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SEEING ALLUSIONS

Translated and adapted by Dovid Yisroel Ber Kaufmann

The month of Elul emphasizes the spiritual concept “from below to Above” – man’s efforts eliciting a Divine response. The Torah portion of R’ei – both its name and opening verse – emphasizes the spiritual concept “from Above to below.” Indeed, each word of the opening verse alludes to this approach. The name Elul, on the other hand, is an acronym for “I am for my Beloved and My beloved is for me,” indicating that that which is below (creation) initiates the interaction. These two approaches appear to be contradictory. In truth, both appear in the acronym for Elul. In fact, the name Elul alludes to five areas of human interaction with the Divine, each with its own acronym. The most important of these is Redemption. The practical lesson is to see today, which means to see clearly, not through acronyms or allusions, the reality of Moshiach.

The Torah portion of R’ei is always read close to the beginning of the month of Elul. Most years it is the Shabbos before Rosh Chodesh Elul – the Shabbos

before the new month begins. In that case, the Shabbos of R’ei is also Shabbos Mevarchim – the Shabbos on which is recited the blessing for the new month. In many years, however, the first day of Rosh Chodesh Elul – the first day of the new month of Elul – falls on Shabbos. Thus, the Shabbos of R’ei is either right before the month of Elul or actually Rosh Chodesh Elul itself. Either way, the beginning of the month of Elul is closely connected with the Torah reading of R’ei. What is the nature of that connection? Why are the month of Elul and the Torah reading of R’ei so inter-related?

Indeed, at first glance the spiritual concepts underlying the month of Elul and those found within the portion of R’ei seem contradictory. The spiritual concept emphasized in Elul is man’s Divine service, a movement from below to Above. In Elul – the month in which one prepares for Rosh Hashanah – first man bestirs himself to approach G-d, which in turn elicits a revelation from G-d to man. There is a well-known acronym of Elul that alludes to this approach. (See the previous essay, on *Eikev*.)

But the Torah reading of R’ei indicates just the opposite type of spiritual movement. It emphasizes the revelation of G-dliness that comes first, after which follows the Divine service of man. This is a movement from Above to below, from G-d’s inspiration to man’s

activity. In fact, each word of the opening phrase of the Torah reading implies that spirituality is drawn

from Above to below.

The phrase is: “*R’ei Anochi Nosein Lifneichem HaYom Bracha* – See, I place before you today blessing.” Let’s look at each of these words:

R’ei – See: One of the differences between seeing and hearing is that hearing goes from particular to general, building an understanding of the whole by adding detail to detail. A story unfolds in the telling, bit by bit, and not until it’s all told is there a general understanding. This is bottom-up understanding, from below to above. Seeing, on the other hand, goes from the general to the particular. First one sees the whole scene, without distinguishing details or individual elements. Only after there is a general understanding and overall sense of the picture does one focus on the details. This is top-down understanding, from above to below.

Anochi – I: There are actually two words in Hebrew for the first person singular pronoun. Both

lives. In this sense, every day is always “today.” The cliché, ‘today is the first day of the rest of your life’ derives from the concept that one’s life is drawn from today – from the present which is ‘above,’ down below into the days that follow. And in this sense, each tomorrow becomes a “today.”

Bracha – Blessing: To bless something means to draw down spirituality from above to below. The word “*bracha*” is related to the word for bending, a movement from above to below.

Yet, as we mentioned, the acronym of Elul seems to indicate the exact opposite type of spiritual movement – from below to Above. The best-known acronym for Elul is: *Ani L’Dodi V’Dodi Li* – “I am for my Beloved, and My beloved is for me.” (The phrase, from Song of Songs, is a metaphor of the mutual love between G-d and the Jewish people.) Each of the four Hebrew words of this phrase begins with one of the four letters of the word “Elul.” This phrase, “I

am for my Beloved, and my Beloved is for me,” begins with man’s Divine service (“I am for my Beloved”) and concludes with G-d’s response (“My beloved is for me.”) First we pray to G-d, after which He responds.

Actually, the month of Elul combines both concepts – a Divine service from below to Above, and one from Above to below. The advantage of *Ani L’dodi* – I am for my Beloved, the Divine service from below to Above, is that the spiritual insight and effect on one’s life is achieved

primarily through individual effort. On the other hand, the level of spirituality that can be reached by individual effort – and thus the degree of holiness that can be incorporated into one’s conduct – is limited by the finite nature of human beings. But when there is a flow of spirituality from Above to below – *V’dodi li* – My Beloved is for me – the potential revelation of G-dliness is unlimited.

Thus, both possibilities are united and combined in the acronym of Elul.

In fact, this concept of unifying *Ani L’dodi* – self-motivated effort – and *V’dodi li* – effort Divinely motivated – applies to no less than five areas of human endeavor, each indicated by an acronym of Elul. (Briefly, the five areas alluded to in the five acronyms are study of Torah, prayer, Acts of Loving-kindness, *t’shuva* or repentance, and preparing for Redemption.) The most famous acronym, the one

We must add – and help others to add – in Torah, prayer, Acts of Loving-kindness, t’shuva and redemption. Particular emphasis must be placed on the last one – the aspect of Redemption within Elul, for that penetrates all other aspects of one’s Divine service.

Ani and *Anochi* mean “I” and both identify the speaker. The difference is that *Anochi* also identifies the exalted, elevated status of the speaker. For example, the prophet Samuel uses the term *Anochi* in identifying himself as a seer. Here again, there is the implication of spirituality flowing from above to below – from the prophet down to the people.

Nosein – Give: Giving obviously is a process of ‘from above to below’ – from giver to receiver.

Lifneichem – Before you: This further emphasizes a drawing down from Above to below, for the word “*Lifneichem*” literally means “within you.” The blessing is placed within the Jewish people, within the essence of each individual, and from there extends outward – and downward.

HaYom – Today: This word indicates the eternal present. This is the day, the moment in which one

we've been discussing, *Ani L'dodi V'dodi Li*, alludes to prayer. Three of the acronyms – those for prayer, Torah and *tz'daka* allude to the concept of individual effort – from below to Above; the other two – those for *t'shuva* (which is self-transcendence) and Redemption (the ultimate in transcendence) – allude to a giving of blessing – from Above to below.

What is the practical implication of all this? How do we translate this spiritual insight into action, since “action is the main thing”? First, we have to awaken within ourselves the Divine service connected with the five acronyms of Elul. We have to publicize the inner meaning of Elul – we have to increase our efforts in the “five acronyms,” so to speak. We must add – and help others to add – in Torah, prayer, Acts of Loving-kindness, *t'shuva* and redemption. Particular emphasis must be placed on the last one – the aspect of Redemption within Elul, for that penetrates all other aspects of one's Divine

service.

And even if one claims to not yet understand this concept, how Redemption will occur, nevertheless, since every Jew has complete faith that G-d will bring Moshiach, and that Redemption can – and will – come any day – the blessing is given today – therefore one's obligation to publicize and study about the coming Redemption does not depend on one's comprehension of how it will happen.

In simple terms, we have to announce and publicize everywhere, in an appropriate manner, with words that “go from the heart,” that G-d tells each and every Jew, through His servants the prophets, that “*R'ei Anochi Nosein Lifneichem HaYom Bracha*” – “See, I give to you today blessing,” and that this blessing means that we will actually see – today – with our own eyes – the blessing of the true and complete Redemption.

(Based on Seifer HaSichos 5751 Vol. II, pp. 767-779)

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THE URGENT NEED TO REVERSE THE TREND IN SOUTH AFRICA

By the Grace of G-d
① 29th of Kislev, 5740
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Greeting and Blessing:

This is to confirm receipt of your letter of Nov. 9th. ^② *received with considerable delay*
Needless to say, it is difficult for me to go into the specific aspects of a situation overseas. However, knowing personally the people in charge of the Lubavitcher organization in your country and city, their dedication to service and their concern for the best interests of the community they serve, I am confident that a candid personal discussion with them will bring about the proper solution, one that will be doubly good - tov lashomayim v'tov labriyos.

I am impelled, however, to take a position in regard to one point in your letter which is almost independent of the issues. I refer to your basic premise that "South African Jewry is a dwindling community."

To be sure, going by bare statistics, the statement reflects the situation as it is at this moment. However, the mere fact of an existing situation need not be accepted as irreversible, hence to be dealt with accordingly. There are situations in our present day and age which call for a contrary response, in an all-out effort to reverse the trend. That this approach is both right and effective has been borne out by experience in similar situations in the U.S.A. and other countries, where the tide of dwindling communities and dwindling neighborhoods has not only been arrested, but also reversed, with notable success, though varying in degree.

With all due respect to your expertise and intimate knowledge of the S.A. Jewish community, I must take issue with your premise that a dwindling Jewish community must inevitably curtail its educational facilities. In most Jewish communities, including JHB, there are hundreds of Jewish children who are going astray and on the road to total assimilation for lack of adequate Jewish education. They constitute an untapped reserve, for whom existing facilities should not only be sustained, but also expanded.

As for the quality of Jewish education, there is surely no need to point out

to you that in order to achieve its purpose, Jewish education must be in keeping with the basic principle enunciated by the Wisest of All Men, King Solomon, who counseled: "Educate the lad according to his way, so that when he grows old he will not depart from it." (Prov. 22:6)

In other words, whatever the advantages of a uniform educational system may be, or one that is limited to two or three streams at the most, it cannot compensate for the overriding benefits of a diversified system reflecting the pluralistic nature of most communities in our present day and age, and offering the best possible and most natural appeal to every child individually.

Virtually every Jewish community, including S.A. Jewry, comprises a variety of groups, each with a distinct identity in terms of ancestral heritage and traditions, as exemplified also in different synagogues, with different rites and customs, such as Ashkenazic, Sephardic, Yemenite, etc. All of them existing and flourishing side by side contribute to the advancement of the Jewish community as a whole. It is within this frame of educating the lad "according to his way" - that Jewish education can succeed most, provided, of course, the basics of Torah education, common to them all, are upheld.

You surely know that Gedolei Yisroel in all generations scrupulously upheld the validity of tradition in regard to the Nusach of Tefillah, tracing its variety to the original Twelve Tribes of Israel.

A case in point: When Lubavitch came to North Africa and established there Yeshivos and educational institutions, my predecessor, my father-in-law of saintly memory, who initiated the broad program, gave clear directives not to encroach upon the customs and rites of the local Jewish communities, though for themselves the Lubavitch personnel had their own Minyan to follow their own Nusach. This approach immediately won the trust of the community leaders and had a salutary effect on the success of the educational process.

Needless to say, parents are free to choose the type of school they prefer for their children, and even change their Nusach. But it must be voluntary. Experience has shown that whenever a uniform educational system has been imposed on a multi-faceted community, it inevitably proved disastrous.

I have expanded somewhat on the subject of Jewish education, because I believe that the principles outlined above are universal in their application, and may be helpful to clarify the issues. This is all I can say from a distance, especially since I am convinced that a heart-to-heart discussion can easily solve the problem, if there is one, as mentioned above. All the more so, in view of the fact that all parties are sincerely concerned for the best interests of the community.

In light of the above, the most practical purpose of my writing is what follows next, and this, too, pertains to the problem of S. African Jewry being a dwindling community, to quote you again.



Before concluding this letter, permit me to turn my attention, and yours, to another aspect of the problem of South African Jewry as a "dwindling community." Though this aspect is independent of the subject matter of your letter, it has serious implications far beyond the state of the community itself, and I would be remiss if I were not to take this opportunity of bringing it to your attention.

As you know, the RSA is one of the very few remaining friends of the Land of Israel in the present international arena. While common interests are, of course, important factors in international relations, there can be no doubt that the South African Jewish community and its leaders have had a significant part in developing and fostering this good relationship.

