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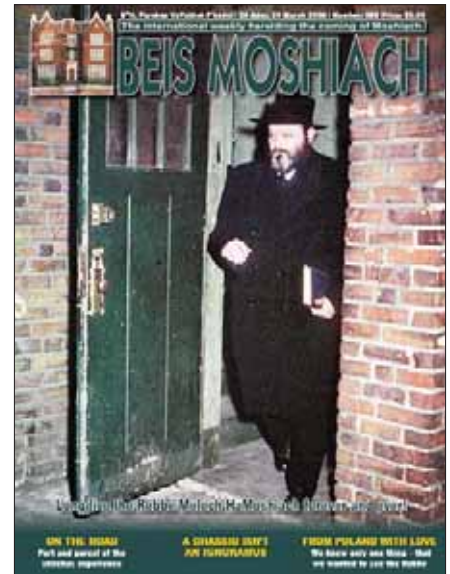
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THE INTERNAL SANCTUARY – ARK AND ALTAR

Translated and adapted by Dovid Yisroel Ber Kaufmann

The external structure of the Sanctuary parallels the internal structure of the Jew. The functions of the vessels parallel functions of the soul. The ‘internal ark’ is Torah study; the ‘internal altar’ is mitzvos. Learning Torah draws down G-d’s Essence; performing mitzvos invests G-d’s Essence in the lowest realm. Building our inner Sanctuary adds a brick to, and foreshadows the building of, the third Sanctuary by Moshiach.

This week’s Torah reading describes the construction of the Tabernacle and the various items – such as the altar and menorah – placed within it. One such object was the aron – the ark in which the Ten Commandments were placed. Let’s consider this in light of the well-known interpretation of the verse, “Make Me a Sanctuary, that I may dwell in them.” The command to build a Sanctuary uses the plural pronoun, “them.” Grammatically, of course, the verse should say, “Make Me a Sanctuary, that I may dwell in it.” Since G-d says He will dwell “within them,” our Sages explain that “them” refers to the Jewish people. By making the Sanctuary, the Divine Presence

will dwell within each and every Jew.

Accordingly, the concept of a Sanctuary is two-fold. On the one hand, it refers to a physical structure, whether the Tabernacle in the wilderness or the Temple in Jerusalem. Here, sacrifices were brought. All the various utensils – the altar, the menorah, etc. – served to assist the process. Through the sacrifices and accompanying procedures, G-d’s presence became manifest in the Sanctuary.

On the other hand, the Sanctuary is an internal structure, the conduct and thought of the individual. Every Jew can build a personal, inner Sanctuary; there, too, the Divine Presence will dwell. By analogy, what exists in the outer, physical Sanctuary – the building and its utensils – also exists within every Jew. Once we understand the function and purpose

of a particular item in the Temple, we can discover its equivalent within ourselves.

This parallel teaches us an important lesson. We know that Moshiach will rebuild the Temple. Indeed, that, along with gathering in the exiles, identifies Moshiach with absolute certainty. Surely the lesson of our Sages extends this far: the Divine Presence dwells within the internal Sanctuary of every Jew, just as it dwells within the physical structure of the Temple. An individual’s efforts to sanctify himself, to internalize the holiness of the Divine Presence, parallel the vessels and activities of the Temple, as prescribed by the Torah. What happens internally, to

the individual Jew, corresponds to what happens externally, to the Temple. The Temple was destroyed and the Jewish people are in exile. In some way, our internal Sanctuary can be destroyed. But, just as the Temple in Jerusalem can and will be rebuilt, so too we can reconstruct our internal sanctuaries.

In fact, it may be said that by rebuilding our internal sanctuaries, by awakening the spark of Moshiach within us, we act as a collective catalyst for Moshiach, bringing Redemption into the open. By enabling the Divine Presence to dwell openly within us, together we cause the revelation of Moshiach and the rebuilding of the Temple.

With this in mind, let's look more closely at the function of the ark and the altar. In some ways, these are the two central vessels of the Sanctuary. The ark housed the Torah; but through the sacrifices, the Jewish people demonstrated their relationship and subservience to G-d. Sacrifice is a prototypical mitzva. After all, "mitzva" means both commandment and connection – and both mitzvos and sacrifices are man's initiative to become closer and connect to G-d. Thus, through the mitzvos – exemplified by the sacrificial service – the Divine Presence came to dwell in the Temple.

We can speak of two places: first, the Sanctuary itself, the place of mitzvos – as embodied in the sacrifices – where the Divine Presence dwelled; second, the ark, the place of the Ten Commandments, where the Torah dwelled.

What is the difference between the altar and the ark, between mitzvos and Torah? Of equal importance, how do we metaphorically rebuild the ark and altar within ourselves? By reconstructing our "inner Temple," so to speak, we prepare our part of the world for the coming of Moshiach.

Generally speaking, a Jew is united with G-d in one of two ways: through learning Torah or through performing mitzvos. When learning, once we thoroughly and completely understand the subject, we become completely and totally united with the Torah. The Jew and Torah become one entity.

On the other hand, when we do a mitzva we perform G-d's Will. The person becomes a "chariot" or "vehicle." However, the individual is not united with the mitzva. The mitzva and the Jew remain two separate things.

The Sanctuary must contain both Torah and mitzvos – both the ark and the altar. We must remember why the Sanctuary was built – to provide a dwelling place for the Divine Presence. This dwelling, this Sanctuary – whether the physical structure in Jerusalem or the internal structure of heart, mind and action – has two aspects. First, G-dliness must be openly revealed, demonstrating the inner unity of the Divine Presence and its Sanctuary. This is the aspect of Torah. Second, the Divine Presence

must dwell in the lower realm, the place of the physical. This is the aspect of mitzvos, which are clothed in material objects.

This distinction between Torah and mitzvos – between the ark and the altar – derives from their fundamental nature. As the *Zohar* declares, Torah and G-d are one. On the other hand, mitzvos are called the "limbs of the king." The limbs of the body are subservient to the soul, but are not united with it. So when a Jew learns Torah, he becomes attached to and unified with G-dliness. When a Jew does a mitzva, although this is G-d's Will and he is subservient to G-d, he and G-dliness do not merge into a single existence.

We can now understand why our task requires both Torah and mitzvos. In order to make this physical world a dwelling place for G-dliness, both aspects are necessary. Obviously, with the coming of Moshiach the purpose of Creation will be realized. Just as obviously, Moshiach cannot come and build the Third Temple in Jerusalem until we have built our inner Temple. Doing so entails constructing both an ark and an altar.

In other words, in order to transform this lowest of worlds into a dwelling place for the very Essence of G-dliness, two things are necessary: Something to draw down G-d's Essence, and something to insure that G-d's Essence is drawn into the lowest realm.

Learning Torah draws down G-d's Essence since G-d and Torah are one. But Torah by itself remains higher than the world; it does not enclothe G-d's Essence within physical objects. On the other hand, mitzvos, which must be performed with something physical – leather for t'fillin, parchment for a mezuzah etc. – purifies and refines the object, drawing G-dliness within the material substance.

Of course, there are times when learning Torah and doing mitzvos don't seem very easy. Indeed, anyone can transgress a commandment, regardless of his level of learning or observance. When the soul enters the body, it faces temptations and distractions. This hazard even a great scholar encounters. What, then, can be said of the ignorant Jew or the one steeped in transgressions? What protection – what sanctuary – does he have? With what will he build a Temple?

Our Sages tell us that every Jew is as full of mitzvos as a pomegranate is full of seeds. We must recognize that our sins and transgressions are temporary and external. A Jew's real existence is the Torah and mitzvos he or she possesses. Through our learning – and learning leads to action – we construct, brick by brick, as it were, our internal Sanctuary. And thus with every mitzva, we add a brick to the Third Temple. When Moshiach comes, we will see our handiwork.

(Based on Likkutei Sichos 16, pp. 434-442)

COUNTING TO REDEMPTION

Translated and adapted by Dovid Yisroel Ber Kaufmann

Counting connects the last Torah reading of Exodus to the first. Although the theme of Exodus is Redemption, it begins with an accounting of Jacob and his family and ends with an accounting of the donations and vessels of the Sanctuary. By connecting counting and Redemption, the limited and the limitless, the Torah reading teaches that the true goal is to reveal the Infinite within the finite.

This, the last Torah reading of the book of *Exodus*, starts with an accounting of the contributions towards the Tabernacle, then details its vessels and utensils, concluding with its construction. The culmination of the process was the descent of the Divine Presence: “Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle.” So powerful was the Divine Presence, that even Moses was not able to enter the Tent of Meeting.

Since Moses refrained from entering, G-d had to call him. Thus begins the book of *Leviticus*, with G-d calling Moses, inviting him inside the Tent of Meeting to hear about the

sacrifices. The transition makes sense: the last half of *Exodus* describes the construction of the Tabernacle, and *Leviticus* begins by defining the sacrifices offered there.

However, *Exodus* doesn’t end with this successful raising of the Tabernacle, indicated by the descent of the Divine Presence. Rather, it concludes by explaining the role of the Cloud of Glory. The presence or removal of this Cloud determined the movements of the Jewish people. When it rested on the Tabernacle, they encamped. When it was removed, they began to journey. The placement of the Cloud determined when they wandered and when they rested.

This interlude seems out of place. Apparently, the text flows smoothly without it – from building the Tabernacle in *Exodus* to using it in *Leviticus*. Why interrupt that? Besides, later on, in Numbers, the Torah describes all the journeys of the children of Israel. Why give an abbreviated version here, out of order?

There’s another question: What connection does the end of *Exodus* have with the beginning? In general, the book of *Exodus* concerns the Redemption of the Jewish people from Egypt. Yet it begins with a list of names and ends with an accounting and inventory of the Tabernacle. In fact, the Hebrew name for the book, *Shmos*, means “names.” The name of the last Torah reading, *P’kudei*, means accounting.

So *Exodus*, which focuses on the Redemption, begins and ends with numbering – whether the names of the children of Jacob or the money and material given to the Tabernacle. Accordingly, the concept of Redemption is connected with the concept of numbering.

But these seem to be contradictory concepts. Counting indicates limitation: there is precisely this amount of money, this number of people, etc. Redemption, on the other hand, indicates a departure from limits; one is not restricted by particular boundaries, physical or spiritual.

This paradox of combining the numbered and the innumerable we find within the two Torah readings as well. The first Torah reading names the children of Israel who went into Egypt, then says they multiplied and increased exceedingly, as if without limit. The last Torah reading begins with an accounting of the vessels of and donations to the Tabernacle, but concludes with the indwelling of the Divine Presence. G-d, the Infinite, comes to reside in the confines and structure of the Tabernacle.

So, the content of the first and last Torah readings of *Exodus* concern counting, a limitation, while the book as a whole concerns Redemption, the limitless. And this paradoxical combination of the finite and infinite, of the numbered and the innumerable, is also found **within** the first and last Torah readings.

This pattern of the book of *Exodus* serves as a paradigm. The purpose of both the individual and of creation as a whole is Redemption, a level without limitations on spiritual growth and awareness. We must rise above the measurements and boundaries of the world. But this must be done **within** the world, within the confines and borders of physical existence. There must be a conjunction and union of the finite and the infinite, the limited and the limitless. The book of *Exodus*, which provides the prototype for Redemption and teaches the concept of Moshiach, exemplifies this fusion of opposites, of the infinite within the finite.

This strange truth about reality can be viewed a different way: Creation occurred because G-d desired a dwelling place in the lower realms. This requires two things: First, an actual **dwelling**, a place of G-dliness. Second, there must be a **lower realm**. The dwelling must be located in this physical realm, the lowest of all possible worlds.

The practical expression of these two aspects is the difference between the Jewish people and the world. The dwelling place of G-dliness is the Jewish soul, since, as the *Zohar* states, The Holy One, Blessed be He and Israel are entirely one. Where is this dwelling? Where are Jewish souls found? In the physical world, the lower realm. When a Jew is a proper dwelling, then the world does not prevent a revelation of G-dliness. Rather, G-dliness can now also reside within the domain of the physical.

The book of *Exodus* reveals that the world was created “for the sake of Torah and the sake of Israel.” It begins by counting the children of Israel, to show that they are united with and beloved by G-d. It concludes with the construction of the Tabernacle, the utilization of the physical world for a spiritual purpose.

