUSANDS OF TAXIS

The following an amazing story happened to Rabbi Shimi Goldstein:

A tourist usually gets a visa for six months and he has to cross one of the borders and get an exit stamp, and only then can he get an extension. A few years ago, we had to extend our visas to India after they expired. That year, we flew to Thailand and extended our visas there.

On our return we landed in Delhi. As you know, in India it's not hard to find a taxi because as soon as you walk out of the terminal, hundreds of drivers descend upon you and want to take you as their passenger. After some bargaining, as is customary, we got into a taxi and drove to "Main Bazaar," to a hotel near the Chabad house.

After we arrived at the hotel and had put our things in order, we suddenly realized that we had left our passports, money and personal documents in the taxi! The value of our documents in India, the bureaucratic capitol of the world, was inestimable. Losing them, one can spend countless hopeless weeks between government offices until things get straightened out.

When we realized our terrible oversight, we didn't waste a minute but immediately contacted people to help us locate the taxi. Delhi is a city with hundreds of thousands of vehicles and nearly all of them are taxi drivers. To find the taxi that took you from the airport is quite impossible, especially since the treasure on the back seat was surely

A young Israeli wearing t'fillin moments before the sun sets in Pushkar



***His tortured soul
began to boil up.
He suddenly felt
tears welling up
and he spent the
rest of the night
wiping away tears
that refused to
stop flowing...***

noticed by now. And would he recognize you? And would he return it? There was no way.

Moreover, when people file a report at the police station, they are usually asked such general questions as: "Did he have a mustache?" Of course, most Indians have a mustache ... They just ask a few questions for the purpose of filling out the form.

After some time, one of the locals suggested that we try a specific area in the city where the taxi drivers congregate. "In Delhi," he said, "there is a huge area where many drivers sleep. He will probably be there."

Having no alternative, we went to the area he told us about without deluding ourselves about our chances. Upon arriving there, we were taken aback to see hundreds of taxis parked in almost complete darkness.

My friend concluded that it was hopeless. "How will you identify the driver in the dark? Let's give up."

"Since we came here already, let's at least look into a few taxis, just so that we tried," I suggested.

For some reason, I went over to a particular taxi that was parked near us among the huge number of taxis and I tried to peer inside. And the unbelievable happened! From the

window I could make out my jacket lying on the back seat with the passports, money, and important documents in it.

I knocked on the driver's window and when he woke up he thought he was hallucinating. He could not understand what I wanted of him. I motioned to him that my jacket was in the back and that we had come to get it. We took the jacket and I checked to see that everything was intact.

It was truly a miracle that out of all those taxis there, I went straight to the right one.

PURSUING ME

I can testify to the power of the meshaleiach that passes through the shliach and brings about miracles. On more than one occasion I have met tourists at the Chabad house who expressed an interest in getting more involved in Judaism but somehow, at a certain point they "wake up" and just leave. Of course, we lose track of them and who knows what happens next, but sometimes odd things happen and tourists who try to leave, just can't. It's just like the story with the black wagon and the Alter Rebbe when it just wouldn't go on Friday afternoon.

Once a couple wanted to leave and their motorcycle, which worked fine up until then, mysteriously no longer worked. Another time, the guy drove off and returned in a day "for some reason" ... On a different occasion, it was a simple stomach flu, and so on.

One Shabbos in Pushkar, an Israeli youth showed up in the middle of davening. He stood in the doorway, hesitant about entering and casting suspicious glances all around. He came with two other guys who helped him bring his baggage in. Since I was in the middle of davening, I went over to

him and motioned to him to come in and feel at home.

Before he put his bag down he said, "I didn't sleep all night." I understood that something was bothering him and that he needed help.

When we finished davening he told us the following:

My name is Asher. I grew up on a kibbutz in the south of the country and this is the first time that I am traveling abroad. A week ago I arrived in Jaipur on a stopover from Israel via Delhi on the way here to Pushkar.

When I left the airport, a driver offered to take me at a good price. I trusted him and we set out. I noticed that he didn't get on to the main highway but continued towards the city itself but I still didn't suspect a thing and I kept quiet.

After some minutes of driving we arrived somewhere where he stopped and told me to get out, saying we had come to the taxis' office headquarters. When I walked inside the owner welcomed me and shook my hand. For some reason, he spent over an hour and a half talking to me.

He spoke about Israel, about the global situation and while doing so, he asked to see my passport as though out of curiosity. I didn't suspect a thing and handed it to him. He casually went over to the copying machine and copied it. I asked him why he needed it and he gave a noncommittal answer.

I found this odd and suspicious. I suddenly felt I had gotten into trouble. After a few more minutes of conversation, he handed me a small bag.

"There are some diamonds here that have to get to Israel," he said offhandedly. "The taxes on diamonds are high for importers and exporters," he tried explaining. "But for tourists it's much lower. I want you to take these diamonds, declare

them, pay what they ask you, and then we will divide the profits.”

Now the truth had come out. I had fallen in with a criminal gang. Afterwards, I found out that this was a famous gang that forced people to take diamonds for them to Israel in a legal fashion. The victim had to pay the taxes and then members of the underworld appeared at his home, based on details written on his passport, and promised to pay the amount he had laid out plus a percentage. Then they disappeared, never to be heard from again.

I didn't have the courage to get up and go but at some point, I realized I had no choice, it was either now or it would be too late. I took my bag and ran. “We'll find you,” I heard him yell from behind

me.

I took a taxi and drove to Pushkar where I stayed in a hotel and tried to recover from this bizarre experience. Last night I was sitting on the roof of the hotel, looking at the scenery and having a friendly conversation with my neighbor from the next room when I suddenly noticed the guy who had spoken to me the day before. He was talking with the owner of the hotel as though he hadn't noticed me. I also made believe that I did not notice him but I knew that if he had arrived there, I was in trouble.

Out of the corner of my eye I noticed that he had turned and was staring at me. He kept finding reasons to inch closer to my table. When I saw him getting too close, I

got up and walked towards the exit. He stopped me and said in a friendly way, “I think I know you ...”

“I don't know you,” I replied curtly and turned to leave. I went down to my room and wondered what to do next.

After consulting with my neighbor we decided that I would move my stuff into his room and I would sleep there. We couldn't sleep all night. I imagined them pursuing me, catching me, and beating me up, and forcing me to take the diamonds.

In the middle of the night we heard the door to my room burst open. Someone went in and out a few times and then left. We had no doubt who the person was. I trembled at the thought that they would figure out I was in the next room and would break in. My friend and I did not take chances. We took knives to defend ourselves and stood waiting near the door.

It took a long time until we relaxed our guard. We knew we could not stay there any longer and that there was only one place where I could feel safe, the Chabad house! And that's why I'm here now.

Throughout our conversation, he glanced all around him as though in fear of the appearance of those men. I tried to figure out whether he was telling me the truth or perhaps he had taken drugs and was hallucinating or exaggerating.

After talking with some people in the know, I found out that this is known and common in Jaiphur, the city of diamonds.

