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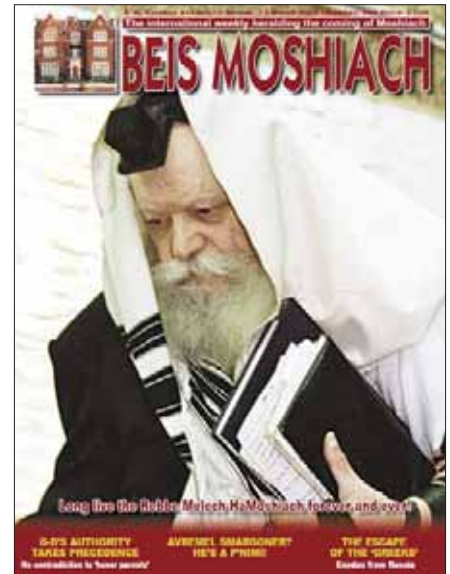
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B"H 16th of Adar, 5769

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 uhj ha 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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WHAT WILL WE SACRIFICE?

Translated and adapted by Dovid Yisroel Ber Kaufmann

There is an essential difference between mitzvos in general and the sacrifices: mitzvos emphasize the person fulfilling G-d's command; sacrifices emphasize the object through which G-d's Will is fulfilled. A mitzva should be performed with hiddur mitzva, in the most beautiful manner possible. Even so, this cannot achieve atonement or a reconciliation after a transgression. Sacrifice and t'shuva, tz'daka and Redemption, go hand-in-hand.

The Book of *Leviticus* begins by defining what types of sacrifices should be brought and how they are to be offered. Since Moshiach will rebuild the Temple and restore the sacrificial service, obviously any discussion about the Temple or sacrifices deepens our understanding of what will be required of us and what life will be like in the era of Redemption. Such a discussion also helps us prepare for the coming of Moshiach. Needless to say, the sacrifices must be seen as having more than just historical or theoretical interest. Rather, the restoration of the Temple service is an imminent reality.

Still, it may be difficult to see the current relevance. Simply understanding the details and technical aspects of the sacrificial service is not sufficient. In order to recognize that, in a spiritual sense, the Temple exists even now, that we can bring actual sacrifices today, we must internalize the meaning, the inner truth of the sacrifices. This inner realization inevitably manifests itself externally: we must first see the Temple and sacrifices as real, albeit

not yet revealed. In this way we work towards the full revelation, the materialization, of the Third *Beis HaMikdash*, the Third Temple.

That said, we can look at the significance of the fundamental difference between sacrifices and mitzvos. True, the various sacrifices are counted among the six hundred thirteen mitzvos. Nevertheless, the essential nature of sacrifice differs from the essential nature of mitzvos.

The difference lies in which each emphasizes. A mitzva emphasizes the action of a person. The **person** fulfills G-d's command. The object with which the mitzva is performed is only a tool, of no inherent interest or value. True, the thing itself may become invested with some holiness, but that is a byproduct. The person has only one intention – do what G-d asks. The “drawback” of a mitzva, if

we can speak this way, is that there is a **someone** who does the mitzva. Although a mitzva is an act of compliance with G-d's Will, there is still an individual, an ego performing the act.

On the other hand, by definition a sacrifice sanctifies the **object**. The sacrifice becomes holy by being offered on the altar. Sacrifices emphasize the status of the object, the material being sacrificed. Whether the sacrifice comes to fulfill a vow or some obligation, it is made holy by being given away, sacrificed to G-d. The human element is only a preparation and precondition. While the person's intention is important, a sacrifice has significance only when it is offered on the altar.

We can look at it this way: every other mitzva, and all the accessories with which it is performed, remain the property of the person performing the mitzva. The only mitzva which involves something being “given away” to G-d is a sacrifice. So, in general *the focus of mitzvos is on the person, while the*

focus of sacrifice is on the thing itself.

This difference in emphasis also explains an important distinction in halacha: Jewish law distinguishes between *hiddur mitzva* and bringing a sacrifice from the best of one's possessions. The concept of *hiddur mitzva* – of beautifying the mitzva, doing it in the most magnificent and impressive manner possible – applies to the person. By making a beautiful sukka, for example, the person adorns himself before G-d. When the Jew presents himself before the Almighty, he appears decorated with a resplendent mitzva. That is the concept of *hiddur mitzva*.

Naturally, this is a way of honoring G-d. Just as one appears before a human dignitary dressed in the finest, most fashionable clothes, so one should appear before G-d dressed in the finest, most dignified mitzvos. After all, mitzvos are called the 'garments of the soul.'

However, a mitzva, even a *hiddur mitzva*, cannot bring about a reconciliation or atonement. After a transgression, a mitzva by itself cannot appease or conciliate. For that we need a sacrifice. The precursor to Redemption is *t'shuva*. And sacrifice is the essence of *t'shuva*.

A sacrifice by definition belongs to G-d. True, the person sanctifies it, but to be a sacrifice, the object must be offered on the altar. A person may declare that such and such will be sacrificed, dedicating it for that purpose. But the object does not become a sacrifice to G-d until actually brought on the altar.

This explains why a sacrifice must be from the best of one's possessions. The most complete and perfect way to give something to G-d is to give the finest of what we own. In simpler terms, the sacrifice must not only be fit for the altar, it must be **worthy** of the altar. It must reflect an ultimate and absolute commitment to G-d, a willingness to devote ourselves – who we are and what we own – first and foremost to G-d.

Similarly, everything that can be compared to the altar must reflect the same resolve and realization. For example, when building a synagogue, it should be nicer than one's own home. The poor should be fed with the sweetest and tastiest food from one's table. The best, the "fattest," should be sanctified and dedicated.

Specifically, matters of *tz'daka*, such as providing food and clothing for the poor, affects atonement. Sacrifice and *t'shuva*, *tz'daka* and Redemption, go hand-in-hand. The proof of our repentance is a willingness, even a desire, to

sacrifice the choicest products of our fields, the first fruits of our labor. We must give ourselves away, our very essence, to G-d.

By subduing our desires, our material appetites, by being generous with what we sacrifice, we make ourselves pleasing and acceptable to G-d.

Indeed, a proper sacrifice, one that reconciles and atones, may be equated with the subjugation of the *yetzer ha'ra* – our evil inclination, our egotism and selfishness.

We derive this principle, that one should sacrifice the best of one's possessions, from the meal offering and which grade of olive oil can be used with it. Olive oil was graded according to which pressing – first, second, third, etc. – it came from. Only certain grades were used in the menorah, but all grades were permitted with the meal-offering. Nevertheless, one who wishes to subdue his *yetzer ha'ra* and act generously will bring from the best of his possessions. One will sacrifice the clearest and purest of his "oil," his essence.

Why the meal offering, the offering of the poor? In describing the meal offering, the Torah says, literally, "when a soul wishes to draw close." That is, when a poor person, who has nothing to give but flour and water and a little oil, when such a person brings an offering, G-d accounts it as if he had offered his very soul. Such a person does not consider himself, but only the offering, the transformation of the physical into the spiritual. The *t'shuva*, the sacrifice, of such a person is of the highest order.

Surely the relationship to our times, to the coming of Moshiach is clear: when the reason for the destruction and exile ends,

automatically and immediately the consequence ceases to exist. Both the destruction of the Temple and the exile are negated, and instantly the Jewish people are redeemed through Moshiach.

We must ask ourselves: are we giving the best of our possessions? Which part of our day, which part of our energy, attention and ambition, are we dedicating to Torah, to preparing the world for Moshiach? What are we sacrificing on the altar – not yet the physical altar in the Temple, but the spiritual altar within us? *Hiddur mitzva* does not suffice. The concern must be giving the best of ourselves to *tz'daka* – to feeding those hungry for Torah, to clothe those naked of mitzvos. In that way, we make ourselves worthy of Redemption.

(Based on Likkutei Sichos 27:8-15)

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G-D'S AUTHORITY TAKES PRECEDENCE

By the Grace of G-d
19th of Tammuz, 5727
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Greeting and Blessing:

In reply to your letter of the 15th of Tammuz, in which you write about the difficulties you are encountering in realizing your desire to advance in Judaism by learning Torah, Toras Chaim, in a Yeshiva.

Inasmuch as to learn the Torah and to live a life of Torah, as is expected of every Jew, is a matter of vital importance, as the term Toras Chaim, mentioned above, implies, since it is indeed "our life and the length of our days," including also our life in this world - it is clear that you ought to do everything possible to order your life accordingly. To accomplish this it is, I am certain, essential to learn in a Yeshiva. In the course of time, I am quite confident, your parents will also be satisfied and happy about this, although for the moment they do not seem to be in favor of it, as you write.

Needless to say, it is a Mitzvo to honor one's father and mother, but it is in no conflict with the above. On the contrary, when your parents will see that you are sincere and meticulous in observing not only the other Mitzvoth, but also the Mitzvo of honoring your parents, they will realize that if at times you are unable to fulfill their wish, it is not because of lack of respect, but because G-d's authority takes precedence. This will eventually also have a good effect on them to encourage them in the same direction.

If you will let me know your full Hebrew name, together with your mother's Hebrew name, as is customary in such a case, I will remember you in prayer for the fulfillment of your heart's desires for good.

With blessing,

By

NISSAN MIRACLES, BIG AND SMALL

C.D. Schwartz

As I write this story I'm experiencing the miracles all over again and am overwhelmed to the point of tears. We have the most incredible, loving and wonderful Father in heaven and please G-d we should appreciate the miracles He really does for us every day just by breathing and being alive, let alone for all the myriad kindnesses and gifts He gives us every day that we can so easily take for granted.

I have a wonderful miracle story that happened to our family in the month of Nissan that has been waiting to be told for too long already. I felt an extra inner push to publicize the story now for Rosh Chodesh Nissan, in honor of the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach's request that we publicize miracles for this helps to hasten the Redemption.

The "4 Miracles in One" as I call it, happened 15 years ago on Rosh Chodesh Nissan, but to appreciate the miracles you'll need some background information...

We made aliyah to Israel back in March of 1991 right after the

Gulf War. My in-laws were very kind and generous people and from the beginning they would lend my husband their old car so he could use it to establish and run his business here. Eventually they gave us their car as a gift, for my mother-in-law felt she was too old to drive safely any more and my husband really needed it for his business. It was great receiving a free car and it certainly helped him a lot, but over time it needed frequent visits to the repair shop.

One day the repairman gave us the sad news – the car had soured into a lemon and wasn't worth repairing any more. This was

difficult for us to hear as his business was not easily run without a car. We unfortunately couldn't afford to buy a used car in its place. Things were tough financially and we were really struggling, but we didn't want to be a burden asking my in-laws for more help than what they had already given. The mechanic suggested we just sell it to a junkyard, but we wouldn't get much from doing that so we held off on deciding what to do.

We spent a couple months fretting over how to overcome this dilemma while the car barely hung in there. We completely ruled out the option of trying to re-sell it as that certainly wouldn't have been honest trying to pass it off as anything worthwhile for someone else to buy. But the junkyard option didn't solve our problem of how to find enough money to buy another used car either. What could we do?

We did what any Jew would probably do – we prayed to Hashem for help! We really didn't see any solution at the time, but of course asking Hashem for help was natural. I even admit that the request came with some doubts as to how we could possibly solve the problem, and I see looking back that I certainly had quite a bit of room to grow in the faith department. Hashem made the entire vast universe and runs it

constantly – how could I possibly doubt His ability to solve such a relatively insignificant problem?

A couple months went by. I happened to be pregnant at the time with our second child and wasn't feeling well, so a good friend came to help me every day to enable my husband to go to work. She brought along her sweet little one and a half year old boy who also was a good playmate for our four year old. One day, on Rosh Chodesh Nissan, my husband was in a lot of pressure to get to work early and since my friend had to take a bus from

another neighborhood she couldn't get to us quickly enough. My husband called her up and offered to drive over and bring her back which was a lot faster, so she agreed and he took our four year old along for the ride.

I stayed home to rest but after they didn't return at the expected time I began to get a little concerned. They showed up about an hour and a half later looking a bit wide eyed and shaken. Then they told me the story...

After my husband had picked them up and started driving back, he noticed a smell of gasoline and

got concerned if the car was okay, so he pulled over and lifted the hood. He didn't see anything wrong at the time, so he got back in and continued driving. Only a couple minutes later while they were driving up a very busy main street in Jerusalem called Bar Ilan, he suddenly saw some smoke coming out of the hood. Realizing the potential danger, he quickly told everyone to get out of the car as fast as possible.

Right after all four of them safely reached the sidewalk, the engine burst into flames and the whole car quickly became one large bonfire! They stood in shock as they watched the large inferno burning in the middle of the busy street!

Someone called the fire department and the fire engines came and finally put out the huge blaze. It was so badly burned it was totally beyond repair. My husband tried rummaging through what was left of the car to see if he could salvage anything, but it was so badly burned the key was melted into the ignition to the point you couldn't even identify what the melted mass even was.

