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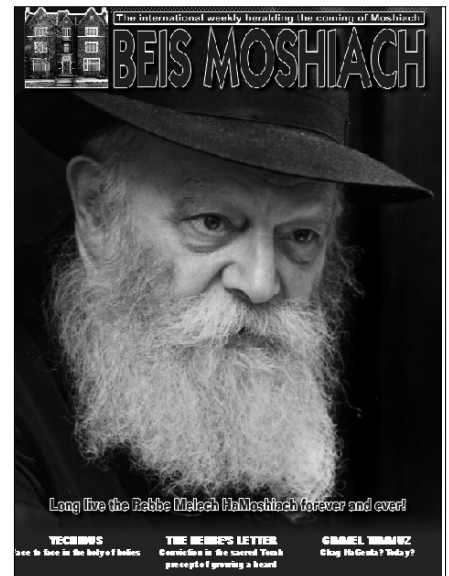
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CONVICTION IN THE SACRED TORAH PRECEPT OF GROWING A BEARD

By the Grace of G-d
16 Kislev, 5744
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Blessing and Greeting:

This is to acknowledge receipt of your letter of Nov. 14, in which you write about your son .

First of all, let me congratulate you and your husband on having on having been blessed with a son who stands firm on his principles and is not swayed by convention and the like. It is no small achievement for a Jew - and one who is a minority within a minority at that - to have the strength of character and conviction, where it would be so much easier to follow the crowd.

Especially in this day and age of tremendous upheavals, when so many young people are just drifting, without a firm foothold in life. Jewish parents who have been blessed with children who are unshakably rooted in, and proud of, their Jewishness, should surely thank G-d for it every day. There is no need to elaborate on the obvious.

The above is also my response to what you consider to be a problem, which to my way of thinking, based on experience of many similar cases, is really a blessing.

To be sure, there are orthodox circles (such as Young Israel, for instance) in which wearing a beard is not considered obligatory. On the other hand, there are those who not only grow a beard, but will not even trim it. I know from experience that is highly inadvisable to pressure a young man who has strong convictions in regard to religious values. To dislodge a brick may sometimes disturb the whole structure. Even if there is the slightest doubt about the consequence, it would be prudent to leave it alone.

Be it remembered that Jews who do not trim their beards are doing it out of conviction, not caprice, fad, or the like. They consider it a sacred Torah precept. This is no reflection on those who follow a different ~~author-~~itative rabbinic view. (Historically there have been legitimate differences within the Halachah as to how certain Mitzvos should be performed). But it would not be right - for the above reasons and others - to use pressure in matters of principle and time-honored practices, or even *interfere*

Wishing you and yours a bright and inspiring Chanukah,

With blessing,

CHAG HA'GEULA? TODAY?

Interview by Menachem Ziegelboim



However you look at 3 Tammuz, something happened on that day. Even Chassidim like mashpia, Rabbi Levi Yitzchok Ginsburg who think that this day ought to have a happy disposition to it, acknowledge that it was a “big shock.” “I didn’t know

how the sun could shine,” said R’ Ginsburg candidly, but he was quick to say, “But a shock that the Rebbe said was not a shock of darkness and churban.”

We all went through a traumatic experience. “Not an easy test,”

agrees R’ Ginsburg. Over the years we have seen an ideological split with some people looking at the situation in a narrow materialistic sense, while others also want to see events in their larger context, from the perspective of the sichos of the past and their promises for the future, and believe that what is happening now is only a momentary test.

R’ Ginsburg is someone who lectures extensively on the topic of Geula. Every week he gives shiurim in Tanya and D’var Malchus in dozens of places in Eretz Yisroel. It is clear that he is familiar with the sichos about Geula, especially those from 5751-2, like the back of his hand. When you talk to him you see that he knows them backwards and forwards and he quotes extensively. In order to give an answer with a source he doesn’t have to look things up.

His gentle demeanor doesn’t exactly fit with his views and answers that are said with Chassidic strength and are sharp as a razor. It’s no secret that terms like “Yechi HaMelech HaMoshiach,” “Chai v’Kayam,” “shlita,” and others, that he uses regularly, annoy people, and this bothers him. Those who know him say he is a person full of Ahavas Yisroel, sincerity and refinement. He does chesed with his body, soul, and money and is devoted heart and soul to the Rebbe’s inyanim. Throughout the years he has put himself completely aside in order to spread Chassidus as well as do the Rebbe’s mitzvaim.

His popular weekly columns in this magazine have given him a reputation as an authority on the topic of spreading the Besuras Ha’Geula and explaining the Rebbe’s teachings which illuminate the difficult period we are in, a period of concealment.

R’ Ginsburg is invited to lecture, give shiurim, and to participate on

panels where he presents the Geula perspective. He shrugs when asked questions that are based on the present concealment. “It says explicitly in the Rebbe’s sichos,” he says, sounding almost apologetic. “It’s not the invention of a Chassid. It’s the Rebbe.”

He was the person we turned to Erev 3 Tammuz to respond to questions that bother many Lubavitcher Chassidim as much as those in other orthodox circles. Of the questions I asked him, some are wondered about quietly while others are asked out loud; some are asked with hostility but most out of ignorance.

I often found myself apologizing when asking a difficult question but R’ Ginsburg in his gentle manner welcomed questions. He isn’t fazed by any question. He knows his stuff.

What is 3 Tammuz?

This day is the beginning of Geula. That’s what the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach shlita says, that this day is one that leads to Geula and starts the Geula. It is the day that the Rebbe Rayatz was released from jail and sent to exile and that was the beginning of his Geula.

Unlike 9 Av, about which it says, “It will be transformed into rejoicing and happiness,” this day is the **beginning of Geula**. The fact is that something inexplicable happened to us, which seemingly contradicts what we thought and expected. Nevertheless, when we look at nearly all the 3 Tammuz sichos (5717, 5745, 5748, 5751 and others) we see how the Rebbe says that Chassidim celebrate 3 Tammuz even more than 12 Tammuz (*Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 4, p. 1315 in the hosafos of the sichos of 3 Tammuz 5718).