We offered the fellow some food and a place to sleep for a few hours. At first, he was afraid. He kept looking around to verify that nobody was after him. I took him to a room and he lay down to rest though not before locking the door and peering out the window every few minutes. “Don't worry,” I tried to calm him,



Rabbi Shimi with an Israeli tourist

I was flabbergasted. How did this young guy, doing this for the first time in his life, convince them to put on t'fillin so easily while I had to work at convincing them and sometimes get into debates?

"they won't come here."

The next day, Sunday, he packed his bags and got ready to head for the bus station on his way to northern India. When I saw him with his backpack on I asked him to put on t'fillin. "Thanks," he said politely, but then he hesitantly said, while observing my reaction, "The truth is that I never put on t'fillin."

"So now's the time!" I said with a smile.

"For some reason, throughout everything that happened, I had the thought that I have to put on t'fillin for the first time in my life here in

India, and maybe I'm getting a hint from Heaven about it. But I'm still not ready to do it. I promise you though, that thanks to you I won't leave India before putting on t'fillin."

All my efforts to convince him to do it then and there failed. He left and I waved goodbye. A few weeks later I found out that as soon as he arrived in Dramsala, he went to the Chabad house and put on t'fillin.

FLEEING AT THE LAST MINUTE

The scene is Delhi, shortly after Shabbos was ushered in. At the Chabad house run by Rabbi Shmuel Scharf they were looking for Israeli tourists for Mincha. A minyan for Maariv is no problem since many people come for the Shabbos meal and end up joining the services.

One of the mekuravim went down to the street to find some Israelis to complete the minyan and when he went out to the main street, Main Bazaar, he noticed a girl sitting on the corner and sobbing. She was obviously Israeli and he went over to her to see if he could be of help.

"I have to tell you something," she said emotionally when she saw him with his Yechi kippa. "I have been traveling in India for a few years now and have been enjoying every minute of it. I am well aware of Chabad's work in India but from the start I resolved not to enter a single one, under any circumstances.

I must tell you that I stuck to this decision for years, even though I was near many Chabad houses.

"About a year ago, I became friendly with a local, Indian young man. We lived together in his house for a long time and all was peaceful. Today, out of the blue, we got into an argument and he hit me. I knew I had to get out of there but when I tried to flee he blocked the door and locked it.

"I stood there helplessly, not knowing what to do next. Then I remembered that in my bag I had a T'hilim that my mother had given me before I left home. She urged me to take it with me where I went. I politely took it and stuffed it deep into my bag. I didn't think I would ever need it but today I ran to take it out.

"I prayed to G-d to help me out of there. I don't know how it happened but the Indian let the door open a little bit and I took the opportunity to escape, and here I am. I knew that you would be the first to help me."

After she calmed down she entered the Chabad house to have something to eat and to recover from her ordeal. She didn't stop regretting the fact that she hadn't visited Chabad Houses before, which would have prevented this sorry tale from happening.

After a few days of learning Chassidus, she resolved never to venture forth to foreign fields and was determined to only marry a Jew.

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COMING FULL CIRCLE IN CINCINNATI, OHIO

By Nosson Avrohom

One day, a Chassidishe, talented young man got up and decided to start a yeshiva, one that has become a success story in a very short time. The Chabad Mesivta in Cincinnati has three grades and the talmidim learn and daven in an atmosphere of hiskashrus to the Rebbe and Geula.

The Chabad Yeshiva in Cincinnati has just completed its second year. In this brief period of time, the yeshiva has acquired an excellent reputation and has had a tremendous impact on the city which has long been associated with the Reform movement. The one who took the plunge and took on the responsibility of the Yeshiva is Rabbi Gershon Avtzon.

"Sometimes I pinch myself to see whether I'm dreaming," he says.

The Yeshiva is a place where bachurim are educated to hiskashrus *ahn p'shetlach* (without compromises). The T'mimim in Cincinnati walk around proud to be

in the king's legion with all that implies. How beautiful it is to see dozens of talmidim during s'darim, as the sound of Torah reverberates in the beis midrash.

The Yeshiva is known as a place that gives personal attention to each bachur which is why many shluchim send their sons there when they were unable to have a formal, Chassidishe education in their place of shlichus.

The Yeshiva is special and this is obvious to the visitor. There is lots of simcha and chayus. You notice that the talmidim actually love the Yeshiva and the staff.

When I commented to R' Avtzon that the distance between his staff

and talmidim is one of respect and not one of fear, he said with a smile, "One of the main reasons that explains what you have noticed is the chayus in inyanei Moshiach and Geula that we have here. If you live Moshiach and live with the Rebbe, in the present tense, and not as someone in the past, your behavior is different. This is also one of the main reasons that led us to opening the yeshiva for, in our opinion, this component is lacking elsewhere."

Along with the outstanding ruchnius, and the level of learning, the chayus in inyanei Moshiach and Geula and the personal attention, the talmidim enjoy excellent gashmius conditions. The yeshiva is located in the heart of the city in a building that served the T'mimim-shluchim from 770 who came at the end of the 70's. At that time, the shliach Rabbi Sholom Dovber Kalmanson was asked to start a yeshiva within only ten days. The yeshiva, which closed two years later for various reasons, has now reopened and is a direct continuation of that surprising instruction that came before Lag B'Omer 5737 from the Rebbe.

The spacious building has two floors. On the first floor are the beis

midrash, kitchen, dining room and offices. On the second floor is the dormitory which consists of twenty rooms that serve the fifty talmidim and bachurim-shluchim. The second floor also has a laundry room. R' Avtzon thinks that bachurim should live in one place and not be scattered in apartments.

"The goal is for the shluchim to live with the talmidim," he explained, and he said that the group of shluchim coming next year will be coming from the yeshiva in Frankfurt.

"Even though the Yeshiva is relatively small, we have hired a full-time *menahel gashmi*, Rabbi Eliyahu Morrison, to ensure that the bachurim's gashmius needs are seen to.

How does a Chassidishe young man get up one morning and decide to open a successful yeshiva? Aren't there are other mesivtos in the United States?



Rabbi Gershon Avtzon

"Before I opened the yeshiva I consulted with many mechanchim and rabbanim. I spoke to Rabbi Heller in Crown Heights about opening another yeshiva and he said that the era of huge mesivtos with hundreds of students is over. He said that every bachur today needs

personal attention and so he looked favorably on my opening a yeshiva.

"I have been teaching in yeshivos kayitz from a very young age, each year in a different place. I traveled all over the United States. It's not that I woke up one morning and decided that I'm the person to educate young bachurim. Over the years I learned how teenaged bachurim think and how to handle their problems and conflicts.

"When I first got married, I thought I was going on shlichus, like my friends, and that I would establish a k'hilla and do mitvzaim. I had some offers which I checked out. I wrote to the Rebbe about one of them and the answer I opened to changed everything.

"The answer said – you see success in your work in chinuch, especially with youth, so why don't you continue with this? I decided that I would forgo shlichus and devote myself to chinuch. I looked for a mesivta where I could get



involved.

“When I spoke about this to my mashpia and with other rabbanim, we came to the conclusion that in order to establish a new chinuch approach, a new mosad had to be opened. One of my main goals is to guide the bachurim so that the learning is not arduous but at the same time, they will graduate from here knowing how to learn Gemara, Rashi and Tosafos.”