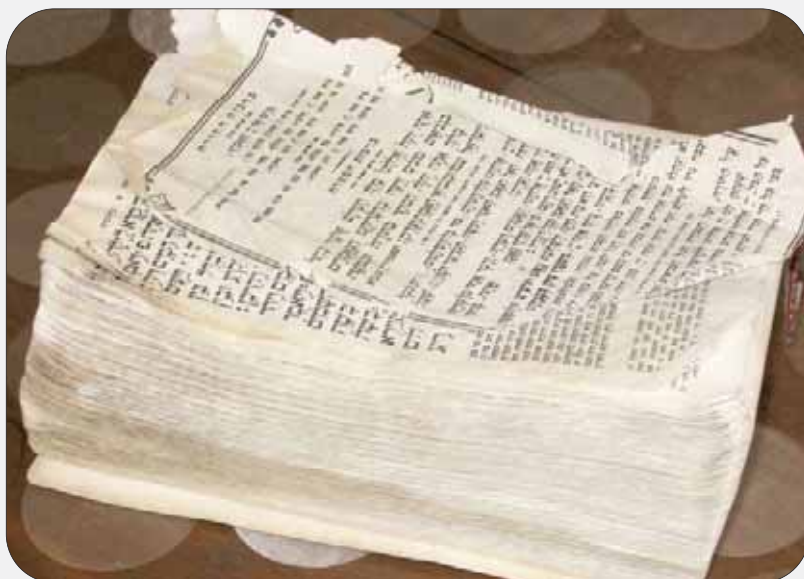
But then something caught his eye – he always kept a Chitas (a book that includes the Chumash, Tehillim and Tanya and is called by the acronym Chitas) on the dashboard right next to the front window. There sat the Chitas, the cover itself which was a very thick cardboard had totally burned, but the book itself whose pages are extremely thin and delicate, had miraculously survived intact! It's completely beyond and above nature that the super thin pages could've survived while the cover itself burned. The edges around the pages were colored dark gray and black from the heat of the blaze, but the holy book itself survived in one piece.

CHITAS WHEREVER YOU GO

Here is a photo of the Chitas that survived the fire. All the pages had been intact, but because we've carried it around with us for so many years to show to other people, some of the introductory pages unfortunately ripped out of the binding.

Note the discoloration around the edges of the pages – that was from the heat of the fire. It had been considerably darker right after the fire, but quite a bit of the discoloration faded over the last 15 years.

We highly recommend following the Rebbe MH"m's directive of keeping a Chitas and tz'daka box in every room of the house, in your car and to carry one with you at all times. The Rebbe MH"m also said every child should have his own Chitas and tz'daka box in his/her room displayed in a prominent place, and we make sure our children carry a Chitas with them wherever they go.



A TEST OF FAITH

Sometimes when we pray to Hashem we don't always get the answer we hoped for. This is when our faith is tested and we need to strengthen ourselves to trust in Hashem that everything is for the good even when we can't see it.

We can cry out "ad masai" for the Geula in our pain if it's a particularly painful test, and perhaps the pain was partially there to bring us to the point of crying out for the Geula, which will also hasten its revelation. As the Rebbe MH"M said, ultimately we will see how everything was for the good in a revealed way when we have the Geula Shleima and we will be in awe.

May we only have everything we need in revealed blessings, and may all our sorrows be transformed into the greatest joy with the full revelation of the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach and the Geula Shleima *miyad mamash*.

The Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach had given a directive to keep a Chitas and charity box not only in every room of the house, but also in cars and any other vehicle one was using, emphasizing that it serves as a form of protection. We had heard of miracle stories of how in the merit of having the Chitas, people had been protected and miraculously saved from things like car accidents. But now it had happened to us!

The first miracle was that Hashem in His infinite kindness and mercy had made sure that all of four of them safely reached the sidewalk before the whole car burst into flames. It gives me chills just thinking about it! We owe a very big public thank you to HaKadosh Baruch Hu for that incredible miracle – it was only by a matter of seconds that their lives were saved and they got out without a scratch.

What we see as the second miracle is that it happened on Rosh Chodesh Nissan, the month of revealed miracles – and this was certainly a revealed miracle that many people witnessed who happened to be there that day on that very busy street! What an awe

inspiring miracle to experience right in the beginning of the month of revealed miracles, just highlighting the miraculous nature of the whole month for many others to witness together.

Miracle number three was finding the Chitas miraculously intact – we have it to this day and can show people the depth of the miracle first hand (look at photo in the box). The thick hard cover burned yet the extremely thin pages remained totally intact!

What was miracle number four? This is really the clincher...

After they arrived at our house, a bit shaken up but Baruch Hashem recovered enough to relate the miracle story they had just lived through, my husband finished telling the story and we all were very thankful yet still in shock that everyone was thank G-d okay. We were still trying to process the whole event together, and it then occurred to my husband and I that it was a pity we wouldn't even be able to get the small fee for the car the junkyard might have given us.

I remember bowing my head in disappointment, not that we weren't overwhelmingly grateful that everyone was safe, but that it

just seemed like another blow to our predicament. Until my friend suddenly jumped up and said with her voice literally shaking in excitement –

"But wait – didn't I remember you told me your in-laws had put full insurance on the car for you? Don't you realize what that means? You'll get full coverage and that will probably be enough money for you to buy another used car!"

When we overcame our initial shock and realized that she was right - there *was* full insurance and we would most likely now be able to get another used car, we all jumped up and started rejoicing like it was Simchas Torah!

We couldn't believe it – Hashem had done so many miracles all in one we were completely overwhelmed with joy, gratitude and such awe at how He orchestrates every event in our lives, and that something that even initially looked like a loss really turned out to be totally revealed good and an amazing blessing many times over!

As I write this story I'm experiencing the miracles all over again and am overwhelmed to the point of tears. We have the most incredible, loving and wonderful Father in heaven and please G-d we should appreciate the miracles He really does for us every day just by breathing and being alive, let alone for all the myriad kindnesses and gifts He gives us every day that we can so easily take for granted.

Yes, we did get full insurance and we were able to buy another used car that served us well for nearly ten years until we decided for various reasons that we didn't want to use a car anymore. What an awe inspiring experience to be able to see Hashem help us in such

a revealed way – we had really been in a corner and saw no way out. We cried to Hashem for help, not even capable of imagining how we could be helped, and Hashem in His infinite kindness and mercy answered our prayers in the month of miracles with a quadruple set of miracles. So we had a problem that we needed another car but couldn't sell the old one to get another one? For Hashem nothing is too big or too small. I felt like He simply "said" –

"Don't worry, I'll just make sure you're all safely out of the car, and then I'll let it go up in flames so you can use the insurance to get another one!"

In the scheme of things nowadays, it might seem a bit trivial to have been so worried about needing a car when we've been facing terror attacks and wars. But it isn't trivial at all to need to keep a roof over our head and feed a family and the car was necessary at the time to help us make a living – we had actually been homeless for three months at one point and had to move eight times in those three months between different friends, and this was right after giving birth to our third child. And it wasn't just that Hashem helped us above nature to acquire another car, he also miraculously saved members of two families from harm in the whole process. May His name be blessed forever and ever. I hope to inspire others to appreciate and have a very deep love and awe for

our "Abba" and how we can rely on Him for everything we need in our lives. We certainly have to couple our faith with our own efforts to find solutions, but when we rely on Him, He can respond even above nature.

Now that we as a people and also specifically in Eretz Yisrael feel surrounded by enemies with no apparent way out, just like we did when we left Egypt and felt trapped by the Egyptians pursuing us on one side, and the Sea of Reeds on the other with no obvious way to escape, let's take it to heart that nothing is too big or too small for our loving and wonderful Father and "kadima" (go forward) as Moshe Rebbeinu told us. The Rebbe MH"M told us we will be redeemed and gave us the work to do, so there's no need to hesitate but to just continue forward following his directives, looking neither to the left nor the right, but straight forward with simple faith and simcha. HaKadosh Baruch Hu redeemed us from Egypt with miracles and He will redeem us from this last exile with miracles too.

The initial drop and feeling of despair that we had lost the last bit of hope to receive even a small amount of compensation for the car may have seemed out of place considering the immeasurable miracle of everyone being safe and sound. But it was only natural considering our very limited perspective of the whole picture at that moment. We need to be

simple and resolute in our faith to stay positive and not let any temporary or apparent steps "backwards" throw us off guard. It could be that dafka those steps that look and feel like we're going in the opposite direction are actually the stepping stones to our Geula and they are not really backwards steps at all.

In spite of our incomparably much greater pain and losses we've suffered recently as a people, we need to take note and hang onto our faith that even when everything looks as if we don't have a way out, Hashem can do anything and He can certainly turn everything around in the wink of an eye.

We have to remind ourselves of all the amazing revealed miracles He has shown us as a nation in our own generation, for example with the Gulf War parts one and two. Before we left Egypt and Moshe Rebbeinu went to Pharaoh to tell him to free us, initially the situation got much worse for us. The Egyptians increased our labor and we suffered even more. But it was only temporary, like the last labor pains before giving birth. We were soon redeemed and we will again soon be redeemed, this time forever with no more exiles, only total redemption, please G-d immediately with the Geula Sheleima mamash!

Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu V'Rebbeinu Melech HaMoshiach L'Olam Va'ed!

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THE ESCAPE OF THE 'GREEKS'

By Rabbi Shneur Zalman Chanin

We continue the saga of the post-War exodus of Chassidim from Russia through Poland and on to freedom. Pretending to be Greeks, they risked their lives daily between ruthless officers, the merciless wilderness, and anti-Semites all around...

In the previous installment we read about groups of thousands of Jews, among them Chabad Chassidim, who fled anti-Semitic Poland after the war as the Poles continued the work of the Nazis, persecuting the Jews who remained in Poland. The Zionist Bricha organization helped the Jews escape this blood-soaked land.

Bricha was mentioned in my father's house with reverence and deep gratitude, but I think that the respect the Chassidim had for the Bricha people was no less than the admiration the Bricha people felt for the Chassidim.

Efraim Dekel, who worked for Bricha and helped Chassidim cross the borders, writes:

"A magnificent chapter in the annals of Bricha will be written thanks to the Lubavitcher Chassidim who left Russia in the first year after the liberation. They

ran an independent, organized and secret smuggling operation.

Despite the severe punishments that would be meted out to them in the event they would be caught trying to cross the Russian border, and despite the tough border crossings, groups of Lubavitcher Chassidim left for the purpose of making aliya or joining their Rebbe in the United States. One cannot help but respect and admire these people, who pulled off the seemingly impossible as they kept in close contact, through mysterious means, with their esteemed Rebbe in America.

"The first and hardest stage in their journey, which entailed escaping Russia, was carried out by organized cells of Chassidim without including outsiders in their daring deed. It was not until they wished to leave Poland for Czechoslovakia on their way to other places that they turned to

Bricha for help. Their flight was a most effectively kept secret, with details known only to a few in Bricha who made their escape possible and whom the Chassidim especially trusted.

"There was a girl was in charge of the Chassidic smuggling operation. She excelled in her daring, courage, and mesirus nefesh. The Russian authorities in Poland, who found out about her work, ordered the Poles to arrest her. Boruch Hashem, the Chassidim were warned in time and with our help, she was able to escape to a European nation and was saved.

"It wasn't easy to remain loyal to Chassidus and to ties with the Rebbe while in Russia, which had been cut off from the rest of the world for thirty years. Nevertheless, secret contact with the Rebbe continued. They related this without a trace of arrogance, as though it was something natural and self-understood. They highly praised Bricha, which helped them in their wanderings in Europe without asking for payment and without asking them to reveal their great secret, – how they got out of Russia.

"Their leader, who is also the son-in-law of the great Rebbe

Right: Talmidim of the yeshiva standing with the Bricha people before leaving for the Polish-Czech border

[referring to Rashag z"l, who visited the Chassidim in Europe after the war], had similar praise for Bricha, which took care of those who had escaped and even financed their flight. Since he had heard from the Chassidim about the aid and the care that members of Bricha had provided them with, he would mention our names with admiration and thanks at every opportunity and even bestowed the Rebbe's blessing upon us.

"These Jews, who are fervent in their faith and attached to the Lubavitcher Rebbe, seem to us like the first trickles of that faithful and fervent Judaism which was cut off from us for decades. Among them were people who had been on *kolkhozes* and factory workers in various Russian cities. We were amazed by the unity amongst them and, above all else, the strong ties amongst them, the spirit of discipline and unshakable partnership in the "unified secret" (which they did not tell even us), and the way they had gotten across the Iron Curtain.

"Their representative, who

contacted us in Poland and then in Prague, in order to obtain passports and visas that we produced or procured, received from us everything he needed. He spoke in a whisper, almost without saying anything. He would enter our office without us realizing he had come and wait there quietly. Only when there was nobody but us in the office did he speak to us and make his petition.

"We would grant his requests to the maximum extent possible and provide him whatever he needed. We treated him with respect, and in friendly jest they would announce his arrival to the one in charge: 'the meshulach is here.' He spoke only to the commander, humbly and quietly, always taking care that nobody should overhear him.

"One time, when we referred him to someone of lower rank, he responded humbly: 'We are members of the underground and our caution is what protected us, with Hashem's help, until now.'

"We understood him and the ways he was accustomed to and



we did not stop him from continuing to act with the same exacting standard of caution and secrecy which were also the basis for our work.