Another point emphasized in the 3 Tammuz sichos (in the D’var Malchus of Korach 5751 and others) is that **all historical events that happened on that date** are connected to one another and are

The Rebbe complained years ago that we don’t cry out for the Geula, “ad masai,” and really mean it. He noted sharply that even when we say it, we do so because we were told. Today, after 3 Tammuz, we cry out “ad masai” and mean it!

actually one thing. If so, the Rebbe is telling us that this is the beginning of Geula even regarding 3 Tammuz 5754!

Of course it doesn’t seem that way to us. Just as on this date in 5687 (1927), they sent the Rebbe Rayatz to exile and it seemed as though the situation had worsened, afterwards it became clear that this day was the beginning of his Geula, “the day he was saved from a death sentence,” even though Chassidim didn’t see this at the time.

The mashpia, R’ Mendel would say that on 3 Tammuz 1927, when they heard that the Rebbe left jail, there was a farbrengen in which they all danced exuberantly. The floor was blackened and the walls of the beis midrash nearly collapsed and they had to support them. Afterwards, when they heard that he was sent to exile, most of the Chassidim were greatly saddened

but the mashpia, R’ Zalman Moshe HaYitzchaki didn’t stop dancing. His friends did not understand him but they all joined him ten days later when, on 12 Tammuz, they found out that indeed, 3 Tammuz was the beginning of the Geula.

Why then, shouldn’t we celebrate on Tisha B’Av because the Geula ultimately develops from the events of that day?

Indeed, the Rebbe says in one of his sichos, why 3 Tammuz comes out on the same day of the week as 17 Tammuz and 9 Av and the first day of Pesach. Just as 3 Tammuz seemed to be a harsh day at first, and only afterwards was it seen as a Yom Geula, this principle applies to 17 Tammuz and 9 Av that fall on the same day of the week, and 3 Tammuz reveals in them that just as at first, they seemed like harsh days, in the future we will see them transformed into days of simcha.

Again, why then shouldn’t we celebrate Tisha B’Av like 3 Tammuz?

Because the Rebbe says that 3 Tammuz is a day of Geula and Tisha B’Av is a day of mourning and destruction but it will, in the future, be transformed into a day of rejoicing.

It’s all good and well after the fact to know that a particular day, retroactively, was the beginning of the Geula, but we cannot ignore the present. If we could have asked the Rebbe Rayatz on 3 Tammuz 1927, when he left for exile, whether it was a happy or a sad day, what would he have said?

True, the Chassidim did not know it then, but the Rebbe knew that his life had been in danger and he was saved from a death sentence, so it was a day of simcha for him even though it wasn’t yet a full release, and the Chassidim were not aware of this.

What is the principle – when there are difficult circumstances,

when can you know that it's a mournful day and when can you know that the difficulty is actually the beginning of something good?

When we don't know, we look and listen to what the Rebbe said and the Rebbe says that 3 Tammuz is a day of Geula, so it's a day of Geula! As the Rebbe wrote in one of his letters (ibid *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 4) – Chassidim should celebrate on 3 Tammuz.

WHEN YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND, STICK TO WHAT THE REBBE SAYS

People want to understand, what happened on 3 Tammuz of the seventh generation?

A lot happened but we don't know how to explain it. Something very important took place regarding the Geula process. On the one hand, it was a tremendous shock but a shock that the Rebbe says is not one of darkness and churban but something that ought to arouse in us hidden powers of Geula.

Hashem set things up so that we don't understand why, and we don't understand why things are going on this long, and we cry out nonstop that it's enough already, ad masai?! And we need the true and complete Geula now, but the way to receive this great light is through *nesira* [lit. sundering, a kabalistic concept], as explained at length in Chassidus, which is what leads to perfection.

There's a situation that at first looks to us like darkness and concealment but the truth of the matter is that this is a "breaking" and *nesira* of all previous levels in order to give us something **incomparably** greater, the Essence which is above the light and the revelation – Moshiach.

So even in the moment before the revelation of Moshiach, this day – which looks like a day of concealment – is a meritorious day

and an auspicious day, and not G-d forbid, a day of sadness and eulogy. The Rebbe says explicitly, while emphasizing that all the events that happened on that day have a connection with one another: "Chassidim should celebrate 3 Tammuz."

There's no doubt that the situation created in 5754 was intended to lead us to a whole new level... I don't know how to put it, it's not defined ... but this day led us to an entirely different perspective on "do all that you can," in an entirely different way... It led to a very strong increase of momentum in the inyan of Geula, even though at first, it didn't seem that way.

Today, 15 years later, in hindsight, what major step forward took place in bringing the Geula?

The Rebbe complained (several times, especially in the sicha of Chaf-Ches Nissan 5751) years ago that we don't cry out for the Geula, "ad masai," and really mean it. He noted sharply that even when we say it, we do so because we were told.

Today we cry out "ad masai" and mean it! After 3 Tammuz, every Lubavitcher Chassid sincerely says, "ad masai."

Along with the pain, the Rebbe emphasizes (sicha B'Shalach 5752 and others) that we need to be more b'simcha and more enthusiastic with the knowledge that "behold, Moshiach comes." It's not just a sad "ad masai" but "ad masai" with faith that it will happen any minute now.

But 15 years have gone by...

It's painful but this pain has to motivate us to take action. The Rebbe emphasizes (sicha B'Shalach 5752) that the main thing now is not the pain but the simcha and enthusiasm about Moshiach coming now!

Of course the Rebbe stressed simcha; it was that way throughout the years and isn't something new. When he went in and out of shul,

he encouraged people to be b'simcha with a wave of his hand, like a father who wants his children to be happy. What's the chiddush?

I started explaining earlier, the Rebbe says that 3 Tammuz falls on the same day of the week as the first day of Pesach, the beginning of Geula. This day is the day of Geula even though we still don't understand how. What little we do see is the upturn in momentum on the part of the Chassidim. And that's the whole point; the Rebbe said that 3 Tammuz is a day of simcha, not a day of crying.