This explains the connection between the beginning of *Exodus* and its conclusion. Redemption is the process of bringing the Divine Presence into the physical world, of revealing the Infinite within the finite. Hence, the connection between numbering the innumerable: At first, the children of Israel are named. But they are not limited to the seventy

***We do not roam
aimlessly through
exile, but move
inexorably
forward towards
the days of
Moshiach.***

souls that entered Egypt, for the children of Israel, one with the Infinite, will be as countless as the stars. At the end, the articles associated with the Tabernacle are counted. The physicality of the world is emphasized. But because the Tabernacle is built by the Jewish people, the material is transformed into the spiritual, and the Divine Presence dwells there – openly.

What of our original question, why *Exodus* concludes with a digest of Israel’s journeys? Is this not an interruption between the Tabernacle of *Exodus* and the sacrifices of *Leviticus*?

Actually, no. The sacrifices of

Leviticus parallel the Cloud-directed journeys of *Exodus*. Both fulfill the purpose of the Tabernacle, built to house the Divine Presence. The Tabernacle was not a goal in itself; building it provided the means to transform the entire world into a Divine dwelling. G-dliness penetrates the world in one of two ways: by bringing the physical into the Tabernacle or by bringing the Tabernacle to a place currently devoid of the Divine Presence. Sacrifices subjugate the animal and materialistic to the spiritual. Journeying through the wilderness extends the dominion of holiness to locations as yet unredeemed.

Like our ancestors, we must be prepared to travel among the nations, into a spiritual desert. For the wanderings in the desert allude to the wandering among the nations during exile. Our travels in exile purify the environment, transforming the wilderness of the nations into a residence for the Tabernacle, a place where sacrifices can be offered.

The removal of the cloud from above the Tabernacle metaphorically implies a concealment of G-d’s presence, a darkness in the world, even a personal darkness. Yet when G-d’s presence is removed, elevated beyond perception, it is also time to move forward with our Divine service. True, while traveling, while in exile, we have no direct perception of G-dliness. But only by transporting the Tabernacle can we reach our destination and bring the Redemption. For we do not roam aimlessly through exile, but move inexorably forward towards the days of Moshiach.

As in those days, when the Cloud of Glory rested on the Tabernacle at journey’s end, so too will we, along with the world transformed by our mitzvos, see G-dliness revealed in the Third Holy Temple.

(Based on Likkutei Sichos 16, pp. 475-480)

Kupas Rabbeinu

Lubavitch

קופת רבינו

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B"H 16th of Adar, 5769

MO'OS CHITTIM

To All Anash and Temimim wha' Sholom U'vrocho!

Excerpt of a Sicho Kedoisho, which speaks for itself

The Jews will be redeemed solely through *tzedakah*... In particular, this applies with regards to the matter relevant at present, *maos chittim*, *tzedakah* given for Pesach that includes all of the needs of the holiday.

Our involvement with this must be in a manner of *ratzo* and *shov*, i.e., **one should not wait for the *tzedakah* collector, but instead, rush to give him *maos chittim* on his own initiative (*ratzo*). Moreover, even after he has already given *maos chittim*, he should go and give a second time (*shov*)....** For one who has been blessed should increase his gifts according to the blessing he has been given. And who ever increases will be given additional reward. Indeed, there is no limit to this additional reward. From the sichos Shabbos Parshas Vayakhel-pikudei, 5750

It is well known that "Kupas Rabbeinu" endeavors to continue implementing all of the holy projects and activities which the Rebbe has established. Amongst these activities is the Rebbe's practice to extend financial aid to those families in need of their various Pesach necessities.

Accordingly, we are at this time urging and requesting each and every Anash member and Tomim uhjha to contribute generously to "Kupas Rabbeinu," in order to enable the administration to provide for these families and thus afford them with the opportunity to celebrate Pesach with contentment and joy.

Regarding this Mitzvah it is stated: "Whoever increases (in giving) is praiseworthy."

Unfortunately, the amount of families in need of this financial assistance is more than generally assumed. As such, the more generous your contribution to "Kupas Rabbeinu," the greater the number of families receiving assistance will be.

And since, with regard to all Mitzvahs we are instructed to act with Simcha and zest, it is all the more pertinent with regard to the aforementioned, as it is of paramount importance that the funds be received and distributed as soon as possible.

In the merit of Tzedakah which hastens the Geula, may we merit the true Geula Shlaimah, with the revelation of Melech HaMashiach - The Rebbe Nasi Doreinu, immediately, Mamash.

Chag HaPesach Kosher V'Sameach, *Vaad Kupas Rabbeinu*

P.S. 1) The traditional "**Magvis Yud Shevat, Purim**" can also be sent at this time, as well as all other Magvios.

2) All funds should be sent to the following address only; Donations are tax deductible

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In Eretz haKodesh: KEREN KUPAS ADMU"R, P.O. Box 1247, KIRYAT MALACHI – ISRAEL

CHAG HA'MATZOS OF "CHABURAS ANASH"

Of the talmidim of Tomchei Tmimim Lubavitch

The mitzva of eating matza is the most prominent mitzva of the Seder to the point that the holiday is called "Chag Ha'Matzos." The work of matza baking is one that entails a great deal of responsibility since there is a fine line between chometz and matza. Much caution and *siyata dishmaya* (divine assistance) are needed to ensure kosher matzos.

This article will describe the hiddurim practiced by the **Chaburas Anash**, Lubavitcher Chassidim who are mekusharim to the Rebbe MH"M. Many of us in Eretz Yisrael and the United States will be eating the mehudar matzos baked by them.

It is a few years now that this special chabura has been baking matzos with tremendous hiddur in yishuv Yad Binyamin. The bakery there was selected after a thorough search made by the *mara d'asra* of Shikun Chabad in Lud and the Av Beis Din Badatz Heichal Lubavitch, Rabbi **Boruch Boaz Yurkowitz**, and found to meet their particular needs. This year, the *mara d'asra* of Crown Heights, Rabbi **Aharon Schwei** made a trip from New York in order to ascertain these hiddurim

for himself. He joined Rabbi Yurkowitz in kashering the area.

A detailed list of kashrus instructions from the rabbonim were given to the mashgichim who were told to carry them out in their entirety, starting with the drawing of the *mayim shelanu* and bringing the flour to the bakery, and ending with wrapping the matzos for the suppliers. What follows are some of the many hiddurim used in baking these matzos.

WORKERS WHO ARE YIREI SHOMAYIM

Since the kashrus of a matza bakery depends on the quality of the staff, emphasis is placed not only on those who are expert in their work but whose fear of Heaven precedes their wisdom. Those involved in this holy work were selected with a fine-tooth comb so that only the best were hired. It is only once you have a good and disciplined staff that you can implement all the necessary hiddurim. It goes without saying that all employees were checked (on the basis of approbations of known rabbonim) and found to be mitzva observant.

Aside from the regular mashgichim of the bakery –

which is under the ownership of a family of Tzanzer Chassidim – who spare no effort to improve the bakery, the Chaburas Anash have additional mashgichim from the **talmidim of Tomchei Tmimim Lubavitch** who have experience in matza baking. Thus, aside from the care taken with all details of the baking and ensuring that it is **l'sheim mitzvas matza** – an announcement made loudly every so often – the mashgichim of the chabura added a special chayus in all the workers. They all joined, while baking, in singing traditional Chabad niggunim, "Keili Ata" of the Alter Rebbe and "Yechi Adoneinu," the song and proclamation that was encouraged by the Rebbe.

Singing increases the alacrity with which the work is done; so that those who knead the matza and those who roll them out finished their work with the proper speed. It's an impressive scene – workers with long pei'os with tzitzis peeking out of their vests and mashgichim with Yechi yarmulkes and Moshiaich flags.

QUALITY OVER QUANTITY

The bakery building, and especially its main room, is

larger than other places which enables free movement of the workers and mashgichim, yet the production is not a lot for the simple reason: **effort is put into quality**, considering that when it comes to the mitzva of matza the hiddurim take precedence over quantity, although the latter produces a better bottom line.

For example, this year, the Chaburas Anash decided to add a hiddur and establish that all the workers should change their

disposable aprons once every 18 minutes. Even when this is done quickly, it delays the start of the next baking and the results are quality over quantity. This and similar practices cost money but Chaburas Anash do not compromise when it comes to hiddurim.

IMPROVED HIDDURIM

R' **Boaz Lerner** of Nachalat Har Chabad is an active and steady participant in Chaburas

Anash. R' Boaz is a famous baal teshuva (he used to be a combat pilot) and just as he displays great knowledge in other fields (construction of mikvaos etc.) when it comes to matza baking, he is also able to contribute his expertise. A few years ago, his suggestion to set up a protective shield around the tables was implemented. This prevents the workers from leaning on the table where they roll out the matzos.

The fencing, which is easy to clean, is attached to the special work tables. What makes them unique is the fact that they are made of marble which prevents the work area from heating up. This is despite the fact that the actual rolling of the matzos is done on special work grade paper which is spread out on the marble and changed for new paper every 18 minutes.

These innovations that R' Boaz excels in have earned him a good reputation with the owners of the bakery and therefore they are respectful when before every important move he makes he stops for a moment and proclaims "Yechi." Not for naught does this proclamation appear on the boxes of matzos ...

The bakery is closed to visitors. You won't see children here with coats wet with rain. As for the workers, there is no smoking or phone calls in the work area. Whenever someone enters the bakery, in the morning or after a break, their clothes have to be brushed, watches removed, mouths rinsed and hands washed. Those who work with the matzos wear a



Rabbi Schwei supervising the work of the bakers



Rabbi Yurkowitz supervising the libun of the ovens

disposable apron which is constantly changed and the rolling pins are sanded down and cleaned before each new round of activity.

PRE-BAKING PREPARATIONS

The man who works in the flour room cannot enter the area where they work with dough and matzos. The room and flour sifters are carefully cleaned under strict supervision of a mashgiach. After leaving the flour room, the mashgiach must wash his hands, beard, and clothes. In the water room, the measuring cups need to be carefully checked. As the work is done, the measuring cups are checked frequently since by pouring water into the flour, flour dust is likely to cling to the water utensil. The utensil with which the water is poured into the bowl of flour is disposable and changed every 18 minutes.

The rollers and rolling pins are checked scrupulously and if they have scratches or holes, they are sanded and smoothed before any work is done. Sometimes, they are exchanged for new ones. The perforators and their handles are also checked after they have undergone *libun* (kosher cleansing in fire) and special cleaning.

At the faucets where workers wash their hands the faucet opens and closes automatically with merely a push so that after washing their hands the workers don't have to touch the faucet with their clean hands. The kneading of the matzos begins only after the oven is ready for them.

MAYIM SHELANU

Someone is appointed to bring the water. His job includes verifying that the water is strained with a clean cloth. Likewise, he must hear the sound of the pump during the drawing of the water. The mayim shelanu is stored in a special building which is somewhat removed from the bakery. The walls and roof are covered with heat proofing materials to preserve the water's coolness. The water is brought in a glass utensil and it is also stored in glass containers.

Another hiddur in this bakery is that the entire timed process -



Examining the kernels of wheat

which is allotted much less than 18 minutes – is calculated from when the water is poured into the bowl until the matza enters the oven. This is unlike other bakeries where the 18 minutes are counted from when the dough is put on the rollers' table until it enters the oven.

KASHRUS OF THE PAPER

Any paper that comes to the bakery, even if it comes from the same supplier as the year before who provided quality merchandise, is checked again with a special iodine solution that the mashgiach has, to ensure

that the paper does not contain starch. The perforating table uses paper with potato starch which is manufactured with excellent hashgacha.

The rule is that those who bring the paper to the bakery do not put it down, even temporarily, in an area where there is dough and flour.

THE RAV AS SHLIACH

The Rabbinic seal of Kashrus and the involvement of the rabbonim did not end after Rabbi Schwei and Rabbi Yurkowitz decided on the hiddurim that Chaburas Anash will use, including those hiddurim that the Rebbe Rashab told the Chassid, Rabbi Yaakov Landau z'l. Rabbi Yurkowitz himself, after selecting mashgichim, appeared regularly at the bakery to ensure that everything was done with the utmost kashrus and hiddur. The poskim say that it is proper for every balabus to be at the bakery when the matzos are baked and supervise the kashrus of the matzos. Rabbi Yurkowitz serves as the shliach of the customers to make sure that all is as it should be.

PERSONAL SUPERVISION

The manager of the bakery tells of distinguished rabbonim of all groups who arranged to watch how these matzos are made and expressed their amazement with the wonderful hiddurim. We will mention just a few of the points they noted:

The way flour is ordered by the kneader, who wears a disposable apron and changes it for each round, is by pressing his foot to ring a bell, not his hand,



Special marble work surfaces covered with paper. A rail around the table prevents people from leaning on it.