"The fact that they refrained from telling about their escape and how they had achieved it, seemed to us a seal of responsibility which obligated us to treat them with seriousness, and to trust in them and the way they did things.

"Keeping a secret internally among thousands of refugees was



They got to the border and gave their list to the Polish border guard. He had a hard time reading such 'Greek' names as 'B'reishis bara,' 'Mah nishtana,' 'yetzias Mitzrayim.'

incomparably harder than keeping it from the outside, but they were so careful in disguising their identity that their secret was not revealed.”

As for the care taken by the Chabad Chassidim and the quality of their organization, group member and the commander of Bricha in Poland, Tzvi G., relates:

“We knew there was a parallel Bricha to ours and we knew that it was Lubavitch Chassidim who crossed the borders, whose Rebbe permitted them to hasten the *keitz*. We were amazed by their organization and its tactics in getting over the border and, above all else, we were amazed by the extreme secrecy which characterized their smuggling activity.

“We knew details about their work but we spoke to them only when necessary. We indirectly kept tabs on them and when it was necessary we found a way of warning them about danger. We did not imagine that they knew about us and even knew some of

our members. Apparently, *they* had been keeping tabs on *us*.

“Then one time, when I was alone in the room, a man with a handsome beard and peios under his cap said that he knew that I was a shliach from Palestine and the commander of Bricha in this land, and he was therefore asking for a certain number of certificates and arrangements to smuggle his people to Czechoslovakia.

“He said nothing about himself and about their work. He did say though that he fully trusted Bricha and its people, but he still refrained from answering various questions, turning things around so that he was the one asking questions.

“When I pointed out the error of his approach, he said, ‘Only for you, the chief coordinator of Bricha and the shliach from Eretz Yisroel, will I reveal that which I have not revealed to anyone aside from our Chassidim.’ He told me how they had gotten instructions from the Rebbe in America to leave exile, and he added details of

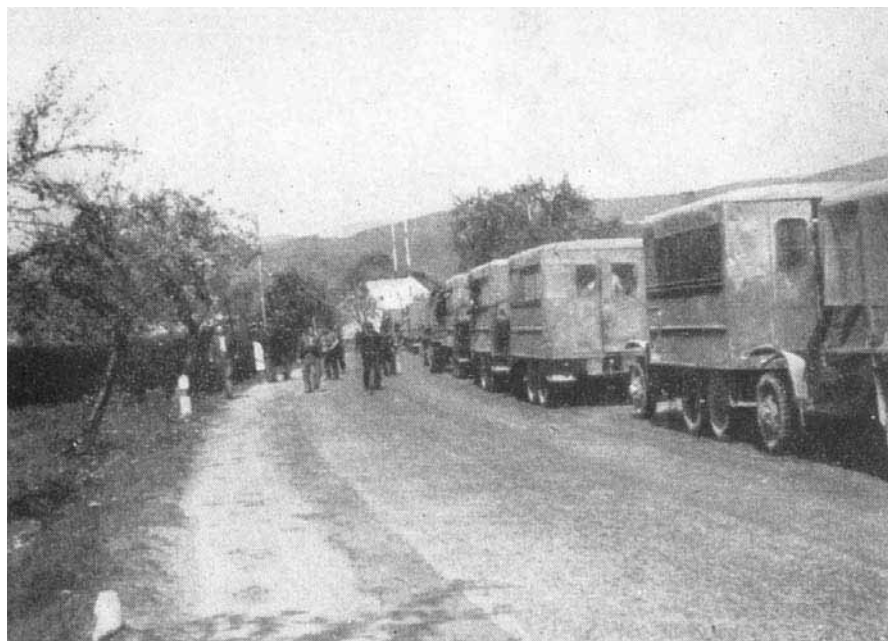
the methods and tactics of this operation and how they had arrived there.

“At the beginning of 1947, we spoke to Aliya Bet and suggested that those Chassidim already concentrated in various camps who wanted to make aliya should sail under cover of secrecy by a ship that would be called *Chabad*. Although the Chassidim agreed to try to sneak into Eretz Yisroel, they did not want to board a ship called Chabad lest it cause hardship to their brethren still in Russia. Therefore, the Chassidim sailed on various ships, not as a group.

“On the ship *Yetziat Europa*, which was at sea for weeks and was returned to Germany, there were a few dozen Lubavitcher families. The passengers endured much hardship, yet through it all, the Lubavitcher Chassidim remained role models for others.

“The Lubavitcher Chassidim were a disciplined group. Working with them was a great pleasure for our people, after their attempts at dealing with other groups who were not as organized and disciplined, and were not permeated with that faith and enthusiasm. They even showed loyalty to the country they had fled; they did not speak disparagingly about it, nor did they reveal any of its secrets.

“When the Rebbe’s son-in-law [Rashag z”l] arrived in the middle of 1947 to visit the Chassidim in the camps in Germany, he traveled to each location in the impressive car of General Clay, Commander of the American Occupation, which was put at his disposal throughout his visit. The Chassidim took pride in this, saying that their Rebbe was great and esteemed not only by his Chassidim but also by high ranking goyim, and even the



A convoy of trucks belonging to Bricha before it left for the Czech border with refugees



A group of refugees crossing the border with Bricha men leading the way

president of the United States was one of his admirers.

“In various ways, mostly with Aliya Bet, the Chassidim and their families and their many children arrived in Eretz Yisroel. Most of them worked at agriculture and integrated into life in the land and in building it up.”

It should be noted that when Dekel refers to the courageous girl who did so much, he must have been referring to Hadassah Perman a”h, daughter of R’ Chaim Meir Garelik, the mother of R’ Moshe Perman, shliach in Venezuela, Rabbi Menashe Perman, shliach in Chile, and R’ Chuna Perman, shliach in Toronto and the sister of R’ Gershon Mendel Garelik, shliach and rav in Milan, Italy.

After she was already in the American zone in Germany, the Chassidim sent her back to Prague to help smuggle Anash who were still in Poland. While engaged in this work, together with Bricha, a Russian spy caught on to her and two other askanim, R’ Leibel Mochkin – who was one of the leaders of the escape of the Chabad Chassidim in Russia and a girl named Svetlana. The Russian police began looking for them.

When the soldier saw that he wasn’t responding, he threatened that he would shoot him because he was a fraud.

That same day, R’ Leibel escaped to Prague. Hadassah was arrested, but with the help of Bricha’s connections she was released and also escaped to Prague, but Svetlana was arrested and shot to death (may Hashem avenge her blood).

THE GREEK JEWS

As related in the previous installment, with the help of Bricha, my parents left Krakow for Czechoslovakia. When the time came, they were told to pack necessities that they could carry. The rest of their belongings, which was the bulk of what they had taken with them from Russia, was to be left in Krakow and shipped

to them later on trucks. Each of them dressed in several layers of clothing, put their bundles over their shoulders and were ready to go.

The Bricha people told them that from that point on, until they were given their next instruction, they were Greek citizens and they should not react in the event that someone spoke to them in Polish or Russian. The Bricha provided them with forged certificates from the Polish Red Cross, with the forged confirmation of the Soviet official in the city, that they were a group of Greek repatriates who wanted to return to their homeland.

Why did Bricha choose to give the refugees Greek identities? This had to do with the fact that Greek was a foreign language, and strange to the Russians as well as to the Poles, Czechs, and Germans. It would be difficult for them to differentiate between Greek and Hebrew, since they knew neither. Bricha also warned them to be quiet and if someone asked them a question, to make believe that they didn’t understand anything.

I heard from Rabbi Zalman Shimon Dworkin, who took this route out of the Soviet Union with a different group, that in 1947, his group passed through the Russian-occupied zone in Austria or Germany. Although there was a treaty between the American government and the Russian government, and military men from both superpowers worked together and helped one another in moving refugees (the Russian soldiers were given cigarettes, sugar, chocolate, and vodka by the American soldiers), the group was at the mercy of some Russian soldiers who were supposed to escort them to the American zone.

The members of the group

***They all held their
breath when, in
the course of their
journey, some men
in uniform entered
the compartment
and shone
flashlights in their
faces.***

were extremely frightened. If the Russian soldiers realized that they were Russians they would immediately send them back to Siberia. It was nearly impossible for an entire group of dozens of men, women, and children not to utter a word. What if one of the children began to cry and spoke to his mother in Russian? Their fear increased when Bricha told them not to speak to their Russian soldier escorts at all.

One of the Russian soldiers apparently suspected that they weren't Greeks and started talking to R' Zalman Shimon in Russian. R' Zalman Shimon made believe he didn't understand. The Russian soldier switched to talking in Polish, then Czech, Hungarian, and finally German, but R' Zalman Shimon made believe he didn't understand a word. When the soldier saw that he wasn't responding, he threatened that he would shoot him because he was a fraud.

R' Zalman Shimon continued to act as though he didn't understand a word until the Russian soldier finally gave up in disgust. He muttered in Russian, "He's not normal."

In relating this story years later, R' Dworkin says that it was

a miracle that he had managed to continue playing the role of a Greek. If he hadn't, he would have given the entire group up to the Russians.

Every so often somewhat humorous incidents took place because they had adopted a Greek identity. It once happened that some genuine Greeks wanted to cross the border but the border guards suspected that they weren't really Greeks since their certificates and their language didn't match the certificates of the "Greeks" who they were used to, or the language (Hebrew) that they had heard the "Greeks" speaking.

PURE 'GREEK' JUSTICE

An excerpt from the book
Bricha:

"In the first group there were few Hebrew speakers, so the Bricha people served as leaders of the groups. They were the only ones who could speak on behalf of the Greek repatriates. The rest of the people were told that in the event that they were spoken to directly, they should answer with verses from Tanach. They also taught them how to say a few Greek phrases like 'good morning,' 'good night' and 'how are you.'

"After two hours of tutorial and preparation, the groups were on their way to the train station of Katowice, dressed in clothing like those of the real Greek repatriates. From there they went to the Czech-Polish border. At the border, they gave their list to the Polish border guard, who had a hard time reading such 'Greek' names as 'B'Reishis bara,' 'mah nishtana,' 'yetzias Mitzrayim,' etc.

"A Russian guard came to help him and when he saw that the certificates were 'signed' by the Soviet commander of the city, he

told the Polish guard not to give them a hard time. It would be better to allow them to pass through immediately, in deference to the Russian officer's signature. And anyway, their faces looked Greek...

"One time, one of the boys from Palestine, who had just returned from bringing over a group of 'Greek' refugees, got off the train and saw a Polish border guard standing on the platform next to a man in civilian clothes. The officer asked the young man to speak with the man in civilian dress to ascertain whether he was really Greek. With no other recourse, the young man greeted him in 'classic Greek,' 'yekum purkan min Shmaya china v'chisda.' Of course, the Greek had no idea what he was saying. When the Polish officer saw that he did not understand 'Greek,' he ordered him to leave on the first train before he arrested him..."

IN A CLOSED, DARK TRAIN

Although Bricha operated with the unofficial permission of the Polish government, their work still had to be done with utmost caution for several reasons. First, the communist influence was spreading quickly through the Red Army, which ruled in Poland, Czechoslovakia and throughout Eastern Europe. The Russian police could easily catch on to their identities and send them back to Russia.

Second, they also needed to be wary of the British, who tried with all their might to stymie any plans of a Jewish organization. The British government continued to exert enormous political pressure against those who helped Jews organize in special camps, so they wouldn't help Jews cross the borders. The British knew that

thousands of Jews wanted to head eastward, to Israel, and it did whatever it could to stop them. No government wanted to enter into conflict with its English ally and so their operation had to be as undercover as possible.

The third and most weighty reason was to protect the survivors from the anti-Semitic Polish rabble who still filled the cities of Poland.

In light of these considerations, my parents and other Chassidim were put into a closed train without windows that used to be a cattle car. They all held their breath when, in the course of their journey, some men in uniform entered the compartment and shone flashlights in their faces. To everyone's relief, they left without asking any questions.

After hours of travel in which the train covered more than 300 kilometers, they arrived close to the Polish-Czech border. There they were put into barracks to rest a bit, eat, and get ready for the nighttime crossing of the border.

Belongings in hand, they crossed the Polish-Czech border on foot along an obstacle-filled road of many kilometers. The Bricha contact went in front of

them, though not before his buddies had paved the way with bribes and forged documents, signed and sealed.

They walked through fields and forests, mountains and valleys. Their T'fillas HaDerech took on added significance. Every word was said with the utmost concentration and feeling, "*Lead us in peace, and direct our steps in peace, support us in peace ... and deliver us from the hands of every enemy and lurking foe, from robbers and wild beasts on the journey and from all kinds of calamities that may come to and afflict the world.*" When morning dawned, they were in Czechoslovakia.

I don't know which forests and borders they traversed, since they stole across several borders while walking, but I once heard my mother talking to Mrs. Ettya Gurary, sister of R' Zalman Bronstein and the mother of R' Mordechai Gurary. My mother spoke about the treacherous mud, the darkness of the forest, and their fear as they walked for hours in the vast wilderness.