Rabbi Avtzon’s cousin, Rabbi Eliyahu Simpson, who used to teach in mesivta in Crown Heights, opened the yeshiva with him. He is an expert mechanech, and comes

At that time, the shliach Rabbi Sholom Dovber Kalmanson was asked to start a yeshiva within only ten days. The yeshiva, which closed two years later for various reasons, has now reopened and is a direct continuation of that surprising instruction that came before Lag B’Omer 5737 from the Rebbe.

from a family which has chinuch flowing in their veins. He is also respected by the bachurim for the weekly shiurim he gives in *Divrei Yemei Yisroel* (Jewish History) and general Jewish topics that broaden the minds of the bachurim.

Another one of their goals is to be mechanech the talmidim in the spirit of Geula and to proudly live with the Besuras HaGeula.

“Our idea in founding the yeshiva was to have a mosad where living with Moshiach is a given, not something debatable. This is why we chose Cincinnati because the Chabad community there, without exception, lives with Moshiach.

“At the yeshiva we have a shiur in inyanei Moshiach and Geula every day as part of the curriculum. When the talmidim see that the hanhala lives with Moshiach, that the shluchim live with Moshiach, it makes a deep impression on them. It creates a situation in which I don’t have to get the kids excited about Moshiach; they live it.”

As mentioned earlier, thirty years ago, in 1977, only ten days before Lag B’Omer, Rabbi Chadakov called Rabbi Kalmanson and told him that the Rebbe wanted him to start a yeshiva that would begin on Lag B’Omer! When I spoke to Rabbi Kalmanson, he recalled that time and expressed his delight with the new yeshiva there now.

“That phone call from Rabbi Chadakov was a huge surprise especially as it was towards the end of the z’man. Whoever I told about it did not understand how a yeshiva could be formed on such short notice without funding or anything at all. However, since the Rebbe asked for it, it was done. Within ten days the yeshiva opened with talmidim sent from 770.

“A few days later, I got another phone call and was told that the Rebbe wanted me to contact Rashag

(the Rebbe’s brother-in-law) and tell him to call Rabbi Ruderman, the Litvishe rosh yeshiva in Ner Yisroel in Baltimore and to ask him not to open a branch of his yeshiva in Cincinnati. That’s when I found out that Rabbi Ruderman had plans on opening a branch here.

“I immediately called Rashag who was a member of the Agudas Menahalei HaYeshivos in the United States and was very influential. The next day he called me and told me to tell the Rebbe that his request had been carried out.

“The yeshiva operated for two years until certain problems arose, which I won’t get into now. Apparently the *sitra achra* was bothered by the fact that a yeshiva existed here and we were forced to close it. Throughout that time the Rebbe guided us.

“Without getting into the details of what happened that led to the closing of the yeshiva, I will tell you that the final answer we received from the Rebbe about the yeshiva said: **‘He will receive his reward, davka from desisting.’** Today I know that the greatest reward is the opening of the yeshiva by Rabbi Avtzon.”

R’ Avtzon’s connection to Cincinnati began three years ago when he met a friend, Rabbi Gavriel Levin, who is Rabbi Kalmanson’s son-in-law. R’ Levin, who heard about R’ Avtzon’s plan to open a yeshiva, told him that his father-in-law had just returned from a lecture tour in Eretz Yisroel. While there, he had visited some Chabad yeshivos and had been very impressed by the big yeshiva in Tzfas, by the chayus in inyanei Moshiach there. He was inspired to open a yeshiva in Cincinnati that would inculcate this idealism in its students and that would also bring back a Chabad yeshiva to the city.

“That same day I called R’ Kalmanson who liked the idea.



Listening to a shiur given by Rabbi Kalmanson

Things moved forward quickly. R' Kalmanson still had the building that had been used by the talmidim in 1977. He undertook to renovate it and to pay for the expenses while I took on the job of recruiting talmidim and paying the staff.

"At first we thought of starting with just shiur Alef (9th grade), but when we wrote to the Rebbe we opened to an amazing answer that left no room for doubt. The Rebbe wrote to someone who was in chinuch and told him to add double the energy and then he would discover hidden strengths he didn't know he had.

"In light of this answer, we decided to open with two grades shiurim Alef and beis. As with every inyan of k'dusha, there were plenty of obstacles but with Hashem's help and lots of kochos from the Rebbe, we overcame them. We have just concluded our second year with three grades and we have a good registration for next year.

"This past year the yeshiva hired another *yungerman*, Rabbi Zalman Baras, whose previous success in Mesivta Oholei Torah is legendary. In addition to teaching he devoted

time every day to speak to the bachurim one-on-one to encourage them in their spiritual growth.

"We have satisfaction from what we are doing; bachurim are living with Moshiach, living with mitzvaim and horaos from the Rebbe. We feel that the Rebbe is with us both spiritually and materially."

We asked R' Avtzon what educational challenges he contends with and what his solutions are. He said:

"Shiur Alef is difficult because this is the first time that the bachurim are traveling so far from home and for such a long period of time. It's not camp and they have to live in a dormitory with other boys, many of whom they are meeting for the first time. It's different than dorming in Eretz Yisroel where, within a few hours by bus, a bachur can be home. Here, most of the boys are coming from other states.

"It's also very hard for the children of shluchim who are coming from distant places. They have attended day school and got their main chinuch and ability to learn from their parents, the

shluchim. Many of them are not on the same level as the bachurim who learned all their lives in Oholei Torah or Lubavitcher Yeshiva.

"All these boys come together and you have to find the right level for each and every one. This is the reason that we place a huge emphasis on personal attention. Each bachur-shliach is assigned several bachurim and he is responsible for their progress both in learning as well as their behavior and Chassidishe conduct. The same is true for the hanhala with each staff member having talmidim he is responsible for.

"This is one of the main reasons that we don't want large classes. Each class has up to twenty talmidim which enables us to keep tabs on every bachur. It's intensive work but there are no shortcuts with talmidim. With some of the talmidim, those who don't come from Crown Heights and haven't had the experience of living in a Chabad atmosphere 24 hours, we notice the influence of secular American society. Part of our job is to change this to a Chassidishe outlook.

“Every Sunday night, Rabbi Kalmanson gives a shiur in Chassidishe hashkafa. The bachurim ask him questions that are on their minds. Rabbi Kalmanson is a gifted speaker who is forceful and clear and he has quite an impact on the boys.

“Back when we first started out, we decided to see in what area each boy shines and to help him develop in that area. When a bachur is able to develop in an area that he has a *geshmak*, he will end up learning everything.”

The boys don’t just cover material but are taught how to learn, so that every bachur leaves the yeshiva knowing how to learn a daf Gemara or a maamer Chassidus on his own. The hanhala gives a lot of help to the boys to enable them to learn on their own. The hanhala is very dedicated and this makes the yeshiva into one big family. The teachers are young married men.

“The bachurim in high school don’t necessarily relate to an older mashpia. In Chabad it was known that there is chinuch and above all else, the talmidim get their chayus from the Rebbe. Bachurim wrote to the Rebbe, attended farbrengens, saw the Rebbe, and this shaped their Chassidic lives. The very fact that a bachur spent time in 770 and had a chayus was an important factor.