Okay, but when the Rebbe said that, Lubavitch was in its glory and you were able to look back with satisfaction and say that after the traumatic events of 1927, the Rebbe Rayatz was extricated from danger and came to America and led Lubavitch to achieve great things. However, after that came 3 Tammuz 1994 which clouded over the simcha of the first 3 Tammuz of Geula.

If 3 Tammuz was really a day of mourning and churban because the Rebbe is not with us, it wouldn't simply be a problem with the specific nature of this day but the opposite of everything the Rebbe taught, the opposite of the purpose of creation, the opposite of everything we were raised with. If this would be the case, we'd have nothing to live for because without the Rebbe there is nothing.

As far as the increased drive that started then, there is no question that people are living today with far more of a feeling that they have to do something because every additional minute in galus is painful. But it's not a pain of depression and self-pitying tears but a pain that galvanizes us. Because there aren't two options; there is one path of "and he will fight the wars of Hashem and win."



The Rebbe must vanquish the klipos not because we want the Rebbe to win but because Hashem wants this victory which will bring the Geula. The Rebbe announced that this is the task of the seventh generation, to bring the Geula.

The Rebbe constantly worked to instill in us the desire for Geula. There was significant progress starting from Chaf-Ches Nissan but it wasn't enough. Since 3 Tammuz, people are far more ready to make real sacrifices to bring Moshiach.

You're saying that the concealment is meant to shake people up and get them moving?

Heaven forbid! I'm not saying that I understand what happened and I'm not explaining it. The Rebbe says it's a day of Geula and

therefore it must be a day of Geula, but you try, nevertheless, to understand what that means when we see concealment. I'm trying to help make it a little more palatable based on what it says in Chassidus about nesira which seemingly fits with what the Rebbe said that within this concealment there are some points of light. But it's a day of Geula because the Rebbe says so!

As the years go by, does it become harder or easier?

On the one hand, it feels easier since, unfortunately, we get used to it. But it shouldn't be that way; we should not get used to it! On the other hand, it becomes harder to do what needs to be done. Every passing moment is astonishing.

15 years – that means that a

child born back then is past his bar mitzva now ... an entire generation of bachurim and children...

Yes, that's the most astonishing thing of all. Look at today's bachurim, at how much they live with the Rebbe. They live the Rebbe, work for the Rebbe, breathe the Rebbe. I teach in a yeshiva in Rishon L'Tziyon and know talmidim who became Lubavitchers in just the past few years. They learn Chassidus and the Rebbe is their entire life. People live with the Rebbe constantly. They write to the Rebbe, tell the Rebbe what is happening with them, travel to the Rebbe – a bachur today won't forgive himself for not going for Tishrei. It wasn't always like this. Many people went before, but today, everything revolves around the

Rebbe. Thousands go for Tishrei.

Are you satisfied by the quantity and quality of hafatza of the Besuras Ha'Geula?

It should be far more! The whole world should be informed and have explanations. That is one area where much is lacking. Most people have no idea why we think the Rebbe is Moshiach and why we think the Rebbe is still with us. They think that it's only a few nutty people.

The Rebbe wants the entire world to know that he is alive, that he is Moshiach, and that he is redeeming the Jewish people and we need to accept his malchus. People don't understand what we're saying. They were able to bring people to the stadium in Ramat Gan and Baruch Hashem, there were explanations about this but it's not enough.

At the same time, we cannot look askance at the *makif*. In our generation, the *makif* is more influential than deep explanations. Look at politics and elections. Once upon a time, the candidates held town hall meetings where they explained things, while today the discussion revolves around the significance and impact of various advertising gimmicks. It's *makif*, it's superficial, but it works.

Maybe that's the problem; that many are caught up in symbols and less with shiurim and events with tochen.

One doesn't have to be at the expense of the other. We need both and to a certain extent, because we are a low generation and people think less and are more superficial, publicity is more effective. But it's really not instead of learning and explanation.

The fact is that the Rebbe asked for shiurim and not slogans.

The topic of Moshiach is a broad one which can be approached in many ways. The Rebbe let us know that the activities have to come from

You can't work on bringing Moshiach while neglecting Ahavas Yisroel. These are characteristics of the Rebbe and what characterizes Moshiach – simcha, Ahavas Yisroel, and chayus. The "forcing" the Rambam refers to, as explained in Chassidus, is from great love which is more compelling than anything else.

"below" not "above," i.e. from him. That's what the "Yechi HaMelech" sicha is about, that the people have to effectuate "Yechi HaMelech." This topic appears throughout the D'var Malchus. The Rebbe says that everything must come from below, in an "arousal from below," meaning that it has to come from us. The people have to approach the Rebbe and ask him to reveal himself as Moshiach. The problem is that we have not yet sufficiently explained the importance of this.

If so, then 3 Tammuz happened because the Rebbe wanted people to ask for Moshiach more sincerely – because throughout the years there were farbrengens, davening with the Rebbe, *kos shel bracha*, etc. and we didn't feel the need to ask for Moshiach because everything was wonderful? Now that we feel this great sense of loss, we ask for Moshiach?

Heaven forbid! I said before that I don't try to explain what happened on 3 Tammuz because I don't understand it. I went outside that day and didn't understand how the sun shone. The Rebbe gave us a *zetz* and it woke us up. We can't say that this is the reason for what happened.

Something happened and it woke us up. We didn't anticipate or want it to happen in this way, but if this is the way it happened we have to move forward, as the Rebbe wants us to, with simcha, and explain so that the world knows that Moshiach, the Rebbe, is coming.

The problem is though, that not only doesn't most of the world know this, many of Anash and even shluchim and people who studied the Rebbe's teachings over the years, don't understand the sichos as you do.