What Mrs. Ettya remembered was the freezing cold. She

described how she carried her son for hours through the thick forest. There was a terrifying stillness and only the wind whistled among the trees and covered the sound of their footsteps. Mrs. Ettya was a widow. She had given birth to her son after her husband had already died and had named him for his father. She wrapped the baby in a blanket and held him close. Every so often she rubbed his feet and breathed her warm breath on them, occasionally even warming them in her mouth so they wouldn't freeze.

The two women recalled their weakness and exhaustion and how their paltry bundles weighed on them to the point that they left some of their belongings on the road. They didn't want to lag behind the group.

My mother told of the temporary anguish when my sister's shoe was lost on the way. My father knew he wouldn't be able to take cash out of Russia and so before he left, he exchanged his money for a gemstone and hid it in her shoe, sewing it into the sole between layers of leather. He hoped to sell it when they settled in a free country so they would not arrive as paupers. But as they waded through the mud in the forest, the shoe was lost in the darkness. Till this day, they don't understand how they managed to find that shoe in the dark forest.

They arrived safely on the Czech side of the border and boarded another train – this one an ordinary passenger train, which brought them to the Achad refugee camp. This was intended as a way station where they would spend a few days to muster their strength. They were housed in barracks and given minimal rations as they waited for the signal to continue their journey.



The barracks that the refugees stayed in after they crossed the Polish-Czech border

THE REBBE GOT THERE FIRST

By Nosson Avrohom

“I didn’t know whether to laugh or to cry. How could the Lubavitcher Rebbe be so sure? The doctors had despaired of my condition, yet the Rebbe, unimpressed by their diagnosis, was assuring me that all would be fine.”

One evening, I accompanied R’ Ido Rahav, the Chabad shliach in the exclusive Ne’ot Afka neighborhood in northern Tel Aviv, to a Chanukas HaBayis. A few dozen family members, friends and neighbors had gathered to celebrate the occasion.

One of the first things the family had done when they moved was to look for a Chabad rabbi or shliach in the area, and they had heard excellent reports about R’ Rahav and his active Chabad house.

A mezuzah was put up, as is customary, and then R’ Rahav addressed the assembled guests. He spoke about the concept of a Jewish home and the importance of having a mezuzah on every doorpost and concluded by explaining the Rebbe’s prophecy about the imminent Geula. Then everybody sat down to a Seudas mitzva.

One of the guests, Tamar Mordowitz, took the floor. She said:

“You spoke about the Lubavitcher Rebbe, whose Chassid you are. In my family, we greatly esteem the Rebbe.”

She proceeded to tell a miracle story that she herself had experienced thanks to the Rebbe’s bracha in 5741(1981).

“Though my relatives who are here already know this story, I would like to share it with you and the friends and neighbors who are gathered here tonight. A few months after my husband and I were married, we joyously announced that we were expecting a baby. Then problems set in, taking a toll on my physical and emotional health.

“The doctors prescribed complete bed rest. Nowadays women in that condition are enabled to return home, but back then I had to stay in Tel HaShomer hospital for two months.

“I wasn’t allowed to move, certainly not to exert myself. The doctors repeatedly warned me that

in my condition, any physical exertion could mean a tragedy for me and the baby. I lay there unable to do anything but think, and my thoughts just made my mood worse. Every day was harder than the day before. It was a very delicate situation and I don’t know where I got the strength to reject all attempts at convincing me to terminate the pregnancy. Every day that passed without incident, I thanked G-d.

“After two months of lying in the hospital, my body started rejecting all the medications I was given. The doctors were at a loss, and explained my situation to my husband and relatives. I began feeling labor pains very early, before the 30th week. The doctors warned that since the baby’s lungs were still undeveloped, if I gave birth at that point the baby would not survive.

“I’ll never forget that terrible night. I felt simply awful. It was pouring outside and I lay in bed crying uncontrollably. Nobody could calm me down. I cried for hours.

“Late at night a religious-looking woman came in. Sizing up the situation, she asked empathetically, ‘What happened? Perhaps I can help?’

“Her soothing voice calmed me immediately, accomplishing in a moment what my family and the medical staff had been unable to.

She sat down next to me and I told her what had been happening the previous months. As I recounted the doctors' pessimistic pronouncements that I ought to abort because according to their medical knowledge I would not give birth to a healthy child in my condition, I began to cry again.

"I kept telling that religious woman, whom I later learned was a Lubavitcher, how I did not want to lose the baby. I had managed to hang in there all this time, but now I was out of strength. She listened closely – she had a wonderful ability to listen. She looked at me tenderly and said, 'Don't cry, we will contact the Lubavitcher Rebbe and what he says, will happen.'

"The assurance with which she said this astonished me, and my hope was renewed. Though I had been raised in a home with emuna and tradition, I was amazed by the strength of her faith.

"She asked me for my full name and my mother's name and went on her way. The next evening she came into my room with a smile from ear to ear. 'The baby will be fine and you'll complete the pregnancy in a good and successful time,' she said confidently. 'The Rebbe even said he would mention you for a blessing at the gravesite of his father-in-law.'

"I didn't know whether to laugh or to cry. How could the

Lubavitcher Rebbe be so sure? The doctors had despaired of my condition, yet the Rebbe, unimpressed by their diagnosis, was assuring me that all would be fine.

"I'm sure you can guess who was right. It was the Rebbe – without him seeing me, without seeing the doctors' medical opinions. From the moment I received his bracha, my condition drastically improved. The doctors continued to issue their dire warnings and predictions, but I felt my strength beginning to return.

"Amit was born in the ninth month in an easy birth, without any complications. He is sitting right here."

Amit got up and introduced himself.

"Amit is a successful medical student at the Technion in Chaifa, after receiving two degrees in biology from Bar Ilan University and Hebrew University in Yerushalayim," Tamar concluded proudly.

When R' Ido Rahav and I left the house, we spoke

"I wasn't allowed to move, certainly not to exert myself. The doctors repeatedly warned me that in my condition, any physical exertion could mean a tragedy for me and the baby."

about how a shliach often thinks he is going to connect a family to the Rebbe only to discover that the Rebbe himself has beat him to it.

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NEVER ALONE

By Rabbi Yaakov Shmuelewitz

Once again, I felt that in the merit of shlichus, Hashem had made sure that I wouldn't be alone.

The very concept of isolation or loneliness is foreign to a shliach. At the Kinus HaShluchim, the shliach of the Rebbe to Alaska, Rabbi Greenberg, apologized that he could say nothing on the topic of loneliness because he never feels alone. He has twenty Jews in his immediate k'hilla, several hundred throughout the city, friends and acquaintances worldwide and besides, the Rebbe is always with him.

Apparently, numerous other shluchim feel the same way. The following stories illustrate how a shliach of the Rebbe is never alone.

THE REWARDS OF SHLICHUS

An amazing story in the news last summer displayed Yad L'Achim's heroic extrication of a Jewish woman and her seven children from a house in the Arab quarter of the Old City in Yerushalayim. Watching the videotaped rescue, people were awed by the daring and resourcefulness of the Yad L'Achim workers, some of whom took off their yarmulkes so as to look like Arabs in order to save this Jewish family.

The second part of the story wasn't publicized in the media,

but it was no less amazing. The family was taken to a city far from the center of the country where, away from the spotlight, the local shliach committed to helping them from A to Z. Of course, the name of the city and shliach cannot be publicized. The Arab husband will soon be released from jail so the whereabouts of the family must remain unknown.

The shliach excitedly confided that he, and all who extended aid to this family, saw incredible yeshuos. Helping them is no easy task. As a result of the hostile, primitive Arab environment in which the children grew up, they unfortunately lack manners. Merely accustoming them to sit at a table was a monumental task, let alone a Shabbos meal that goes on for an hour and a half.

Members of the community volunteered to take the children on outings, while the shliach undertook to bring the family food every day or two.

One of the friends of the Chabad house in the city, a waiter by profession, was passing by just as the shliach stopped his car near the family's house and saw him getting out with the boxes of food. When he saw him doing the same thing again two days later, he approached him and said that he sees he's bringing food to this

family and wants to increase his weekly donation by several hundred shekels.

"The waiter wasn't exactly losing out from the deal," related the shliach. "I first met him two months earlier, in a store that sells building supplies. I put on t'fillin with him, and then he made a contribution to the Chabad house. Five minutes later, his cell phone rang. It was a tour guide asking to visit his restaurant with a group of tourists. The waiter was certain that this influx of parnasa was in the merit of the donation he had made to the Chabad house.

"A week later, I met the waiter again. He put on t'fillin and again gave a nice donation, enthusiastically relating the results of the previous week's donation. Believe it or not, five minutes later his phone rang and it was the tour director, this time with two groups of tourists who were going to his restaurant! Recognizing what had brought him the bracha, when we next met he pledged to make a generous weekly donation."

Now, seeing where such contributions go, he upped his donation. When a shliach gets involved in a special project, Hashem will swiftly send him unexpected assistance. And the one who assists him doesn't lose out, either.

IN FARAWAY PLACES

R' Sagi Har Shefer, shliach in Nes Tziyona, relates:

Some of my shlichus involves

traveling around the world in order to enable people to take part in the Rebbe's shlichus work (a.k.a. fundraising). When my itinerary on one such trip included a flight between two states in the United States, states with hardly any Jewish communities, much less a Chassidic one, I resigned myself to being a bit lonely on this flight.

I boarded and took my seat, looking around me as more people boarded the plane and found their places. The plane was almost full when, to my astonishment, a Lubavitcher got on and took the seat next to

mine! I felt that Hashem had made sure that I wouldn't be alone.

On another trip, I was traveling in the United States by car. I was wiped out by the work of the previous days and unenthusiastic about the long, lonely trip ahead of me. As I walked out of my lodgings, I saw a Polisher Chassid standing at a nearby gas station. He was heading in the same direction as I was, and ended up traveling with me in my car. Once again, I felt that in the merit of shlichus, I was not alone.

When a shliach gets involved in a special project, Hashem will swiftly send him unexpected assistance. And the one who assists him doesn't lose out, either.

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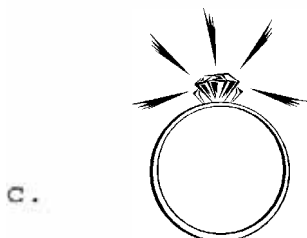
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WOMAN OF VALOR

*Brief notes on the life of a Chassidic wife, mother and grandmother, a tower of strength to her family and countless others. * Mrs. Basha (Batya) Reinitz a"h.*

EARLY DAYS

Basha (Batya) Reinitz a"h was born on 9 Elul, 1939, in Yerushalayim. Her parents were Reb Shmuel Chaim and Yocheved Pesel Kubalkin. She grew up in Battei Machseh in the Old City.

Her father was a Chassid of the Rebbe Rashab and later, of the Rebbe Rayatz. He taught Tanya in various shuls in Yerushalayim and was greatly encouraged to do so by the Rebbe.

They lived near the Kosel and every Shabbos during the winter, her father would give hot tea to people who came to daven. In the summer he offered cold water.

Batya always said that although they had almost nothing to eat, every Motzaei Shabbos her father would take some herring and a piece of bread for Melaveh Malka.

Her father passed away when she was six, and her mother put the children into a frum orphanage since she was unable to raise them herself.

At the age of seventeen she married R' Yosef Zev Reinitz and they settled in Beit Ungarin in Yerushalayim.

CONSTANT JOY

She was always happy and she

influenced others to be happy too. During the Shiva, one of her good friends sighed, "What's going to be? Who will cheer me up now?"

She saw the good in every little thing. She would say, "I don't need expensive jewelry in order to be happy; even a little decoration for the house makes me happy."

In her later years she lived in Crown Heights. A childhood friend in Yerushalayim said that Batya would call her frequently, despite the distance, in order to bring her joy after she was widowed, something that even her friend in the next building didn't bother to do.

WISELY RUNNING HER HOME

She had a good friend who grew up with her in the orphanage. After her marriage, she fell into a depression. Her husband wanted a divorce. He put her in a mental asylum and told the doctors that she wanted to commit suicide. She was put into a room in isolation.

Batya tried to visit her at home a few times but she wasn't there, of course. The husband initially tried to evade her questions as to where his wife was, but eventually he submitted to Batya's pressure and

told her. She went to visit her at the asylum and encouraged her, "Do you want to get out of here? Put on some make-up and brush your sheitel."

The attention to her appearance showed the doctors that she wanted to live and they moved her to a regular room. A few days later they sent her home, but her husband didn't want her. Batya convinced him not to divorce her, until he finally agreed to take her back. She then came to her friend's home and helped her clean, cook and get into a normal routine.

When the daughters of this woman went to be menachem avel, they said that they would never forget what Batya did for them when they were little. She was there for them through the difficult times when their mother was sick.

PREVENTING AN AUTOPSY

On Shushan Purim, 1971, Batya's mother passed away in Hadassah hospital in Yerushalayim. Batya was with her in her final moments. When she died, the doctors asked her to leave the room since they wanted to transfer her body to the morgue.

In those days, autopsies were often done without the family's permission. Unwilling to allow anyone to violate her mother's body, she refused to leave the room. She grabbed hold of the bed. The security guard was summoned and he demanded that she leave the room. She yelled back, "You won't move me from my mother! Don't touch her! You won't get even the

retina from her eye!”