Libun of the bowls

which ensures that his hands that are busy with the dough will not touch the bell button. While working, he wipes his head and face with a dry disposable towel. After every round the cleanliness of his hands, fingers, arms, face and beard are checked. He is not permitted to approach other workers to talk and surely not to approach the area of the oven and the baked matzos.

Tearing off individual pieces of dough is done by hand. The one in charge keeps kneading the dough and only cuts off pieces as necessary. They are extremely particular about the **working** of the dough, and not just with handling it, which merely warms it. (Normally, the worker wants to preserve the shape of the dough and tries not to knead very hard and this is why they are especially careful with this).

All the hand towels are

disposable. The rolls of paper are changed often, at least for every new cycle. After each 18 minute round, the mashgichim check the cleanliness of the rolling pins that were sanded and smoothed by an expert, and the workers can return to the tables after their hands are carefully checked by the mashgiach.

PERFORATING MATZOS

An important part of preparing the matzos is making holes in the dough. The mashgichim make sure that the one perforating the dough does not talk while he works. The paper on his table is changed at least twice within 18 minutes by someone who does not touch the matzos.

By instruction of the rabbonim, matzos cannot accumulate on the table of the perforator. If the matzos sit around on the table, they are thrown out and not put in the oven!

Unlike other places in which the oven is very close to the area where the perforator works so the matzos that wait on the table are likely to be affected by the heat, here – aside from the fact that the oven is built in a separate room and is made of special stones that preserve the

heat inside, special care is taken so that matzos do not remain on the table. A mashgiach makes sure this is so.

The matzos are not taken and hung on a stick here. Hanging it



Special building where the mayim shelanu is stored

takes time. Instead, as soon as the dough is perforated, a stick wrapped in paper is put on it and someone (not the perforator, so as not to cause other matzos to remain on the table) folds it on the stick and places it in the oven.

When there is three or four matzos, then a special mashgiach – on behalf of Chaburas Anash – goes over them with a perforator so they do not remain for even a moment without being worked on.

The perforators with handles are purged in fire after every cycle with a large blow torch and they are returned to use only after they are checked and found to be cold.

TWO BAKERS

One of the special hiddurim in the bakery which is perhaps, so it seems to the outsider, the

most special, has to do with the way the matzos are put in and taken out of the oven. The usual procedure is that one person does both these things. It is hard work and one that entails great responsibility. Despite one's diligence, since it is two jobs, it takes time and by the time the baker removes the matzos from the oven, the matzos that were finished and perforated would have to wait. As we already mentioned, having matza dough waiting near the oven is not desirable.

In this bakery, there are two bakers at one oven with one putting matzos into the oven, stick after stick, and one in charge of taking them out. Both of them work quickly and carefully without disturbing the other and making sure not to pass the matzos going in near the warm roller taking them out.

It costs more – after all, there are two men working, but the results are worth it. The matzos enter the oven quickly, without waiting!

Chaburas Anash has a mashgiach standing there whose job it is to supervise the bakers who are cautioned not to talk as they work. This prevents any delays in placing the matzos in the oven.

Another mashgiach is stationed near the matzos coming out whose job it is to ensure that they are kosher. The baker who removes them from the oven cannot touch them, lest his hands not be properly clean. Another worker is the one who spreads them out to cool.



Top: They are impressed by the way the sticks are wrapped in paper.

Above: Two men at work; expensive but worthwhile.

The rabbonim instructed their mashgiach that if he sees any folded matzos (on the edges or anywhere else), they are to be taken out on a separate designated roller.

CLEAN STICKS

There is another hiddur which we saw for the first time. The sticks that the matzos are hung on are cleaned after they are placed in the oven; this cleaning is vital because the stick touched the dough. An ingenious way was found to ensure the sticks are scrupulous:

A worker puts one end of the long stick into a rotating machine while at the other end he places a roll of special paper – which was checked and found to be clean – that hangs from the ceiling. There are special revolvers in the machine that

wrap the stick very tightly with several layers of paper and the dough is placed on perfectly clean paper. The sticks are thus never in contact with the dough.

When a paper-covered stick is removed from the oven, another worker completely removes the paper (which is thrown out) and the exposed stick is put down in a designated area to cool off and be sanded again. The wrapping paper is obviously disposed.

EVEN FOR ONE MATZA ...

We checked to see how many matzos go on one stick into the oven. We were pleasantly surprised. The maximum was four matzos to a stick but most of the time only three matzos were put in. Many times, only two matzos went in and sometimes, even one matza. This is so that none sit around, even if it's one matza. So, often the wrapping of the stick in paper is done for just one matza!

Hafrashas challah is done by the mashgichim and no matzos *tevel* leave the bakery.

The matzos can be delivered directly to your home or chabad house anywhere.

For as much as we wrote we still have not described all the hiddurim in detail. We didn't even mention the quality of the matzos – the experts have praised their great taste, crispiness and they are also thin. We will conclude by saying that the matzos mehudaros of Chaburas Anash are this year's matzos to have.

A CHASSID ISN'T AN IGNORAMUS

By Rabbi Naftali Estulin, Shliach, Los Angeles

I couldn't keep quiet, since that would mean I was conceding to him. Nor could I give him a long explanation with all the sources. I decided to put him in his place and retorted, "You are a liar, an ignoramus, and a person with a bad heart!" ...

I recently had occasion to attend a bris that took place in a Chabad shul. Right after the davening, I proclaimed "Yechi" three times. After I did so, one of the guests, a distinguished person in Misnagdic circles, berated me, "What makes you so sure that Moshiach is coming today, and who said the Rebbe is Moshiach?"

I couldn't keep quiet, since that would mean I was conceding to him. Nor could I give him a long explanation with all the sources. I decided to put him in his place and retorted, "You are a liar, an ignoramus, and a person with a bad heart!"

He was stunned by my reaction and I continued, "I will explain. You are a liar because just a few minutes ago you stood before Hashem and recited in Shmoneh Esrei, "For we hope for Your salvation all day." That means that you stand all day with hope and

anticipation for the coming of Moshiach. If you don't believe that Moshiach is coming today, how do you say that you await him all day? Since when do people wait for someone whom they don't believe is coming? Either you lied to Hashem when you davened or you lied to me just now when you said that you don't believe Moshiach is coming today. Or maybe you're lying to yourself.

"You are an ignoramus because you know nothing about inyanei Moshiach and Geula. In these matters, you are an am ha'aretz. When was the last time you studied anything on the topic?"

The man admitted that he had never learned the topic of Geula.

"If so," I said, "how dare you tell me off and ask me, 'Who said the Rebbe is Moshiach?' We Lubavitcher Chassidim, who believe and know that the Rebbe is Moshiach, know it after 300 years

of study. Ever since Moshiach told the Baal Shem Tov, 300 years ago, that Moshiach will come when his wellsprings of Chassidus would spread outward, and especially in recent years, Lubavitchers have been busy bringing the Geula and learning about it. Someone who never learned a certain subject and goes to a place where there are experts on that subject, would not dare open his mouth as you did.

"And you have a bad heart because the Chida explains the prayer, 'the sprouting of Dovid Your servant should quickly sprout ... for we hope for Your salvation all day,' to mean that we will be taken out of galus as a reward for our hoping and anticipating the Geula.

Every Jew needs the Geula - for some people, it's a matter of life and death. If you truly anticipated the Geula, that itself would bring the Geula. Your coldness towards it and your lack of anticipation demonstrate that you don't care that Jews are suffering in galus. You don't care about all those people who are sick, all the people who are suffering, the people whom Moshiach will save from their tzaros.

IF I KNEW, I WOULD NOT HAVE KNOCKED IT

After the bris I had to go to another shul, one that was not

Chabad. Many people go to that shul to collect tz'daka. Whenever I am asked for money and they start telling me about the children they have to marry off, etc., I tell them, "I will give you tz'daka, but I want you to know that I am giving you money for a different reason, one that is far more important than the tzaros you just mentioned. I am giving tz'daka to hasten the Geula!

"It says, 'Great is tz'daka for it hastens the Geula.' When you ask for tz'daka, tell people that you want to enable them to hasten the Geula. That supersedes any reason you have for collecting money."

People from Eretz Yisroel came over to me as usual, and I explained my perspective on tz'daka. Out of the corner of my

eye, I noticed the Litvishe fellow who had spoken to me after the bris. He was sitting and davening. I felt a bit bad that I had spoken so sharply to another Jew who may not have meant to start up with me. I decided to stay in shul and wait until he finished davening so I could go over to him and apologize.

In fact, he preempted me and came over. He apologized, "I heard that you are a shliach of the Lubavitcher Rebbe and I am sorry about what I said. I hope you're not upset with me."

I laughed and told him that not only wasn't I upset, I had been waiting to ask him to forgive me for the way I had spoken to him. "It hurts me," I said, "that people

really know nothing about this subject and yet they talk as though they are the biggest experts."

He asked me, "Now that we have time, I'd be happy if we could sit down and you would explain to me your source for saying the Rebbe is Moshiach. What interests me even more is your source for saying that the Rebbe is alive. Where is there a source for this in Judaism?"

He was asking in a completely different way than he had earlier that morning, and I was happy for the opportunity to sit and learn the inyan. I gave him the sources in the Gemara and poskim for every detail of Chassidim's belief that the Rebbe MH"M is chai v'kayam. Of course, I referred to the Gemara in



Either you lied to Hashem when you said in Shmoneh Esrei, “For we hope for Your salvation all day,” or you lied to me just now when you said that you don’t believe Moshiach is coming today.

Taanis about Yaakov Avinu not dying and Rashi’s explanation that “it seemed to them that he had died, but he was alive.” I also mentioned the Gemara in K’subos about Rabbeinu HaKadosh, who would go to his home after he passed away and recite Kiddush for his family, and the Gemara in Bava Metzia about Rabbi Elozor, who for nearly twenty years after his passing, lay in the attic of his home and responded to halachic queries.

We spoke for a long time and at the end, he said to me, “On 3 Tamuz, 5754, I was in New York. One of the Jewish radio stations reported that Chassidim were dancing and saying that the Rebbe is alive and this was only a test, etc. I was so upset by this that I called the radio station in order to protest. I was the first to speak on the show and I harshly attacked those Chassidim. If I had known everything you just told me, I wouldn’t have disparaged their emuna, and I certainly would not have attacked them.”

RESTORING THINGS TO THEIR PROPER ORDER

My father, R’ Zalman Leib Estulin a”h, lived for many years in B’nei Brak. His greatness in Torah was known even among the Misnagdim, and Litvishe men would visit him occasionally. Understandably, many debates ensued on topics pertaining to Chabad, including inyanei Moshiach and Geula.

When the Rebbe started talking a lot about Moshiach’s coming, they asked him, “Why are they suddenly talking about Moshiach in Chabad? This is not something Jews are accustomed to.”

My father responded, “You don’t realize, but the truth is that throughout the generations, Jews believed in and anticipated Moshiach’s coming as something real. Whenever it was difficult in galus, they would speak of their longing for the Geula. It’s just in the recent generation that confusion has set in. On the one hand, there were many big tzaros; on the other hand, Zionism confused people into thinking that we are doing fine. Jews forgot their natural longing for Moshiach. The Lubavitcher Rebbe merely restored things to the way they used to be.”

“When I was a boy,” continued my father, “and people built homes, they would minimize their expenses because they firmly believed that Moshiach was coming momentarily and they would leave their possessions behind in galus. In the previous generation, every other word was about Moshiach. Unfortunately, we have forgotten our parents’ ways to the point that when the Rebbe tries to bring things back to the way used to be, people look askance.”



R’ Zalman Leib Estulin on Purim

UNCOVERING THE SPIRITUAL WEALTH

In the sicha of Shabbos, Parshas Truma, 5752, the Rebbe said that not only every Jew ought to be wealthy, materially and spiritually, but every Jew is actually wealthy. Even if this is not readily apparent, it is not because the wealth does not exist, but because he has to reveal it through his avoda.

Of course we all want to fulfill the Rebbe’s horaa about material wealth, and we should! But at the same time, we have to uncover the spiritual wealth. Our great spiritual wealth lies within the Rebbe’s sichos, maamarim, and letters. The Rebbe bestowed on us an enormous spiritual wealth, the likes of which is unprecedented. Sometimes, we are right next to this wealth, and for some reason, we opt to close our eyes and stand like paupers in the doorway.

How many times did we hear the Rebbe speak sadly about the Chassid who is asked to explain the *koch* in the belief in Moshiach’s coming, and doesn’t

know how to respond? The Rebbe was unhappy with Chassidim who don't know how to respond to simple questions, especially on topics that the Rebbe frequently explained at farbrengens!