“After 3 Tamuz, when unfortunately, we don’t see the Rebbe, chinuch has had to undergo a drastic change. There are mashpiim and rabbanim who have not made any changes. A mashpia can come to a class and talk at a farbrengen about devotion to the Rebbe and he has no idea why the bachurim sitting there don’t understand him. He thinks that having a chayus in Chassidishe inyanim is a given and that what he needs to demand of them is devotion, but he’s wrong.

“That mashpia educated generations of talmidim who were raised with the Rebbe and he doesn’t understand why he has to farbreng with bachurim about mikva when that’s self-understood. The answer is that today, nothing is self-understood and the simplest Chassidishe values must be instilled and not taken for granted.

“I want to share a feeling that I have. In 1982 the Rebbe founded Tzivos Hashem. The boys born then (myself included) became bar mitzvah in 1994. I think that the Rebbe was empowering these young boys with the ko’ach to educate the post Gimmel Tammuz talmidim.

“At the same time, re-inventing chinuch is not desirable and so we have to strike a balance. We consult with mashpiim and experienced educators like Rabbi Yosef Simpson, Rabbi Lustig and Rabbi Akiva Wagner, who is my personal mashpia. The talmidim here are greatly influenced by R’ Kalmanson who is a role model of a shliach with bittul to the Rebbe.”

Ask any talmid who learns in Cincinnati and you will hear that he is happy there. The fact that the yeshiva is removed from any large Chabad community and is located in a place where there is a united Chabad k’hilla with thirty families who all know one another, contributes tremendously towards the intimate atmosphere in yeshiva.

What intensifies the cohesiveness is the Shabbatons. Since the boys can’t go home for Shabbos, they are hosted by the shluchim in and near Cincinnati (Columbus, Ohio and Louisville, Kentucky etc.) In a city like New York, there are many potential distractions that can lure a bachur from his learning, including spiritual things like weddings and bar mitzvas.

“There’s a bachur who came to yeshiva from his parents place of

shlichus. It took him a long time to get into the swing of things. One morning he said he didn’t feel well and he asked to be excused. I agreed because I knew that he wanted time to himself. A few hours later he came to me with a volume of Igros Kodesh and said, ‘R’ Avtzon, I have regards for you from the Rebbe.’

“I didn’t know what he meant until he told me that he had wanted to write to the Rebbe which is why he had asked to be excused. He wrote about his life on shlichus and how hard it was for him in yeshiva. He showed me the answer he opened to. The Rebbe wrote to a bachur in a good yeshiva with a good rosh yeshiva and said he did not understand why he wanted to leave. This bachur changed from one extreme to another.”

One of Anash in Cincinnati admitted to R’ Avtzon that when he started the yeshiva, he didn’t believe that the T’mimim would be able to accomplish much on mivtza t’fillin and the other mivtzaim. Jews in Cincinnati hide their Jewish identity. Many of them are the second or third generation and don’t know what Judaism is. Now, after two years, he saw that he was mistaken.

“The impact of the bachurim is on two main fronts. First, with mivtzaim, mivtza t’fillin or seasonal mivtzaim like on Chanuka and Purim, or organizing a Lag B’Omer parade. Second, the fact that the bachurim walk in the street every morning to the mikva which is a few minutes away, and passersby see them with a hat and jacket and tzitzis sticking out, definitely makes a kiddush Hashem.

“Jews here saw this with their grandparents. I have seen people stop walking or slow down as they drive, in order to look at us.

“Not far from the yeshiva is a store that the bachurim would go to every Friday for mivtza t’fillin even

though the owner always refused them. After several months he was willing. He explained that he needed time to digest the idea. It was novel for him to see religious bachurim every morning. The fact that he saw them every day, with their refinement and their persistence in coming to him every Friday despite his refusal, penetrated his wall of resistance.

"There is a small k'hilla of Misnagdim here too. I have heard them express their amazement of the bachurim. They didn't know that in Lubavitch people learn. They had been told that we don't learn in Chabad ...

A mashpia can come to a class and talk at a farbrengen about devotion to the Rebbe and he has no idea why the bachurim sitting there don't understand him. He thinks that having a chayus in Chassidishe inyanim is a given and that what he needs to demand of them is devotion, but he's wrong...

"Certainly, in a city where most of the Jews are Reform, the yeshiva has changed their awareness about religious Jews. Jewish pride, which is so lacking in Cincinnati, is something the bachurim display as they walk around. There are sometimes large gatherings of Jews on days like Yom Yerushalayim or Yom HaAtzmaut. The shluchim in yeshiva go and put t'fillin on with many people.

"At first, it was hard, like anything new. People did not look favorably on us, but the bachurim are indefatigable and have typical Chabad persistence and they have

made inroads."

At the beginning of the year, when I visited Massachusetts, I heard one of the shluchim speak warmly about the bachurim who were in his state during the summer, with the shliach, Rabbi Chaim Wolosow. They made a positive impact on the Jews of the area with their outreach and farbrengens.

This led me to ask R' Avtzon about *bein ha'z'manim*.

"I received my main chinuch in the yeshiva in Toronto. Rabbi Akiva Wagner instituted that the yeshiva is open in the summer and a bachur who is not in yeshiva during the

summer cannot come back for the new z'man. This is the system in yeshivos in Europe and Eretz Yisroel but it's not generally the way yeshivos in the US and Canada are run. R' Wagner was loathe to see bachurim wasting months of time which would likely destroy whatever gains they had made the previous year. The summer schedule is lighter but it's still yeshiva.

"The first year our yeshiva was opened, I didn't know whether I would be able to have a summer program and I wrote to the Rebbe about it. The answer I opened to was about the importance of youth learning in the summer and so I

decided not to wait another year or two but to have a yeshiva summer program that first year.

"It was very hard to do but in light of the Rebbe's clear answer, I didn't think twice about it but informed the bachurim that there would be a mandatory yeshivas kayitz. I looked for a suitable place and heard that my cousin, R' Wolosow of Massachusetts had rented a big place for his day camp. I made an agreement with him without knowing where the money would come from.

"One day I heard that there is an organization that provides funding for these things to prevent kids from wandering the streets. Since the organization did not operate in Cincinnati, I had to use connections until I managed to get on the program. I was happy that at least a nice part of the costs would be covered.

"I wrote to the Rebbe and the answer I opened to said how important it is to abide by the laws of the land and not to do things in a crooked way. I also read an answer that if I am doing a program, to go all the way with it and not skimp. So I made a yeshivas kayitz and waited for the Rebbe to help. The unbelievable happened when an acquaintance of mine called me and said that he was going to pay for all the additional expenses of a yeshivas kayitz.

"The hanhala of a yeshiva is responsible for their bachurim even during summer vacation. In order for this to be taken seriously, they have to provide a summer program for the boys. It can't be exactly the same as the year-round yeshiva program but the boys have to learn Nigleh and Chassidus while having fun too. This year, our summer program is located at camp Chayalei HaMelech and I thank Rabbi Yankel Spritzer and Rabbi Yehuda Levin for that."