When they saw that she was adamant, they tried to trick her into leaving the room, saying that her husband was waiting for her outside and wanted to talk to her. She insisted, “I am not budging from here; if he wants to talk to me, he can come here.”

She faithfully guarded the body of her mother all night, until her family and the Chevra Kadisha came in the morning and made the arrangements for the funeral.

CONCERN FOR OTHERS

She always loved to help the unfortunate and the needy. She listened to them without appearing condescending. Batya was a regular participant at shiurim in 770. Once,

noticing one of the participants watching as another woman drank her coffee and had a bite to eat, she went to Kingston and bought her a coffee and a sandwich. The woman thanked her gratefully and said Batya had revived her. She continued to buy her a coffee and sandwich nearly every day.

Batya was sensitive to others’ needs. She was bothered that at every farbrengen in 770 there was food for the men and nothing for the women. She asked her husband to bring up some food or to arrange that refreshments be brought up to the Ezras Nashim too.

During the Shiva, a woman told Batya’s son that twenty years ago, she had gone to the Rebbe for a bracha for children. All her pregnancies had ended in miscarriages. After she passed by the Rebbe for “dollars” and received his bracha, she still wasn’t relaxed. She sat in 770, crying copiously as she recited T’hillim.

With genuine concern, Batya approached her and asked how she could be of help.. After hearing the woman’s story, she encouraged her to be confident with the Rebbe’s

bracha.

“Thanks to your mother, I went home in a calm frame of mind, certain that the Rebbe’s bracha would be fulfilled,” said the woman, who is now raising several children.

Batya always invited guests for Shabbos and Yom Tov, especially young people who were first learning about Judaism.

Every Motzaei Shabbos, she would ask her husband to collect some copies of *Yechi HaMelech* and put them in the Ezras Nashim so the women could enjoy them too.

SERVING THE KING

She was greatly mekushar to the Rebbe M”HM and his mitvzaim. She and another woman once went

*Every morning,
when her husband
went to daven, she
would say to him,
“Bring
Moshiach!”*

on mitvzaim in Kiryat Yovel in Yerushalayim. At one home, the husband emerged with a stick, screaming and threatening to strike them. Batya grabbed hold of the stick and told the other woman to leave, and then quickly followed suit. Her friend, pale and shaken, wanted to go home but Batya said, “No! We have to continue with mitvzaim.”

On a visit to Eretz Yisroel in 5749, when the Rebbe told people to vote “Gimmel” in the elections, she saw some T’mimim in B’nei Brak manning a “Gimmel” booth. A group of hoodlums wanted to overturn their table, but Batya screamed at them, “Watch out! You are starting up with the Lubavitcher

Rebbe!” Her words had the desired effect and the hoodlums left. The next time she went by the Rebbe for “dollars,” the Rebbe gave her a big smile.

Mivtza Moshiach was especially dear to her. She once met a childhood teacher of hers at the Kosel and told her that she remembered her telling the class that Moshiach can’t come on Shabbos. Batya had explained that Moshiach can, indeed, come on Shabbos!

She tried going on mitvzaim every Sunday to Brighton Beach.

Every morning, when her husband went to daven, she would say to him, “Bring Moshiach!”

Every Motzaei Shabbos, like her father, she would have Melaveh Malka with her grandchildren. They would say the Twelve P’sukim and Yechi, give tz’daka and tell a story about the Baal Shem Tov.

Even during her illness in her later years, she was still b’simcha and waited for the hisgalus of the Rebbe. Every day she would daven, learn the daily Chitas and Rambam, and then use every free moment to say T’hillim, the importance of which she constantly stressed. When her pain would keep her up at night, she would take some medication and then sit and say T’hillim. Sometimes she would finish all of T’hillim twice in one day.

She passed away this year, on 12 Kislev, and is survived by her husband, children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, Chassidim and mekusharim to the Rebbe.

May she be a *melitzas yosher* for us all. Just as she made a *shturem* throughout her life with all the Rebbe’s mitvzaim, especially in bringing about Yemos HaMoshiach, may she make a big *shturem* up Above and not rest until the Rebbe comes. “Arise and sing those who dwell in the dust,” and she among them.

WHO WOULD HAVE DREAMED?

By Nosson Avrohom

By the time he came back the chuppa had already taken place. The rabbi rewrote the k'suba at that point but to our dismay, we discovered another problem. This new k'suba had the kalla's status as "single" rather than "divorced," so we sent the fellow out again to bring yet another k'suba. I was preoccupied with this the entire time, but in the meantime, the music began and people started dancing.

Rabbi Kasriel Kastel is a pillar of the Lubavitch Youth Organization in Crown Heights. His work is done without fanfare, for he prefers to stay out of the spotlight.

When I met with him in his office in the Levi Yitzchok Library, he told me an amazing story which took place last summer.

"After this happened," said R' Kastel, "we could see how even now, when we don't see the Rebbe, we have a Rebbe!"

I have a good friend who lived,

up until recently, on the Lower



Rabbi Kasriel Kastel

East Side. He is a middle-aged, modern Orthodox man, and I've been friendly with him for years. Sadly, he first got engaged when he was over fifty. The woman was a divorcee who lived in Flatbush. She had raised and married off her children, and already had grandchildren.

Their wedding took place in the living room of someone's home in Flatbush, but was a joyous affair nonetheless. After so many years of bachelorhood, there was great reason to rejoice. I was invited to take part in the simcha, and arrived early, even before the rabbi who was going to be the mesader kiddushin.

One of the chassan's closest friends asked to talk to me. He was dressed in Chassidic garb but was not affiliated with any particular Chassidus. He told me that he had learned in a Chabad school as a child for a year or two, but hadn't had any connection to the Rebbe or Chabad since. He said he had to tell me about a dream he had had the night before.

The Rebbe appeared to him in his dream and told him two things: 1) that he shouldn't worry about the chassan marrying this woman (apparently, he had reservations about the shidduch) and 2) despite his being a good friend of the chassan, he shouldn't sign the



The Rebbe at a wedding as the k'suba is being read

k'suba but should have someone else do so.

I told him that the first thing the Rebbe told him was readily understandable. The Rebbe saw that he was anxious for his friend and so he reassured him. I personally thought that his dream merely reflected what was on his mind, and that he was nervous about signing the k'suba because of the circumstances and his worries that they were not suited to one another.

When the rabbi, a local rabbi from Flatbush, showed up, he asked me to volunteer to be the second witness to sign on the k'suba instead of the friend who had bowed out. I had no problem agreeing. The rabbi wrote the name of the chassan and his father, the name of the kalla and her father, and asked me to sign. As I always do, I asked to read the k'suba in order to see what I was signing.

While reading it, I was astonished to find a mistake. I

couldn't get over it! On the line where the rabbi was supposed to write the name of the chassan, he had written the name of the kalla's father! I quickly pointed this out to him and he conceded that it was a big mistake. He thanked me for asking to read the k'suba first, rather than just signing automatically. Then he said that since he did not have another k'suba form with him, he would cross out the error and write the proper name, and we would sign

our initials next to it like you do on a check.

Even *b'diaved* there is a problem with making this kind of correction, and it was fairly easy to go and buy another k'suba. Nevertheless, the rabbi didn't want to wait, and elected to use that k'suba for the chuppa. I, however, was uncomfortable about it.

At a certain point, an Admur who lives in the chassan's neighborhood walked in, having also come to participate in the simcha. I told him what had happened and he, too, was not satisfied with the correction that the rabbi had made. He sent one of his assistants to Boro Park to buy a new k'suba.

By the time he came back the chuppa had already taken place. The rabbi rewrote the k'suba at

that point but to our dismay, we discovered another problem. This new k'suba had the kalla's status as "single" rather than "divorced," so we sent the fellow out again to bring yet another k'suba. I was preoccupied with this the entire time, but in the meantime, the music began and people started dancing.

We had told the chassan, who had been informed about the problem from the beginning, to relax and we would take care of the k'suba. The man finally returned with another k'suba before the bentching. The rabbi had already left, but we took care of the new k'suba ourselves. We bentched after the k'suba was properly written and signed.

It was only afterwards that it hit me. When we finished bentching,

the friend of the chassan came over to me and said, "Now you understand the Rebbe's second instruction. If I had signed the k'suba, I wouldn't have asked to read it. I would have relied on the mesader kiddushin and the couple would have had a problematic k'suba. The Rebbe, who knew you were coming to this wedding, asked me not to sign so that I would tell you the dream and you would replace me and find the mistake."

Once it registered, I just couldn't get over it. I had been the Rebbe's shliach to ensure that this couple had a halachically correct k'suba. Even nowadays, we see how the Rebbe takes care of us.

I recently met the chassan and he thanked me warmly for being the Rebbe's shliach.

"THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY WILL REST UPON THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL"



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AVREMEL SMARGONER? HE'S A P'NIMI!

Prepared for publication by Avrohom Reinitz

*The first of two fascinating chapters written by R' Hillel Zaltzman about his father, R' Avrohom, a"h. * Here he describes his father's years in yeshiva until his marriage and the miraculous birth of his first child.*

My father, R' Avrohom Zaltzman a"h, was born on Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan, 5660 (1899), in Smargon. His parents were Dovber and Shaina Zaltzman, and he had ten siblings.

A *shadar* (fundraising emissary), R' Tuvia Skolnik, came to town and convinced my grandfather, R' Dovber, to send his 11 and a half year old son, my father, to yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim in Lubavitch. The yeshiva had a good reputation as a place of Torah and yiras Shamayim, and my grandparents, despite their apprehension about sending a young boy away from home, gladly took advantage of this opportunity.

My father joined the shadar and they eventually reached Lubavitch a week before Rosh HaShana, 5761 (1910). He was tested in

Gemara *Eilu Metzios* and was then called in for a talk with the menahel, the future Rebbe Rayatz. The Rebbe asked him why he had come to Lubavitch and why he preferred this yeshiva to other yeshivos in Lithuania. The Rebbe also asked detailed questions about the material and spiritual circumstances in his home.

The Rebbe dismissed him without indicating whether he had been accepted into the yeshiva. My father was very nervous about this. That year, the Yomim Noraim were the Days of Judgment in the full sense of the phrase. On Rosh HaShana he cried throughout the t'fillos and beseeched Hashem that he be accepted into the yeshiva.

He was thrilled when, after Yom Tov, he was told he was accepted.

IN THE HOME OF THE REBBE MAHARASH

At a certain point, my father slept in the home of the Rebbe Maharash. This enabled him to see the Rebbe Maharash's bedroom, dining room, yechidus room, etc. His room in the Rebbe's house was next to the beis midrash and every Thursday night he was able to hear the bachurim in the big zal who sat and learned Nigleh and Chassidus through the night, interspersed with niggunim and farbrenging.

Before his bar mitzva, my father ate on Shabbos with R' Hirsch, the butcher of Lubavitch. One Cheshvan night, he was late. By the time he arrived at the butcher's house, the door was closed and the family was sleeping. Brokenhearted and very hungry, he went back to the zal. On the way, he heard the strong voice of the Rebbe Rashab as he said a maamer in the zal for the older talmidim.

When he arrived at the yeshiva, his friends advised him to go to R' Michoel der Alter, who was known as a Chassid with a heart of gold. My father heeded their advice and hurried to R' Michoel's house. He knocked lightly at the door and was quickly admitted. It was obvious that R' Michoel had already gone to sleep and had gotten up especially for the young boy. He went to the kitchen and served my father some lokshen.

My father recalled that the previous month, on Yom Kippur night, R' Michoel had been too ill to daven in yeshiva. Eventually, a bed was brought for him and he davened lying down. My father felt uncomfortable for bothering this old Chassid.

Less than 24 hours later, on Motzaei Shabbos, R' Michoel passed away. My father felt obligated to join one of the watches that sat in his house before the funeral and said T'hilim near his bed. The Rebbe Rashab and his son, the Rebbe Rayatz, attended his funeral, which

took place Sunday night.

[In *Beis Moshiach* Issue #664 there is a letter that my father wrote to his grandson, R' Yosef Yitzchok Zaltzman, shliach in Toronto, about how he came to be expelled by the mashgiach for some mischief and was re-instated in the yeshiva after he pleaded with the Rebbe Rashab.]