It hurts, it really hurts, to see Chassidim who haven't opened a sicha on inyanei Moshiach in years. When they are asked about Chassidim's belief and behavior, they don't know how to respond and instead, they mumble something about a fringe group in Chabad.

We have a great treasure. Let's use it and teach it to Klal Yisroel!

To conclude on a happy note, as is fitting for this happy month of Adar:

In that sicha of Truma, 5752, the Rebbe asks: Why does it say in the Gemara, "Just as when Av comes in, we diminish simcha – so too, when Adar comes in, we increase simcha?" When a sentence is comprised of two parts, with the first part starting with the words "just as," and the second part with "so too," that means that the two parts are connected and furthermore, that first is the cause of the second. When we say at a bris, "Just as he [the baby] entered the covenant, so too he should enter to Torah, chuppa, and good deeds," it is obvious how the bris pertains and leads to the continuation of the bracha. What is the connection between the diminishment of simcha in Av to the increase of simcha in Adar?

The Rebbe explains that the great simcha in the month of Adar comes from the knowledge that this is a special month, "the month of transformation," a month that has the ability to transform all negative things. This explains the Gemara's comparison, that the power of Adar is so great that not only can it transform the negative elements of the month of Adar, it can even transform the negative elements in the month of Av and make them into something good.

From where do we get the power to transform all the negative things to good? The Rebbe explains that this power was given in potential with the acceptance of Torah, because at Mattan Torah the decree separating the upper and lower worlds was abrogated, and actualized with the building of the Mishkan.

The Rebbe stresses in this sicha that the main chiddush of Mattan Torah was abrogating the decree that separated between the upper and lower worlds and the ability for **every Jew** to bring k'dusha into the world. This chiddush was fully expressed with the building of the Mishkan, which every Jew took part in building. The Mishkan drew down the loftiest levels of k'dusha within the material world in the most complete way.

The job of our generation, the seventh, is to build a Mishkan throughout the world by drawing the Sh'china down to this physical world. Every Jew can do this. "Equal rights" are given to all, men, women, and even children. This right is also an obligation, Nobody can get out of it, certainly not a Chassid.

At this time, as we complete the Mishkan of the seventh generation and draw the Sh'china down, each of us is given special abilities. We can transform all the opposition to Moshiach to enthusiasm, anticipation and longing for Moshiach. We just have to use the tremendous abilities we were given and bring about the hisgalus of the Rebbe MH"M now, mamash!

This article is l'ilui nishmas my father, R' Zalman Leib Estulin a"h, for his fourth yahrtzeit on 15 Adar.



Rabbi Estulin with his father, R' Zalman Leib

FROM POLAND...

WITH LOVE

By Rabbi Shneur Zalman Chanin

“Plans? Who had plans? We had to escape with no concept of what the future would hold, strange as that may seem to you. We knew only one thing – that we wanted to see the Rebbe and relied on his sending us instructions.”

“What did you think you would do as soon as you were on the other side of the border?” I once asked my father, when he told me how they had fooled the Russians and escaped the country. My father replied, “What did we think? We thought about one thing only – escape! To get out of the Soviet Union like one runs from fire. We knew that the NKVD was poised to strike us whether through fire or water, shooting or exile, imprisonment or worse.

“I had been accused of being the chief supporter of yeshivas Tomchei T’mimim, so I knew that I was in their sights. I wouldn’t send my daughters to the Soviet school, which was illegal, nor would I desecrate the Shabbos, so there was no future for us in Russia. The danger of remaining there was far greater than the murky dangers of the future. We had no recourse but to leave. We found an opportunity to escape and we took it. Thoughts about what we would do once we were on the other side were

irrelevant.

“Plans? Who had plans? We had to escape with no concept of what the future would hold, strange as that may seem to you. We knew only one thing – that we wanted to see the Rebbe and relied on his sending us instructions.”

They knew about World War II from firsthand experience, but they had no idea what the war had caused outside of the Soviet Union. They didn’t dream that 6 million Jews had been killed by the Nazis and their willing helpers with unprecedented cruelty.

“We fled the Russian hell certain that whatever we would find on the other side of the border, although it wouldn’t be Gan Eden, it would be far better than life in Russia.

“When we arrived in Poland, we discovered that we were the lucky ones. We were intact families; we had parents and children and babies, brothers and sisters, uncles, cousins and grandparents. We were

together. All around us we saw people who had survived the death and labor camps, most of them alone in the world and broken in despair.

“We were a strong group of Chassidim, and though we were still fearful, we continued traveling and our hope did not flag. We supported one another, increasing our bitachon in Hashem and making us feel protected. We anticipated seeing the Rebbe.”

The survivors, however, had things much harder. After all they went through, they still found no rest and continued to be persecuted even after the war. Where could they go?

Soviet censorship had managed to omit all of the shocking news about world politics and publicized only that which was useful to the communist police state, so it was only when they spoke to other Jews after they arrived in Poland that my parents first heard that even before the war, as soon as the Nazis rose to power, there were Jews who sought to escape Germany and Austria, but most countries of the world refused them entry.

Public pressure – mainly from Jews in the US – lobbied the United States to open its doors to the refugees. President Roosevelt responded by convening an international conference to find an immediate solution to the refugee problem. The Evian Conference, which met in Evian, France, in

1938, included 32 representatives of different countries. Roosevelt hoped that this meeting would quiet public opinion, and that the other governments would cooperate and divide the absorption of refugees with him.

The committee's conclusions were that the countries couldn't absorb additional immigrants because as it was, they were too crowded. Britain claimed that within its empire it couldn't find a suitable place for Jewish refugees (their settling in Palestine was not even discussed). The Australian delegate noted: "as we have no real racial problem, we are not desirous of importing one." The French delegate stated that France had reached "the extreme point of saturation as regards admission of refugees," a sentiment repeated by most other representatives. Canada claimed it could only accept farmers (but the Jews of Germany and Austria weren't farmers). Latin American countries made it clear that they had no use for doctors, lawyers and businessmen. The US

said it would fill the immigration quota (27,000 people) as it had until then, but it wouldn't increase it.

The only countries that responded positively and agreed to accept Jewish refugees on a temporary basis were Holland, Denmark and the Dominican Republic. With the latter willing to have 100,000 Jews as farmers in development areas.

The Evian Conference demonstrated the world's antipathy to the fate of the Jews. If they refused the Jewish immigrants when they needed urgent refuge, people said, now, after the war, surely these countries would not change their view.

Indeed, as soon as the war ended, masses of Jews began streaming from Poland and the Soviet Union, to those areas that were under western or American control like Germany, Austria, and Italy. Even our "friends" the Americans did not regard the influx of refugees in a favorable light. The American general George Patton, who led the Third Army in Bavaria,

went one step further.

Patton was an impressive commander and a brave soldier who led his men in one of the greatest Allied victories against the Nazis, but he was also cruel, arrogant, and an anti-Semite. After



the war he mercilessly sent back three groups of Jewish refugees with the excuse that the influx into Germany was against his orders and there was no room for additional refugees. He refused to allow them entry, refused them food, and sent them back over the border to Poland and Czechoslovakia.

By the beginning of 1946, America's attitude towards the refugees had changed. Eisenhower, Allied High Commander, agreed to set up DP (displaced persons) camps that would serve as a refuge for Jews alone (as I mentioned in the previous installment). General MacNarney, who was Eisenhower's replacement, helped the Jews even further by adding DP camps and looking away when the number of refugees exceeded the amount that the American government had agreed to.

"When we came as a group of Polish refugees to Krakow," said



A child survivor, sitting with his belongings, waiting for the Bricha to take him over the border

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my father, “the Polish government welcomed us and housed us in barracks that were given to all repatriates, i.e. Poles who were returning to their homeland. Members of Jewish organizations contacted us immediately and greeted us with bread and water and made sure we had clothing and medication. From the moment we met our Jewish brethren, and especially the members of the Bricha, we knew that we were in good hands. They took us under their wing and did not leave us until we had made it to safe shores.”

My father would refer to the Bricha people with great admiration. “They were *Tai'ere Yidden*, dear boys, and displayed endless devotion to us and genuine friendship.” He said he would never forget the numerous people who helped him in various ways, whether by arranging papers and planning travel routes or helping

carry children and dragging heavy packages and suitcases.

When my father would say this, my mother would listen and nod and shed a tear.

How did the Bricha operate? What means did they have at their disposal to enable them to get 250,000 Jews to freedom? My father did not know. Fortunately, I got hold of a book by Efraim Dekel, in which he devotes an entire chapter to the Chabad Chassidim and their escape from Russia. The book sheds light on how Bricha operated and gave me some answers to my questions.

The secret to Bricha's success did not lie with its leaders, whose goal was to send to Israel only those who were able to fight for the country and help them develop it economically, but in the 200 or so members. Most of the members were from Israel, while others had been partisans or fighters in the ghettos. Officially Bricha's goal was Zionism – to bring Jews to Israel in order to establish a Jewish state – but in fact, they saved hundreds of thousands of Jews without

questioning their final destination.

They rescued not only those heading to Israel but also Jews continuing on to the United States, South America, Australia, etc. Those who did not escape with Bricha between 1945 and 1949 remained stuck in Eastern Europe until at least 1962. They set up a well oiled network of smugglers who brought refugees from Poland through Czechoslovakia and Austria to the American controlled zone in Germany. Although the headquarters prepared the certificates and the proper signatures, the many tricks and tactics were a result of the creativity and daring of the “gray” soldiers, members of Bricha in the field. They were the ones who found the weak links in the border crossings and those who were willing, for a price, to allow many groups of Jews to cross the border. They were the ones who bribed the drivers to take illegal “merchandise” with them. They were the ones who endangered themselves by sneaking men, women, and children across

BRICHA IN THE BEGINNING

This is how Efraim Dekel describes how Bricha began:

“The first to rouse themselves and recover were the partisans, among whose number was a group of activists who laid the foundation for the rescue operation. They began searching for Jews, who were still using non-Jewish names and hesitant to come out openly as Jews. The Jewish partisans, survivors of the Holocaust, joined together devotedly in collecting the thousands of bodies that still lay about in the fields and woods near the city and bringing them to burial. This increased the trust that the survivors had in them, a quality that was a valuable commodity in the work in those initial days of the liberation before stable governments were established.

During the days of liberation, while our dead still lay before us, Bricha was formed. During the memorial in the cemetery, right after the eulogies which made even top-ranking officers cry, a senior Soviet officer turned to our friend S and whispered to him, “I know that you have organized to smuggle the remaining Jews out of here. Be successful! If you need help, come to me and I'll give you travel passes so you can move freely and do your work.”

borders on foot, through dark forests on moonless nights.

They daringly and bravely led the survivors through fields and over mountains, crossing borders with them. With tireless devotion, cunning and persistence, they stuck to their goal, encouraging those who faltered and carrying children on their backs.

The Joint was another decisive factor in the success of Bricha. Without the help of the Joint, which represented American Jewry and worked in tandem with the American occupation forces, Bricha would not have been able to accomplish all that it did. The Joint operated as a respected legal organization and could not officially identify with an underground operation. Nevertheless, it actually funded most of Bricha's operations, either directly or indirectly, overtly or covertly.

In various places and at various times, those who worked for Bricha appeared in western Europe as employees of the Joint or as people under their auspices, earning them

the attention and cooperation of the authorities. Members of Bricha often used forged certificates of the Joint, which aroused the ire of some of the higher-ups but did not interfere with the actual work.

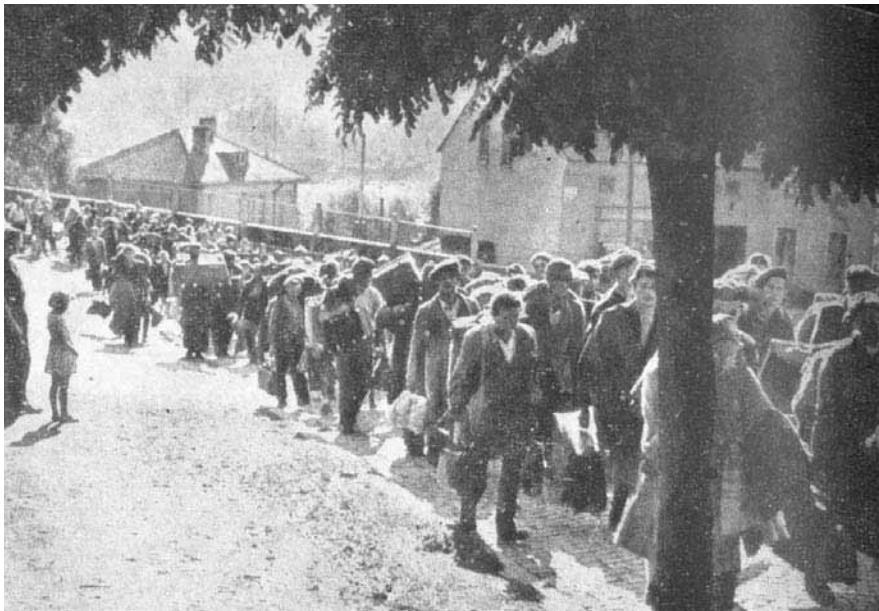
The chaos that reigned in most European countries was another vital factor in Bricha's success. The heads of state, who had just been awarded leadership of their countries, did not have time to enact new and established laws, and there were no clear instructions as to how to manage the borders. The decision to allow refugees to pass through or not was made by local guards or officers.