THE SPANISH INVASION

By Chani Nussbaum

The Suueds arrived in Barcelona, Spain two years ago. All the Jews of Barcelona had either fled or converted long before the Inquisition, following the church-incited riots of 1391. Barcelona was devoid of any Jewish presence for more than five hundred years until the beginning of the 20th century. Now, with Chabad on the scene, it's a happening place for the 3500 Jews living there, the largest concentration of Jews in Spain.

To me, Genia is a model of a shlucha who is batel (submissive) to the meshaleiach (lit. the one who sends, i.e. the Rebbe). Although only on shlichus for two years so far, she has plenty of stories to tell.

She went on shlichus with her husband Amichai and their oldest son. Her second son was born in Barcelona and his bris was the first bris ever held at the local hospital. Genia's father is the well-known Chassidic flautist, Avi Piamenta. He attended the bris which was a very special one indeed.

Genia: I wanted so badly to attend the Kinus HaShluchim on

22 Shevat 5767. Everything was ready. My oldest son and I had tickets (my baby wasn't born yet). I wrote to the Rebbe for a bracha and opened the Igros Kodesh and was dismayed to read: The trip is not worthwhile now.

I disappointedly canceled our tickets and soon understood the Rebbe's answer. We received a phone call and heard that my mother-in-law, who was going to visit us, had become very sick. My husband immediately went to see her and when her condition worsened, my son and I went too. My mother-in-law passed away and

the Shiva took place during the Kinus HaShluchim.

How did you end up in Spain?

I am from Kfar Chabad and my husband is from Mexico. We lived in Kfar Chabad for three years, during which we eagerly looked forward to going on shlichus. My husband is Spanish-speaking of course and he knew the shliach, Rabbi Dovid Libersohn who lives in Barcelona. After working there for ten years, R' Libersohn needed help and that's how we ended up there.

We left Motzaei Yom Kippur and when we arrived with all our stuff at the airport, our luggage was way over the weight limit. My father didn't give up though. He went over to the person in charge and explained that we were going on the shlichus of the Lubavitcher Rebbe and we needed all these things.

When it came our turn, the woman in charge told the clerks to let us through. So from the very start of our shlichus, we saw that the Rebbe was with us.

How did you feel moving from Kfar Chabad to Barcelona?

It's very different. I don't have a big kosher supermarket near my house, but I got used to it. What's really hard is that in Kfar Chabad, although I gave a lot of time to be actively involved with Junior N'shei, the mikva, organizing shiurim and lectures, I received too. But here in Barcelona I only give and give. I have no time for myself, to learn a sicha in depth for example, but we carry on.

One of our regular activities is hosting tourists as well as local Jews for Shabbos. Every Shabbos we have tourists, students, local mekuravim and Israelis at our table. We meet Jews who are apathetic about mitzvos and it's amazing to see how, little by little, they warm up.

We recently hosted a group of Israelis. When we invited them, there was a businesswoman who the other members of the group did not think would show up. In the end, the unbelievable happened and she came. As we spoke at the Shabbos table about Igros Kodesh, she was amazed and also wanted to write to the Rebbe.

She made a good hachlata and opened a volume. In the letter she opened to, the Rebbe addressed a businesswoman who asked about her trip. The Rebbe said: The trip is worthwhile.

The woman and her husband looked at one another and said: That's our answer!

My husband pays a weekly visit to one of the Israelis who lives here. At first, he refused to put on t'fillin. We subsequently found out that he had once begun coming close to Yiddishkait but when a shidduch did not work out, he had gone off the derech. When my father came for the bris, my husband asked him to get into a conversation with this Israeli. My father did so and put t'fillin on with him. He so won him over that he

puts t'fillin on every day now. He recently decided to learn Gemara once a week.

Last year we went to Eretz Yisroel for a family event and since we were coming back before Chanuka, we decided to bring back a menorah to put on our car's roof. We knew it would be great pirsumei nisa and something Barcelona had never seen before.

When we arrived for our flight, our baggage was overweight and we left the meat behind but took the menorah. On Chanuka, it was a special attraction for the tourists and locals. Every day we drove to the tourist area and the most famous street in Barcelona, Las Ramblas with a car loaded with doughnuts and our menorah on top.

One day, an Israeli called my husband to chat with him. My husband invited him to the Chabad house but he declined, saying he was an ardent kibbutznik. One time, he jokingly said, "You come to me." We were willing to take him up on his offer but he didn't seem genuinely interested.

We met him in the area and managed to arrange a time to meet.

This week, as my husband went on mivtzaim, someone else asked him for tzitzis, "Like Gil has." He even asked for another ten pairs.

My husband asked him to put on t'fillin which he refused to do at first, but then he finally agreed. He told us it was the first time he was putting on t'fillin. Since then, whenever he meets my husband, he asks to put on t'fillin.

Genia sees how one mitzva leads to another and one neshama leads to another.

Since we've come here, my husband goes out every Friday to Las Ramblas on mivtzaim. He looks for Jews among the locals



and the tourists and finds many of them. I'll tell you about one of the many Jews he has met. His name was Gil and at first, he had no open connection to Judaism. After

being visited consistently by my husband, he expressed the desire to wear tzitzis. We got him a pair and he's been wearing them ever since. He asked my husband to make

him a copy of the t'filla we say in the morning. My husband did so and his wife told me that he says it every morning with great feeling. That's not all. He shares his knowledge of the t'filla and other Jewish things with his friends.

This week, as my husband went on mitzvaim, someone else asked him for tzitzis, "Like Gil has." He even asked for another ten pairs.

This year, on 19 Kislev, I prepared a program for Hebrew speaking women. I set up and waited but only one woman came. We sat for three hours together and talked. She told me that she had recently taken the bus and had gotten into a conversation with an old man sitting next to her. When she told him that she is Jewish, he said he was too.

They've been in touch ever since. They both are poets and maintain a regular correspondence. Of course I took all the details from her and we visited him. We brought him a menorah for Chanuka which was coming up. He was so moved and he thanked us. It seems it was the first time in his life that he saw a menorah. After Chanuka, when we visited him, he told us that he had lit it every night of Chanuka.

A similar hashgacha pratis story took place just this past Shavuot. We had many guests and a shliach in Eretz Yisrael called us and said that one of his mekuravim would be in Barcelona and could we send him kosher food to his hotel. I prepared him Yom Tov meals and included a note which said: Chabad is thinking of you.

We worked some more until it was Yom Tov and my husband had three things left to do: open the gateway to the Chabad house so people wouldn't ring the bell; run and buy diapers for the baby because my supply had run out; bring the food for the man at the

"FOR YOUR MIRACLES AND YOUR WONDERS"

The lives of shluchim are replete with miracles and daily hashgacha pratis. Last Chanuka provides an example of this as Genia relates:

It was erev Chanuka and my husband went to set up the menorah on our car when a policeman stopped him and informed him that it was against the law. On top of that, he informed my husband that his Mexican driver's license was not valid in Barcelona. My husband was taken aback since the previous year he had driven his car with the menorah and had no problem.

In the meantime, I was standing and waiting with the children so we could go out and light the menorah with the Jews we had been mekarev and would be mekarev. I had already called a girl who worked on Las Ramblas to tell her that we would be coming soon with a menorah and doughnuts but my husband was delayed.