Needless to say, a healthy, vigorous and flourishing Jewish community is required in order to exert maximum influence on the government, and, clearly, such influence is bound to suffer if the community is allowed to dwindle, whether physically or spiritually, or both. Hence, if there is still a dwindling trend, it must be halted, and, indeed, reversed. I hope and trust, therefore, that if any communal leader, or influential member of the community, or any Jew with roots in the South African community contemplates leaving it, they will seriously reconsider it, bearing in mind the impact not only on the community itself, but also how it would affect their fellow-Jews everywhere, and in Eretz Yisroel in particular, inasmuch as

כל ישראל ערבים זה בזה

Closer home, the South African Jewish community must surely be aware of its impact on neighboring smaller Jewish communities, particularly in Rhodesia, where despite recent erosion there is a firm determination to maintain a viable and normal Jewish existence and development. Obviously, the future of the South African Jewish community will have a great impact on these, as well as more distant Jewish communities faced with similar problems.

There is surely no need to elaborate to you on the above vital points.

④ With esteem and blessings

*From the t'shura printed in honor of the wedding
of Shmuel Simpson and Golda Chasdan sh'y*



WHAT A DIFFERENCE A DAY MAKES

By Mendel Tzfasman

Translated By Michoel Leib Dobry

Rabbi Tzvika Friedman of Migdal HaEmek received a series of amazing answers for his friend Gil G., a gem dealer, bringing about a significant transformation in his life. The Rebbe guided him step by step, giving him the inner strength to make key decisions at a major turning point.

“Before Pesach last year,” says Rabbi **Tzvika Friedman**, director general of Chabad’s Beis HaTavshil Tov VaChesed in Migdal HaEmek. As he begins his story, Beis HaTavshil office workers are vigorously involved in sending brochures and fundraising letters, at that time, to the Haifa and Krayot regions.

“One of the informational brochures found its way to the home of Gil G., a graduate of the vocational school where he used to serve as a counselor. He noticed my picture in the brochure and decided to call. He asked how I was doing, and immediately agreed to become an active partner in the organization’s charitable activities by signing a standing bank order on a monthly

contribution.

“But the main focus of our conversation was something completely different, as he describes it.

“‘Listen, Tzvika,’ said Gil on the phone, ‘this is the most amazing case of Divine Providence I’ve ever experienced. For over a week now, I’ve been looking for a Chabadnik who can write a letter for me to the Rebbe via *Igros Kodesh*, and suddenly I get warm regards specifically from you...’

“It turned out that the young man that I had known from the vocational school had already gotten married, was raising a family, and making a living as a salesman in a jewelry store in the popular Krayon shopping center,

in the Krayot district. Recently, he had been offered a job as a gem dealer with the responsibility of going around to stores and selling diamonds, precious stones, and gold jewelry. This position presented an opportunity to bring in considerable proceeds based on a sales commission arrangement. The proposal was most attractive with the possibility for considerable advancement, and naturally the chance to earn much more money each month.

“He felt insecure due to his lack of experience in the field, yet he didn’t want to pass up the ‘two in the bush’ for ‘a bird in the hand.’ Plagued by doubt either way, he felt he had to somehow consult the Rebbe, MH”M.

“I happily responded to his request, and I laid out his question explicitly in writing to the Rebbe, the first of a long series of letters I wrote for him, through which I saw revealed miracles. I placed the letter in Volume 16 of *Igros Kodesh* of the Rebbe MH”M.

“The letter that appeared, on page 192, was addressed to the Kfar Chabad Mikveh Construction Supporters Committee, and dealt with the importance of involvement with mikvaos, and I read it to him exactly as it appeared.

Surely all those who love Torah and mitzvos have no need for an explanation of the greatness of the concept and its importance, and we have no greater proof than the known halachic ruling that a Torah scroll can be sold for the purpose of building a mikveh. There is no need except for preference and expeditiousness in assistance for the stated matter, and particularly according to what the Alter Rebbe declares in *Igeres HaKodesh* Ch. 21 about the greatness of the quality of being timely in all mitzvos, especially the aforementioned mitzva,

which also resembles the charity and act of kindness mentioned there in *Igeres HaKodesh*. Furthermore, it is known how much our Sages, of blessed memory, emphasized this concept even by coming a day sooner, and especially in our generation, the footsteps of Moshiach, when the end of our exile that purity brings, etc., is approaching, Eliyahu HaNavi proclaims our Redemption...with the blessing of greater success in their holy work.

"After consulting with Rabbi Dubroskin from Migdal HaEmek, I called Gil and told him that the Rebbe was asking him to become

stronger in matters pertaining to family purity and mikveh.

"Tears of emotion welled in Gil's eyes. 'This is unbelievable, Tzvika,' he said to me. 'I'm sitting here in the car with my wife, who comes from an ultra-Orthodox family, and just today we decided to be more stringent in our Torah observance...'

"A few months passed, and we didn't hear from one another. A few days before Pesach, my friend Gil called me in a very emotional state. 'The Rebbe simply performs miracles. Double the amount of my monthly contribution; it's forbidden to do anything without asking the Rebbe first,' Gil said,



firing a jumbled barrage of sentences. After I succeeded in calming him down and asked to hear more specific details, he began to relate what had happened:

“On the same day that we received the Rebbe’s answer, I went to sign a contract on a new business deal. Since then, thank G-d, I have seen the realization of a bracha for success in my sales activities, and even my employer, who was rather worried about my lack of experience, is satisfied with the profits I am making for the company. What is more amazing is how precise every word of the Rebbe really is. The Rebbe wrote in the letter the expression “even by coming a day sooner” on the importance of purity and constructing a mikveh, but practically regarding the matter at hand, I made a point to sign the contract that very day. The next day, two highly qualified and successful young men from Tel Aviv visited my boss asking for a job. ‘I would have more happily signed a contract with you than with someone of lesser experience,’ my boss told them, ‘but my word is my bond, and I signed a contract with someone yesterday...’

THE ANSWER CAME BEFORE THE QUESTION

“In that same emotional telephone conversation, Gil asked me to write a second letter for him to the Rebbe.

“Amidst those pressure-packed days prior to Pesach, when along with the rush to clean the house and make holiday purchases, I had the additional responsibility to arrange the deliveries of Kimcha D’Pischa food packages for needy people, raising funds, etc., I simply had no free time to sit down and write a letter. I told him

that we could meet right after Pesach, discuss the matter at length, and also write a letter to the Rebbe. In the end, the meeting didn’t take place, and once again we were not in touch with one another for some time.

“One day, I sat down to write a letter to the Rebbe on a personal matter. To my great surprise, unlike other times when I was privileged to receive clear answers, this time I didn’t find a single reference to the subject of my question.

“The letter I received (*Igros Kodesh*, Vol. 14, pgs. 226-227) was written to the Rebbe’s uncle, Rabbi Bentzion Schneerson. The Rebbe blessed him with improvement in his state of health and that they will manage things in their current home, ‘calming’ him with assurances that the One Who provides nourishment and sustenance to all will take care of them.

“As I mentioned, I didn’t see any connection to the letter I had written. While my thoughts were racing in my mind, my mobile phone rang. Gil was on the line, and he again asked me to write a letter to the Rebbe for him. Feeling as I did that ‘things weren’t going well for me,’ I tried to push him off, at least until the following day. However, to my surprise, he responded in a tone that left no room for deliberation: ‘I’m not asking and not requesting that you write; you simply must write to the Rebbe for me – now!’

I asked him to explain the urgency and he told me quite simply, ‘Tomorrow morning at nine o’clock, I have to sign a contract on the purchase of a new apartment. I’m not prepared to take such an important step without receiving the Rebbe’s permission...’

“I was in absolute shock,” said

Rabbi Friedman, describing his feelings at that moment. “I wondered if perhaps the Rebbe had sent him a letter even before he had written, although I hadn’t agreed to accept the responsibility to write the letter. I asked Gil to wait a few minutes, and I quickly called Rabbi Dubroskin for advice. I told him the whole story, read him the Rebbe’s response, and asked him if the letter that I had received was in fact meant for Gil.

“Rabbi Dubroskin gave me an answer that I’ll never forget: ‘He asked you more than a month ago to write a letter to the Rebbe for him. Now, when you write to the Rebbe on a personal matter, the Rebbe responds to him. When you finish your ‘obligations’ to the Rebbe and to another Jew, the Rebbe will reply to your personal questions...’

“I called Gil back and read him the letter: **I was happy to receive his letter...where he writes about the improvement in his health and that they are managing in their home, and may it be G-d’s Will that the general management in relations to matters of parnasa will be realized very soon, according to his wishes.**

...In any event, the One Who provides nourishment and sustenance to all has provided the sustenance for his existence and the existence of his household. There is surely no room whatsoever for concern on this matter. As we have seen clearly, as the attribute of trust grows, so grows the vigor, and thus the management will progress... Awaiting good news in all the aforementioned, and may it be G-d’s Will that just as he and his wife have seen G-d’s kindnesses until now, similarly, they will find only good and kindness properly managing in

their current location in good health and broadening of the mind."

The following day, Gil and his wife bought their apartment at special payment terms with the very benefits that they wanted.

"It is interesting to note," Gil said, "that a good friend of mine, who was close to the real estate agent that arranged the apartment deal for us, told me about many people who were jumping at the opportunity to get this apartment, among them the agent himself, who wanted to buy it for his daughter."

They are about to celebrate a real "chanukas ha'bayis" in its purest sense, with a chassidic farbrengen, to which all of his

miraculous chain of letters. A few days after signing the contract, Gil had to pay a sizable portion of the down payment in cash. He had almost the entire amount, but was still missing seven thousand shekels. There are those who would say that seven thousand shekels is a lot of money, but a Jew like Gil who had already seen revealed miracles was not particularly moved by this, as this is a paltry sum for "the One Who provides nourishment and sustenance to all." So Gil went out to work as usual, and waited for a miracle...

In one of the stores that Gil entered that morning, when he spread out his valuable merchandise, he noticed that the

"Listen, Gil," the storeowner said to him in a friendly tone, "I've been looking for this specific watch model for five years now, and it's no longer available. I know that when you bought it, it cost six thousand shekels. You know what? I'm not only prepared to buy the watch for its full market value, I'll add an additional one thousand shekels – that will give you seven thousand shekels in exchange for the watch!"

When Gil heard the proposed amount – the exact amount missing to close the deal on the apartment purchase – he understood that the One Who provides nourishment and sustenance to all had taken care of him. After updating his wife and receiving her permission, he removed his watch, received the agreed payment in return, and ran to pay the balance of the down payment on the apartment – but not before making an urgent telephone call to R. Tzvi Friedman, asking him to write another letter to the Rebbe for him to thank the Rebbe for the revealed miracles that he had made...

"This amazing story continues," says R. Tzvi Friedman in conclusion. "Today, as a result of the Rebbe's answers and instructions, Gil is about to embark on a huge business deal. He is gradually progressing in his observance of Torah and mitzvos, coming to chassidus classes conducted by Rabbi Dubroskin, and he doesn't make a move without first consulting the Rebbe MH"™. Anyone who is prepared to listen to him will hear him say that there is a Rebbe in the world, beyond all natural limitations, and all who wish to walk with certainty in his path should not take a step without asking for his advice."

When Gil heard the proposed amount – the exact amount missing to close the deal on the apartment purchase – he understood that the One Who provides nourishment and sustenance to all had taken care of him.

friends have been invited to participate, probably for the first time in their lives. And if any of Gil's friends have yet to hear his story, they will surely hear it firsthand at this celebration, together with a hearty recommendation on having a strong connection with the Lubavitcher Rebbe, who still leads, encourages, and provides direction and guidance, doing great miracles for all those who follow in his path.

SEVEN THOUSAND SHEKELS AT THE ELEVENTH HOUR

But this is not the end of the

proprietor was not concentrating whatsoever on the sparkling selection of gold and diamond jewelry before him. His look was fixed on the Rado gold watch on Gil's wrist. "I'm specifically interested in the watch you're wearing," the storeowner said openly. Gil, who had received the watch as a gift from his wife on their wedding day, would not allow him to make it the focal point of the sale. "The watch is not for sale," he declared. "And even if I would consider selling it, the amount that I could receive for it as a second-hand watch would not make the sale worthwhile."