At every border, on either side, members of Bricha infiltrated the areas in order to study how things worked and to make their plans accordingly. The difficulties at border crossings varied greatly throughout. There were borders that you could not cross in the evening but when there was a changing of the guards, you could cross at night or at dawn, or vice versa.

They bravely led the survivors through fields and over mountains, crossing borders with them. With tireless devotion, cunning and persistence, they stuck to their goal, encouraging those who faltered and carrying children on their backs.

In those places where one country allowed refugees to leave but the country on the other side did not want them, or vice versa, Bricha brought them over semi-legally, what they called "partially black." There were points along the border that they crossed totally illegally or "in the black." On borders where they crossed "in the black," they "just" needed knowledge and familiarity with the byways, how the border was constructed, where the guards were stationed, where the patrols went, and the system of communications with the other side.

Stettin (or Szczecin) for example, was one of the border towns through which the Bricha brought refugees from Poland directly into Germany. Stettin was a German city before World War II but was annexed to Poland after the war. The Poles, who wanted to rid the city of Germans, set up a repatriation office for the purpose



The refugees at the gathering point, waiting for the Bricha to take them over the border

A JEWISH PASSPORT

A member of Bricha, Boris K, who served in the Red Army in Russia during the war, was released after the victory. In 1945, he returned to Poland, from where he had fled at the beginning of the Nazi occupation. Boris was drafted into Bricha and was sent to the area of Austria that was under Soviet control. He worked for Bricha for four years, having established deep connections with Russian officers and soldiers on the borders:

At first, the Russian officers and soldiers displayed appreciation for the Jews and saw themselves as partners in our tragedy. On the borders, they were as lenient as they could be, both in entering Austria from Czechoslovakia and Hungary and leaving it for the American occupied zone. There were instances in which soldiers in the Red army treated the Jewish children who crossed the borders or rode the repatriation trains gently and gave them candy.

Although Jewish soldiers in the occupying army couldn't speak openly and in many instances they were fearful of being identified, they secretly helped on many occasions. Some of them used Yiddish with the Ukrainian accent of Kiev and Odessa to speak about Jewish sorrows. Many of them could not actively help because they were being watched, especially after incidents in which men left the army, changing their army uniforms for refugee clothing.

Our ties with Russian officers and soldiers on the borders, in offices and train stations, were with Russians from all over the huge Soviet Union, including many who had never seen Jews or heard about them.

There was a captain in charge of border affairs between Czechoslovakia and Austria, with whom our people became friendly. The young officer eased the border crossings and ordered the manager of the nearby train station to provide train cars as we requested.

Colonel Intzov, whose office was in Soviet

headquarters in Vienna, was responsible for all border matters. He carried great weight in the Soviet hierarchy and his influence was extensive throughout the Russian occupied area of Austria. He had the authority to grant permission to cross from Czechoslovakia (even in the days when difficulties on the part of the Czechs began to come to a head) and permission to leave the Russian zone, even when the Americans did not want additional refugees. He had the power to tighten the noose in the area or to enable the continued flow of refugees if he chose to look the other way. He chose to avert his eyes.

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This is how Ezriel Carlebach described the men of Bricha:

One youth, clumsy, short, in his torn suit, with an old scarf on his neck, without a tie and without a hat, gives out 'passports' to 1000 Jews, to 2000 and 3000, at once. Standing there, somewhere in a field, or leaning at a bar in a restaurant. With one quick motion he tears a small paper from his notebook and adds in pencil: "v'lo yishan, shomer Yisroel," or "ashrei yoshvei veisecha," or some similar line and someone hides the note wherever. Those are the 'passports' by authority of which hundreds of Jews pass from country to country throughout Europe.

They work as 'consuls' of that country which is always on the road of exile, specifically on the road. They provide consular services, whose signatures are a wink of the eye and a handshake. They serve the people who nobody in the world wants to look after, and the only visa is Jewish brotherhood.

Masses of people, entire tribes, people who are unknown, not their names, not their vital statistics, tens of thousands who don't exist legally at all, pass the border confidently, quietly, with heads raised. One of them has a verse from Tanach hidden in his pocket. They have a Jewish passport!

(HaTzofeh from May, 1947)

of sending Germans and other nationalities to their homelands. Some members of Bricha were planted in this office and they got Jews out in the guise of Germans. This was, of course, very dangerous both for the people of Bricha and the refugees, but they managed to get 1000 people out in this way.

Bricha also had 4500 legal visas to France, Belgium, Italy, Czechoslovakia and Bolivia, acquired by "Assistance" and HIAS, with which passports could be obtained. These visas were used only in urgent situations and less than half were actually put to use. [This is probably because of the obstacles the Communist government in Poland would have put on those applying to emigrate. — ed.]

After they pinpointed an area along the border and began transferring refugees, they had to be careful that the border did not become "burned" (which would make it unsuitable for long term activities). If it was "burned," they looked for a substitute.

I have already mentioned the fact that it was Jewish partisans

and those who fought in the ghettos and in the Jewish Brigade (which was comprised of Israeli volunteers to the British army who fought the Nazis) who were the nucleus of Bricha. They each had contacts with men in the Allied forces, with Russian soldiers, and with people in the underground and partisans who had fought with them against the Nazis.

Some of those Soviet officers were given high positions and were a great help to Bricha. Many of them were communist Jews but they had warm Jewish hearts. They endangered their distinguished positions by getting train compartments, freight trains or military trucks in order to transport the refugees to their destination. They also provided them with certificates so they wouldn't have problems with spot checks at roadblocks or border crossings.

The smuggling of the Jews of Poland has to be divided into two periods: until the end of July, 1945, and from August and on. In the first period, Bricha sent out refugees little by little, 200 people a day, in a completely illegal manner. Some of the refugees had (forged)

transit permits or they were given "certificates" of Greek, Roman and Italian repatriates. Some crossed the "green border," which meant crossing via green fields with the aid of guides who lived in the mountains or with the help of Bricha people who had learned the route.

The refugees left the city in cars, train or trucks. Once they neared the border, they alit from their various modes of transportation and crossed the border at night on foot along mountain paths or through fields. In some places, the border guards were willing to look away (after receiving the proper remuneration), while in others the refugees had to see and not be seen.

The pogroms in Kielce on 5 Tamuz, 1946, in which 47 Jews were killed in Kielce itself and 30 were killed in the surrounding area mark the beginning of the second period of smuggling Jews out of Poland. The pogroms awoke the Jews in Poland to the reality that this country, which was a cemetery for their dear ones, was poised to swallow them too, and that if they wanted to live, they had to leave. These pogroms also made the Polish government realize that anti-Semitism was powerful in their country and they couldn't fight it. Therefore, for the good of the Jews, the Polish government, and the Polish nation, it was worth getting rid of the rest of the Jews and encouraging them to leave the country. Rather than place obstacles in their path, it was better to make it easier for them to leave.

There was no better time than this to involve the heads of government for Bricha's purposes and there was no better man for the job than Yitzchok Tzuckerman. Yitzchok, known as Antek, was one of the organizers of the Warsaw ghetto uprising and had personal



ties with the paramilitary organizations in the Polish underground and with the Polish government in exile. He and Dr. Adolf Berman were introduced as representatives of the "Central Jewish Committee" to the Defense Minister, Marian Sapicholski, whose help they requested. The Defense Minister did not consult with the Foreign Minister (who was under pressure from the British) and he agreed to the following terms:

*The Polish border would be open to crossings for one to two months, to organized groups, by way of certain points of crossing that would be arranged ahead of time.

*This Polish aid would be kept a secret and no indications would be given that the Polish government was involved or that it agreed to let the Jews out.

*The Jewish organizers had to check to see that no Poles, enemies of the government or collaborators with the Nazis got out.

*They had to ensure that those leaving did not take foreign

currency with them.

*The Bricha would help the police work against those leaving illegally via smugglers.

*Those leaving would be given a collective certificate that would bear an agreed upon stamp and would serve as a kind of "visa" of the Bricha.

As soon as this agreement was made, a representative of Bricha left with General Cherbinski (who was appointed to this post by the Defense Minister) for the border. Together, they established three points of crossing and several staging areas to gather the groups. At every border crossing and at all the staging areas, an official, secret signal was arranged with the border guard office and with the local intelligence agent.

Bricha, together with the Joint, found sufficient accommodations, food, bed and blankets to host 4000 refugees on a temporary basis.

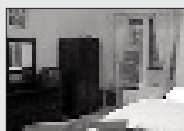
Groups of refugees were usually sent over the border early in the morning. So that nobody would find out the Polish government was

enabling this illegal crossing, the army closed the borders at that time and only allowed passage to those groups of Jews who were brought by Bricha.

As soon as they came to an agreement with the Polish Defense Minister, the first group of Chabad Chassidim arrived in Krakow from Russia. They were among the first refugees taken by Bricha in July. All together, Bricha brought over 17,000 people that month via various crossings. In August, Bricha brought over 31,000 people.

It is very possible that the Rebbe's instruction of 1 Tamuz, **"to try and go to Paris and may Hashem give them material and spiritual success,"** changed because of new opportunities that were created by the agreement between the Polish Defense Minister and Bricha following the pogrom in Kielce. On 26 Tamuz, the Rebbe wrote, **"Go to places under American rule in Germany, from where it will easier to get entry permits for the United States."**

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AND KINGS SHALL BE YOUR ASSISTANTS

By Boruch Merkur

*If this is the case even with regard to a preparation for prayer, how much more is it so that gentiles help out Jews with their interests and in their obligations with regard to Mitzvos and their essential needs. * Tracing the Rebbe MH”M’s instructions on how to perfect our Divine service in the Final Era.*

The Rebbe further develops this concept of how our Divine service transforms the world – specifically the gentile nations, including even their kings (as we learned regarding King Achashverosh) – with a story from the Gemara:

“In this regard we derive strength and instruction from the story in the **Gemara**¹³¹: ‘Rav Ashi said: Huna bar Nosson told me: One time I was standing before King Izdager (that was his name and he was the king¹³² of Pras¹³³ [Persia]). I happened to have been wearing my Avnet [i.e., his belt] too high and he lowered it to its proper place (his Avnet was worn up high, up to [the upper part of] his arms, and he lowered it in order to enhance its appearance¹³³). He said to me: Of you [the Jewish people] it is written, “And you shall be to Me a kingdom of princes and a holy nation”¹³⁴ (and you must accustom yourselves to the splendor of Priests, regarding whom it is written, “do not gird [yourself] in the place of sweat.”¹³⁵ When Huna bar Nosson came to Ameimar, Ameimar told him: You experienced the fulfillment of [the verse], “And kings shall be your assistants.”’

“If this is the case even with regard to the place of the Avnet, a belt, which is a prerequisite and a preparation for one to pray properly **thereafter**,¹³⁵ how much more is it so that

gentiles help out Jews with their interests and in their obligations with regard to Mitzvos and their essential needs (including the laws which in Talmudic times were considered beyond the letter of the law but presently, after they had been established as such in *Shulchan Aruch*, they have become obligatory by law for every Jew¹³⁶).”

There is a circle of reciprocity created when we exert effort on elevating our environment and the world at large. Namely, gentiles are motivated to further Jewish interests, even the most subtle religious concerns.

NOTES:

¹³¹ Z’vachim 19a, beg.

¹³² To note the connection to King Achashverosh, King of Pras and Madai.

¹³³ Rashi ibid.

¹³⁴ Yisro 19:6.

¹³⁵ *Tur Shulchan Aruch* and the Alter Rebbe’s *Shulchan Aruch Orach Chayim siman 91*.