In the end, my husband met someone and had him drive the car but he had to take down the menorah. We arrived late at Las Ramblas and we went to the girl who had been waiting for us. When she saw us she burst into tears and thanked us on behalf of her mother and grandmother for coming to remind her about Chanuka.

That night, as we went back to our car, we saw a crowd surrounding it. A Moslem had broken into the car and stolen the bag with our passports in it. An Israeli noticed him and recognized that it was the rabbi's car and he chased after him. When he caught up to him he punched him and the Moslem had no choice but to return what he stole. So without our knowing a thing about it, everything was over by the time we returned.

Another thing that happened was when we noticed a couple from Argentina whose car was parked near our car. They were very excited when they discovered that it was Chanuka and thanked us profusely.

We continued on to a dilapidated building where we knew that an Israeli girl lived. We found four other Jews with her surrounded by bottles of beer and in the center was a plate with latkes. Near them beer bottles were arranged as a menorah. They weren't afraid of the drunken goyim around them and they lit the menorah.

We spoke to them about Chanuka and had a good time. If I hadn't seen it with my own eyes I would not have believed how awake a Jewish heart is.

In case you're worried about how the license and the car-menorah worked out, there's a good ending. After we found out that the license is actually fine in Barcelona and we got a permit to have the menorah on the car, we happily went off to a park to have a big Chanuka party with hundreds of people. My father came from Eretz Yisrael and he sang and played and it was a Chanuka with lots of simcha, light and miracles.



to be there on business and when she realized that it would be Yom Tov, she planned on arranging something but her preparations for the trip and adjusting to the place had put it out of her mind. Twenty minutes earlier, she had said to her friends, "Come, let's look for a store; at least let's buy water before the holiday." And that's how they met my husband. Of course, he invited them to celebrate Shavuot with us.

He had gone to do one mitzva and Hashem sent him another mitzva.

I asked Genia to tell me about daily life on shlichus.

Our goal in coming here is to be the Libersohn's right-hand people. Our primary task is chinuch. Every week we have a Sunday School. At first it was very small but now we

hotel.

He hurried to the hotel before going to the store and when he left the hotel he saw that most of the stores were closed already. He was at a loss as to what to do until he

discovered one store that was still open. He went in and heard someone behind him saying a joyful "shalom."

It was a group of four Israelis. One of them told him that she had



have 25 children.

The shluchim here don't send their children to the local Jewish school. Last year, I taught their oldest daughter and my husband taught the boys. This year, the Libersohns joined the home schooling Shluchim program over the Internet which is for children of shluchim who don't have schools to go to in their area. So I became free to make a Gan Chabad.

Our older son is three and a half and I opened the gan for him and four other children in our living room. The other children are from a family that became very close to Chabad and took their children out of the local school. My husband teaches their oldest son and I have their two daughters. Boruch Hashem I am very successful.

Every so often we organize Shabbatons. For an upcoming Shabbaton, Nechama Libersohn will prepare the women's program while I will prepare the program for the children. We invited guest speakers from Eretz Yisrael, Rabbi Shaul Elituv and his wife, both of whom speak Spanish because they were on shlichus in Argentina for years.

This summer, we expect 45 children in our day camp. It grows from year to year and we've had successful winter camps too.

Before Yomim Tovim, my husband does interesting programs at the local Jewish school including shofar blowing before Rosh Hashana, making olive oil before Chanuka, etc.

What about a mikva?

For now we have the community mikva but we plan on building a more spacious Chabad house which will have a mikva. We recently met a wealthy Jew who is married to a non-Jew whose name is, of all things, Tanya. He came to the Chabad house and was hooked. Now he's very interested in Judaism. He is helping us look for a place for a Chabad house.

Last week, when we went to look at a certain building, I discovered that part of the house is suited to having a mikva since it's open to the rain. I wrote to the Rebbe and asked for a bracha. In the letter I opened to it said: in response to your letter in which you write about the second mikva you want to arrange ... perhaps it is difficult but great is the power of purity through which one is strengthened etc. I was flabbergasted by this letter.

On another occasion, when I wrote about the mikva, I opened to a letter that began with the words: the delay of the mikva is upsetting. Once again I was amazed by how the Rebbe guides us and is with us. I called Nechama and she was as shocked as I was. She felt she needed this answer because due to the lack of money, they had begun to think that maybe they would forgo having a second mikva in Barcelona. Obviously, after this answer, we decided to move forward with it.

How do you manage as far as kosher food is concerned?

We make most of our food ourselves or we import it when we can. This week, for example, I heard about tourists coming from Eretz Yisrael and I asked my parents to send ketchup and yellow cheese with them. As I already said, we don't have a kosher supermarket handy. There is a small store where you can buy a few kosher products but the prices are very high and the selection is small. The secret on shlichus is not to expect much when it comes to gashmius and to make do with what you have.

How do you promote the Besuras HaGeula?

First and foremost, through the Shabbos meals we host. Many of our guests are tourists on vacation. They are relaxed and open and ready to hear everything. We try to

make everything revolve around Moshiach and Geula. The atmosphere at the meals is very special and unifying and with people being open they are able to listen to the message about Geula.

In conclusion, I'll tell you something personal. After being here for two years on shlichus, I really wanted to attend the Kinus HaShluchos. This year I planned on going (I told you already what happened the year before) and everything was ready. I have an American passport so a visa wasn't a problem but at the last minute I found out that my six month old baby needed a visa and I couldn't go. I overcame my disappointment by doing something positive - I arranged a farbrengen for women.

We shluchos yearn for the Geula. May we see the Rebbe in 770 in the third Beis HaMikdash now!

Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu V'Rabbeinu Melech Ha'Moshiach L'olam Va'ed!



‘AND THE HEARTS OF THE FATHERS WILL RETURN THROUGH THE SONS’

Translated By Michael Leib Dobry

Tens of thousands of children have learned over the years in hundreds of Chabad kindergartens in Eretz Yisroel, from Kiryat Shmona to Eilat. A sizable percentage of these children come from non-Torah observant homes. The investment is tremendous when compared schools of “higher” learning like elementary and high schools. Is the investment justified? How much influence can one expect to have on a child? How exactly is a kindergarten established? Menachem Ziegelboim went out to speak with shluchim, kindergarten teachers and directors, and came up with some most interesting findings. Part 2 of 2.

[Continued from last issue]

The influence is not only upon the tender souls of children (“fresh paper”, as quoted earlier), but upon their families as well. The children come home and give over what they have learned. In these Moshiach times when “*chutzpah*, brazenness, will increase”, the children also brazenly demand positive changes, like that their parents make Kiddush, a Shabbos table, put on t’fillin, and the like.

Rabbi **Gershon Shnur** (the Rebbe’s shliach in Ganei Tikva) not only agrees, but much more than that. “The influence is tremendous,” he says decisively. “You have an influence upon the home through the child. ‘And the hearts of the fathers will turn back through the sons’ in its simplest sense. If you speak to the heart of a child that he should do *Neggel Vasser* in the morning, say brachos, dress modestly, wear a kippa, keep kosher, this obligates the parents. Many of them are quite happy about it, as this helps them to strengthen themselves.