PRAISING, YEARNING, REQUESTING, AND EVEN DEMANDING THE REDEMPTION

By Boruch Merkur

*In order to speed up the Redemption and assure its imminent unfolding, the call of the hour is to increase in faith in Moshiach and the Resurrection of the Dead, as well as prayer and yearning, requesting and even demanding the immediate Redemption * Tracing the Rebbe MH”M’s instructions on how to perfect our Divine service in the Final Era.*

[Continued from issue #660]

“Especially that Jews should ask for the Redemption. And not only asking but crying out, ‘Until when?! [i.e., How much longer must we suffer in exile?].’ Indeed, part of the significance of **petitioning** G-d, as it were, is that it obligates Him (so to speak). But not in a manner of an obligation [i.e., a burden], Heaven forefend. Rather, G-d rejoices in it, as the Sages say,⁵⁸ the Holy One Blessed Be He ‘smiles and says, “My children have defeated Me, defeated Me”’ – He rejoices

in fulfilling the requests of the Jewish people.”

In order to speed up the Redemption and assure its imminent unfolding, the call of the hour is to increase in faith in Moshiach and the Resurrection of the Dead, as well as prayer and yearning, requesting and even demanding, asking at the gravesite of the previous Rebbe, the Rebbe Rayatz, to bless us with the immediate Redemption – “that Moshiach should come in the near future (‘He did not delay their redemption even the duration of the blink of an eye’⁵⁹) and that in that very instant,⁶⁰ ‘awaken and sing, you who dwell in the dust,’

and he (the one whose gravesite we visit [i.e., the Rebbe Rayatz]) and all the members of his family at their lead.”

Then we will all go to the Holy Land, whose borders will have expanded,⁶¹ to Yerushalayim, to the Temple Mount, and to the eternal Third Holy Temple, where we will serve G-d both with the offering of sacrifices and the service of prayer, which take place concurrently:

“even when they were offering sacrifices, the *anshei*

mishmar (the group of people designated for that week to pray in the Holy Temple on behalf of all their brethren) would pray 'upon the offering of their brethren, that it should be willfully received [On High].'⁶²

"And we may submit that the term 'their brethren' comes to include all the Jews of all generations."

Thus, the service of prayer in the Holy Temple is an experience that is shared by all Jews by virtue of the *anshei mishmar*.

CHARITY: TWO-FOLD SALVATION

The Rebbe mentions an addition factor to hasten the Redemption, namely, the giving of charity, a Mitzva that is especially suited for this purpose:

"Charity is great, for it brings the Redemption closer'⁶³ and 'charity saves a person from death.'⁶⁴ These quotations entail two concepts: a) It literally 'saves' a person from death, insofar as it [i.e., death] does not take place from the onset. b) Charity saves those 'who dwell in the dust' from death, insofar as 'Charity is great, for it brings the Redemption closer,' when there will be 'awaken and sing, you who dwell in the dust.'"

Charity not only protects a person from death, it brings about the Redemption and the Era of Resurrection, when those who have died will return to life.

The Sages, of blessed memory, teach that G-d did an act of charity in scattering the Jewish people among the gentile nations, for we and our heritage are thereby difficult to annihilate. But this modest favor, through our giving of charity, can be transformed into the ultimate gift of Redemption:

"In exchange for the fact that 'The Holy One Blessed Be He did an act of charity for the Jewish people by dispersing them among the gentile nations,'⁶⁵ there will be the everlasting charity of G-d taking the Jewish people out of exile."

Thus, the Jewish people are given the opportunity, by giving charity – even modest sums⁶⁶ – to transform the transient and relatively minor favor of being dispersed among the gentiles into a permanent and ultimate reward of eternal Redemption.

MINIMAL EFFORT IS REQUIRED

The realization of this goal, to bring about the true and complete Redemption, is not something that is difficult to accomplish. A huge effort is not required to precipitate it. Rather, all the pieces are in place already:

"The Torah has already notified and proclaimed that 'all the dates predicting the end of the exile have passed and the matter only depends upon repentance.'⁶⁷ And the leader of the generation has ruled⁶⁸ that a groan of a Jew is an expression of complete repentance.

"And he has also testified⁶⁹ that all matters have already been completed. We must only polish the buttons of the *mondir*, a soldier's uniform. (A possible explanation: Every Jew is a soldier called to arms,⁷⁰ and when we go out (every Jew together with his wife and children) to greet 'G-d, the L-rd of Hosts,'⁷¹ at the future Redemption, we must garb ourselves with special garments for the occasion, the *mondir*.)

"It is obvious that since there have already been thirty-something years of polishing, the buttons are surely polished by now to the utmost perfection."

NOTES:

58 Bava Metzia 59b.

59 Mechilta and commentary of Rashi Bo 12:41, etc. – see Footnote 70 in the original.

60 As is known, the righteous are destined to rise at the very onset of the Resurrection - Zohar I 140a. It is also explained in Gemara: "In the Future Era...when Aharon and his children, as well as Moshe, will come with them" (Yoma 5b). To note that Aharon and his children (the Priests) and Moshe are described as having alacrity.

61 See R'ei 12:20, Shoftim 19:8, as well as Sifri and the commentary of Rashi there.

62 Taanis 27b.

63 Bava Basra 10a. See *Tanya* Ch. 37, end.

64 Mishlei 10:2; 11:4. See Bava Basra ibid.

65 P'sachim 87b.

66 At this public address, the Rebbe distributed single dollar bills, as was his custom, to be given to charity, suggesting, however, that adding to that amount is even better.

67 Sanhedrin 97b.

68 In the name of his grandfather the Rebbe Maharash, *Likkutei Dibburim* Vol. 4, pg. 720a, end, his *Igros Kodesh* Vol. 3, pg. 551, end.

69 The address of Simchas Torah 5689.

70 See BaMidbar 1:3, 1:48, Pinchas 26:2.

71 Hosheia 12:6; Amos 3:13, 6:14. See *Likkutei Sichos* Vol. 20, pg. 446, end ff., where it is discussed.

MAAMUD MONEY

By Yisroel Yehuda

*One of the important ways that a Chassid expresses his hiskashrus to the Rebbe is through “maamud money,” money the Chassid gives to the Rebbe. This inyan, which was always an “inside” practice within Chassidic communities, goes way beyond material support. * An overview of the topic of “maamud money”*

Throughout the generations of the Rebbeim, starting with the Alter Rebbe, Chassidim knew the importance of giving “maamud money” to the Rebbe, i.e. money that the Rebbe used as he saw fit, whether it was used for his personal needs, for the use of Beis Rebbe (the Rebbe’s household) or tz’daka causes of his choosing.

Chassidim always regarded maamud seriously and would consider the giving of maamud money a top priority. Even Chassidim who were poor, did all they could to send some money to the Rebbe and this sometimes entailed mesirus nefesh. Chassidim knew that it was an expression of a Chassid’s love for and hiskashrus to the Rebbe.

When a Chassid gives maamud, it expresses his bond with the Rebbe more than his learning the Rebbe’s teachings. This is why it is called “maamud” – since the money is something

that puts a man on his feet because it enables him to buy what he needs, and yet the Chassid gives it to the Rebbe. This connects him to the Rebbe with greater d’veikus and hiskashrus.

Another aspect of maamud is that it unites all Chassidim. “The inner intent of maamud is to connect all Chassidim together in true unity,” writes the Rebbe in one of his letters. On another occasion he said, “maamud connects all of Anash together.”

THE HISTORY OF MAAMUD MONEY

The inyan of maamud began back in the days of Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Vitebsk, when he traveled to Eretz Yisroel with a large group of Jews in the year 5537/1777. Their material state was terrible and the money that they took with them

dwindled. “It is impossible for the few to sustain the many, here in Eretz Yisroel, who come daily to the house, knocking on our doors to provide bread for their children. Infants cry out for bread and in the morning they say ‘who will give us in the evening’ etc, as they don’t even have food for one meal, and we are collapsing under the burden,” wrote Rabbi Yisroel of Polotzk who was a member of the group.

The Alter Rebbe, who had just undertaken the leadership of the Chassidim throughout Russia, geared his energies to helping the group and that is how maamud began, the general meaning of which is to give money to the Rebbe to support him and his family. The Alter Rebbe, as a superb commander and organizer, initiated the project of arranging maamud money for “our Rebbeim in Eretz Yisroel” as the Alter Rebbe referred to them.

The maamud fund began to operate and was run by the Alter Rebbe and another two disciples of the Maggid. These three tzaddikim established that every house should have a maamud pushka, which each family had to contribute towards regularly. At first, the *takana* (enactment) was to set aside maamud money before every Yom Tov, but this was changed to every week.

Emissaries were sent throughout White Russia, Vohlin, and Poland to collect the money. It was sent to the Alter Rebbe who sent it to Eretz Yisroel. The Alter

Rebbe greatly esteemed the inyan of maamud and wrote a lot about it in various letters. It is told that the Alter Rebbe once punished a certain person for his misdeeds by instructing his maamud emissary to not accept even a cent from him.

Chassidim also sent maamud directly to the Alter Rebbe. In his responses to the calumnious charges against him, the Alter Rebbe stated: "Sometimes, they also send me from other towns ...

some individuals volunteer together and send me donations, as they like, without my asking them," and "But those who come to me do not give me anything in person; they just send me from their homes for the purposes of my parnasa."

The Alter Rebbe's incarceration, was based in part on libelous claims by misnagdim fact that he sent money abroad to lands under Russia's enemy, Turkey. The fact was that the

money was for poor Torah scholars living in Eretz Yisroel which was at that time under the Turks. The informer even had the audacity to suggest that the government open the accounting records of the maamud money, where he claimed it would be proven that "a significant sum of money leaves Russia for abroad."

The Alter Rebbe, in his response, wrote "in our religion we support the poor of Eretz Yisroel so that they will pray for



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all of Israel.” He explained that this is the custom in all Jewish communities, to provide emissaries from Eretz Yisroel with letters of approbation encouraging support, and this was done in Vilna and Shklov, which were misnagdic strongholds, too.

Throughout the generations, the Chassidim continued to give maamud for the Rebbe, the Nasi of that generation. The Mitteler Rebbe instructed that “Every man send maamud money, and not decrease heaven forbid, as you undertook during his lifetime before my father... and I am confident in the true strength of your hiskashrus.”

The Mitteler Rebbe had a special ledger in which all the names of those who participated in maamud were written, so that “it will be etched in my heart to be remembered for good in truth and faithfulness.” He upheld the takana of every home having a maamud pushka, and every family, whether rich or poor, had an annual assessment that they set aside for maamud.

It seems that the word “maamud” entered the Chabad lexicon at this time, for we see it

here for the first time. We need to differentiate between the “maamud klali” which was given to the poor of Eretz Yisroel and the “maamud b’yichud” that Chassidim sent to the Rebbe for his personal use.

**IN THE TIME OF THE
TZEMACH TZEDEK,
REBBE MAHARASH,
AND REBBE RASHAB**

Maamud continued in the time of the Tzemach Tzedek. He encouraged the Chassidim to continue giving maamud, as established by the Mitteler Rebbe: “The main thing is to have closed pushkas and to collect the contents every week, or at least once a month, and what is lacking from the established assessment they should make up on a monthly basis, so it won’t be too arduous for them at the end of the year.”

We have one story about maamud, from the time of the Tzemach Tzedek, which the Rebbe told:

“R’ Levi Yitzchok, the son-in-law of the Tzemach Tzedek, was a math genius and he would say about himself that he couldn’t compare to the Tzemach Tzedek in this, and he related the following: R’ Yossele, the Maggid’s, was a meshulach. The way it worked was that ... they would bring the original coins given to them for maamud along with lists that said how much each one gave.

“One time, when R’ Yossele came (with the maamud money), the Tzemach Tzedek gave R’ Levi Yitzchok the lists in order to make an accounting. R’ Levi Yitzchok wanted to show the Tzemach Tzedek how Yossele kept an exact accounting, so he entered the Tzemach Tzedek’s room and began reading the lists: So-and-so

gave a *pyaták* (a Russian coin), so-and-so gave half a pyatak, and so on.