We keep going back to the first point. The one who establishes what happens is the Rebbe, not us. We weren't the ones who started this Moshiach initiative; it wasn't we who said that the seventh generation is the generation of Moshiach; not we who came up with the idea that the Rebbe is Moshiach. It didn't win us any popularity points, you know. It came from the Rebbe, especially in 5751-2. This is why I don't stop talking about the need to learn the D'var Malchus again and again because these sichos are pivotal.

True, it's much easier to talk about Ahavas Yisroel, to farbreng about learning Torah and Chassidus, to do nice programs to spread

Jewish ideas. People love to hear about that more than about Moshiach. And why get involved in areas that generate arguments? But the Rebbe says that this is what remains – to bring Moshiach – and this is the point of it all. That all actions, all mitzvos, and all Torah study be permeated with Moshiach. The Rebbe says (28 Sivan 5751) that it depends on **us**, and Hashem needs (as it were) that a Jew want, agree, and proclaim that not only has the time for Geula arrived but we have the Geula. He needs, as it were, for a Jew to be a partner with Hashem in bringing the Geula. In nearly every sicha that was said during those two years, the Rebbe spoke about this and this ought to inspire us, and not in order to cry...

To what extent is it dependent on us?

Hashem will be victorious and the Rebbe will be victorious in the war to bring the Geula; there's no doubt about that. But Hashem wants it to come from us, so we need to do everything we can so that it does, in fact, come because of us.

Exactly how it will work out and when, who knows? The Rebbe says there is no reason why it is delayed, because everything was done, but the Rebbe also says that if we see that Geula is delayed, we have to do more. Maybe only one more action is needed... This has to be the direction in our avoda to bring the Geula.

If it depends on us and has to come from us, what will happen if the people don't ask for Moshiach?

The Rambam paskened l'halacha that "when Yisroel do t'shuva, they are immediately redeemed," and if they don't do t'shuva? Hashem will



arrange things so that we do t'shuva. The Rebbe says that the Geula is happening in our generation and it's now. At the same time, we need to demand of Hashem that He not wait any longer.

Why is the Geula delayed? No one can say a reason why. Only afterwards will we be able to understand why the Geula was delayed, but right now we don't understand it and we cannot concede that there is an acceptable reason for the delay. If you see that this is the situation, you have to do the things we were told to do.

We are soldiers engaged in a campaign to make Hashem a dwelling place down here. That is the purpose of creation. It's all of Chassidus – the world was created for Geula. The Rebbe says we did it, it's done. "Do all that you can" is referring to the final activities to

welcome Moshiach. It demands simcha and the willingness to do our utmost.

One of the most important things that the Rebbe emphasizes is learning inyanei Moshiach and Geula. The sichos said in most recent years are not merely an amazing source of wisdom on this topic, but the light which illuminates everything that is going on in our current situation. Many people are confused because they don't keep learning these sichos. Without them, there are many challenges from all sides, such as, "Why do Lubavitchers do such-and-such or say this-and-that, which I so irritating and so hard to swallow?"

You explain it nicely but with some things you avoid giving a clear answer and you say, "I don't understand this." What can we understand and what can't we understand?

I know that we have to do what the Rebbe says. We have to do as we were told but not blindly, because we need to understand. The topic of Moshiach is not popular and maybe it would be more convenient to do other nice programs but we do it because of the Rebbe, even if we don't understand. If the Rebbe said to do it – then it makes no difference whether we understand or not. First there's the "naaseh" and then the "nishma."

The topic of Moshiach that we need to address isn't easy or simple but good things require effort. If there are difficulties that doesn't mean we drop it.

Can you sum up – what does the Rebbe want us to do?

That we live Moshiach, and this needs to be expressed in all areas of Torah and mitzvos. The chayus in

Moshiach needs to be suffused with Ahavas Yisroel. You can't say, "I'm living with Moshiach" while hurting someone else. You can't work on bringing Moshiach while neglecting Ahavas Yisroel. These are characteristics of the Rebbe and what characterizes Moshiach – simcha, Ahavas Yisroel, and chayus. The "forcing" the Rambam refers to, as explained in Chassidus, is from great love which is more compelling than anything else.

Yet you know that Moshiach activities sometimes lead to arguments and dissent whether within the community or among the shluchim, etc.

We have a problem. We can't forego the central point of emuna but it has to be done in a dignified way so that others join in.

And when it doesn't work out and you can't hold the stick by both ends?

If you think it's a matter of faith, you can't forego that. Do it as best as you can but don't compromise.

IT'S EASIER FOR SIMPLE JEWS TO WITHSTAND A TEST

Writing to the Rebbe through the Igros Kodesh has become widespread since 3 Tammuz.

There are so many stories and most of them haven't even been publicized. People tell about answers they opened to that were on the mark. The amazing thing is not only the miracles but the fact that a person asks and the Rebbe answers. You see that the Rebbe is responding to you. We're not talking about a couple of people. It's thousands. Bachurim in yeshiva show me their questions and the Rebbe's answers and I'm constantly amazed.

There are Chassidim who never merited to receive answers from the Rebbe and others who received answers occasionally, very short

But sometimes the answers aren't that clear and great care is needed and you should definitely consult with someone. It often involves dinei nefashos and it is forbidden to make a decision based solely on your own understanding.

ones, while today nearly everyone receives a long answer.

That's the Geula aspect of 3 Tammuz that on the one hand, certain things are much greater but on the other hand, we can't be satisfied with this. We need to see the Rebbe and hear him speak. That's the way it needs to be and it's an essential point in Chassidus.

We say that the Rebbe is alive – it's not a matter of quoting one sicha or another as proof. **Without a Rebbe in a physical body there is no basis for Chassidus.** Since 27 Adar 5752, the mashpiim spoke about this publicly for this was a given, so what happened?

What happened was 3 Tammuz... You can't ignore it and say that nothing happened.

If "principles" can change, then they were never true in the first place. We have an unchanging Torah. When the Rebbe says something as a fact, then it's an absolute fact.

If you were asked before 3 Tammuz whether this could have happened, would you say that it could?