¹³⁶ We may assert the following reason and necessity of the matter, as follows. In order to nullify the increase in evil from generation to generation (see Sota (49a), “There is no day, etc.”), there must be an increase in light and holiness, etc. See above Footnote 49 [in the original], that the descent of being “scattered and fragmented among the nations” is in order that there should be the ascent resulting from the revelation of unity even in a place of dispersal. Indeed, this is the inner explanation of the saying of our Sages that “The Holy One Blessed Be He did an act of charity for the Jewish people by scattering them among the nations” (P’sachim 87b) insofar as it should bring about the “abundance of possessions,” for which reasons we descended into exile. (See Lech Lecha 15:14; Brachos 9b, beg.)

ON THE ROAD

By Rabbi Yaakov Shmuelewitz, Shliach, Beit Shaan

Here's another angle to life on shlichus that is not familiar to the public at large – the long trips, the constant traveling, the dangers, the experiences, the reliance on the Rebbe's bracha, all of which are part and parcel of the shlichus experience.

I've written previously about the traveling that shluchim, their wives and children do. This article is devoted to more stories about shluchim on the road.

All shluchim have gotten used to the long or short trips they have to make from their place of shlichus to various Chabad centers and back, but the shluchim in Eilat do this far more often than other shluchim, at least in Eretz Yisroel.

Rabbi Shimon Eisenbach, a shliach in Eilat for 25 years, told me:

"Unlike all other cities in Eretz Yisroel, when you leave Eilat you won't encounter another city until Dimona (250 kilometers) or Yerushalayim (300) kilometers. For shluchim, this can happen once or twice a week and sometimes more."

R' Eisenbach related some interesting things that happened to him on these trips:

"One day, we left Yerushalayim for Eilat. About an hour and a half after we left, I noticed that one of the children

looked dehydrated and was beginning to show signs of lethargy. I was in the middle of the trip, not close to anywhere in particular, and didn't know what to do. Should I turn around or go ahead? Either way, there was more than an hour and a half of driving.

"I called the hospital in Eilat with one hand on the wheel and one hand examining my child as per the doctors' instructions (while a third hand held the cell phone...). The entire time I kept glancing at the Rebbe's picture and asking him, in my mind, 'Rebbe, help us.' The child's condition improved and we saw that it was just a *nisayon*, a test..."

Another story:

"It was 3 Tamuz 5761 and we had managed to organize a group of thirty people from Eilat and Beer Sheva to go to the Rebbe. People were seeing 770, Chabad world headquarters, for the first time in their lives. We davened in 770, farbrenged, and met Chassidim and shluchim from all

over the world. It was very special.

"One of the men from Eilat had been to Morocco the year before, on a trip to search for his roots, and he had gone to the shul in Casablanca where he met the shliach, Rabbi Sholom Eidelman, giving a shiur. Now, when he came to 770, he met R' Eidelman once again.

"This trip made an indelible impression on all the participants. One member of the group, Mr. Moshe Elmakais, who is the head of the religious council in Eilat, went back to Israel, all enthused. At the first opportunity, at the main farbrengen for 18 Elul, he delivered the main address and excitedly told about Chabad world headquarters which is *chai v'kayam*."

A SUCCA IN A PRIVATE VEHICLE

R' Eisenbach:

"Take Sukkos for example. If I have to travel, then throughout the trip to Kfar Chabad, about five hours, I can't even have a drink of water out of a sukka. That's the Lubavitch way. It once happened that I made a stop by Rabbi Yosef Karasik who served at the time as the rav and shliach in central Arava. I went into his sukka and refueled and then continued on my way.

"After a few years on shlichus, Hashem helped and we bought a Mazda with a sun roof. You can put some s'chach on it and eat or drink while on the road.

“Or take for example what happens when the car breaks down on the road, which has happened to us more than once on the hundreds of trips we’ve made during 25 years on shlichus. In the summer, the temperature in the Arava is over 45 degrees Celsius (113 degrees Fahrenheit) in the shade and 75 C (167 F) in the sun.

“Once, we left on Erev Yom Tov for Yerushalayim and the car died in the middle of the trip. By Divine Providence, a car with tourists drove by and the driver saw us with little children and he offered to take us.

“In the end, we were helped by some rides until we got to Yerushalayim shortly before Yom Tov.”

WHEN THE STREAM OVERFLOWED THE BANKS

For a long time there were places where the streams of the Negev cut through the Kvish Arava (the Prairie Road which is about two hours of straight flatland). It’s the only road that connects Eilat and the center of the country. This area is known for the flash flooding that takes place whenever it rains. The

flooding blocks the road due to the danger – and there have been more than a few instances in which cars were swept away by the power of the current.

Just ten years ago they started putting up proper bridges in those places where the streams cross the Kvish Arava.

“We had situations,” said R’ Eisenbach, “when we set out on the road and just then the streams started flowing powerfully and the road was closed for hours, even for half a day. Sometimes, we couldn’t go back home because the roads behind us were blocked by other streams that had flooded... While hoping you have enough food for the kids, you wait for the water to subside and then you continue on your way.

“I’ll never forget one day in the summer when I traveled the Kvish Arava. In the summer, I figured, there’s no chance of flooding, but apparently there had been a tropical storm in Egypt and the flood waters flowed towards the Arava. The road was flooded and with my own eyes I saw a truck getting swept away like a leaf as it tried to cross the stream in Nachal Tzin.

“I haven’t mentioned weddings yet. Sometimes a wedding of a relative can consume without

“We shluchim feel that 770 is our home. On shlichus we are ‘on the road.’ In order to remind ourselves of this, we say the T’fillas HaDerech every day, ‘until we return home,’ to 770.”

exaggeration, two whole days. You leave Eilat at twelve noon in order to get to the chuppa. You leave the wedding at 11 at night, make two rest stops, and get home at 5 in the morning. You rest a bit and ... two days have gone by. Still, I’m not complaining. We should only have simchos!”

Sometimes there are advantages to these trips. For example, there are certain well-known rest stops on these long trips. The most famous one is the restaurant of Kushi Rimmon.

Kushi Rimmon and especially his wife, are very connected to Chabad. The restaurant is full of pictures of the Rebbe and nearly every visit we make there turns into a special Chassidic farbrengen. You will always find tired drivers getting spiritually revived with a Chassidic story, young tourists who “don’t mind” listening to Chassidic ideas in the wee hours of the night, and sometimes you even meet yeshiva bachurim who are on vacation, refreshing themselves for the next semester and open to sharing a Chassidic idea. When all these

T’FILLAS HA’DERECH EVERY DAY

A few days after we married and a few days before going on shlichus in Beit Shaan, one of the Israeli shluchim told me:

“I’ll tell you a secret. Some of the shluchim have a custom to say the T’fillas HaDerech every day (without Hashem’s name) until they return to 770. The custom is based on what it says in the Alter Rebbe’s Siddur before T’fillas HaDerech: ‘And on the other days that he spends on the road, until he returns home, he should say it every morning, even in a hotel, and conclude with *baruch Ata shomeia t’filla* without Hashem’s name.’

“We shluchim feel that 770 is our home. On shlichus we are ‘on the road.’ In order to remind ourselves of this, we say the T’fillas HaDerech every day, ‘until we return home,’ to 770.”

people are sitting together, it makes for a unique farbrengen.

R' Eisenbach told me about another advantage:

"Yesterday I traveled from Kfar Chabad to Eilat. I was tired but I had no choice. At the Kastina junction I noticed a resident of Eilat, a friend and mekurav who davens at our shul. I stopped for him and he was happy to get the ride. I took advantage of the trip to give him a four a half hour shiur and he did most of the driving..."

A CAR, A BUS AND A PLANE

There different ways to get from Eilat to the center of the country and each one has advantages and disadvantages.

The simplest way is to take the bus. Eilat has Chabad schools but when it comes to mesivta and high school you have to send your children away. The problem is that on the bus to and from Eilat, there are people that we don't want our Chassidishe children spending hours with, if you know what I mean.

For long periods of time, R' Eisenbach would travel every Sunday from Eilat to Kiryat Malachi in order to bring his daughter to high school and every Thursday he went back there to bring her home for Shabbos.

Another option is to fly from Eilat to Sdei Dov in Tel Aviv. It's much quicker and more comfortable but it's expensive and doesn't enable you to take care of things in several places since

you're without the versatility of driving yourself. An advantage of flying is that nearly every time a shliach flies he meets the mayor, one of his deputies, a city council member or a senior business executive. This enables them to have an open and friendly talk which can advance Chabad's work in the area.

A MIRACLE TIMES FOUR ON THE KVISH ARAVA

R' Yosef Hecht, shliach and chief rabbi of Eilat, told me about a rough day with a happy ending that happened to him on one of his trips from Kfar Chabad to Eilat:

"It was at the beginning of Nissan and I was traveling to Kfar Chabad in order to bring matzos, wine, meat and fish to Eilat for my family and for some mekuravim. Friday morning I left Kfar Chabad for Eilat with my car loaded up with all those food items. To my horror, I watched the sky become slowly overcast and it began to pour. I hoped to pass the area of the streams before they flooded but didn't make it. I got to the first stream and the road was blocked!

"It was hard to tell how high the water was but no driver would dare to cross the rushing waters. I waited with everyone else but the flow did not diminish. This was a Friday and I had to get moving and make it home before Shabbos.

"Having no choice I decided that I'm a shliach mitzva and fortified with bitachon I crossed over. I stopped on the other side to check that the matzos remained dry and saw that all was fine. A miracle. I continued and came to the next stream. Again, it was flooded and again, we waited



A stream overflowing its banks

until the rushing waters diminished and everybody warned me not to dare cross.

"I mustered my bitachon once again and it worked. At the third stream someone tried to cross before me and got swept away. I saw his car overturned in the stream bed. I was scared. Time was moving on. I waited for an hour and ... having no choice I crossed. I felt the car starting to flounder, I grasped the steering wheel and asked for Hashem's help and the Rebbe's bracha and whew, the car made it across. I checked the matzos and everything was dry.

"I advanced to the fourth stream, only forty kilometers away from home. It was flooded. It was five in the afternoon and Shabbos came in at 6:30. I waited and calculated how much time I had left to work with. An hour went by which left me only half an hour to get home. I had no choice and I tried to cross and ... Hashem helped and I made it.

"I got home minutes before Shabbos. We managed to get all the meat and fish into the freezer

I saw his car overturned in the stream bed. I was scared. Time was moving on. I waited for an hour and ... having no choice I crossed. I felt the car starting to flounder, I grasped the steering wheel and asked for Hashem's help and the Rebbe's bracha.

which had not spoiled despite the long, long trip from Kfar Chabad, from 9:30 in the morning until 6:30 in the evening."

THE REBBE'S NIGGUN

Dear ANASH & Temimim

This year, in honor of Yud Alef Nissan, the 107th birthday of the Rebbe MH"M Shlit"a – a Lubavitch committee will be formed to choose the new niggun which will assigned as the "Rebbe's Niggun" for his 107th year.

The board will consist of experienced Baalei tefillah and Baalei menagnim who have previously participated in the "Lubavitch niggunim committee."

Niggunim can be sent until the 3rd of Nissan to:

E-mail: VaadLubavitch@Gmail.com

*

The Rebbe's letter that was received 3 years ago in connection to the establishment of the committee:

אקוה אשר לא יהיו קשויים שיסכימו על נוסח הנ"ל, ובכל אופן צריך להיות נזכר בנוסח הגליונות השם "ליובאוויטש" . . . מה שכותב שעשו ועד של חמשה אנשים ומכאן ולהבא יפנו בבקשותיהם על ידי קומיטי ז', הנה כמובן מעצמו שיהי' באופן כזה שישמר רוח המוסדות על טהרתן ולא יתערב רוח זר בתוכם

(Igros Kodesh Vol. 4 Page 68).

A DOUBLE TRANSFORMATION

By Nosson Avrohom

Translated By Michoel Leib Dobry

Photographs by Meir Alfasi

The transformation from California hippie to Kfar Chabad Yeshiva bachur was just the beginning. The tragic death of Rabbi Yehoshua Dashiff's son sent him into deep shock and trauma. His recovery by means of an innovative approach, brought him face to face with the psychology within chassidus, a synergy which he utilizes daily in his counseling profession.

My interview with Rabbi Yehoshua Aryeh Dashiff, a Lubavitcher chassid certified in a special therapy that treats Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, lasted several hours, but it took far longer to get my impressions down on paper. There was something quite interesting and impressive to this interview, and to the overall atmosphere that accompanied it. In general, hours of uninterrupted discussion and interview can prove rather tiring. This time, however, I found myself concluding the conversation with a feeling of calm, tranquility, and relaxation. Rabbi Dashiff has an indescribable magic

to him that is most soothing to the listener.