“The Tzemach Tzedek then wiped his hands in preparation for the ‘asher yatzar’ bracha and said, ‘nu nu’ to indicate that he should continue his recitation. When the Tzemach Tzedek finished the bracha after drying his hands – as meanwhile R’ Levi Yitzchok read five pages of the list – he said, “the total is such-and-such ...”

The Rebbe Maharash lived in opulent style yet he said “maamud is more precious than anything.”

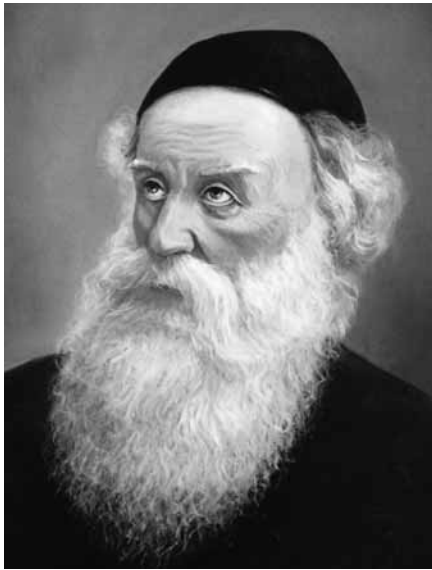
The era of the Rebbe Rashab is characterized by the search for a proper emissary. One of the suggestions was to send Rabbi Isser Yanovsky, the Rebbe’s great-uncle, but that idea did not work out for various reasons. In the end, R’ Sholom Cohen was picked but after a few years he became sick and the Rebbe Rashab had to look for someone else.

Later on, about the year 5653/1893, the maamud was set up in a more organized fashion. The Rebbe Rashab once used this unusual expression for maamud, calling it, “bread from heaven.”

**IN THE TIME OF
THE REBBE RAYATZ**

When the Soviet anti-religious edicts went into effect and Jews were persecuted by the Yevsektzia, the Rebbe Rayatz began an offensive war to build mikvaos, shuls, yeshivos and Talmudei Torah. This tremendous network which spread across the former Soviet Union, required huge sums of money every month for salaries, to sustain families, for construction materials etc. and this came from maamud money that the Rebbe received.

Out of fear of the NKVD



The Alter Rebbe

agents, the name was changed from maamud to nifneh. It was the code word for maamud with each letter of the word maamud replaced with the following letter in the Alef-beis. They also used the code word “tarmichan” which meant “sh’kalim” using the same code of one letter off in the Alef-beis. The code word “mezuzos” meant thousands. The words became part of the Chabad lexicon so that even after the Rebbe Rayatz left Russia, you could find the expression, “So-and-so donated X amount tarmichan for nifneh.”

After the Rebbe left Russia, the situation became worse there. The Rebbe was broken by the physical and spiritual persecution in Russian jail which affected his health severely. He had to make trips to health spas but there was no money. In addition, there were Lubavitcher families left in Russia whom the Rebbe treated as a father does his children, and these families cried out for financial help (many of them were fired from work and they starved).

The Rebbe also continued with his holy work and soon, this

encompassed all of Europe and America.

We can see how dire the situation was in letters that the Rebbe Rayatz’s secretary, R’ Chatshe Feigin wrote to R’ Yisroel Jacobson in America:

“The situation is particularly oppressive, you cannot imagine, and it was most apparent during the holiday ... You understand that in a letter it is impossible to write everything, but if I could tell of such matters that have resulted from the difficult situation, which he himself (the Rebbe) spoke with me, your hair would stand on end. I will give you one illustration and that is, his weakened health is immeasurable. And it is a matter of life and death that he travel to a health resort for the summer months. However, ultimately, it is doubtful that he will even be able to travel to an ordinary summer retreat like that of the average householders of Riga, and the simple reason is that extra money is needed above and beyond the normal expenses; approximately 500 dollars, for the summer ... In Russia, the situation gets steadily worse and consequently, the money from there diminishes ...”

In those years, when the Rebbe MH²M was already engaged to Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka but there was no money for their wedding, R’ Chatshe poured out his bitter heart in another letter:

“I am writing you in strictest confidence which is not to be repeated how bad things are ... even though I haven’t been told anything about the matter, but ultimately, a month later or a month sooner, a wedding must be made and with what?”

The terrible situation compelled the Rebbe Rayatz to become directly involved in maamud. Although he himself did

not personally address Chassidim, he informed them that he appointed R’ Chatshe Feigin, “Who is aware of the state of affairs,” to arrange maamud properly.

R’ Chatshe, who saw and heard plenty in the Rebbe’s home, was greatly affected by the Rebbe’s state and he constantly tried to convey this to his friends, the T’mimim, so they too would be aroused to genuine hiskashrus and collect money for maamud.

“After scrutinizing the matter it appears that there is a frightful abandonment of the inyan of maamud. In Beis Rabbeinu there is privation and pressure with no foundation or order in the collection of maamud, and the heart is pained by the situation of Anash coming to see the house of their Rebbe in such a state,” he wrote to his fellow Chassidim.

He let them know about the establishment of “Chevras Machazikei Beis Rabbeinu” whose function it was to support the Rebbe and his activities. The takanos of the organization established that every member would contribute no less than 100 shekels a year. The names of the contributors were always left on the Rebbe’s desk for him to arouse much mercy “to pour out a flow of abundance of life and much blessing, materially and spiritually.”

R’ Chatshe made great efforts to arrange maamud. As part of his efforts, R’ Itche der Masmid was sent to America for two years to collect maamud.

R’ Chatshe was killed during the Holocaust by the Nazis and after the Rebbe Rayatz came to America, his son-in-law, the Rebbe took on the responsibility of arranging maamud and called it “part of his job.” In the Rebbe’s letters there is a lot written about

“It is a matter of life and death that the Rebbe travel to a health resort for the summer months. However, ultimately, it is doubtful that he will even be able to travel to an ordinary summer retreat like that of the average householders of Riga, and the simple reason is that extra money is needed above and beyond the normal expenses; approximately 500 dollars, for the summer.”

maamud.

Maamud money that was sent to the Rebbe MH”M was divided into three funds as the Rebbe saw fit: Machne Israel, Lishkas Chasha’in, and Merkos L’Inyanei Chinuch. These three organizations, which the Rebbe directed, were involved in various aspects of tz’daka including

spreading Torah, chinuch, money for the needy.

In every area someone was appointed in charge of maamud, whose job it was to urge Anash to send maamud money to the Rebbe. In one of his letters, the Rebbe explains the inyan of maamud in a simple though amazing way, so that it could be explained to Jews that were not Chabad Chassidim:

There needs to be elucidation that being that each individual does not have the opportunity to take part in the Rebbe’s holy work, which is really the obligation of every Jew, however, by giving nifneh: 1) They remove this concern from him so that there won’t be this distraction which interferes with his work. 2) Most importantly – by doing so, you take part in his holy work, which is why the giving ought to be in an entirely different manner and an entirely different quantity.

The Rebbe Rayatz said it in a more explicit way in the year 5688/1928:

In truth, the inner inyan of this is the foundation of hiskashrus of Anash which is why every one of the mekusharim ought to know his obligation in paying the monthly maamud ...

We can learn about the connection and the mutual “responsibility” between the giver of maamud and the Rebbe from a letter of the Rebbe Rayatz:

When I know how much each is giving per month, if they add, they will add to him from Heaven, and if heaven forbid it is diminished so that heaven forbid, it is obvious that he is lacking from Above for his livelihood – I need to know.

We see that the Rebbeim highly

regarded maamud, and obviously, it is very important to every Chassid.

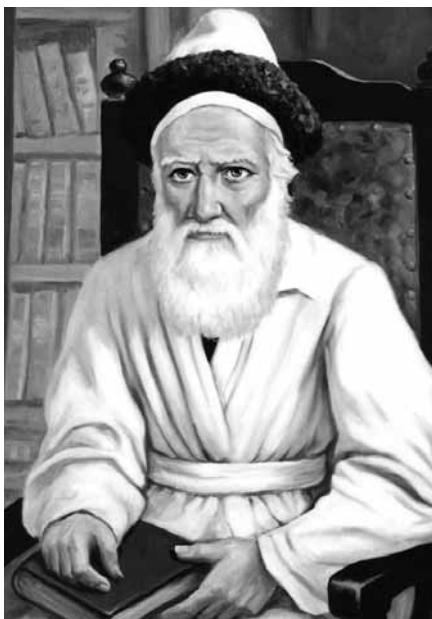
THE CHASSIDIM TREAT MAAMUD VERY SERIOUSLY

In the past, every Chassid knew that maamud is just like learning a maamer Chassidus, like participating in a farbrengen or davening at length, and even more than that. Giving maamud was something that concerned Chassidim deeply and was an integral part of the life of every Chassid.

Shimon the Heretic provides authentic testimony to this. After he succeeded in Vilna in sending innocent bachurim into the clutches of the Maskilim in Berlin, the Maskilim decided to try and capture Chassidim as well. For this purpose, they sent Shimon the Heretic to the Alter Rebbe for yechidus.

During his travels he was in touch with those who sent him and he described the appeal that was made in one of the Chassidishe towns. It may not have been for maamud but we can learn from this how Chassidim regarded money that needed to be sent to the Rebbe:

“When they finished singing, R’ Nachman (the Mashpia) said to one of the men: Peretz, give your yarmulke. Peretz lifted his hat and removed his yarmulke and put it on the table, upside down. Nachman then said: Betzalel Chaim, you write the list. Then he turned to one of the men and said: Eliyahu Moshe, bring a paper, pen and ink. Then he turned back to Betzalel and said: Be careful to write properly without extraneous thoughts because the list will enter the Holy of Holies of Adoneinu



The Tzemach Tzedek

Moreinu V'Rabbeinu.

"When Eliyahu Moshe brought paper and writing implements, Betzalel Chaim stood up and went to the sink and washed his hands. He rubbed them and dried them and fixed his gartel and hat and sat down. After these preparations, he wrote about two lines. I did not see what he wrote but his face looked very serious, and kept changing colors as he kept his gaze fixed upon R' Nachman.

"R' Nachman took out a cloth packet from his pocket and took out a paper and read the names of the men and the amounts of money they had pledged which amounted to more than 1000 rubles in gold coins. He put the coins in the yarmulke and Betzalel Chaim wrote the names of the donors. When R' Nachman finished the list, another four or five men did as he did and read lists of donors and the amount of their donations and the coins were put in the yarmulke. Betzalel Chaim wrote and filled up four or five sheets.

"When they finished reading

the lists, R' Nachman took out a gold coin and put it in the yarmulke and Betzalel Chaim wrote his name and then the other people sitting there did the same thing. Most of them did not give less than three coins and there were people who gave five or nine gold coins.

"One of them greatly surprised me because when it was his turn, he took out a cloth packet and removed many gold coins and gave them to R' Nachman who counted them once and again and told Betzalel Chaim: Chaim Zundel ben Beila and R' Yochanan Zev – 72 gold *rendlich* coins.

"I looked at Chaim Zundel, dressed in old, plain clothing, with tattered shoes; and a poor man like him gave such a large amount ..."

How Chassidim treated maamud can be seen a short while after the Alter Rebbe was arrested, when a committee convened and established rules for all Chabad Chassidim which they had to carry out until the release of the Rebbe. Three paragraphs out of nine had to do with maamud:

-Every one of Anash will be careful to pay maamudos to support the Rebbe's household and the fund for our brethren in our Holy Land.

-Every one of Anash will make a list of the gold and silver items he owns.

-Wherever Anash live, they will select someone reliable who will supervise the carrying out of these conditions and they will bring the maamud money to him.

Over the generations, the Chassidic commitment to maamud not only did not dim; on the contrary. One of the Chassidim who was devoted to the Rebbe, MH" M was R' Avrohom

Pariz. He lived in Petach Tikva and he made a living with difficulty by working in an orchard. His material circumstances were very constrained but his thoughts were constantly on the Rebbe's material state in faraway Riga. R' Avrohom knew about the Rebbe Rayatz's precarious health as well as about the terrible financial state of Beis Rebbe.