Definitely not. I did not think this could happen. So Hashem presented us with a test. That's what a test is, that you see things and they are not the reality. Hashem told Avrohom to bring up his son and he went to slaughter Yitzchok even though Hashem had told him that his descendents would continue through Yitzchok. He had a big question but he went to carry out Hashem's will. Hashem does not change what He says. That doesn't happen. The Torah does not change. Hashem has a plan which must be carried out. There are certain things that Hashem says ahead of time are liable to change, but the goal, a dwelling place down below, does not change. The basis of Chassidus is unchangeable.

Torah has 70 facets and you can always find explanations...

The Rebbe stated clearly that our generation is the generation of Geula and that the seventh generation is the one that will bring Moshiach. So this is not liable to change. *The fact is that until 3 Tammuz we all knew this and it is only after 3 Tammuz that some people changed their minds.* We need to withstand the test!

There is a group of Chassidim who worked on the Rebbe's teachings including those from 5751-2. They delved into it and even worked on putting it into writing and they think differently than you do...

A test is difficult. Any test. Simple Jews have an easier time withstanding a test. R' Reuven Dunin would say, "There are Chassidim who after 3 Tammuz said they don't understand – and before 3 Tammuz you *did* understand?"

For someone who knows that before 3 Tammuz he did not

understand anything about the Rebbe, then even after something happens that is the opposite of everything he thought, he carries on. The greater and smarter a person is, the harder it is to withstand a test.

The vast majority of Anash believed before 3 Tammuz. The mashpia, R' Zalman Gopin went with me to sign people up for kabbalas ha'malchus. *Kfar Chabad* magazine constantly publicized articles on Moshiach and that the Rebbe is Moshiach. R' Yoel Kahn, R' Dov Halperin, R' Menachem Brod and others all wrote along these lines. If it was so clear before, when a nisayon happens do we suddenly abandon all our beliefs which used to be so elementary and fundamental?

The Rebbe doesn't trip up. There is no such thing. There are things that the Rebbe said up front that are being held up due to spiritual struggles and battles, but the moment the Rebbe says something decisively, that's the way it is. Failure is not possible.

When you look at the “first Goel” – Moshe Rabbeinu, how can we understand the fact that he hoped to complete the Geula and bring the Jewish people into Eretz Yisroel and was unable to do so?

The intention from the start was not for Moshe to take the Jewish people into Eretz Yisroel. Only on the surface of things might one think that he wanted to and was unsuccessful. In Chassidus it explains that this was the intention from the outset. But the Rebbe says (sicha Pinchas 5744) that if Moshe insisted and decreed that the Geula should come, that is what would have happened.

A Jew can change the entire Seder Hishtalshlus, when he really makes up his mind that the Geula should come now. A tzaddik decrees and Hashem... The fact that Moshe did not do so, says the Rebbe, was



the greatest mesirus nefesh on his part for the sake of the Jewish people (sicha Pesach Sheini 5751).

For tzaddikim and especially the Rebbeim, there is no concealment. Take the Alter Rebbe's imprisonment in Petersburg for example. The Rebbe was in prison and suffered as we know from the story. Nevertheless, it says that the Alter Rebbe did not want ten of his talmidim to join him in Petersburg because with their holy avoda they could have set the Petropavelsk fortress where he was imprisoned, on fire.

The fact that the Alter Rebbe suffered and was in great danger does not contradict the fact that everything was as he willed it. There is a Divine plan that requires enduring suffering on the part of the Rebbe and for the Jewish people, for a hidden intention, to make Hashem a dwelling place. We don't understand why Hashem wants it

this way, but the intention remains the intention – to bring the Geula through the Rebbe MH”M who is the seventh generation and who brings the Sh’china down to earth. There is no going back; the goal did not change and the job to carry it out is ours, the present generation of “the time for your redemption has arrived.”

SPEAK TO A MASHPIA IN ORDER TO UNDERSTAND THE REBBE'S ANSWER

Getting back to the topic of writing to the Rebbe through the Igros Kodesh that became popular after 3 Tammuz, as you said, many people are quick to ask the Rebbe everything. It wasn't like this in the past.

Trivial things should not be asked. You have to write to the Rebbe about what's going on with you, things of import, of course. It's

important to know that the answers aren't always clear and you need to consult with your mashpia or a doctor-friend. Sometimes, a person reading it on his own can distort what it says. In general, the Rebbe doesn't always answer clearly and you have to consult. That's the way it was all the years, when the Rebbe sent you to a doctor-friend or to askanim etc. Even then, it was through them that you got the Rebbe's answer.

Unfortunately, people rely on the Rebbe's answer that they open to in the Igros Kodesh when they are highly subjective. It was like this in the past when people decided on their own what the Rebbe wanted based on a hint that they heard or even an answer that they got. The more serious the issue, the more vital it is to consult with someone and not rely on your own understanding. For example, when doctors say to do an operation, you usually need to ask another doctor or doctor-friends, and definitely not to decide on your own not to do the operation.

Certainly, there were times that the Rebbe "took the responsibility" and said not to do an operation, but then you were 100% assured. Today, if the Rebbe answers through the Igros Kodesh, if a Chassid asked about an operation or a trip and got a clear answer in which the Rebbe says, "In response to your question about the operation, I don't think it is necessary," or "regarding the trip – it does not pay to go," this is perfectly clear. But sometimes the answers aren't that clear and great care is needed and you should definitely consult with someone. It often involves **dinei nefashos** and it is forbidden to make a decision based solely on your own understanding.

There are people who seek out an answer by forcing the issue – is it possible that the Rebbe

sometimes does not answer?

It's always important to consult with your mashpia after opening to an answer. Even thirty years ago, when the Rebbe answered you clearly, it was possible to read the opposite of what the Rebbe intended since a person is subjective. I look for answers in the Igros but even when I look, there are limits. You can't force the Rebbe to answer.