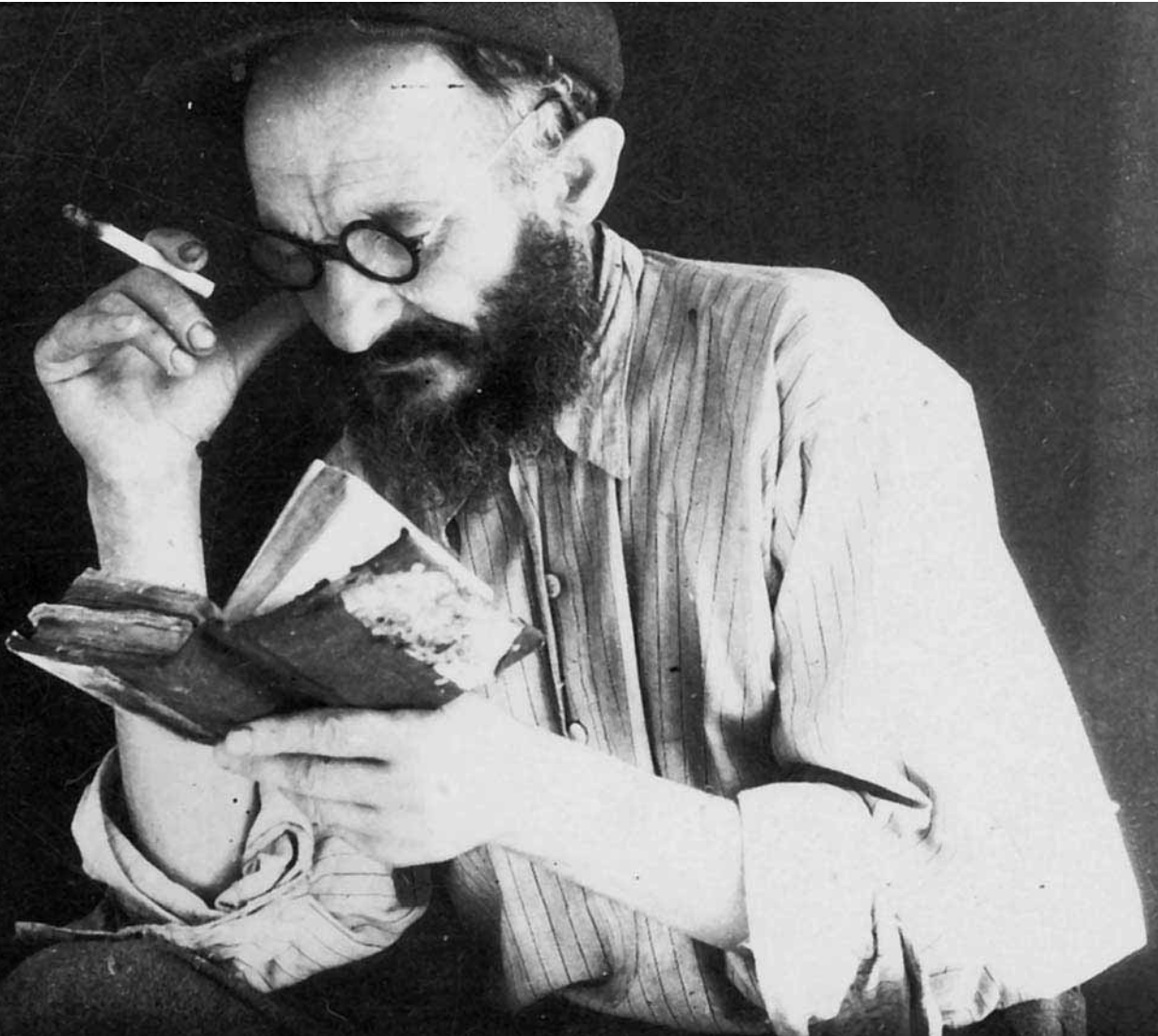
YOMIM NORAIM AND PESACH NIGHT IN LUBAVITCH

My grandfather reminisced in a letter to his grandson how on Erev Rosh HaShana, before Mincha, all the T'mimim, young and old, came

to say T'hillim with the Rebbe Rashab. The Rebbe would recite it out loud and with a special chayus. He also remembered how on Erev Yom Kippur, as soon as dawn broke, the Rebbe Rashab would give the chicken he used for Kaparos to the shochet.

On Rosh HaShana night, the Rebbe Rashab spent about two hours on the Shmoneh Esrei, humming to himself the words of the t'filla. My father would nostalgically recount how he would stand together with the other T'mimim saying T'hillim quietly, and from time to time would hear the Rebbe's sweet voice in prayer. My father also

The talmidim would recite Kiddush together, and when they drank in a reclining position they each leaned on the person next to them. It looked like dominoes, with each falling to his left.



related that one Shabbos, at seven in the morning, he observed the Rebbe Rashab returning home from the mikva.

One year, before his bar mitzva, my father participated in all the t'fillos of Yom Kippur in the shul next to the Ohel in Lubavitch. The chazan, an old Chassid of the Rebbe Maharash, reported that the Rebbe Maharash came to him in a dream and asked him to daven in the shul next to the Ohel. That Yom Kippur, my father slept on the floor in a corner of the shul, covered with some straw. It was a Yom Kippur that was engraved deep in his soul and every Yom Kippur he would picture himself standing and

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Hashem.***

PLEASE GIVE ME A JEWISH BURIAL

I heard the following story from my father, who said it made a deep impression on him.

A person came to Lubavitch and davened Mincha with great concentration and tears. In those days, this was a typical sight when new people came to Lubavitch so this did not attract much attention. Some time later, my father went out to the yard and he suddenly heard the sound of someone choking in the outhouse. He rushed over and found the man lying on the ground with his eyes closed, unconscious, with a smell of poison coming from his mouth. On his chest was a note which read: No one is implicated in my death; please give me a Jewish burial.

My father ran to his friends and they carried the body to the yard and tried to resuscitate him. They forced him to vomit until he threw up all the poison he had swallowed.

When he recovered, he told my father his story. He came from a wealthy family and was on his way from Austria to Eretz Yisroel, where his family lived. On the way, he had been robbed of all his money and was left penniless. For a few days he had had nothing to eat and he simply could not bring himself to ask for a hand-out. That day, he couldn't take it anymore and after davening that heartfelt Mincha he tried to commit suicide.

My father raised money for the man's trip, prepared a bag full of food and sent him on his way. Before he left, the man said that his last name was a composite of an Austrian and a Hebrew name. He begged my father to look up his family if he ever went to Eretz Yisroel, and they would pay him for his efforts.

Over fifty years later, when we arrived in Eretz Yisroel, we asked my father whether he had found the man's family. He said that he had heard about a family by this name that lived in the Gadera area but he did not locate them.

davening in the shul near the Ohel.

In general, the visits to the Ohel, to the gravesites of the Tzemach Tzedek and the Rebbe Maharash, were engraved forever in my father's heart. He would often picture himself standing next to the gravesites and saying the *maaneh lashon*.

The night of the Seder held a place of honor in my father's memories of Tomchei T'mimim. A small table was set up in the center of the zal and a beautifully handcrafted wooden candelabra was placed upon it. This candelabra was constructed by the Rebbe Maharash after his doctors told him that working with his hands would be good for his health. It was made out of 613 pieces of wood and it had thirteen ("echad") holders – one in the center and two sets around it. The outer set had eight holders and the inner set had four.

Around that table were eighteen tables, around which sat 300 talmidim. When the Seder began, they would announce: Table 1 – Kiddush, and so on. At every table, when it was their turn, the talmidim would recite Kiddush together, and when they drank in a reclining position they each leaned on the person next to them. My father said it looked like dominoes, with each falling to his left. On Acharon shel Pesach there was a large farbrengen with the Rebbe Rashab.

My father said that he had the z'chus to hold the Mittlerer Rebbe's pipe and the tobacco smelled fresh.

When my father spoke about Lubavitch, he would describe the small, low, wooden houses of the town, which were on the verge of collapse. One time, as he went to the mikva near Binyamin Shtibel, he saw a little, low house in the corner which they said was the house of Uncle Yossel, the uncle of the Tzemach Tzedek. He was a man of great spiritual stature and the

Tzemach Tzedek greatly respected him.

My father said that when they told the Rebbe Rashab about a Jew named Chasidovsky who lived in Rostov and built a big house on Varantchovsky Street, the Rebbe said, "A big house – great concealment."

I once heard that at one of the Yud-Tes Kislev farbrengens, when all the T'mimim went to the farbrengen, my father elected to stay next to the bed of a sick bachur so he wouldn't remain alone. During the farbrengen, the Rebbe Rashab said that he doesn't know which is more important – the bachurim who came to the farbrengen or the bachur who remained with his sick friend.

MIRACULOUS RESCUE ON THE TRAIN

In his youth, my father suffered from asthma and the doctors told him to move to someplace warmer. They recommended the Crimean peninsula. My father went to

Narzan, Crimea, where he rented an apartment from a Jew. After living there for a year and drinking warm spring water he was completely healed.

During that year, his landlord gave him a plot of land and my father learned gardening. He loved gardening because with this work you see and hope for Hashem's blessing and also because it's very healthy to be outside in the fresh air. The landlord played the violin and my father asked him to instruct him. Over the years, on various occasions, my father would play the violin for weddings or Chassidishe farbrengens.

After the Bolshevik Revolution in 1920, there was anarchy in Russia. Various gangs operated throughout Russia. One of the most famous bandit armies, notorious for its anti-Semitism, was the Machnovites under the leadership of the anti-Semite Machnov.

In those terrible times, a train ride was dangerous for Jews. A passenger who fell into the hands of one of the Machnovites could be



**My father playing the violin
in Eretz Yisroel**

thrown off the moving train. Once, when my father was in his twenties, he had to travel by train. Since his beard announced the fact that he was Jewish, he tried to sit quietly in a corner of the compartment so as not to attract undue attention.

Not far from him sat one of the Machnovites, who began to mock him. Terrified, my father made believe he did not realize they were talking about him, but the hoodlum increased the volume of his curses until he approached my father, grabbed him by the neck and started dragging him to the end of the train towards the doors.

My father began pleading with him, saying, "Let me be, I am still young, I also want to live..." but the thug continued to pull him towards the doors, cursing angrily.

Suddenly, from a corner of the compartment, a huge man lunged forward. Towering over the Machnovite, he started screaming at him, "What are you doing? Leave him alone!"

As he said this, he approached the Machnovite and grabbed him by



**Chassidic farbrengen with my uncle, R' Boruch
Duchman, before he left Samarkand**

the neck. The Machnovite let go of my father and began arguing with the giant, saying, “He’s just a dirty Jew...” The giant grabbed him firmly by the neck and dragged him to the end of the compartment, opened the door, and pushed him out of the racing train. Then he came back to the compartment in a calmer frame of mind and gently asked my father to come over to him.

My father, who did not understand what was going on or who this man was, was afraid to refuse. Quaking, he got up and went over to him. The enormous man said reassuringly, “Don’t be afraid of me. Come with me and I’ll show you something.”

My father, still trembling, followed him to the entrance of the compartment. There the man whispered to him: “You should know that I am a *Her Tzedek* (the Ukrainians say a “Hei” for a “Gimmel” and so he meant a righteous convert).” My father looked at him incredulously and the

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sick friend.***

man said the first parsha of Shma to substantiate his words. He even picked up his shirt and showed my father his tzitzis. He parted from my

father with a smile and said, “I taught that anti-Semite a lesson! If he remained alive after I threw him off the moving train, he will remember this until the end of his life.”

When my father was of age, the shidduch with my mother, Bracha, was suggested. When her brother, R’ Avrohom Boruch Pevsner, the mashpia in Minsk, asked the Rebbe Rayatz about the shidduch, the Rebbe said, “Avremel Smargoner? Nu... he is a p’nimi!”

My father was a Chassid in the full sense of the word but it was all in a p’nimius’dike way with him. An outside observer could erroneously think he was a simple person. An outstanding example of his yiras Shamayim was the fact that throughout the terrible times he lived through in the Soviet Union, he never touched his beard and he was moser nefesh for the chinuch of his children (as will be related in part two).

A SURPRISING INSTRUCTION IN YECHIDUS

My father and my uncle, R’ Boruch Duchman, were brothers-in-law. Both of them were married to the sisters of the mashpia R’ Avrohom Boruch Pevsner. A short time after his wedding, my father heard that the shochet in the town of Cherepovets, in Siberia, had died. The community was left without a shochet and many were eating treif.

My father went to his brother-in-law, my uncle R’ Boruch, who lived in Medvedev near Leningrad, and studied sh’chita for three months. Since the community in Siberia was waiting for him, he rushed his studies and learned the halachos in the condensed s’farim *Simla Chadasha* and *Melech ha’Sh’chita*. He spent most of his time at the town slaughterhouse, where they

MASHKE FROM POTATOES

My father would occasionally visit his parents and relatives in his hometown of Smargon. On one of these visits, he heard about a man in the city who was having a hard time raising the money he required to marry off his daughter. My father had pity on him and decided to save him some money. He went over to him and said that he knew how to make mashke out of potatoes and would make the amount that the man needed for the wedding. In those days, mashke was expensive and this would be a significant savings.

The truth was that my father had never tried producing mashke out of potatoes. His ‘experience’ was limited to one time that he had watched someone else make mashke. But he pitied the man and decided to try his luck.

He mixed potatoes with sugar, as he had once seen, and put it in a warm place to ferment. Days went by and nothing happened. My father felt terrible when he thought that because of him there would be no mashke at the wedding. The man regretted having agreed to this kid’s suggestion – my father was all of 14 at the time. In the end, Hashem rewarded my father’s sincere intentions. The mixture eventually did ferment and by the wedding, the mashke was ready and it was delicious.

shechted many chickens and cows that came from the merchants in Leningrad (this was at a time when the government still allowed private enterprise to a limited extent).

After he finished his studies, and before traveling to Cherepovets, he went to the Rebbe Rayatz. This was in 1927. When he entered the room for yechidus, the Rebbe asked him, "What did you learn?"