One day, R' Avrohom found a treasure. He found a sack of gold coins in the field. "I thought that Hashem had given me the merit, and through me relief would come to the Rebbe, even if only in small measure," – he later related – "However, I feared lest my heart convince me to take a tenth for myself from this precious treasure. So I went to the bank immediately, without going home first, and I deposited all the money into the Rebbe's account in Riga."

Later on, R' Avrohom found out that this money helped the Rebbe make a beautiful wedding for his middle daughter and the Rebbe, Nasi Doreinu.



The Rebbe Rashab



The Rebbe Rayatz

A few years later, in the summer of 5689/1929, R' Avrohom found out that the Rebbe was about to visit Eretz Yisroel and his joy was boundless. He didn't rest as he arranged all the details for the visit. R' Avrohom obtained a large sum of money from somewhere and waited for the Rebbe.

When the Rebbe Rayatz alighted from the train in Eretz Yisroel, R' Avrohom went over to him and gave him the bundle of money. The Rebbe asked: Avrohom, what's this?

R' Avrohom replied: Maamud!

The Rebbe smiled and asked in surprise: Do the people of Eretz Yisroel collect maamud money? (The Rebbe realized that R' Avrohom had obtained the money and also knew his financial state).

R' Avrohom reiterated: Rebbe, maamud!

The Rebbe agreed to take this maamud money. This amount enabled him to conduct himself royally throughout his stay in Eretz Yisroel.

R' Avrohom would say, in his heartfelt, characteristic, Chassidic

way: "When you get your monthly salary, you have to give it to the Rebbe. Then you can ask him: Rebbe, I need bread, Rebbe I need milk, and the Rebbe will give you all your needs."

In those years the Chassid, R' Itche der Masmid went on shlichus for the Rebbe in order to arrange maamud money in the United States.

R' Itche was an oved and G-d fearing, a man above the norm, who had many particularities and stringencies. He was removed from matters of this world and conducted himself with *iskafia* to an extreme. To illustrate, in the home where he stayed in the United States, the bed was always made because R' Itche never used it.

Nevertheless, when it came to maamud, R' Itche had his feet on the ground and he knew how to find addresses, get people to part with their money, organize plans and generate money. In a wide ranging series of letters, R' Itche is revealed in all his glory. One clearly sees how he devoted himself completely to the Rebbe regarding maamud, literally abandoning his nature and habits. He used every means possible to urge Anash to donate money to the Rebbe.

During his stay in America, Reb Itche's opinions rankled the sensibilities of some of the Chabad askanim. They maintained that it was preferable to support Tomchei T'mimim than to give maamud, while R' Itche held that maamud superseded all. R' Chatshe heard about this difference of opinion and he reacted strongly in a letter:

"Regarding R' Itche ... you need to consider that he is a Jew involved in avoda for thirty years and so his middos are on a whole

different level ... I don't know how other people's emuna is; for me it's as follows: The Rebbe himself is to me above all personal inclinations and considerations of any other matters. Back in Russia, in Leningrad, the Rebbe told me: Maamud is the head and Tomchei T'mimim is the heart. The order is the head, then the heart and therefore, you should not question R' Itche."

The Rebbe Rayatz himself wrote R' Itche about money woes:

It is very difficult for me to talk about my personal situation but I must inform you that I am drowning in debts that escalate and increase constantly, and I request that Anash unite and come up with a good plan for the past, to pay debts, and to strengthen the present in an organized way. Please Anash, have mercy on me and on yourselves and your households and unite with one mind and wholeheartedly, and Hashem will help you materially and spiritually.

R' Itche said about this letter from the Rebbe: I literally cried like a little child because of this letter, how the crown of our heads, the tzaddik of the world, has to plead with those in America and in the end, they harden their necks etc.

R' Itche did not rest but used every possible means to raise money for the Rebbe. Anash in America who hadn't seen the Rebbe in ten years, had had their ardor cooled off somewhat and when R' Itche came to them they didn't always rush to give him money for the Rebbe.

"The coldness of Anash is unimaginable. How can we sit with folded hands when the crown of our heads shlita is suffering so greatly? Where is the effect of the study of Chassidus? Where is our

friendship to our Rebbeim? What are we and what are our lives if we are not involved for the benefit of our true lives?" – this is what R' Itche wrote to R' Yisroel Jacobson.

When the Rebbe Rayatz arrived in the United States, his son-in-law, Ramash, took over the raising of maamud. The Rebbe MH" M asked Anash in all locations to arrange maamud. When it seemed that things weren't being taken care of at a satisfactory pace, the Rebbe wrote words of rebuke or surprise.

The Rebbe extolled the inyan of maamud very much and said that it was "the highest of the high," and that this is the way to true hiskashrus to the Rebbe.

The Rebbe wrote an unusual and surprising letter to the mashpia, R' Shlomo Chaim Kesselman, who lived in Paris and was appointed to raise maamud from the Chassidim there. R' Shlomo Chaim wrote to Ramash about the state of Anash in Paris and said that the avoda of maamud did not pertain that much since people (outside of Chabad) would not give money for that purpose.

R' Shlomo Chaim received a six page, very sharp letter in return about the inyan of maamud. The Rebbe wrote that wherever people were involved in this inyan, the maamud was very successful and "those who were involved did not have to unsheathe their mesirus nefesh for this. Not only that, but their own state improved materially and spiritually, and respect for them in the eyes of those who worked and made efforts along with them continues to grow, and ultimately they see that they (the donors) are the recipients and not the givers and even materially and in

monetary matters."

Then the Rebbe told him the well-known story about the simple chassid who had moved to some nowheresville, both in the material sense and spiritually. Before long, letters began coming from there to the Rebbe Rayatz. From this, concluded the Rebbe, if a simple person had such a great impact on the Jews of the place, all the more so in the Lubavitcher community in Paris where "the finest of the fine of Anash" lived, could they influence others to give maamud.

MAAMUD – NOT ONLY FROM CHASSIDIM

The Rebbe was of the opinion that maamud can be gotten from not-yet-Lubavitchers too, as we see in the following letter:

In general, there is no need to be stringent and sift with thirteen sifters before talking about the inyan of nifneh, especially considering that in recent years it is becoming more emphasized how he is the leader of all Jews ... On the other hand, you should not speak about all this with every single person. Obviously, you need to be wary of those who will triumphantly say later, "I made Avrom rich."

From what the Rebbe says in several places, it can be fine to take maamud from someone who is not a Lubavitcher Chassid and thus connect him to the Rebbe.

Even in the previously quoted letter to R' Shlomo Chaim Kesselman, the Rebbe refers to his claim that the people living in Paris have no connection to maamud and responds sharply as follows:

And you come in your letter (and as apparent from the lack of activities - this is also the conclusion of Anash in your

camp) and coldly declare that all our Jewish brethren in his camp (aside from those who live in your neighborhood) have no connection to all this! Please call a meeting of all of Anash and make an accounting of how much effort they made to garner supporters for this, and then the whole discussion will be superfluous, as it will immediately clarify the reasons for the lack of results.

The Rebbe declared:

Based on experience that we have seen in every location where they were involved with nifneh in recent years, they accomplished and were successful.

The Rebbe even coined the idea

R' Avrohom would say, in his heartfelt, characteristic, Chassidic way: "When you get your monthly salary, you have to give it to the Rebbe. Then you can ask him: Rebbe, I need bread, Rebbe I need milk, and the Rebbe will give you all your needs."

of “spiritual maamud” which means to connect Jews to the Rebbe. The Rebbe considered this even greater than material maamud.

However, in the case of non-Chassidim, the Rebbe wanted maamud to be collected only from such people who knew what a Rebbe is. The Rebbe said that a Jew had once gone to the Rebbe Rayatz and wanted to give him maamud. The Rebbe Rayatz refused it and said: “**Chassidim** give maamud.”

The man said, “I will be a Chassid.”

The Rebbe said, “That’s not how you start.”

Participating in giving maamud is not just about money but an expression of the feelings of the heart as well as a conscious sign of hiskachrus for the inyanim of the Rebbe, my father-in-law who sacrificed in order to plant Torah and Judaism around the world, especially in this country - wrote the Rebbe in one of his letters.

Today too, Chassidim continue to connect to the Rebbe by giving maamud which can be given to Kupas Rabbeinu. By doing so, one strengthens the hiskachrus to the Rebbe MH”M and becomes a fitting vessel to receive his holy brachos.

Sources: Igros Kodesh Rebbe Rayatz, Igros Kodesh Admur shlita, Toldos Chabad in Eretz Yisroel, Otzar Sippurei Chabad, Didan Natzach, Mishpat HaS’farim – Didan Natzach (T’shura), Echad Haya Avrohom, Yiras Hashem Otzro, Kovetz Maamud, Beis Moshich, Choveres Hiskashrus published by ATaH

THE GENTILE JUDGE WRITES ABOUT MAAMUD

Over the years, many people tried to harass Chassidim about the giving of maamud money. The most recent episode was during the court case of the s’farim. The crux of the case centered on whether the Rebbe Rayatz treated the library, over the years, as his personal possession, or as a public library which belonged to the Chabad movement.

One of the proofs that the other side tried to bring was that since the Rebbe Rayatz bought s’farim for the library with maamud money, and since maamud was the Rebbe’s personal money, the library was the Rebbe’s personal possession.

“Our side” countered this with arguments which Judge Sifton accepted as he wrote in his final ruling. In his brief, the gentile judge wrote a concise and enlightening summary about the inyan of maamud: “Maamud money also was used by Lieberman (the Rebbe Rayatz’s secretary) and the Rebbe to buy s’farim to enlarge the collection. The fact that the Rebbe hid, almost completely, how the money was used does not take away from the incontrovertible and proven fact that the money that he received as maamud was designated as money received to further goals of the community which he led.

“According to Dr. Louis Jacobs – an expert on Chassidus – unlike other Chassidic groups that support their Rebbe by giving donations called pidyon or pidyon nefesh which is given personally to the Rebbe, Lubavitcher Chassidim support their Rebbe and the institutions which he heads primarily through an organized and established plan of donations called ‘maamud’ or ‘maamud beis chayeinu.’

“Dr. Jacobs explained: ‘By right, each member of the movement ought to feel the responsibility and ... There is an amount according to his means that each member pays or ought to pay ... maamud is comparable to membership dues of an educational society or religious society, and the money is received as membership dues.

“Maamud is given to supply the Rebbe with his needs and the needs of his family as well as support the institutions of his community that are under his jurisdiction. A detailed accounting given by Rabbi Schneerson, in his handwriting, regarding the expenditures of maamud divide the expenditures into six parts: ‘HaKria V’HaK’dusha,’ s’farim, gemach, tz’daka, personal expenses, salaries and telegrams etc. As can be seen from another document entered into the record - out of \$18,481 which was received by Rabbi Schneerson, only \$2102, about 11% were defined as personal expenses. Dr. Jacobs concluded, ‘It seems clear to all that maamud is designated to support the organization.’”

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CONNECTING JEWS TO THE REBBE

By Rabbi Yaakov Shmuelewitz, Shliach, Beit Shaan

Think for a moment - Where can you distribute sichos, Shabbos and Geula brochures, D'var Malchus, copies of Beis Moshiach magazine, maamarim, etc? In a nearby shul, at your place of work, in a waiting room? Who knows? Maybe a drop of the ground-up jewel from the king's crown will enter someone's throat and into their heart and he will be healed ...

I'm casting back to recall my very first experiences with the Rebbe and Chabad. Two images come to mind and maybe our readers will be able to learn something from them about bringing Jews close to the Rebbe.

FIRST IMAGE

The first image I recall is when I was ten or eleven. We were not yet Lubavitchers at all. One day, my father woke me up very early, maybe three in the morning, and took me to the Kosel where we heard a live broadcast of the Rebbe's farbrengen. I did not know Yiddish at the time but I remember dozens of Chassidim crowded around the loudspeaker

and listening very closely.