There was a baal t'shuva who wrote to the Rebbe (before 3 Tammuz) with a list of questions he had. He received a response in that next to each answer the Rebbe wrote the proper person to consult – a rav, doctor, advisor, professional, etc. He wrote to the Rebbe again and said that he wanted the Rebbe to answer him clearly and not to send him to other people since he didn't know anyone and the Rebbe was his rav, advisor.

I saw the answer the Rebbe gave him, "If so, you need to obey," and under this he made two lines for emphasis, "and I repeat again my clear response," and again the Rebbe wrote next to each question the appropriate person to consult.

Even when you consult with a professional, that is the Rebbe's answer; it's just that the Rebbe does not want to spoon feed you. The Rebbe wants a person to make an effort to think and understand even though this requires a great deal of obedience as well.

NO WORLD WITHOUT THE REBBE

On 3 Tammuz 5754 did you also think that it was all part of the long Geula process?

I didn't know what to think that day.

After all, the sun shone that day too...

The fact is that we are the seventh generation, the final generation. It's the reality. There is no such thing that life goes on in

this physical world without the Rebbe. The Rebbe said throughout the years that you can't be without a Rebbe in a physical body. The Rebbe raised us on that, that we must have a Rebbe.

Why do we need a Rebbe? Why doesn't Hashem run the world on His own? The answer is in chapter 2 of Tanya. There the analogy is given of the brain in the head. All limbs and organs are connected with the head. Why do we need a brain? The brain is the organ where the nefesh resides and everything extends from it. If there is no brain, there is no life. What about the nefesh? The nefesh needs a physical place to reside, and that is the brain.

Why do we need a Rebbe? Why doesn't Hashem rule on His own? The Rebbe explains that because of the inyan of dira ba'tachtonim it has to be through a human being who channels chayus to everyone like the brain that needs to be a physical brain.

Why then did the Rebbe take over after the Rebbe Rayatz? Why couldn't the Rebbe Rayatz continue leading as the Rebbe leads today?

The Rebbe Rayatz was the sixth generation and the Rebbe is the seventh, a new generation. The Rebbe Rayatz's generation did not have the task to bring the Geula, though our generation does, as the Rebbe said in his inaugural maamer.

I heard from Rabbi Yosef Hecht, rav in Eilat: the Rebbe said about this situation (Truma 5710) about the test of Ikvisa d'Meshicha, that it's the opposite of the truth. It's not the inyan of histalkus of tzaddikim. The histalkus of tzaddikim is well-known in the sifrei Chassidus and there are explanations about it. You can't call that a nisayon. The topic of 3 Tammuz is not clear and not understood by anyone, not to those known as "meshichisten" and not to those who aren't. The fact that the whole chain ends with the Rebbe,

only testifies that the Rebbe's statements that this is the final generation of galus and the first generation of Geula are coming to their ultimate fruition, and our goal, as Chassidim of the Rebbe MH" M, is to bring about the hisgalus.

The Rebbe says in several places (*Likkutei Sichos* vol. 26, p.7; vol. 24 in the first sicha, etc.) that there must be a Rebbe in a physical body and this is part of the dira ba'tachtonim, and so Moshiach must be a human being. We didn't invent this. The Rebbe taught us that a Rebbe must be in a physical body

and the hashpaos to the physical world must come through a Rebbe in a physical body. The world can't exist without the Rebbe. It's part of our belief. There is no such thing as a generation after the seventh generation. The seventh generation is the last one, period.

3 Tammuz 5769 – what should we do and what should we get out of it?

We want the Rebbe to come now. If G-d forbid he is still delayed, we have to live with the Rebbe even more, spread the Besuras Ha'Geula even further, so that the entire world

will know that there is a Rebbe and Moshiach.

This includes proclaiming Yechi at every suitable opportunity since this itself increases the life of the king and hastens his hisgalus as the Rebbe said in the sicha of 2 Nissan 5748 (and in the sicha of Rosh HaShana 5737 at the beginning, the Rebbe emphasizes that the main thing is **saying it** and it's not enough to think it).

That's the point: We want Moshiach now! *Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu V'Rabbeinu Melech HaMoshiach L'olam Va'ed!*

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YECHIDUS: FACE TO FACE IN THE HOLY OF HOLIES

By Yisroel Yehuda



Chassidim waiting for yechidus (artwork by Zalman Kleiman)

Yechidus: Awe inspiring moments between a Chassid and his Rebbe. Yechidus goes way beyond presenting a note and receiving a bracha or good advice. It is loftier than “giving shalom,” which is customary in other Chassidic groups. For Chassidim of yesteryear, yechidus, and especially their first yechidus, was the peak experience in their lives. A Chassid, from the time he matured or joined the ranks of Chassidim, he prepared himself for it. The yechidus itself was indescribable. They were holy moments etched in fire in the soul of a Chassid which ignited his middos, subjugated his mind and heart, and shaped him as a person.

When a Chassid left the yechidus, his direction on the road of life was laid out for him. It may have been a long and winding road, but he had direction. From that point on, his life revolved around that yechidus. What was said in yechidus served the Chassid as a guide map and a blessing for the road.

WHAT IS YECHIDUS?

The Rebbe defines it briefly: “The inyan of yechidus is one ‘yechida sh’b’nefesh’ asking and speaking to another ‘yechida sh’b’nefesh.’”

When a Chassid has a yechidus with the Rebbe, the Rebbe connects with the source of that Chassid’s soul and based on that source, he gives him a path to follow in avodas Hashem. This is no simple matter and it demands great spiritual and physical effort on the part of the Rebbe, but the Rebbe, in his love for the Chassid, does it for his sake.

The Rebbe Rashab once said that the main difficulty in yechidus is the constant “dressing

When a Chassid has a yechidus with the Rebbe, the Rebbe connects with the source of that Chassid’s soul and based on that source, he gives him a path to follow in avodas Hashem.

and undressing.” The servant of one of the Rebbeim who wasn’t that smart, expressed his surprise to the Chassidim that the Rebbe had to change his clothing after he finished receiving people for yechidus since they were drenched in sweat. When the Rebbe heard about his comment, he was annoyed and told the servant he was fired but he would continue to send him a salary.