My father told him the truth, that he had learned the laws of sh'chita and treifos from *Simla Chadasha* with the commentary of the *Levushei Serad*. The Rebbe smiled and said, "*Ah tendetner shochet* (i.e. a natural)."

Then the Rebbe asked my father from whom he was going to get a kabbala (certification) for sh'chita. My father answered that he intended to ask Rabbi Shimon Lazarov, who was the Lubavitcher rav in Leningrad. The Rebbe said he should get kabbala from Rabbi Katzenelenbogen.

A difference of opinion had recently come to the fore between the Rebbe Rayatz and Rabbi Katzenelenbogen regarding a meeting of rabbanim that the Yevsektzia wanted to have in Leningrad. My father did not understand why he should go to him, but he did not dare say this to the Rebbe directly. He merely asked, "Why him?"

The Rebbe replied, "Rabbi Katzenelenbogen is an *erlicher Yid* (a Jew with integrity)." My father, who had learned only those s'farim, since he knew that in the meantime, the people were eating treif, said that he was afraid that Rabbi Katzenelenbogen would ask him about the Poskim and Rishonim which he hadn't studied. The Rebbe assured him, "*Vestu vissen* (you will know)."

My father utilized this opportunity to cry to the Rebbe that he was married for over six years and did not have children. The



Rebbe raised his hands and said, "You will have children, you will have children."

After the yechidus, my father went to Rabbi Katzenelenbogen, where he saw the fulfillment of the Rebbe's bracha. When he spoke to the rav in learning, he managed to impress him like a big scholar. After he examined the knife used for large animals three times and found that my father had prepared it properly, Rabbi Katzenelenbogen wrote him a nice kabbala. Before he left, the rav warned him not to learn

Chassidus...

My father later also received kabbala from Rabbi Shlomo Yosef Zevin, who was a rav in the city of Kalintzy, in the Ukraine, at the time. He also received kabbala from Rabbi Lazarov. All three kabbalos were later confiscated by the NKVD when they searched our house.

It is known that shochtim don't like giving their knives to others to check, but my father was the opposite. When he met someone who knew how to check a knife, he happily gave him his knife.

In general, my father told Lubavitcher men to study sh'chita, at least how to shecht chickens. He said that you could never know where you would end up and you might live in a place without a shochet. If you know how, you can shecht for yourself and others.

THE REBBE'S PROMISE FULFILLED

My parents had gone to the biggest doctors and they all said my mother would never have children. My mother once cried to my father, "Soon ten years will have gone by and we will have to divorce. Why should you continue to suffer? You can get married to someone else and have children!"

My father said that if in Heaven they decreed that he should have

children, they would be from her, since the Rebbe had promised that they – plural – would have children.

Moved by my mother's words, my father wrote to the Rebbe, saying that all the doctors said my mother could not have children and would have children only when hair grew on the palms of their hands. The Rebbe's answer was that my mother should go to a bigger doctor in Kiev.

My parents went to Kiev and had an appointment with the specialist. After examining my mother, he said in surprise, "Who said she can't give birth?"

When my mother heard this, she nearly fainted. When she had composed herself, the doctor gave her some medication and within a short time, she was pregnant with my older sister, Fruma Sarah.

My parents told the Rebbe the

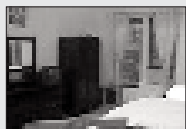
good news and the Rebbe's response was that it would be a healthy child.

When my mother went to the hospital to give birth, R' Itche der Masmid said she should take the Rebbe's letter with her to the hospital. R' Itche was not surprised when my parents informed him they'd had a baby girl. He had understood this from the Rebbe's answer, since he had not said, "ben zachar."

In great joy over the open miracle that happened with the birth of their daughter, R' Itche farbrenge all week in my parents' house. When my mother returned from the hospital, the house was topsy-turvy.

When my sister cried, my father would jokingly say, "Who is crying? The daughter of Bracha the *akara* (barren woman)?"

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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 זו, הנה כמובן מעצמו שיהיה באופן כזה שישמר רוח המוסדות על טהרתן ולא יתערב רוח זר בתוכם

(Igros Kodesh Vol. 4 Page 68).

HERE WE EDUCATE

By Yisroel Yehuda

Translated By Michoel Leib Dobry

*The expectations in a regular cheider program does not match the needs of every bachur. In recent years, various alternative yeshiva programs have arisen tailored to the needs of the particular student. A growing percentage of students are having difficulties dealing with the traditional yeshiva framework, and simply getting through the year is a challenge for the student, his parents, and the teaching staff. Now, however, there is a viable option – the newly expanded Yeshivas Chanoch L'Naar of Tzfas. * A personal visit and firsthand experience.*

One morning a few months ago, the Holy City of Tzfas awoke to a new reality. The telephone service vehicles and offices that had inhabited the “Bezeq site” had been replaced by professionals and tractors. Under the direction of Rabbi Shneur Zalman Lipsker and administrative staff member Rabbi Chaim Sholom HaLevi Segal, a massive renovation was underway. After a prolonged fundraising campaign, Yeshivas Chanoch L'Naar packed up its belongings in nearby Moshav Dalton and established its new dwelling place on the outskirts

of Tzfas.

A visit to the yeshiva's new location is a source of tremendous satisfaction. The *zal* and dining hall are at the heart of the small yet solid facility, surrounded by dormitory quarters and classrooms.

The spirit of Tomchei T'mimim that envelopes the yeshiva is apparent from the moment one enters. There is the ever-present study of Gemara, tests, going home for Shabbos – but above all, there is the very impressive campaign on learning pages of Gemara by heart.

The large and renovated “zal” is

filled from wall to wall. The students are seriously involved in their studies, and the full staff of instructors is constantly working to provide each student with proper direction and guidance, study with him in chavrusa, and help him catch up in the learning material so that every student will attain his full potential.

A large asphalt area on the surrounding yeshiva property has been set aside for sports activities. At one end of this area is a large shed for holding workshops, alongside an olive grove that contributes a calming and relaxing atmosphere. In addition, several students have taken the initiative of raising a collection of animals.

The yeshiva students have just finished davening Shacharis and eating breakfast, and with the vitality of youth, they rush to utilize the last moments of their break. About fifty boys fill the large newly acquired lot. Some head for the basketball court, while others go straight to the computer room.

A visitor will immediately notice that while the student's chassidic yeshiva dress and mode of expression and the beautiful, spacious *zal* and superbly built mikveh testify to the place's yeshiva nature, there are various components which indicate that this is a place quite unique in character.

Welcome to the yeshiva k'tana Chanoch L'Naar!

Right: A rare and unique combination of personalized study and a vibrant Chabad yeshiva atmosphere

Chanoch L'Naar is not just the name of a yeshiva; it's the name of a professional educational approach that comes from the heart. It's the product of a wonderful and dedicated staff, a moniker for a large chassidic family that constitutes a home away from home for the students, and the conduit for their growth and success.

AGAINST THE DEMANDS OF THE YESHIVA WORLD

The yeshiva world is a most challenging and demanding one. The student is expected to invest considerable effort in lengthy classes and to persevere in his Torah study and personal avoda, based on a strict schedule which is not always suitable for the needs of each bachur. Our Rebbeim established Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim – which produces hundreds of pious and scholarly young men each year – in order that their avoda should continue to bear fruit.

In recent years, the need has arisen for a more individual-based yeshiva program that fits the needs of the particular student. A growing percentage of students are having difficulties dealing with the traditional yeshiva framework. Many capable bachurim are experiencing

difficulty managing a demanding learning schedule and disinterest in their studies, leading them to start looking for other ways to occupy their time, which sometimes results in strange ideas and diversions.

Until a few years ago, the best a student, his parents, and the teaching staff could hope for was to “get through the year.” In this “ideal situation,” the student would have no success in his assignments while experiencing failure after failure and more and more administrative punishment, leading to a build-up of frustration that can have an effect on his developing personality. Eventually, many students simply left the program.

The other alternative was to send the student to a non-yeshiva framework, often not Chabad or even not religious at all.

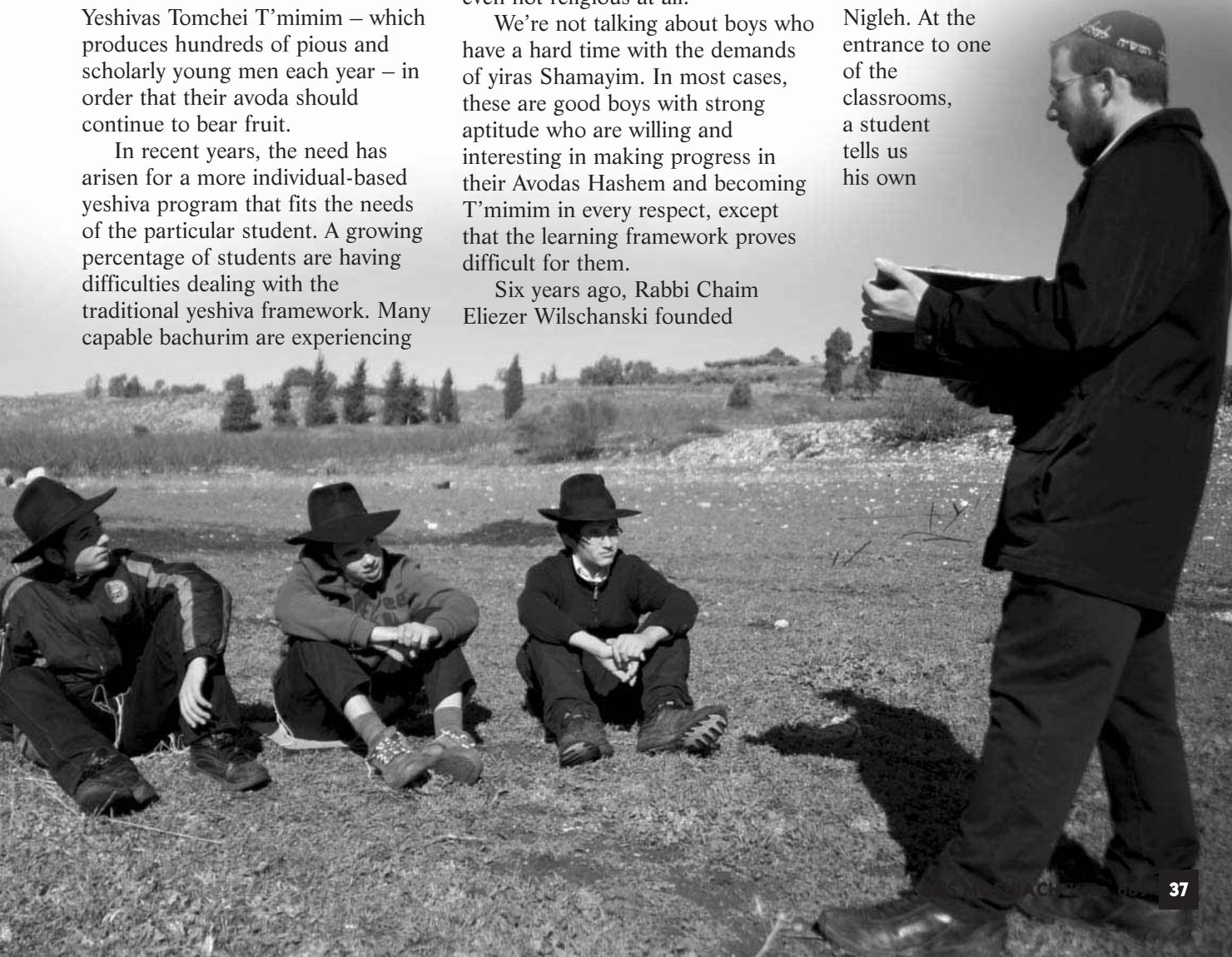
We're not talking about boys who have a hard time with the demands of yiras Shamayim. In most cases, these are good boys with strong aptitude who are willing and interesting in making progress in their Avodas Hashem and becoming T'mimim in every respect, except that the learning framework proves difficult for them.

Six years ago, Rabbi Chaim Eliezer Wilschanski founded

Yeshivas Chanoch L'Naar specifically with these boys in mind. The unique nature to this yeshiva stems from its deep educational understanding, which stands behind every step it takes. Every class, every chavrusa, every staff member, every resource, and every “ruling” made by the yeshiva administration is thoroughly calculated after consultation with professionals in the field of education, and testing to determine if the desired educational objective has been achieved.

“THEY BROUGHT ME BACK TO LIFE”

The break is over, and the boys leave their various pursuits and rush back to class, where their teachers are already waiting to give them a shiur in Nigleh. At the entrance to one of the classrooms, a student tells us his own



personal story:

"I started off learning in a regular cheider, and afterwards I registered in one of the yeshivos. I didn't really fit in over there, and I soon found myself out of the program. With no organized activity, I started looking for something to do to fill my time. Eventually, I registered with a national religious yeshiva high school in Eretz Yisroel.

"I don't know how exactly, but one of the teachers here – Rabbi Avremi Rabinowitz – heard about me, and decided to bring me to Chanoch L'Naar. He had to work

rather hard," the young man said as he smiled shyly, "as I already saw my future in Mizrachi. My parents had already given up on me, so there really wasn't anyone for him to speak with. Nevertheless, he wouldn't give in. He invested many hours, came to my house, and spoke with my parents and me until he somehow finally got me to agree to come for a trial period. In fact, the trial period lasted much longer than originally planned. They brought me back to the life of a yeshiva student..."