Similarly, I recall a typical Friday night scene in my home, me reading a book after the seuda while my father read a concept on the parsha from a bunch of white papers that said *Likkutei Sichos* on the outside. Every now and then I would hear him exclaim, "Ah, what genius! What a fantastic idea!"

Back then, I knew nothing about the content of the Rebbe's sichos but today, in retrospect, I realize how the Rebbe's influence found its way into our home. Moments like those probably paved the way for me later as our entire family joined the Rebbe on the derech of Chabad Chassidus.

Those papers my father perused, and many others like it,

were distributed by Chassidim in the shuls in the Yerushalmi neighborhood where we lived and davened. After services, my father would collect leaflets to bring home and this is how, perhaps for the first time, he became acquainted with the Rebbe's teachings.

The moral is obvious. We could do so much to be mekarev thousands of Jews to the Rebbe, to his teachings and to Chassidus. True, there is opposition to Chassidus today, but there were Misnagdim back then too. With all that, there were still plenty of open-minded Jews of all backgrounds who took them and read them and even enjoyed them. Today they and their children fill Chabad yeshivos and serve as rabbanim, shluchim and Chassidim in the Rebbe's army!

Take a minute to think where you can put sichos, Shabbos and Geula brochures, D'var Malchus, copies of Beis Moshiach magazine, maamarim etc. in nearby shuls, at your place of work, in waiting rooms, etc. Who knows? Maybe a drop of the ground-up stone from the king's crown will enter someone's throat and into their heart and he will be healed ...

Parenthetically, I'd like to point out that sometimes, even one page can accomplish a lot. About twenty years ago, we began giving out *Sichat HaShavua* to the religious



kibbutzim near Beit Shaan. A few months later, a man of about 70, a resident of one of the kibbutzim, told me that he read it and he wanted to join a deeper shiur in Chassidus.

A shiur was started specifically for him, and to sum it all up, this 70 year old man soon switched to using a T'hillas Hashem siddur, started wearing a gartel, grew a beard, started using the mikva, and launched a Mesibos Shabbos program for the children of the kibbutz in his home! He went on

to learn and even teach a lot of Chassidus (prior to this he was a talmid chacham), visit the Rebbe, and passed away at ripe old age a full-fledged Chassid of the Rebbe, MH"M.

At his funeral, he was eulogized for his "spiritual flexibility," that at an advanced age he took on a new path and threw himself into it fully. It was all thanks to the page we gave out at the kibbutz.

I have many more stories about baalei t'shuva who started on their path thanks to a D'var Malchus

booklet that ended up in the kibbutz mail box, or a Tanya that someone pushed on a friend before he left for India.

Pretty much everyone who works in Chabad outreach has experienced stories like these. The bottom line is, don't be lazy Give out pages, leaflets and booklets of Chassidus. It works!

SECOND IMAGE

The second image that comes to mind is from when I was 14. I was taking my first steps in a

Litvishe yeshiva, Yeshivas Itri in Yerushalayim. I had already met some Lubavitcher bachurim and had heard the occasional Chassidic thought.

It was the Nissan break during the Omer period and I noticed in my siddur words like “chesed of chesed,” “g’vura of chesed,” and had no idea what they meant. I had a feeling that if I met a Lubavitcher, he would know.

I began looking for a Lubavitcher in my neighborhood. At first I found a young bachur from a Lubavitcher family. He couldn’t help me but he introduced me to an American Lubavitcher who invited me to his (temporary) home in the neighborhood and explained things to me at length (which I didn’t quite understand) about Atzilus and other worlds, about various s’firos, and the hishtalshlus among them.

I didn’t understand it all (I may not have understood anything) but I remember being very impressed that this person didn’t know me yet he was willing to devote his time and energy to speak in a foreign language with a fourteen year old kid interested in Chassidus.

To this day, I have no idea who he was (if you know of an American, Australian or British Lubavitcher who was in Bayit V’Gan in Nissan 5738 who spoke

to a bachur about hishtalshlus and s’firos, give him my warm regards). Thanks to him though, I can now recommend that each of you Lubavitchers reading this take a good look around for someone waiting for your invitation to learn Chassidus. Maybe even a Litvishe bachur like I was. Not every person from a Litvishe yeshiva is antagonistic.

Who knows, maybe you too will reap the reward of a story like mine to your credit? Sounds good, doesn’t it?

EIGHT WORDS OF THE REBBE

Rabbi Shmuel Reinitz, who runs programs at the Chabad house in Beit Shaan, visits a different section of the city every day, doing mivtzaim and giving shiurim.

One day, while visiting an auto mechanic, he met a kibbutznik about forty years of age who refused to put on t’fillin. “Leave me alone. I’m a Leftist kibbutznik.”

R’ Reinitz put his hand on the man’s shoulder and said, “The Lubavitcher Rebbe said there’s no such thing as a secular Jew. Every Jew has a holy neshama.”

The kibbutznik was touched and he said, “I’ll tell you a secret. I saw him.”

Then he recounted how twenty years earlier he had a friend, also a kibbutznik, who dealt in diamonds and got into huge debt with the underworld and fled to America. Once there he discovered that the criminals could find him there too and his friends told him that there was really only one way for him to hide. He would have to go to one of the Chassidic strongholds and mingle amongst them.

“He picked Lubavitch and quickly learned how to fit in. He even became a Lubavitcher. One day he showed up with some friends, including me, to visit the Rebbe” – continued the kibbutznik. “I met him in 770 and he introduced us to the Rebbe. We stood for a few hours on line and when it was our turn, this ‘Chabadnik’ introduced us as unbelievers. The Rebbe smiled and said, ‘There is no such thing as Jews who do not believe. All believe.’”

At that moment, there at the garage, a circle was closed. The Rebbe had said there are no secular Jews and that they all believe, so the artificial barrier crumbled. The kibbutznik has now become a friend of R’ Reinitz.

Keep up your mivtzaim and you too will probably hear one day, about some other Jew who heard from the Rebbe how we all believe ...

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CLEAVE TO HIM

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

The mitzva of “and cleave to Him,” attaching oneself to Hashem, applies to every one of the 613 mitzvos and all the instructions and mitzvaim of the Rebbe. All the more does it apply to the main task of our generation, bringing the Geula * A fascinating look at the parsha from the perspective of Chazal, Kabbala and Chabad Chassidus

WHAT IS D’VEIKUS?

The Torah uses the term *d’veikus* (cleaving) in several ways: 1) a Jew’s *d’veikus* to Hashem, “and you who cleave to G-d etc.” (D’varim 4:4), “fear Hashem, your G-d ... and cleave to Him” (D’varim 10:20), “to love Hashem ... and cleave to Him” (D’varim 11:22), and “go after Hashem your G-d ... and cleave to Him” (D’varim 13:5). 2) *D’veikus* of a man to his wife, “and he shall cleave to his wife and be one flesh” (B’Reishis 2:24). 3) A Jew’s cleaving to the Holy Land, “to the portion of the tribe of his fathers shall the Jewish people cleave” (BaMidbar 36:7).

D’veikus refers not only to physical contact but also to a deeper, soul connection, a great love, especially for Hashem with whom there cannot be a physical connection. As Chazal put it, “and to cleave to Him – is it

possible to say so? He is a consuming fire!” Rather, it refers to a cleaving on another plane in which the soul cleaves to G-d with utter love from the depths of one’s heart.

Another way of cleaving to Hashem is by doing a physical action for Him as one would for one’s beloved, as Rashi says, “Serve Him – and cleave to Him,” “and cleave to Him – cleave to His ways.” Another way is by cleaving to those who are close to Him as Rashi writes, “cleave to the disciples and sages and I will consider it as though you cleaved to Him.”

INNER AND OUTER D’VEIKUS

Which sort of *d’veikus* is greater, the love felt in the heart or physical touch which is visible and out in the open?

We tend to say that inner

feelings are more genuine and stronger than external signs of *d’veikus* because physical *d’veikus* can be superficial without truly thinking about and loving the other person. So it’s more important for friends or relatives when one thinks about the other in a deep way than to be physically close.

Surprisingly however, the verse which speaks of a Jew’s love and closeness to Hashem first says, “to love Hashem your G-d” and then it goes on to say, “and cleave to Him.” In other words, the first level is feelings of love in the heart and the second and higher level is *d’veikus* which means (according to Rashi) walking in the ways of Hashem with physical actions.

There are several kinds of actions that are done for others. There are obligatory actions like a man’s duty to support his family or a Jew’s duty to go in the ways of Hashem and fulfill Torah and mitzvos. These deeds are also called *d’veikus* for a man cleaves to his family by supporting them and taking care of their needs. The Jew cleaves to Hashem by fulfilling mitzvos.

Nevertheless, this is not the ultimate meaning of *d’veikus* for these actions are done by necessity and are not indications that they come from feelings of love. When a person does things that he is not obligated to do himself, and certainly not by exerting his physical body, and yet he exerts himself, particularly when there is some personal

danger involved; for example, one who visits the sick even when the person is not a relative in a situation where there is someone else who is taking care of the patient, and he visits even though it's contagious. Another example is when he volunteers to bury the dead when it is not a relative, even though someone else is appointed to bury the dead, despite the physical exertion and the emotional effort involved. This is an expression of his genuine d'veikus to the mitzva and the deceased.

To summarize: There are several levels in the fulfillment of the mitzva of cleaving to Hashem: 1) physical d'veikus (the level of "nefesh" in man's spiritual powers), 2) d'veikus which is love felt in the heart (the level of "ruach"), 3) d'veikus of physical action when it isn't required (the level of "neshama") which indicates pure d'veikus which is expressed on both the level of emotions and on the physical level. In other words, physical d'veikus is an expression of a deep-inner-soul love.

HASHEM BURIED THE DEAD AND VISITED THE SICK

In our parsha, on the words "and cleave to Him," Rashi says "cleave to His ways, do kindness, bury the dead, visit the sick, as Hashem did." We need to understand: 1) Since Rashi wrote "do kindness," why did he need to give examples like burying the dead and visiting the sick?

2) If Rashi's intent is to give examples of chesed that Hashem did (that He buried the dead (Aharon) and visited the sick (Avrohom), why doesn't he also add other acts of kindness that He did like clothing the naked (Adam and Chava) and consoling the bereaved (Yitzchok)?

The reason is that Rashi cites mitzvos that a person does not out of a sense of obligation but as an expression of love. Thus even where there is someone else who can do it, he chooses to do it himself, out of d'veikus. This is particularly noticeable in that Hashem visited Avrohom when he was ill after his circumcision, for certainly Avrohom had friends who visited him (like Mamrei) and nevertheless, Hashem Himself came to visit him.

Likewise, although many people could have buried Aharon as he was beloved to all (for he loved them and made peace amongst them), nevertheless, Hashem buried him.

When Hashem provided clothes for Adam and Chava, there was nobody else to do so. Doing a chesed for someone that nobody else can do is an obligation and does not truly demonstrate d'veikus

and love.

"AND CLEAVE TO HIM" - TO THE NASI HA'DOR

The mitzva of cleaving to Hashem and His Torah applies to all 613 mitzvos as well as to all the Rebbe's instructions and mitvzaim; all the more so to the main task of our generation, to bring the Geula.

How do we bring the Geula, spreading the B'suras HaGeula and learning inyanei Moshiach and Geula with d'veikus? By doing these activities not as though we are compelled to do so, and not by relying on others to do it. A Jew who cleaves to the Rebbe and his horaos does not wait for others. Even where there are others taking action, he himself runs to do what the Rebbe wants and by doing so, he strengthens his hiskashrus to the Rebbe and most importantly, he hastens the coming of the true and complete Geula.

*Sources: Likkutei Sichos volume 14 p. 55.
Special thanks to my son Shmuel.*



FUNDRAISING IN THE ERA OF MOSHIACH

SECRETS OF NO-BUDGET FUNDRAISING: LET'S BUILD A BOARD

By Raanan Isseroff

Your goal is to build a team. Not to express your ruler and final decision making powers. Just like when we were kids and our group splits into teams. There is a natural pecking order in a group that allows it to be successful as a team. You need for this process to occur with the natural energy of the group.