The Rebbe said: What don’t you understand? When a Jew comes to me, in order to help him I have to (figuratively) put on his clothes in order to relate to the core of his issue and then, in order to give my bracha, I have to put my clothes back on again. When thirty people come in and I have to get undressed and dressed sixty times, isn’t that reason enough to sweat?

When a Rebbe receives someone for yechidus, in order to be able to respond to him, he has to find some connection, albeit in the most subtle form, to the situation he is presented with. In connection with this, the Rebbe Rayatz writes to one of his sons-in-law at length about a terrible

story with the Mittlerer Rebbe from which we can learn about the power of yechidus and the Rebbe’s avoda at this time (see box).

In the *HaYom Yom*, the Rebbe explains that the point of yechidus is to clarify the spiritual state of the Chassid, establish what his avoda is, and for him to achieve hishakshrus with devotion and commitment.

The Rebbe Rayatz writes that the point of yechidus is to clarify his spiritual state and to establish what his avoda is in “turn away from evil,” to push away the middos and habits that are no good and to cultivate good middos, to be diligent in learning and avoda and to be mekasher himself with complete unification and give himself over with all his desires.

The first yechidus was different than subsequent yechiduyos. At this first yechidus, the Rebbe “shaped” the character of the Chassid, and as the Rebbe Rayatz writes, “The structure, the intellect and emotions of a Chassid is according to his first yechidus with his Rebbe, and a Chassid’s first yechidus with the Rebbe is according to his essence-self. According to the manner of the Chassid’s essence-self, the Rebbe assigns him his avoda.”

CRUSHED EVIL INCLINATION

The Chassid, Maskil and Oved, R’ Avrohom Dovber son of R’ Yirmiyahu of Bobruisk described his trip to the court of the Tzemach Tzedek when he was six years old in 1832. They went as a group from Homil and were led by R’ Isaac of Homil. He described the trip itself, the joy of the Chassidim, their meeting up with other groups of Chassidim,

and finally, their arrival in Lubavitch and the yechidus he and his father had. He related this dialogue with his father on the topic of yechidus from which we can see how Chassidim relate to the Rebbe, to yechidus, and the place of yechidus:

“The Beis HaMikdash that stood in the Holy City of Jerusalem (may it be speedily rebuilt) is now destroyed. When the Jews do t’shuva, then Hashem will send us Moshiach, our righteous redeemer, who will gather us from the four corners of the earth and take us – together with our houses and our furniture – to the Land of Israel, where he will rebuild Jerusalem and the Beis HaMikdash. Until that time, we have neither the Beis HaMikdash nor the Holy of Holies. In the meanwhile, Lubavitch is our Jerusalem, the shul where the Rebbe davens is our Beis HaMikdash, and the room where the Rebbe sits is our Holy of Holies. The Rebbe himself is our Holy Aron containing the Luchos of G-d’s Holy Torah.

“Father’s solemn facial expression as he spoke these words made an awesome impression on me. Then, the realization struck me: Father and I had just been inside the Holy of Holies, and we now found ourselves in the Beis HaMikdash. What a wondrous idea! Very awesome indeed!

“As these thoughts about the Beis HaMikdash and the Holy of Holies went through my mind, I heard Father speaking to me again. ‘Are you aware, my son, that after Moshe deposited the Aron and the Luchos in the Holy of Holies, he was able to hear G-d’s voice speaking to him from between the Kruvim on top of the Aron?’

***In the meanwhile,
Lubavitch is our
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The Rebbe himself
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Holy Torah.***

“Yes,” I replied, “I heard Mother reading about this to my aunt.”

“The words that the Rebbe speaks to each Chassid entering his chamber for yechidus, are the word of G-d,” father continued. “Just as the Kohen Gadol used to enter the Holy of Holies all alone, so too, whoever enters the Rebbe’s room which is now our Holy of Holies, does so all alone. That’s why the audience is called yechidus.”

* * *

A similar and sharper description was given by the Chassid, R’ Yaakov Shimshon from which we can learn about the preparations made for yechidus which will be described later on. His father, R’ Zalman Yitzchok, prepared his son for half a year before his wedding so that he could see the Mitteler Rebbe for yechidus. However, the

grandfather, R’ Nachum Dovber did not find those preparations sufficient and for two months he explained to him the significance of having a yechidus with the Rebbe.