“There’s a member of the local Jewish community here, an attorney by profession, whose daughter learns in the kindergarten. He personally came back to his Jewish roots through the Lithuanian-style approach. Once, his daughter came home and said that ‘today is the Rosh HaShana of chassidus’. He was embarrassed that he didn’t know what she was talking about. She began to tell him, but he still didn’t understand the meaning of ‘Rosh HaShana’ in the middle of the year... As a result, he came to the Yud-Tes Kislev farbrengen that we organized in order to learn and understand. At the very beginning of the event, he whispered in my ear, ‘It doesn’t sit well with me that my daughter comes and tells me about ‘Rosh HaShana’, and I don’t know what it means. I want to listen...’ Since then, he never misses an opportunity to come to a farbrengen at the Chabad House...”

The influence sometimes reaches the extended family. “One family in our community sent their child to Chabad kindergarten,” Rabbi Shnur relates. “The extended family was very much against Chabad. The entire family complained, ‘Why are you sending the boy to Chabad?’ But, nevertheless, the boy went to learn in Chabad, as did his sister after him, and now his younger brother... This changed their entire outlook on Chabad. The wife today participates in chassidus classes in the merit of her children. Once on a family trip, when the younger child saw a picture of the Rebbe, he jumped from his place and called out, ‘Here’s my Rebbe,’ and everyone felt very proud...”

Rabbi Yisroel Gellis (the Rebbe’s shliach in Dimona): “The kindergarten is not an isolated

The high number nationally is in Tzfas, under the inspired directorship of Rabbi Aharon Eliezer Ceitlin and administrator Rabbi Daniel Utinsky, which has about thirty kindergartens spread out in locations all over the city!



program unto itself. Parents of our children have begun coming to our Tanya classes. We have a non-observant family that put their child in the kindergarten, and over the years, the family has become Torah observant and chassidic. Anyone who comes into town sees a Moshiach flag flying over their house. The father davens three times a day, and they participate in farbrengens, etc.”

Yet alongside the satisfaction, Rabbi Gellis does not refrain from engaging in a little self-criticism. “I have no doubt that the influence upon families through the kindergarten children can be much deeper, but I am extremely involved with running the institutions, and I don’t always succeed in making a deeper and more inner connection between the

“There was a rather complicated battle. One of the opponents turned to me and said, ‘As long as we’re talking about giving out jelly donuts and other nice mitzvah campaigns, that’s fine. But to open a kindergarten as well? Absolutely not.’”

parents and the Chabad House. It’s all a matter of resources.”

Rabbi Levin from Kiryat Gat also reasons that there is a need to invest more in strengthening the connection between the parents and Chabad. For this very reason, he employs a secretary to deal with the connection with the parents. “It’s no simple task to be acquainted with five hundred parents. She is in personal contact with them from start to finish.”

Many Chabad Houses in Eretz Yisroel have more than one kindergarten. Some have three, four, or even six. In Kiryat Gat, for example, there are twenty Chabad kindergartens and day care centers. The high number nationally is in Tzfas, under the inspired directorship of Rabbi **Aharon Eliezer Ceitlin** and administrator Rabbi **Daniel Utinsky**, which has about **thirty** kindergartens spread out in locations all over the city!

The Chabad kindergarten network in the Holy City of Tzfas was established thirty years ago, and it appears as if there isn’t a family in town that doesn’t have at least one family member – brother, sister, son, or daughter – who has not received education in one of the Chabad kindergartens throughout the city. The kindergartens serves as “Chabad Houses” and activity centers in every sense: farbrengens on auspicious Chabad dates, Chanukah candle lighting events, “mivtzaim” on Lag B’Omer and Purim, regular year-round contact with parents, and much more.

As mentioned earlier, many of these kindergartens have been established by Reshet Oholei Yosef Yitzchak. Yet, while the “Reshet” was founded in the early days of the Rebbe’s leadership, the emphasis over the years was not specifically on kindergartens.

Thus, in a variety of locations, kindergartens were run in an unofficial capacity, e.g., Rabbi Aharon Mordechai Zilberstrom in Yerushalayim and Rabbi Kalman Druk in Beersheva. However, in 5745, under the leadership of then-Reshet director Rabbi Moshe Slonim, of blessed memory, there began an official and orderly administration of the national kindergarten network.

What was the reason for this?

Rabbi **Yaakov Shlomo HaLevi Lieberman** (Reshet Ganei Chabad director-general): “The official religious school system is run by the government. With regard to kindergartens, we had issues with setting up government approved kindergartens in non-Chabad centers, as we were worried that the educational responsibility would be given to people who would not run the institution in a Chabad spirit. As a result, while kindergartens in established Chabad communities could be safely administered as part of the government-run system, those in other locations were organized privately through the Chabad Houses. Today, most Chabad kindergartens located in non-Chabad regions are run by the shluchim themselves. If it were possible to make all kindergartens part of the government-run system, and Chabad would have complete control over those who serve as their educators – this would be the best thing.”

From a financial point of view, is it a worthwhile venture to open a kindergarten?

“It is much harder to do so in the country’s central region, as opposed to cities in the more peripheral areas, where the rents are much cheaper and the government subsidizes the tuition costs for the children.

“The fact that there are several



Chabad Houses that run many kindergartens is no testimony to the possible ease in opening a kindergarten. This is no simple task, whether from the point of view of obtaining permits, raising funds, or in organizational matters.”

In any event, why do so many Chabad Houses run kindergartens?

“When a Chabad House director maintains contact with about fifty or sixty members of his community, who love the Chabad approach and want Chabad education, this is the easy way to open a kindergarten. When we make activities as we should, we can fill up a kindergarten with relative ease, and thus its maintenance and financial stability will also be much easier.”

Rabbi Gershon Shnur is inclined to agree: “I established the first kindergarten three years after I went out on shlichus. This was ‘an arousal from below’ after a

series of activities with children in the Tzivos Hashem clubs, camps, Shabbos groups, etc. Local residents came and said that they want this type of education on a permanent basis, and they want a Chabad kindergarten.”

How does one open a kindergarten?

“First of all, we have to make certain that there are enough people who will send their children to the kindergarten. After I determined that the kindergarten can be filled, I turned to Rabbi Lieberman for his assistance in obtaining the necessary licenses, security permits, technical matters, and the overall process connected with setting up the kindergarten.

“During the first year, there were twenty-three children in the kindergarten. The following year, we opened a kindergarten for older children, which in practical terms was a continuation of the previous one that now took in new students.

It’s not that it went so smoothly. There was fierce opposition from other sectors in the Ganei Tikva community. “Even the local council was not happy about it,” said Rabbi Shnur. “There was a rather complicated battle. One of the opponents turned to me and said, ‘As long as we’re talking about giving out jelly donuts and other nice mitzvah campaigns, that’s fine. But to open a kindergarten as well? Absolutely not.’”

So why in fact didn’t you just settle for donuts and being the “nice Chabad”?

“I explained to him that pure Jewish education is the Alef-Beis. The Rebbe toiled with great self-sacrifice for the education of Jewish children, and it is impossible to settle just for symbols.”

From your point of view, what is the advantage to focusing on kindergarten as opposed to elementary school education, for example?