The classes are taught by Rabbi

Efraim Bernstein, Rabbi David Shaer, Rabbi Meir David, and Rabbi Avraham Rabinowitz. The uniqueness of Chanoch L'Naar takes expression both in the actual material and in the learning style. The classrooms have fewer students, the classes are shorter, and the studies are accompanied by visual aids, worksheets, and a tutor in every class.

The main task of the teaching staff comes after class. They have the added responsibility of personal educator and advisor of each and every student – a role usually reserved for the mashgiach – and they do it with much affection and professional understanding.

At Chanoch L'Naar, there is considerable emphasis on the seemingly small details, e.g., stringency in the Laws of Orach Chaim, proper attire, order, cleanliness, and so on. Yeshiva madrich, R' Idan Gal explains, "It's easy to see that the more orderly a bachur is, the more of a *mentch* he is. His outward appearance is the equivalent to the testimony of a thousand witnesses regarding the inner depths of his soul, and to a certain extent, even on his level of yiras Shamayim. Therefore, we invest much effort to educate our students, even in such 'little' details, since they represent the very foundation upon which a person is built."

The yeshiva's rabbis maintain personal contact with each student and his parents. "We provide the student with a slightly different framework," explains the rosh yeshiva, Rabbi Wilschanski. "There are short classes in small groups on a variety of Torah and professional subjects, interwoven with social and athletic activities. The extra-curricular activities encourage adherence to the rules of conduct and Torah study. We don't compromise a hair on the

A THANK YOU LETTER FROM A MOTHER IN ENGLAND

Dear Rabbi Wilschanski, sh'yichyeh,

My husband and I wanted to write to you to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to you regarding our son's progress. Since our son entered the yeshiva Chanoch L'Naar, you and your dedicated staff, who have all joined together to establish this wonderful institution, have provided an education that gives our son, and no doubt all the other children, an opportunity to grow, develop and flourish, each in his own way. The yeshiva embodies the [previous] directive – "*chinuch al pi darko*."

Your dedicated efforts, warmth, and caring attitude have created an environment where our son has begun to blossom and show real promise. He enjoys all aspects of the yeshiva and wakes up on time to get to seider chassidus every morning, as well as davening from the amud and reading the Torah whenever he is asked.

He likes the varied schedule and activities, and feels it is a good mix for him. The levels of gashmius and ruchnius are both high. He has made many new friends, and the boys have been very welcoming to him. He is able to use his Yiddish, as well as brushing up on his Hebrew, all of which he enjoys immensely.

Most importantly, his phone calls to us are happy, and we can hear buoyancy and vitality in his voice as he describes his day and his learning. He is excited every day, and happy to be learning in a yeshiva where he says, "The rabbis and the hanhala smile. They talk to the bachurim with a smile, they really listen to me."

Thank you for giving our son this wonderful opportunity, for which he shows his gratitude through his efforts and his diligence.

We wish you and the yeshiva much success in your important work, which enables all of our children access to a true Yiddishe, chassidishe education, where all present and future talmidim will IY"H grow and mature and continue to give nachas to the Rebbe and their parents.

All the best,

Sincerely, M.J.



and kept their worksheets until the end of the year.

“But the worksheets created an even deeper change, as they enable us to sell ‘success’ to our students. A student who made an effort once and received a good mark wants to experience this success again, and thus began to invest more time in his studies. Since then, the worksheets have been used for all the yeshiva’s material in nigleh and chassidus, and lo and behold, the students began to love what they were learning.”

The teachers conduct regular follow-ups on the progress of each student and are ready to offer assistance at any time. “If a student doesn’t sufficiently understand the learning material in class, he can turn to the rav, and the rav will sit with him after class until everything is understood clearly,” affirms one of the students. In addition, the yeshiva has placed a special staff member, Rabbi Yiftach Luzia, in charge of private tutoring, to ensure that no student remains stagnant in his learning.

The results speak for themselves. Rabbi Bernstein relates, “A student came here from a very difficult background. While he comes from a Chabad family, all of his brothers have left the path of Torah. Obviously, this bachur’s outlook was quite far from that of the yeshiva

educational program: Time is time, conduct is conduct, and rules are rules. Every student knows that he must stick [to] by the tasks set for him, and they come before all else.”

Even in the area of punishment, the outlook is totally different. An emphasis is placed upon the need for the student to see the connection between his actions and the punishment he received. When things reach a point when a bachur must be disciplined, he is also given an opportunity to get his “pledge” back by repairing the error for a pre-determined period of time.

Regarding the learning approaches, Rabbi Efraim Bernstein states: “The students in the first year of the yeshiva k’tana program started by learning the kuntres ‘U’Maayan M’Beis Hashem’, but they complained that they couldn’t seem to connect to the material. After consulting with our staff educational advisor, we began to distribute weekly worksheets. While the questions on the worksheets were on the learning material, they also provided them with an additional challenge, offering them prizes if they received good marks



The yeshiva’s new location at the old Bezeq site on the outskirts of Tzfas

world. By Divine Providence, a counselor at the Oro Shel Moshiach summer camp, who had remained in touch with him, convinced him to apply to Chanoch L'Naar. He had, however, already registered at a different school. We had to work very hard in order to get him to agree to come here, and then afterwards, to remove the overall feeling of alienation he had towards yeshiva and its demands. To further complicate matters, there was also a family member who was constantly trying to turn the boy away from the Torah world.

“This young man successfully completed his studies with us, and was accepted as a full-fledged student in one of the higher yeshivos. Some time ago, we asked our graduates to write something about their impressions from the yeshiva, and this student happily complied. In deeply emotional words, he told his story, concluding: **‘I want to say ‘Thank you very, very much’ for all the efforts and devotion you invested in me during the three years that I was here, the**

consideration for my needs, and the feeling of home. A little secret in conclusion: Even when I asked permission many times to stay at home a little while longer after an off Shabbos and you didn’t agree, I understood very well why.

‘I have no words to describe the appreciation I have for the entire yeshiva staff. Thank you and thank you again. I thank the Rebbe Rashab and the Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach, for choosing me to be a *Tamim*, something that I thought was a punishment just a few years ago. Now I understand that this is the greatest privilege that a person can be given – and on the other hand, a heavy responsibility that one must bear every day and at every moment.’”

As part of the system to support the teachers and counselors in their complex tasks, the yeshiva employs Dr. Michael Band, a clinical educational psychologist, and Rabbi Dr. Uriel Marton, an educational guidance counselor, to meet regularly with the staff and give them professional direction and advice in all matters pertaining to their work with the students.

Rabbi Marton holds regular meetings with each staff member, and visits the classrooms for the purpose of organizing and improving their daily management. In addition, Rabbi Marton meets with students individually, and guides the staff on how to make progress with their students’ education. He holds a special weekly workshop for the teaching staff on “educational incentive” and ways to strengthen the connection between the student and the learning material.

Regular meetings among the administration and teaching staff to discuss concrete matters on the students’ progress testify to the yeshiva’s caring and loving concern for the proper development of each of its students.



Holy training



Professional training

NOT A MOMENT TO WASTE

The classes are finished, and the students take advantage of the wide variety of interesting ways to occupy their free time available on the premises: computer room, athletic courts, and workshops in carpentry and agriculture.

Each Wednesday, the students participate in workshops on intellectual development, computers, physical fitness, and music. Rabbi Wilschanski explained the underlying purpose behind these workshops: “One of the great obstacles that students confront is boredom, which our Sages, of blessed memory, have taught us has the power to bring a person to the lowest and most abysmal state. When a student fails to occupy himself constructively, he is liable to turn to things totally contrary to the essence of a Jew with yiras Shamayim and, needless to say, a *Tamim*. Therefore, in the yeshiva

we make every possible effort to fill a student's free time with constructive and enjoyable pursuits. The student's day is thereby filled to overflowing only with positive things, and he goes to sleep filled with satisfaction over his success in his studies, after a tiring and most fulfilling day."

The yeshiva also employs student shluchim, who come to provide assistance to the bachurim. Each year, the administration chooses the shluchim appropriate for the character of the yeshiva program, and these young men embark upon their shlichus with great vigor. They live with the students, learn with them, and walk with them every step of the way. The shluchim also periodically organize their own mivtzaim, adding vitality to all aspects of the yeshiva.

The variety in the learning material of the afternoon classes is unique. Besides the standard material in chassidus and Talmud, the yeshiva also conducts classes on Moshiach and the Redemption with Rabbi Meir David (who also serves as the maggid shiur in Nigleh for the older boys), the annals of chassidic history with Rabbi Chanoch HaLevi Shachar, and Navi with Rabbi Aryeh Leib HaLevi Kaplan.

The students particularly enjoy the special class on chassidic history. Rabbi Shachar, who gives over this shiur, also works as a computer network engineer at the Rebecca Sieff Hospital in Tzfas. He conveys the history of Chabad from the Alter Rebbe to our times in a most orderly and thoughtful manner, and the results are marvelous. For example, leading up to Yud-Tes Kislev, the students learn not only the story of the Alter Rebbe's imprisonment and subsequent redemption, but also about his hidden and revealed spreading of the teachings of chassidus, when as an outstanding commander and scholar (in the

words of the Rebbe Rayatz), he built an entire organization that brought hundreds of the finest avreichim to chassidus.

GIVING ANOTHER CHANCE

The students of Chanoch L'Naar come from a variety of backgrounds from all over the Chabad worldwide community. Some of them came straight from "cheider", while others arrived from one of the corresponding yeshivos k'tanos. Some came simply because they heard that this place makes it easier for them to become normal students, finish yeshiva k'tana, and G-d



A serious study atmosphere

willing, move on to yeshiva g'dola. Others have already been forced out of standard yeshiva programs, and here they get another chance.

One of the yeshiva's major educational successes is that the students feel that the faculty and staff are "on their side." The students know that whatever the problem, they can turn to a staff member, and he will listen to the student and make a genuine effort to help him. Rabbi Rabinowitz defines this in simple terms: "It's important that we give the student a feeling that we're not in conflict with him.

We speak with him warmly and fondly, even in those situations where there's a need to put the student in his place."

The students readily share their appreciation of the teachers and staff, and the love and attention that they receive from them in such large measure. In addition, the students know that the staff members are open to hearing things that aren't so pleasant and to handle them without "breaking the vessels." The considerate and caring manner with which they deal with such phenomena gives the student the awareness that everything is being done for his benefit.

The students feel that the yeshiva staff pays attention to their slightest progress or regression, urging them to continue in the right direction. Rabbi Dovid Shaer, maggid shiur and mashpia in the yeshiva from the day of its inception, sums it up this way: "A student who is stumbling a bit is often hesitant to talk about his need for help. There is a sense of being afraid or embarrassed to go to the hanhala. At Chanoch L'Naar, the student knows that there's always someone who notices what going on, pulling all the right strings, and thus removing the need for the student to 'lodge a complaint' against himself. The yeshiva's motto is to give another chance, and by the same token, to demand progress. As a result, the student finds his way along the proper path, even if he stumbles once or twice.

GOING HIGHER IN MATTERS OF HOLINESS

Last year, the yeshiva's first graduating class completed its studies, and its graduates were successfully accepted to the various yeshivos gedolos. Yet, there was one who chose to remain right where he was. "I've gone through many yeshivos," the student disclosed, "and with G-d's help, I'll eventually

make my way to a yeshiva g'dola. But for the time being, I prefer to stay here another year. I've found myself here. They understand me and give me a desire to progress in my learning..."

Though there are many students who can thrive in regular yeshivos, others can only benefit from programs like Yeshivas Chanoch L'Naar. Rabbi Wilschanski explains, "A student who is able to manage in a regular yeshiva program has the wonderful privilege and obligation to learn in one of the fine yeshivos k'tanos existing today, thank G-d, in Eretz HaKodesh. However, a student who, due to his nature or abilities, is not yet ready for a full learning schedule or is not 'connected' to a yeshiva environment, is cordially invited to turn to us and determine the possibility of his joining Yeshivas Chanoch L'Naar. This also refers to

students who began their studies in a regular yeshiva k'tana and are now without any organized study program. As long as the student is prepared to accept upon himself the educational framework with the general rules of proper conduct in all that relates to yiras Shamayim – he has a place with us."

Which students would be appropriate for referral to your yeshiva?

Rabbi Wilschanski: "A student who is able to manage in a regular yeshiva program has the wonderful privilege and obligation to learn in one of the fine yeshivos k'tanos existing today, thank G-d, among the Chabad institutions in Eretz HaKodesh. However, a student who is not yet ready for a full learning schedule due to his nature, abilities, etc., or he's not 'connected' to a yeshiva environment, is cordially invited to turn to us and determine

the possibility of his joining Yeshivas 'Chanoch LaNa'ar'. This also refers to students who began their studies in a regular yeshiva k'tana and are now without any organized study program. As long as the student is prepared to accept upon himself the educational framework with the general rules of proper conduct in all that relates to yiras Shamayim – he has a place with us."

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