LEARNING TO FIRE A GUN AT AGE 9

Rabbi Dashiff was born in Lancaster, a small conservative town in Los Angeles County, in Southern California's famed Mojave Desert. At the time his parents lived there, many of the city's residents dealt in growing hay and tending large ranch areas. The weather in the region is quite extreme: During the winter, the city is covered with snow, and in the summertime, the temperatures can reach as high as 120 degrees

Fahrenheit.

The city's non-Jewish residents have a very conservative outlook; many of them are devout Christians. "In these areas in the United States," Rabbi Dashiff reminisces, "Utah, Arizona, Nevada, California – gun ownership is a very clear and basic right. The average home contains a variety of weapons. Guns are quite easily accessible, and at the age of nine, I was already learning how to shoot in summer camp. When I was five years old, I played with scorpions, and at sixteen, I was handling rattlesnakes, making hats out of their skin with the rattle hanging over the side."

In the town of 20,000 residents, there were forty-five Jewish families ... but no Judaism. There was a semblance of a community, but the small hut that served as the synagogue was more of a social meeting place than a place of worship. Later, a beautiful shul was built at the edge of town with an office for the rabbi, a kitchen, and classrooms.

"During the early years of my youth, we would travel there by car on Shabbos. At the entrance, there was a box containing yarmulkes. That's where it started and, more or less, where it ended. There was also a Hebrew school on Sundays, but all we learned there was Jewish

history. By the time of my bar-mitzva, I knew the name Moses, but not much more than that.”

He learned to read the Haftora for his bar mitzva from a Conservative rabbi brought by the Jewish community, with the assistance of audiocassettes. Yehoshua understood nothing of the meaning of the words of the Haftora, and there were no t’fillin. The ceremony was lavish in the material sense, yet spiritually bare and empty.

“The only thing that I felt on that day was that I was supposed to be turning from a boy into a man, but I had no idea what that

meant. I remember how I didn’t want to go through with it, feeling that it was a mere window-dressing ceremony empty of all substance.

Yet, I also felt that if I didn’t do it, I would essentially be making a conscious decision not to be a Jew. Though I didn’t understand what it meant to be part of the Jewish People, I knew I didn’t want to give it up.”

After the bar-mitzva party, he stopped participating in Jewish community programs, Hebrew school, and Shabbos groups. “The one strong feeling that throbbed within me, which I remember to this very day, was that every time I entered a synagogue and put on a yarmulke, I had a very nice and pleasant feeling, and when I left the synagogue and took the yarmulke off, the feeling disappeared.

At the time, I thought that this was just something psychological, but today I know that it was a lot more than that.”

At the age of nine, I was already learning how to shoot in summer camp. When I was five years old, I played with scorpions, and at sixteen, I was handling rattlesnakes, making hats out of their skin with the rattle hanging over the side.



ALONE FACING THE YOUNG NAZIS

When Yehoshua reached the age of maturity, he came to the conclusion that the world was created to be enjoyed. He moved to Utah, where there was one of the most famous ski resorts in the United States and a sports club that he really liked. "I had come to the conclusion that the world is like a playing field – it depends upon you how much you want to enjoy the game you're in. In hindsight, I know that I had reached this conclusion from a deep state of confusion. My soul was searching for depth and meaning, while everything around me was superficial and corrupt. I perceived religion in general - and Judaism was no exception - as something that demands and controls, and imposes rule and authority over people through specific laws. I never imagined it could be something so deep and profound."

Yehoshua would spend his free time reading books on a variety of subjects. "I loved to read books of different styles. I would get excited by a certain author, and over a period of time, I would read all of his books and privately analyze his personality."

In 1978, Yehoshua enrolled at the University of Utah to complete his bachelor's degree. "With my conservative and patriotic background, I found it very difficult living around people with such an anti-establishment outlook. As part of my studies, I worked as a director's assistant at the university theater. I was successful and thought this might be my calling, so I adopted this profession as my line of work. I had considerable insight and good interaction with people in this field, but as time passed I decided to give it up. I felt that the prevailing attitude was of caring more about oneself and less about

others, which represented a kind of hedonism that was beyond my view of fun."

Another subject he studied was German. At the end of that year, the university administration announced a special program for those who wanted to specialize in the German language, allowing them to travel to Germany to earn college credits. "I jumped at the opportunity, and I was not the only one. At the start of the academic year, we traveled to the northern German city of Kiel, where we studied the German language and literature at the local university. There, the buds that eventually brought me back to my people and my heritage began to blossom. Until then, I had no idea what true Judaism was, or even that there was something for which to search. This created a feeling of constant disquiet."

The first awakening took place not long after he arrived in Germany, as he sat in a café with several other German and American students. "As the hour grew late, conversations grew hushed. Total

silence reigned – except for the voice of one man that filled the air. I saw a drunk moving from person to person, chuckling to all of them. The patrons remained with frozen facial expressions. Confused, I asked the person sitting next to me to explain this strange occurrence. He whispered that today is the anniversary of the death of Hitler (may his name be erased), and that man is an ardent supporter of his policies and is essentially lauding and praising him."

For the first time, Yehoshua, whose mother was born in Germany, began to realize that there is actually a much deeper meaning to being a Jew. "I returned to my room, engulfed and troubled by a variety of thoughts. However, an occurrence a few months later shocked me even more. There was a small group of students from whom most of the others kept their distance. I, however, would speak with them periodically. One night, as I was getting ready for bed, I heard the sound of a party on the upper floor of my building, and I decided to go upstairs to



participate. As I approached, I saw six young men from that outcast group, dressed in clothes from the Nazi era. The room was enveloped in cigarette smoke, and they were listening to old-time German music. When I entered the room, I felt the tension in the atmosphere. They looked at one another and at me with puzzled expressions of their faces. One of them broke the silence by asking me if I understood the words of the song that was playing. I replied that I could understand if I concentrated. I listened carefully and then suddenly understood that it was song about the Nazi Party, encouraging German youth to join their ranks.

“They knew I was Jewish, and I felt frightened and threatened. The young people’s faces were suddenly filled with hatred, and I quickly left the room. Never before had the Holocaust held any personal relevance to me. I had been asked on numerous occasions throughout the year whether I had already visited the camps, but I hadn’t understood the point. I had never been told what really happened there, and thought that it had relevance only to history, without any specific meaning for me.

“In any event, I returned to California with the feeling that there’s something I have to understand – something different within me – but I didn’t have the slightest idea how to express it.”

THE FIRST SPARKS

After a year in Germany, Yehoshua returned home to California, where he resumed his German language studies at Berkeley. There he received his first exposure to Torah observant Jews, and he soon became familiar with the authentic Jewish way of life, which had previously existed for him merely in the historical sense. “I felt as if I had found long-lost

family members. They were intelligent people of ample academic level and pleasant and amiable ways. Thus, I found myself connecting with them on a daily basis, and enjoying it thoroughly.”

This developing Jewish group included Jews of all sectors – Conservative, liberal, Mizrachi, etc. Yehoshua found himself periodically joining them in shul for Shabbos services, and participating in various Jewish activities. “I still didn’t see myself becoming religious and associating with their beliefs. I was, for all intents and purposes, your average ‘hippie.’ My hair was long and flowing, and my

When I came back inside, the place was already filled to the brim. Where did everyone come from so suddenly? I was shocked!

way of thinking was to do whatever would give me enjoyment. I couldn’t see myself becoming Torah observant, not just on the intellectual level, but on the emotional level as well.”

The start of Yehoshua’s emotional journey to Yiddishkait began to crystallize with his participation at a weekend seminar. “There was a young Israeli man there who frequently played the song ‘Halleluy-a,’ an Israeli composition that had recently won the Eurovision Song Contest. This song penetrated my heart and kindled a fervent desire to strengthen my connection to the

Jewish People. On the final day, when everyone departed from one another, I found myself sitting on the grass and sobbing uncontrollably from the depths of my soul. Someone approached me and asked if I needed any help and whether it was difficult for me to see the event come to an end. I replied that I, too, was bewildered by my crying. ‘It’s because of Judaism,’ I said. I was shocked at myself, crying like that and uttering such a statement, but it seemed to come from deep within me. I suddenly understood that all the changes I had experienced in Utah and Germany in recent years, similar to the feelings of unrest I had experienced all my life, had come because I hadn’t found my true existence yet.”

Shortly thereafter, Yehoshua was accepted to work as a lifeguard at a summer camp for Jewish youth. When he met with the camp director, he was informed that one of the requirements is that all camp employees must put on t’fillin. “I told the director that while I was familiar with the concept of t’fillin, I had never put them on and had no idea how to do so. (A year earlier, when I was twenty-three years old, my brother had returned from a visit to Eretz Yisroel with a pair of t’fillin and explained the mitzva to me.) The director promised to bring me a pair of t’fillin, which I started putting on from the first morning of camp. Though I had never worn them before, I nevertheless accepted the condition and stood by it. For reasons unknown even to myself, I didn’t stop.”

A “HIPPIE” ON THE FARBRENGEN PODIUM AMONG THE ELDER CHASSIDIM

At the conclusion of the summer

THE HEALER OF ALL FLESH

Rabbi Yehoshua Dashiff relates: “During my time in the yeshiva in Kfar Chabad, I became ill. I felt my condition deteriorating with each passing day, and it was further aggravated by waking early in the morning and going to sleep late at night. I wasn’t eating in an orderly manner, and after I had to spend three days in bed because any movement stopped my breathing, I went to a doctor for a check-up. He said that in his opinion, I was suffering from an incurable case of emphysema, an illness that with the passage of time damages the lungs’ ability to take in air. When I asked him what could be done, he replied that it was already in an irreversible state. I took the x-rays of my lungs and showed them to a doctor of my acquaintance from South Africa, and he gave the same medical diagnosis.

“I was only twenty-seven years old at the time, and I decided to travel to California to undergo more thorough tests. On my way there, I went through New York to see the Rebbe. This was about a month before Purim. The state of my health was continuing to deteriorate, and I could feel it. I couldn’t walk very far without stopping to catch my breath. On the following Shabbos, the Rebbe made a farbrengen, where I had a good view of the proceedings.

“During the singing between sichos, I suddenly felt the Rebbe’s eyes upon me. He stared at me with a probing gaze for a long time, as if surprised by something. It was very unsettling. Many of the assembled were staring at me to see who the Rebbe was looking at. It sounds surreal, but when the Rebbe removed his gaze from me, I felt some degree of improvement in my breathing. An hour later, I felt even better, and by Motzaei Shabbos, I could already breathe without difficulty. I felt that the Rebbe had ‘cleaned’ me of the illness.

“Later, when I traveled to California to have those tests (just to play it safe) with the most up-to-date machines in the world, the doctors told me that they couldn’t find any sign of problem, and my lungs were absolutely clean...

“Soon afterwards my sister confided in me about her own health problems. She had been suffering from bleeding, and the doctors discovered two growths in her lower abdomen. They advised an operation to

remove them.

“I told her the story of what I experienced at the farbrengen and the miraculous cure, wrote down all her relevant medical details, and submitted them to the Rebbe’s office with a request for a bracha.

“I waited several days for an answer, and was anguished when none was forthcoming. I begged the Rebbe in my heart that he should respond. After the third day of going in to see if there was an answer, I saw the Rebbe in a dream, clearer and more tangible than anything I had ever seen. The Rebbe told me in English, ‘Don’t worry, I work slowly,’ and then disappeared. The vision was so unmistakable that I called my sister and told her that she has nothing to worry about. Everything would be fine, because I had been privileged to receive an answer for her from the Rebbe.

“She arrived at the hospital on the scheduled day

for the operation. She was already dressed in her pre-op gown and the operation room staff had made all the final preparations, when suddenly one of the nurses entered the room and called out, ‘Stop all preparations for the operation! The patient is taking pain killers that can possibly result in her not waking up from the anesthesia!’ The staff sent her home, with instructions to refrain completely from using those painkillers and to come back in two weeks. When she returned two weeks later, they

took another ultrasound to determine how much the growths had developed. The doctors were shocked to see that they had reduced in size.

“The doctors were overcome with excitement, saying that they had never seen growths of this type shrink so dramatically, and they asked her to come back in another two weeks for another examination. She returned as requested, and as with the previous tests, they told her that the growths had shrunk even more. They were simply thrilled as they compared the ultrasounds to the ones made just four weeks earlier. They asked her to continue coming for follow-up examinations. The next time she came in, after doing another ultrasound, the doctors were pleased to inform her that there was no longer a need for an operation, as the growths had completely disappeared.”

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vacation, Yehoshua returned to school to complete his degree. One day, he met Bela Tobias a”h, a middle-aged woman in the Jewish community with a proclivity for Jewish mysticism. When she understood that he was looking for his path of life, she recommended Chabad. He had never heard anything about chassidus before. She told him about two dynamic and vigorous shluchim, Rabbis Citron and Drizin. “We had lengthy conversations on Jewish philosophy, and she heartily suggested that I get in touch with the shluchim. She added that in her opinion, my place was not in college, but in yeshiva.”