“For whatever reason, people are less concerned about sending their children to a chareidi kindergarten, not to mention, chassidic. Many of the parents wouldn’t agree to send their children to a chareidi Chabad elementary or high school, but they don’t mind a kindergarten. On the contrary, they send them with pleasure.”

Rabbi Shnur reasons that a



“Chabad kindergarten” somehow sounds “milder” and more appealing than a “chareidi kindergarten” – “despite the fact that we are chareidim in every respect and even more. This fact helps us to reach children from homes and communities that we couldn’t penetrate any other way.” Today, about seventy children learn in his three kindergartens – may they increase in number!

Rabbi Yisroel Gellis concurs: “In point of fact, non-religious

parents have an easier time in sending their children to a Chabad kindergarten, as opposed to a Chabad school. There are a variety of reasons: Some parents claim that government-run schools are more professional in secular subjects than religious schools, while others bring the excuse that when the child reaches school age, the conflicts there are much greater.

“Our job is to utilize the influence we have when they are in

kindergarten, in order to make certain that when they do reach school age, their parents will agree to continue with traditional Jewish chassidic education. This is an extremely important objective.

“Once the children enter a school, the parents’ demands become less compromising and they are more serious in their expectations for achievement. We must make a far greater effort to satisfy their requirements on the level of studies, a proper atmosphere, and the like. It is much easier in the kindergarten system to build friendly relations and bond with parents, as opposed to when the children are of school age.”

How many children continue from kindergarten to the school?

Rabbi **Gershon Levin**, Kiryat Gat: “There are those who express some resentment: How is it that we don’t fill classrooms in the yeshiva with former kindergarten students? In fact, in percentage terms, not many of the children come to our school, and from there to the high school or yeshiva. However, according to the Rebbe’s approach, if even one child goes out to a life of Torah and mitzvos or builds a chassidic home, then all the work would be worth the effort. In our times, in this reckless generation, ‘pulling’ children under the strong influence of their surroundings in the direction of a life of Torah and mitzvos is a difficult mission. It’s not easy to convince them to continue along a path that most definitely obligates them.”

Are there children who followed the path of Chabad education all the way as a result of the kindergarten?

“Of course, there are quite a few. There are families in Kiryat Gat who were totally secular or egalitarian at best, and they have

CHABAD KINDERGARTENS AROUND THE GLOBE

*“Chabad kindergarten is a place where young Jewish children get enthusiasm, a feel for creativity, cultivating an experience that constitutes the strong foundation for their successful integration in matters of education, community, and religion”. These are the opening words of the printed and on-line articles in Westchester County, New York, on the declaration of the Rebbe’s shliach in Dobbs Ferry, Rabbi **Benjy Silverman**, of his intention to open a kindergarten in the River Towns.

*“The ‘Ohr Avner’ kindergarten children in the northwestern Siberian city of Tomsk continue their daily lives, virtually as usual, despite the harsh winter conditions and the fiercely cold weather that reigns throughout the city, reaching as low as fifty-three degrees Celsius below zero. In practice, the Jewish kindergarten is the only one in operation these days in this large city, after it received special permission from the Russian Ministry of Health”. The shliach in Tomsk, Rabbi **Levi Kaminetzky**, said that the permit to open the kindergarten was issued upon the installation of modern heating elements in the facility, which had recently undergone thorough renovations.

*A group of wealthy philanthropic Jews and charitable foundations decided to initiate a project for educational centers for Jewish children, the Jewish Early Childhood Education Initiative, that will help to build Jewish continuity. At the first stage, on a temporary trial basis, the Gan Yeladim of Chabad-Lubavitch of Fairfield County, Connecticut is among thirteen kindergartens throughout the United States that comprise a part of this project. More than three million dollars will be invested during its first three years in operation. Among the founders of this project are its president Mr. Harold Greenspan of Massachusetts and project chairman Mr. Michael Steinhart.

*“We chose the Chabad Gan Yeladim as one of the thirteen kindergartens since at the inspection we conducted, it demonstrated leadership, vision, and a readiness to look forward,” said project manager Diana Ganger. The Chabad Gan Yeladim, headed by Mrs. **Vivi Deren**, was founded in 5749 and provides a Jewish education to approximately one hundred children from the age of two.



been transformed over the years to full-fledged Lubavitchers, right down to their silk kapatas.”

Everyone agrees that there’s no hocus pocus here. You have to invest a lot of toil and effort. Nothing happens on its own. “We have two students in our institutions that have reached the eighth grade,” says Rabbi Levin. “The parents were extremely far from Torah observance. One of the children came home and asked for tzitzis, *Neggel Vasser* near the bed, and more. His mother agreed to cooperate, but it came with great difficulty. The father complained that he can’t help him with his homework because he simply doesn’t know Mishna and Gemara. We helped them every step of the way, providing them with a yeshiva bachur for tutoring help, etc.

“There’s another boy who learns today in the yeshiva in Tzfas. His parents were completely secular, and they became closer to Yiddishkait through his studies in the kindergarten and the Talmud Torah. The father began to wear a kippa, the mother put on a sheitel, and during the afternoon and evening after regular school hours, we conducted lengthy

conversations with the parents to strengthen them in their steady progress together with their son...”

Sari: “From my personal experience, what a child receives at the moment that he begins to understand is what remains with him for the rest of his life. This is the first and most basic look with which he sets out in life.”

Mrs. Nava Gellis: “No effort is wasted. I just recently met the mother of a child who learned in our kindergarten, but after completing the required kindergarten level, he went to study in a non-religious school. He has just finished sixth grade and is preparing to enter junior high school. The mother told me, ‘The boy has grown, taller than his father, and speaks like a man. While he has forgotten all of his teachers from school, he wants to meet with his teacher from the Chabad kindergarten...’ This woman then proceeded to register her youngest child in our kindergarten...”

“We have complete faith that investment in education does not go to waste, as even a child who does not continue his Torah studies in the school still has

something to carry with him for the rest of his life.”

Rabbi Levin: “The influence remains forever. On a recent visit to my local health clinic, I met a man sitting with his son who looked familiar to me. When I approached him to ask who he was, he replied, ‘What? Don’t you know me? You took me to the Chabad youth club forty years ago!...”

Rabbi Shnur: “Sometimes the influence is indirect, while other times it is more direct. Sometimes we see immediate results, while other times our efforts bear fruit only after considerable time has passed. We have children who would never go to a religious learning institution, yet in the merit of their years in the Chabad kindergarten, they did just that, albeit in government-run religious schools. Nevertheless, they ended up with far more than they would have received in secular government schooling (some even continued to learn in the Chabad ‘cheider’ in Petach Tikva).

Rabbi Levin: “Now is the time when parents come to register their children in kindergarten. Every parent is another story. The very fact that we hold our registration remains high despite the establishment of several new kindergartens by various organizations that go from door to door and incite parents not to send their children to Chabad is greater testimony than a thousand witnesses on the roots of Chabad education and its success over the years. Apart from a few advertisements in the local papers, we don’t come out with any mass registration campaign, yet we have maintained our strength for many years. This is the power of our deep-seated tradition. We’re talking about thousands. It’s literally a revealed miracle.”