[Continued from last issue]

LET'S START AND GROW A BOARD

How to begin? I am a big proponent of what I call "Free Natural Group Energy." The lights of Tohu into the keilim of Tikkun. To begin with, you need to tap into your most involved people. These are your first board members. They now convene a meeting together with you and your fundraiser or expert (who is running this meeting) with the goal of each suggesting 3 or 4 people who the board (now so empowered as such) will formally approach to join up. From this group have the group vote to appoint a secretary. He will record minutes, decisions, and goals to follow up and send a copy of the minutes to each attending member.

After you have more people on board, they will, as a group vote for the positions of: President, Vice President, Treasurer (you will establish a board bank account) and sergeant at arms (this is somebody who controls the group meetings when they get out of hand and keeps them on track or nothing gets done).

Your board is your "army." An army needs officers. You are in the army of Hashem as the famous saying goes that the "Malchusa D'Ara is a reflection of the Malchusa D'Rakia." We are an army. In order to be organized to operate, there must be a leader and other "officers" who all work together as a team.

The first meeting opens. The fundraiser or expert now opens the floor with that day's goal of picking 2 new candidates whom everyone

minus you (you stay quiet) agrees will work well with their group. This is so "key." You must not interfere in this natural team-making process. You just be the initiator and exciter (and pourer of L'chaims) and G-d will do the rest. They know whom they can work with and whom not. You anyways are inviting to this meeting people who you like and work well together with. Now let them be your "memutza" to other unsuspecting people who don't know yet that they will just love you!

The group now discusses each candidate. His maalos (good points) and chesronos (not-so-good points). Then they vote on two of these people. This board now appoints a person or persons to approach the victim (candidate). A goal is set that the Board candidate will be formally invited by the board to join. A date is voted upon for the next meeting (the following week). You eat bagels make a "L'chaim," take pictures to put on your website and in your newsletter, thank everyone and go home. This is the content of the first meeting.

During the coming week, the new Board Secretary gives the minutes and closing goals to your fundraiser or secretary to type up. He approves them and signs as "secretary of the Board" and gives them to your secretary or fundraiser to mail out to the existing board members and yourself. The

Fundraiser / Board Expert now writes a simple agenda which is “election of new candidates” to the board. This agenda he mails out or emails to all the attending board members. Before the next meeting our valiant fundraiser phones up each of the board members and (cajoles) informs them of the next meeting time & place. He organizes bagels and ...more L’chaim!

The second meeting the candidates (hopefully) all come. You bring out the bagels, coffee and nosh give a quick D’var Torah and then the fundraiser or board expert takes over. (You stay quiet. Shaa!) The new candidates are introduced to everyone. The name game is played and the mission of the organization is discussed, the Rabbi introduced; the fundraiser introduced; future goals discussed and a tour of your operation is in order. Now comes the crowning moment: Your board members ask the candidate to please join. He (please G-d) agrees and then his membership is voted upon. This is all recorded by the Board Secretary. Next each person suggests another 3 people. These are discussed and the board meeting closes with everyone agreeing to meet the following week. (With a few “closing L’chaims” of course...)

The process repeats itself again and perhaps a third time until you have from your original 3 or four people a nice group of 8 to 10 people. At this point, the expert or fundraiser calls for elections and the group now elects from themselves a President, Vice-President, Sergeant-at-arms and treasurer. **You need for the people to use their own energy to pick from within themselves a working cohesive team.**

Any interference from you with this process and yes, you will be the leader, but the leader of what? A group of no one who can work

together as a team, that’s what! As the saying goes: Ein Melech B’Lo Am. There is no King if he has no people.

Your goal is to build a team. Not to express your ruler and final decision making powers. Just like when we were kids and our group splits into teams. There is a natural pecking order in a group that allows it to be successful as a team. You need for this process to occur with the natural energy of the group.

For this to properly occur you (Rabbi, Valiant Shliach, Gaon,

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This is the content
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meeting.***

Beinoni Afilu) have to lay back and stay out of their appointment of leadership or you lose. (Sorry to be so blunt...) After elections, which are the crowning point of a board, you close (with more L’chaims) and with the next meeting business really begins.

For this next meeting sit with the fundraiser and tell him what your needs are. You must now write an agenda for the next board meeting. Include for example: 1. You want to build a school 2. You want to have

the board suggest an appropriate event that they feel would further the organization. 3. You want to have a small dinner to formally welcome the new board. 4. Suggestions for 2 more new board members. 5. Open the floor for more goals that the board feels should be looked into 6. Appoint people to follow up on the agreed upon goals that they will report upon for the next meeting

NOTE ON CONDUCTING MEETINGS

Meetings have a patterned form: An Agenda is prepared and sent to each board member a few days **before** the meeting. The meeting opens with a reading of the minutes of the last meeting and a summary of the goals and reports from people appointed to follow up on those goals. Following the new agenda, you go through the discussion points. From these discussions should come out goals. For each goal, appoint a person or two to look into the feasibility of those goals. He will be contacted after the meeting by the fundraiser who will assist him and remind him to follow up on his goal for the next meeting. He will then report back next meeting. You always open with reports on previously discussed goals and close with resolutions for new goals and either a person is appointed to look into the details of these goals (that person might be the fundraiser) or the goal is voted upon and a committee appointed to implement that new goal.

DISCUSSION OF GOALS / IDEAS

Say an idea is suggested. Ask for a volunteer to give the “pros” (positive aspects) and another to give the “cons” (problems with this idea). The president (or sergeant at arms) gives each person 5 or 10

minutes to discuss his point of view. Then there is a general discussion and then the idea is voted upon, voted down or tabled for more discussion next meeting.

TAKE EACH IDEA SUGGESTED SERIOUSLY

As a side note: Whatever is proposed, each idea is NOT to be laughed at. I would make this a cardinal rule of meetings. You need everyone to feel free to suggest even the most ridiculous idea and feel that he will be taken seriously. Give every idea its discussion time, even if you feel it will not work. It is possible that something else may grow out of the discussion that is worthwhile to pursue. You need for your respected people to be able to freely suggest ideas that they have seen work before and that other board members may not be familiar with. In general, people of this caliber have themselves been a part of very creative fundraising activities. It is always worthwhile to hear some new idea that may be applicable to your situation.

USING YOUR FUNDRAISER TO INTERFACE WITH AND RUN THE BOARD

While I use "Fundraiser" and your secretary interchangeably here, if you have a fundraiser, he must be the organizer of the meetings and work with the Board Secretary to be on top of the new agendas and making sure people with goals are assisted in whatever they need to get their appointed task done. During meetings, he makes sure the President keeps to the agenda and acts as "Emcee." The Board Secretary is that in name only. If you are lucky, he actually writes something. At best, he may take some notes, tape the meeting and give it to your fundraiser or

secretary or his own to prepare. This detail will have to be followed up by your fundraiser. Meet with your fundraiser before each meeting to review the agenda.

KEEPING TO A SET AGREED UPON AGENDA

Board members are business people and very "to the point" with schedules. Your fundraiser must give them your agenda before the meeting. When your fundraiser / expert calls and emails the board member to remind him to attend and inform him of the place, so he

Using your imagination, you can now get a fair picture of where this is going and you being their favorite Rabbi are the beneficiary on behalf of your Beis Chabad.

should ask if there is anything he feels should be on the agenda. This together with goals from the last meeting is formally typed up, emailed, faxed, and mailed to each member of the board.

AFTER ELECTIONS OF BOARD MEMBERS

In your newsletter and on your website and in the local newspaper you run an article with pictures welcoming the new board. The board members are important people and they deserve kavod. A

(small) local dinner is now in order with important people (who are their friends) invited to speak and honor them.

So one of the main things on the next agenda is to form a dinner committee to organize something appropriate for such chashuv people. Of the board members themselves they each know how much to ask from invitees (including themselves!) that people not only won't mind to pay, *but will be lining up to pay!*

And with this event, you are off! Get the mayor in to speak, local town politicians. Get a good photographer in to shoot pictures. Then afterwards you have an article professionally written on the dinner and send it in to the local Jewish and non-Jewish papers with nice pictures of you welcoming your new board members. They of course will feel obligated to print it whether they like you or not, if only to not insult their good friends who are...*On Your Board!* Your board is now in action, working for your Beis Chabad!

This is your first event. Of course the seats cost money, but the board members themselves are organizing these details. They might even get the place donated or at a reduced price because they know or are related to the owner. You just make sure that the event is in a place that has acceptable kashrus and other details that make it a Kiddush Hash-m Chabad event.

This dinner of course will probably pay for itself and leave a little bit left over. No matter. Using your imagination, you can now get a fair picture of where this is going and you being their favorite Rabbi are the beneficiary on behalf of your Beis Chabad.

Your next meeting, you will make a goal of (...what else...?) discussing future events...J

Raanan @shtetlfoundation.org

EDUCATING BNOS RABBEINU

By Chani Nussbaum

*In the Seifer HaShluchim, the Rebbe gives a special place of honor to those who work in chinuch. * We spoke to someone who implants love for Torah with simcha and p'nimius to high school girls, Mrs. Tsylr Turen, principal of Bnos Rabbeinu in Chicago. * We asked her to share the secret of her educational success with us. * "Each one is a star who needs to be given a chance to shine."*

It happened once that a bachur in Tomchei T'mimim in Lubavitch was told he has to leave. He said, "Please, before I go, let me say one sentence to the menahel of the yeshiva." He received permission to do so and said to the menahel, "I am aware that a bachur like me does not deserve to be in this yeshiva, but how did my children and grandchildren sin?"

The menahel acknowledged the truth of what he said, was moved, and replied, "You are right. You can remain in our yeshiva."

Needless to say, that bachur raised a fine family.

The Chassidishe attitude of that

menahel came to mind while I interviewed Mrs. Tsylr Turen, who has over twenty years of experience in chinuch and administration, and who has been running Bnos Rabbeinu High School of Chicago for six years.

About fifty girls attend the school and live in the dormitory. The school is for girls from Lubavitcher homes. Most of them are from out of Chicago, from the United States, Europe and a few from other places. This is a high school where every girl is a success story.

Why would girls leave home to attend Bnos Rabbeinu?

The reasons why girls pick Bnos

Rabbeinu are varied. Many girls do not have a Chabad high school where they live and some want the high level of Limudei Kodesh that we offer. Many come because of the emphasis we place on inyanei Moshiach and Geula, because at Bnos Rabbeinu, everything revolves around that. But most of all, Bnos Rabbeinu has developed a reputation as a school in which every girl feels important, capable, and cared for in a personal and warm manner.

Your high school is known for its success and high scholastic level. What is the secret of your success?

We work with lots of love and warmth. We care for every girl and have a lot of confidence in her. We treat our students with respect and empower them to believe in themselves, which enables them to shine. I work hand-in-hand with Mrs. Baila Grinker and the madrichos of the dormitory to create this atmosphere.

You said "lots of warmth and love." Can you be more specific?

For example, I am not ashamed to go over to a girl and tell her, "You know, I really care about you." That way, the girl doesn't feel like just another girl in the school, because we really care about her and not just her marks and achievements. The

Right: The dormitory of Bnos Rabbeinu



We went to court and even our lawyer told us that it was a shame we were digging in our heels because he did not see any chance that they would allow us to continue using the building. Then suddenly, everything changed and the judge took our side...

results are forthcoming, especially in the areas of Yiddishkait, Chassidishkait and personal development.

Obviously, you can only say something like this if you really feel it. A girl senses whether you mean it and if you don't, saying it can only cause harm.

I feel that in today's generation which is so open to everything, when the street is in every kid's pocket and there isn't even a need to go out to it, the most important things of all are a personal relationship and guidance which are warm and caring and real. That is the key to chinuch.

That is our approach and this relationship is reciprocated by the girls.

Our school day ends at five o'clock and the girls beg to learn more maamarim. They want more Limudei Kodesh and I have to provide it for them as technically difficult as that is. Because you just can't turn them down. And there's no greater nachas than this.