Bela came back numerous times and spoke to him about her suggestion, but what eventually got him off the university campus was the passing of his father in 5741. After taking care of his father’s estate, he decided to take some trips to calm himself a bit. On the last trip, he rode his motorcycle from S. Francisco to Los Angeles, where he met up with Rabbi Citron, who by Divine Providence had set up a newcomers’ Torah study program in the yeshiva of Rabbi Ezra Shochat. “It was that middle-aged woman who had made the connection between us. Indeed, when I met with Rabbi Citron, I was captivated by his happy and personable nature.”

While he was fascinated with Rabbi Citron and the study program, he still wasn’t firm enough about changing his daily conduct and starting to live a life of Torah and mitzvos. “I didn’t know what chassidus was, or what its place was in the collective idea known as ‘Judaism,’ although I already understood we were talking about something serious.

“From the outset, I decided that I would decide day by day whether I wanted to continue learning in yeshiva or not. Now I realize that I

was living in an absurd situation. On the one hand, I felt myself drawn towards Judaism and its deeper meaning, while on the other hand, I clearly did not want to be religious.”

When Yehoshua was in college, he knew many young men who had become involved in various religious cults, noticing that each one of them upon joining the cult had suffered physical and/or emotional harm. “When we began learning *Tanya*, despite the fact that I didn’t understand anything discussed in the class, I did understand that it

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was something very deep and meaningful, something that would be worth my while to learn and know.”

With the advent of the month of Elul, he noticed the beis midrash emptying day-by-day and the bachurim taking leave of the rosh yeshiva. When he asked what was happening, he was told they were all heading for Crown Heights to spend Tishrei with the Rebbe. He decided that he too wanted to make the trip, and he arrived at 770 between Rosh HaShana and Yom

Kippur. “The first time I saw the Rebbe was at the farbrengen of Vav Tishrei, 5743. Someone gave me a tour of 770 and explained all the customs and regular events that take place there. When I asked him where I would be able to stand during the farbrengen, he replied, ‘Anywhere you can find...’ This was about two hours before the farbrengen was scheduled to begin, and since the place was still relatively empty, I went out the back door to see what was going on in the courtyard. When I came back inside, the place was already filled to the brim. Where did everyone come from so suddenly? I was shocked!”

Yehoshua began looking for a place, and eventually discovered one and made his way for it. It was located right on the farbrengen platform, in the area designated for the elder chassidim. There he casually arranged a place for himself to sit... No one said a word to him, and he sat there until the Rebbe entered. “It was only after a few long minutes, when the Rebbe had already begun to speak and even stopped for a niggun, that I noticed a bachur I knew from Los Angeles looking at me in astonishment. It was only then that I realized that I was sitting in a place reserved for the honored few, and a young American with long hair, hardly religious, didn’t quite fit that description... I asked someone sitting nearby if it was all right that I was there, and he replied that there was no problem. So I remained sitting in my place, mesmerized by the Rebbe’s ability to hold thousands of chassidim spellbound and his radiant appearance, despite the fact that I didn’t understand a single thing he was saying. Ever since that farbrengen, I became stronger in my observance of Torah and mitzvos and my connection to the Rebbe.”

GETTING OFF THE FENCE

Yehoshua returned to California after Simchas Torah deeply moved and excited by the tremendous Jewish experience. The degree of his increasing commitment had already become most impressive. For some time already, he had been traveling to S. Monica every Friday to stay with an observant friend, so that he could keep Shabbos in a befitting manner. He was continuing to put on t'fillin every day and was regularly wearing tzitzis.

One day, he took hold of himself. "I thought to myself: 'Who am I trying to fool? Until when will I hop between two ideas? I believe in G-d, fulfill many mitzvos, and even know the meaning of the prayers. It's already been three years since I returned from Germany, and the time has come for me to choose a clear path in life.'

"I went around with this feeling for quite some time until one day, when I reached the words 'on the good land' in my translation of 'Birkas HaMazon.' I asked myself, 'If I truly believe this, then what am I doing in California? Why don't I go learn in a yeshiva in Eretz Yisroel?'

"I wrote a letter to the Rebbe and asked what I should do. A few days later, I received an answer from the secretariat. The Rebbe wrote that it's difficult for him to give an opinion from far away without all the relevant details, suggesting that I discuss the matter with a close friend, and adding that if I accept upon myself an increase in Torah and mitzva observance, G-d will surely come to my assistance and I will see the bracha."

Yehoshua was excited by the answer he had received from the Rebbe, and immediately decided to begin putting on Rabbeinu Tam

t'fillin and be stringent about drinking only Chalav Yisroel milk. "From the moment that I received the Rebbe's letter, I felt connected to the Rebbe in mind and spirit.

"A week before Pesach, 5744, I boarded a plane for Eretz Yisroel. Less than two weeks later, I arrived at a farbrengen with Rabbi Shneur Zalman Gafni, rosh yeshiva of Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim's baal t'shuva program for English speakers (now known as Ohr T'mimim) in Kfar Chabad. He asked me a few questions about myself, and then told me that he agreed to accept me in the yeshiva. I quickly became enthralled by the yeshiva way of life and Rabbi

He closed the front door, then opened it again and called out with undisguised joy, 'I'm doing shlichus!'

Gafni's special personality, especially his farbrengens and attitude towards davening. I was captivated and I became a full-fledged yeshiva student in every respect."

At this point, his change into the world of Chabad went into high gear. R' Yehoshua recalls those days with nostalgia and delight. The difficulties were behind him, having occurred during the years when he was trying to "find himself" before he arrived at the yeshiva. "I would get up at five in the morning and leave the beis midrash late at night, after everyone else had gone. I loved my studies. I had come with a

positive view and the desire to learn and internalize what I was learning. As a result, everything flowed so much easier.

"I learned in the yeshiva for two and a-half years, until Adar, 5747, when I married, Baruch Hashem. After learning for two years in the Kfar Chabad kollel, we moved to Rechovot, where a vibrant Chabad community was beginning to blossom."

THE TRAGEDY AND THE TRAUMA

After he got married, Rabbi Dashiff found himself working in a variety of jobs, specializing in painting t'fillin boxes and straps. Ten years ago, his search for work led him to the Chabad House in Nes Tziona, where he became a dedicated employee of its director, Rabbi Sagi Har-Shefer, whom he knew during his studies in Kfar Chabad.

"On Rosh Chodesh Menachem Av, 5760, my son Yosef Chaim asked if I would take him with me to the Chabad House. He was quite determined, saying that he also wanted to do 'mivtzaim' and to take part in shlichus. All of my efforts to explain that the Chabad House is not a place for games went for naught, and I eventually let him come with me to work. He made several vague and puzzling statements that morning that I had never heard from him before, such as that he wouldn't see his friends any longer.

"That afternoon, Rabbi Har-Shefer asked him to take some envelopes and a bank deposit to the post office. He ran with childish glee to fulfill the shlichus. He closed the front door, then opened it again and called out (to no one in particular) with undisguised joy, 'I'm doing shlichus!'

A few minutes later, someone came in and told me that my son

‘got hit.’ We went outside to find out what had happened, and discovered that the boy had crossed the street with the light and had been run over by a truck whose driver hadn’t noticed him in the crosswalk. Our son left this world with the envelopes still in his hand, fulfilling his heart’s desire to do shlichus with his last breath, while still in the prime of his young life. Heartbroken, we were beside ourselves in sorrow. It is a wound that hasn’t healed to this very day,” sighed Rabbi Dashiff.

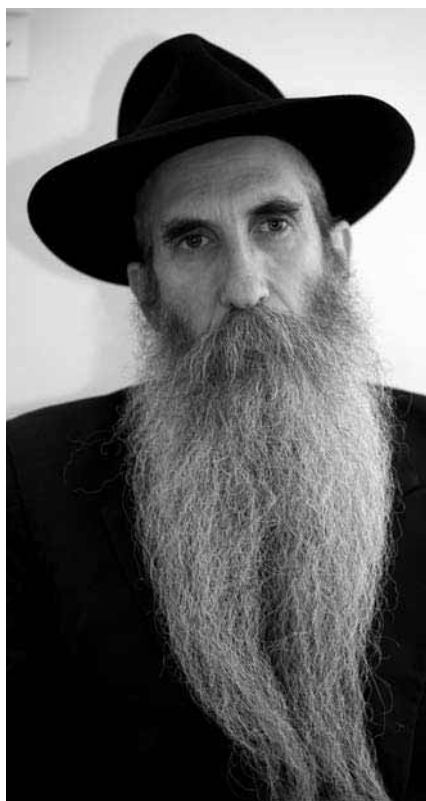
Rabbi Dashiff bore the pain of his beloved son’s passing for what seemed like an eternity. As from the depths of oblivion, he began to envision old pictures from when he was his son’s age, and he too was injured in an automobile accident with several members of his family. His heart was torn open, as he blamed himself for not protecting his son enough by going with him. He was preoccupied with these thoughts for weeks and months. The pain was so great that he couldn’t find the strength to share his inner distress with anyone.

However, as time passed, he went to seek consultation with a professional, and eventually met with a psychologist who treats people according to the Somatic Experiencing approach devised by neurobiologist Dr. Peter Levine. This approach has earned considerable acclaim for its treatment of trauma cases. The approach apparently involves reframing past and present experiences in a positive way, dealing with bottled up reactions to trauma, and setting the stage for growing emotionally from life’s experiences. The treatment is carried out through movement and sometimes physical contact, which is facilitated primarily through developing the person’s sense of self-awareness to his own healing

process,” explains Rabbi Dashiff. “After two years of treatment, I became a new man.”

Having experienced the benefits firsthand, he decided to learn the methodology himself and to thereby be able to help others.

After several years of deep and intensive study coupled with constant training, he began to accept clients. I got the impression that he was overburdened, as several days passed before we found



the time to conduct this interview. “Though the person who developed this treatment approach never learned chassidic teachings, its foundations stem from chassidus. Concepts such as ‘G-d had created one thing opposite the other,’ ‘the advantage of light over darkness,’ and ‘a little light drives away much darkness’ are some of the fundamental principles of this approach,” Rabbi Dashiff explains.

“Hardly a week goes by when I don’t find another aspect of Somatic Experiencing expounded in a maamer, Torah Ohr, etc., with profound complexity.”

Rabbi Dashiff states that this method can be effective even without personally meeting the individual being treated, and that a proper treatment can be offered even through telephone conversations. He speaks with clients from various foreign countries via telephone, and they report good results.

He also connects this approach to the announcement of the Redemption. “Dr. Peter Levine, conceived this approach during the seventies and began to establish it in practical terms at the start of the eighties. However, it was only at the beginning of the nineties when he developed it sufficiently to provide actual treatment with the ability for proven results. As chassidim, we know that it was exactly then that the Rebbe began making a special commotion about the announcement of the Redemption.

“In general, the Rebbe’s emphasis on opening one’s eyes to see Moshiach and Geula are at hand, and to see the goodness within people are mirrored in this therapy. The treatment is designed to call forth one’s own talents and abilities so that the person can develop them with greater resilience, and subsequently they begin to blossom and bear fruit.”

By way of this approach, Rabbi Dashiff helps to solve an assortment of diverse problems, from addiction to trauma to depression. “Before I started dealing with this subject, I learned the *Kuntres Klali HaChinuch V’Hadracha*. I am awed every time I see how the basis for the treatment approach I use is closely coordinated with the concepts brought there. The Somatic Experiencing approach is

not to get involved in what a person is going through as much as illuminating things for him so he can deal with himself and accept himself as he is. This sets the stage for the healing and growth that takes place through the Somatic process. The kuntres explains similarly how every Jew goes through inner development and growth at his own pace, and what he has to do to become aware of it, which in turn enhances and empowers the process."

A HEALED PSYCHE, A BETTER CHASSID

Looking at my watch, I discovered that we had been sitting for nearly five consecutive hours. As we were wrapping up the interview, Rabbi Dashiff asked if he could shed some light on what is, in his opinion, the most important aspect to his treatment approach. "This is not just a means of treatment, rather one that builds the root and fortifies it. It gives the

person the strength to have corrective experiences that enlighten and shake him, and arouse memories. Many relate that after their treatment, they feel much closer to G-d, and they became more chassidic. It's interesting to note for many chassidim, this treatment brings them to recall their experiences with the Rebbe. From my point of view, this proves how the treatment connects the person to the very best places..."





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