I'll tell you something else. I try to convey this to every girl: You are good and successful, you are definitely special. When you convey this to a girl, sincerely and with love, she becomes receptive because she feels that it's real and not just talk.

I asked Mrs. Turen for examples.

One year, a student had a book that was not appropriate for the dormitory. She was asked to give it to us but she said she couldn't because the book did not belong to her. I invited her to my house and as we spoke openly about it, I came up with an idea. I told her: Five weeks remain until the end of the year. I am going to rely on you not to read the book until then. So you can

hold on to the book until you go home and return it to its owner.

At first she was incredulous and she asked: But how? I told her that she was able to do it and in the end she gave me her word and I believed her!

We had a girl to whom I would always say: You are going to end up being the leader of the girls here. And in the end, this was true. She headed Bnos Chabad for the entire school. Today she has a family and is on shlichus and we are still in touch.

The girls know that I rely on them completely. Therefore, when they need to sign whether they were in shul on Shabbos or not, I am sure that only those who were in shul, will sign. Trusting their honesty creates honesty. To promote truth in this generation when falsehood is so prevalent is so important.

We took a trip and before entering a certain place, the girls had to write their age. They hesitated because they were afraid that if they wrote their real age, they would not be allowed in. Their hesitation was momentary because they collectively decided: We will



Rabbi Turen receiving a dollar from the Rebbe before going on shlichus to Chicago

write our correct age because we are always emphasizing the truth, so how can we lie?

I'll touch on another point here which is also a secret of our success. When a girl enters the school she enters into a long-term personal relationship with me. The girls know that they can call me any hour of the day.

Our connection with the girls doesn't end at graduation. It's an ongoing relationship and it accomplishes a lot. We see it; not after a week, but sometimes years later. As the Alter Rebbe says: Just as material that is immersed in dye for a long time absorbs the color, so too with the soul. We who work in chinuch know that every investment counts; you cannot give up hope even if you only see the results years later.

I am reminded of another story. One of the girls came from a very liberal home and in an open conversation she committed to no longer listening to non-Jewish music. Today she is married and on shlichus. In one of our discussions, she told me that when she is pregnant she is careful to avoid stores that play non-Jewish music so the baby won't be affected! She did not

forget the commitment she made even though it was many years later!

To always listen patiently. That is another very important point. Every day I try to have personal discussions with the girls. In my experience, I see that it contributes so much. Even if there are difficulties, I don't give up and I have many stories that bear this out.

Let me share another story, this one about a girl who asked me to stop having personal discussions with her. A few weeks later she said: I thought you forgot about me. I said: Heaven forbid! I honored your request.

Another aspect we emphasize at Bnos Rabbeinu is working on tznus. We discuss the importance of tznus in our thoughts, speech, and actions.

Projects and mitzvaim are part of our schedule. Every Friday and every special day the girls have organized mitzvaim to a senior center, hospital, or grocery store.

The girls put a lot into their studies; what about special activities?

Before Purim, Lag B'Omer etc. we arrange Shabbatons for the girls, each time in a different location. Although they are always together in the dormitory, Shabbatons are a special time and have a positive impact on the girls.

We have an annual production which is attended by the public (women-only). They prepare for it long in advance so that it's really special. They are together the entire Shabbos and then perform on Motzaei Shabbos. Each time we take another topic connected to Moshiach and Geula.

We work together on the idea but the performance itself is prepared by the girls, on their own. It's an opportunity for every girl to develop her talents and appear on stage. One year, we chose two girls who played the main roles. One of them was a very talented girl but quiet and modest. I really wanted to give her a chance to shine.

She was very involved in the play, choir and dance. I didn't realize how important this was to her until her mother came over to me at the end of the evening and said: This is the first time in her life that she was on stage. Thank you for giving her the opportunity!

That's when I saw, yet again, that every girl is a star. This just strengthened my determination to give every girl a chance.

We also have a performance for 22 Shevat in Crown Heights during the Kinus for women and girls, a very successful event which is spoken about throughout the year. It definitely gives the Rebbe MH"M nachas.

The main thing: We hold farbrengens at least once a week. The farbrengens contribute a lot to the girls' Chassidishkait and to the warm atmosphere. It gives everyone a spiritual lift (this is aside from the hours of



Chassidus, about fifteen classes a week, because we know that “the study of Chassidus changes one’s reality and reveals Essence”).

When the girls returned after Pesach vacation I went to farbreng with them even though I was exhausted from Yom Tov and getting back to routine. I felt that it was my obligation and privilege. It was a very special farbrengen and the girls didn’t want to leave. We just sat and farbrenged until dawn.

At our school, special days in the calendar are special from beginning to end. The girls prepare a presentation connected with the time and they really “live” the significance of the day.”

On Rosh Chodesh Kislev for example, we transformed the conference room into a replica of 770. This was done with a lot of talent and effort thanks to the girls. When we davened there that day, I felt as though I was really in 770. At first I thought it was only I who felt it, but to my surprise almost all the girls came over to me and said: We almost forgot we are in Chicago. I just smiled because that is how I felt.

On Yud Shevat we transformed one of the classrooms into the Rebbe’s room. We had the famous picture of the Rebbe when he was two years old in the center with other items around it and over it we hung a poster with the Rebbe’s statement: “From the day I went to cheider and even before that, I began to imagine what the future Geula would be like,” with a picture of the Beis HaMikdash next to it.

As each girl entered the room, she felt as though she was entering the Rebbe’s room.

Around noon, we had a farbrengen in that room that was supposed to take an hour. It ended up lasting until seven o’clock when we had to leave the building. The girls and I found it hard to leave the room. The farbrengen continued for

many hours into the night at the dormitory.

This approach of making things tangible, while using the girls’ artistic talents for holiness, is very important.

Tips I got from Mrs. Turen for the benefit of our readers:

Every girl is an entire world:

Rule #1 is not to invalidate any girl. Every girl is a star, a neshama, an entire world, who has the ability to transform worlds. The best way to deal with the darkness is not to fight it but through light. When a girl is treated with respect, she will be weaned away from negative things.

We always have to remember that we have the choice whether to be accepting, or ruin and destroy. Any destructive act can affect all future generations. The only choice is to be accepting and when you are accepting, you give and give.

This is especially important in our generation when darkness is all around us. So for example, before I accept a girl I check to see how much work she needs. If we think we can work with her, we accept her and then we must give and give and we see results.

To illustrate this, I’ll tell you a story. It happened, towards the end of a particular school year, that I felt that a certain girl, who was especially difficult, did not belong here anymore. Before I acted on this, I needed to ask the Rebbe’s permission. When I opened a volume of Igros Kodesh I read that the Rebbe was explaining the importance of staying in the mosad.

I said: Rebbe, I’ll do as you wish. This is beyond my abilities and my control. The girl came back for 11th grade and amazingly, she was a completely different girl. I felt that the Rebbe had taken over. She married and is a wonderful example of what a real “Bas Rabbeinu” is.

To radiate chayus-enthusiasm:

This point is related to the previous

one. A teacher cannot allow her students to remain passive. She has to be an example of a hard worker. In order to remain strong in Yiddishkait-Chassidishkait, we have to fight and not allow apathy and coldness to set in with us and our students. When you, the teacher, convey enthusiasm and warmth, it creates an atmosphere of chayus in them.

To take responsibility: I

recommend that all educators teach their students, from a young age, to take responsibility.

There is no such thing at our school as not taking a class. I always tell the girls: You will learn and pass the course. You can do it. So there’s no choice but for her to pass. We all have a natural inclination to demand less of ourselves. In my experience we need to empower our students with the conviction that they are more capable than they believe they are.

When the students get this message, guaranteed, they won’t remain indifferent, and that in itself is a big thing, because coldness and apathy are destructive for our generation. Warmth and action are our life preservers.

An atmosphere of simcha – simchas ha’Geula: Another thing I must mention is simcha. This will help every teacher handle the daily difficulties. Radiate simcha and I guarantee that everything will look different.

A healthier and consequently, a better atmosphere will make it easier on the students to be receptive as well as givers. Don’t forget to take simcha along at every step you take in chinuch, simcha permeated with “living with the times” in which we now live, Yemos HaMoshiach.

The high school is at the center of Mrs. Turen’s life but she is involved in something else too:

You give shiurim in Tanya for

women. Tell us about that.

When I began teaching, it really bothered me when I heard the girls say, "I'm bored by the Tanya class." I decided to give Tanya classes and after a few years I put it out on tapes.

Aside from all my classes at the school, every Tuesday night I give a Tanya class for women. We have begun our fourth cycle, which means that we finished Likkutei Amarim three times. I see it as a great z'chus to teach Tanya and to bring down abstract concepts so people can understand them.

How do you do it?

Since 5751, after 40 years of the Rebbe's Nesius, we already have "a heart to know, eyes to see and ears to hear." The head and heart are more receptive to listening and there is a thirst to hear Chassidus which grabs the mind and heart and then penetrates deeply into the neshama.

The neshama understands every language so teaching in English isn't a problem. If you teach with a chayus, it's absorbed. I try to get people to think because that's the tool for learning and it gets the people inspired, and where there is

inspiration, the ideas are absorbed.

There is only one difference between the shiurim for the girls and the shiurim for women. For the women, the emphasis is on feelings and faith. With the girls, I get more deeply into things, in an intellectual way, so as to develop their ability to learn on their own.

The secret is that since I began teaching Tanya, it has come more and more alive for me and this is what I try to convey in my shiurim to both women and girls.

Have you experienced any miracles in your shlichus?

This year, we were asked to leave the school building because the landlords wanted to sell it. We nearly gave up and began looking for another building but from the Rebbe's answer in the Igros Kodesh I realized that the Rebbe wanted us to remain in that building.

We went to court and even our lawyer told us that it was a shame we were digging in our heels because he did not see any chance that they would allow us to continue using the building.

Then suddenly, everything changed and the judge took our

side. We have been able to continue using the building.

At the beginning of this past school year, despite all our efforts, we did not have a single madricha. Things didn't look good because having three responsible madrichos on the three floors of the dormitory is important. I knew that without them, we would not have a dormitory and if there was no dormitory, we would not have a school. Yet I remained calm because I knew Hashem would work things out for us since He wants our school to exist.

I got a phone call from a madricha that worked here the year before. She told me that she was coming to visit at the end of vacation and would help me. I thanked her and was encouraged that I had someone who would welcome the girls.

The girls were supposed to come on Sunday. On Motzaei Shabbos we got our first madricha, on Sunday the second, and on Monday, the third. The three of them came on Tuesday. That was the day the one who came to help me had to leave.

Do you have any parting words to share with our readers?

Educate your children with the mindset of Geula. Believe in them, love them, and show them your love. Inspire yourself, and inspire them. Connect them to the Rebbe and connect them to Moshiach. Our girls live with the knowledge and the feeling that the only remaining shlichus today is kabbalas p'nei Moshiach Tzidkeinu, b'poel mamash. They leave with a new confidence in themselves and a belief that they can help change the world.

Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu
V'Rabbeinu Melech HaMoshiach
L'olam Va'ed

You can contact Mrs. Turen at 773-267-0770, or by email at turen@bnosrabbeinu.com. Additional information about the school is available at www.bnosrabbeinu.com not

BIO

Mrs. Tsryl Turen is originally from Baltimore. Her father was the well-known scientist Naftali Berg a"h who was Director of Research of the Advanced Technology Office of the Army Research Center at the Pentagon and a staunch Chassid of the Rebbe MH"M. He passed away in Tamuz 1994 after a long illness.

Mrs. Turen attended Beis Rifka seminary in Kfar Chabad and then taught in Crown Heights. She married Eliezer Turen of Chicago and they subsequently received a bracha from the Rebbe to go on shlichus to Chicago to found a high school for Lubavitcher girls. She is entering her twentieth year as principal of a girls' high school, currently as the principal of Bnos Rabbeinu High School.

She divides her time between her family, the high school, and her Tanya classes. Her popular shiurim on inyanei Moshiach and Geula can be heard live by phone every Wednesday night, and also archived at www.bnosrabbeinu.com.

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