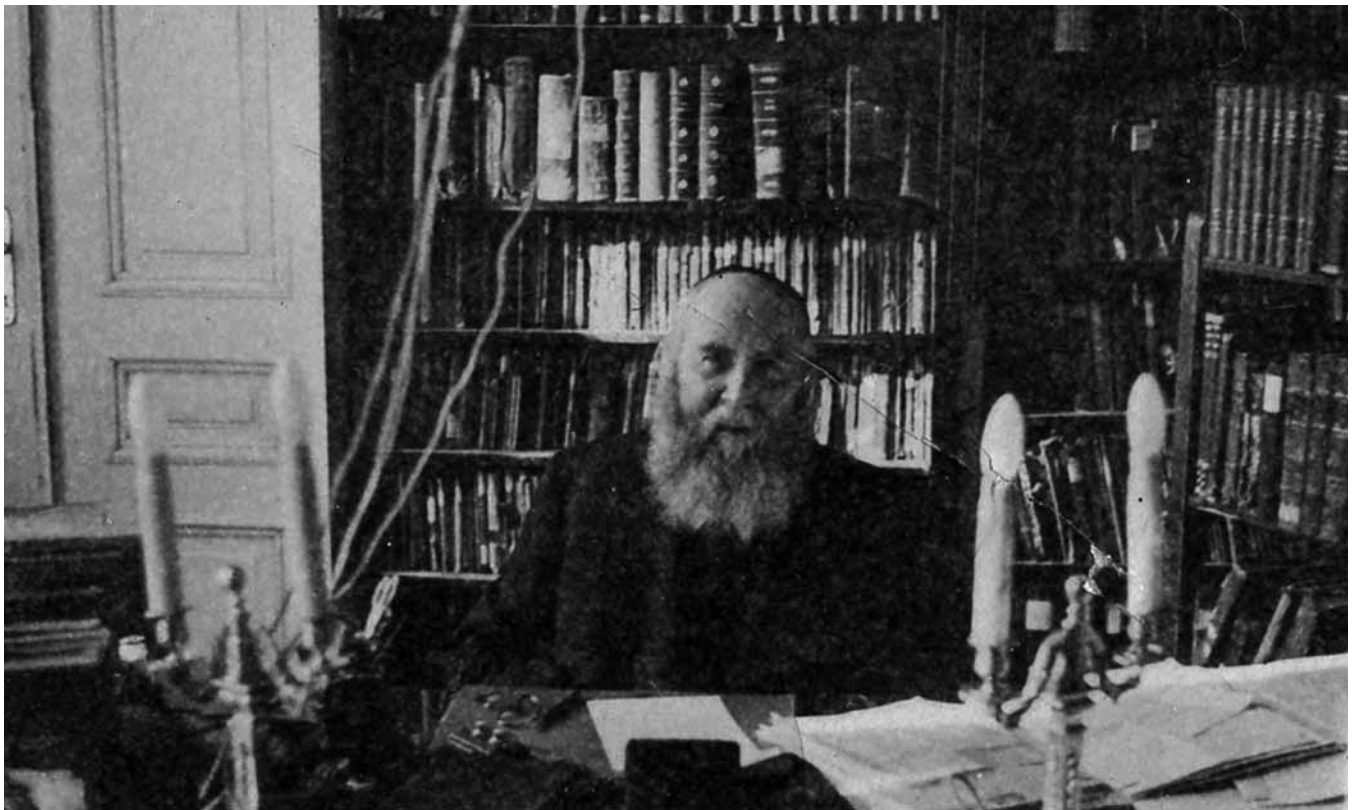
“By us Chassidim,” said the grandfather, “the Rebbe’s house was the Heichal of the Mikdash and the Rebbe’s room the Holy of Holies. When we sat, as young men, by the Rebbe in Liozna, we had awe for the earth on which the Rebbe’s house was built, all the more so for the *Gan Eden HaTachton*. After great preparation and deep cheshbon ha’nefesh, and after immersing in a mikva, we would allow ourselves to occasionally kiss the Rebbe’s amud that he davened from.

“If you had seen with what awe and love, the ninety year old gaon and Chassid, R’ Yerucham of Shipitovka went over to the Rebbe’s amud to kiss the place where the Rebbe’s hand rested while he davened, you would understand what is meant by a holy place where the Sh’china dwells.”

The grandfather went on to describe the exalted time of yechidus:

“There were men who, in their first yechidus – after properly preparing – as they stood on the threshold of *Gan Eden HaElyon*, before they entered the Rebbe’s room, internalized the proper appreciation for apprehension of G-dliness. Their natural emotions were refined and seeing the holy face of the Rebbe opened a channel from the neshama to the ruach and nefesh. During yechidus, the Rebbe patched up the nefesh and ruach that needed fixing. The Rebbe infused them with the light of the neshama.

“They emerged from the yechidus as a new creature with a



The Rebbe Rayatz in his yechidus room.

healthy G-dly soul, a happy and encouraging Good Inclination, a dismembered natural soul, and a crushed Evil Inclination...”

PREPARATIONS FOR YECHIDUS

When the High Priest entered “once a year” to the Holy of Holies, he needed to prepare a week in advance of Yom Kippur. The Mishna refers to technical matters but surely there were also lofty spiritual preparations.

If the High Priest, who was a tzaddik and removed from matters of this world, whose entire involvement all year was in the holy and pure avoda of the priesthood, and on Yom Kippur every Jew rises to a higher level – if *he* needed to prepare, what about a Jew trapped in a material world whose constant involvement is in the coarse,

lowly matters of this world, and he has to, for the eternal benefit of his soul, enter the Holy of Holies on an ordinary weekday? Not go in? That’s out of the question!

It is related as follows:

At the beginning of the Tzemach Tzedek’s nesius, when he was in Shklov, his son, R’ Yisroel Noach told him that many of the Chassidim were embarrassed to enter for yechidus. When he heard this, the Tzemach Tzedek cried mightily and said, “What does that mean – embarrassed? In something that pertains literally to nefashos, they’re embarrassed?”

The preparations for yechidus were among the main avodos in the life of a Chassid. Back then, a Chassid did not see the Rebbe simply when he showed up in Lubavitch. A Chassid went to the Rebbe only after he felt that his

G-dly soul needed support in its avoda in this world. The greater the Chassid, the longer his yechidus lasted him.

The preparation could be compared to climbing a steep mountain. At first you have to work very hard to reach the summit. The summit is yechidus. Then you need to descend slowly in order to bring the yechidus into action.

It used to be that Chassidim did not see yechidus as a meeting with the Rebbe but the culmination of a project that began months (or years) before, and then continued for months or years.

R’ Nachum Dovber explained to his grandson: “We were told by the elder Chassidim that you go to yechidus only after preparing well and this preparation takes time. For some of them, it took **three years and**

more.”

The Chassid, R' Isaac of Homil, before entering for yechidus with the Alter Rebbe, prepared himself for two years. When he went to the Alter Rebbe, he passed through the town of Kazan that was near Polotsk and he visited R' Shaul Kazaner. R' Shaul told him what he heard from the first Chassidim in Vitebsk, that when the Alter Rebbe founded Chabad Chassidus, he said a Chabad-Chassidic Torah teaching: “Six months with oil of myrrh and six months with perfume” (how the women were prepared to meet with King Achashverosh). Six months with oil of myrrh alludes to meditation that leads to true bitterness; Six months of perfume alludes to developing the proper appreciation for apprehension of G-dliness. This needs to be the preparation for yechidus.

When R' Isaac heard this, he stayed an additional year until he went to yechidus.

The Chassid, R' Moshe Vilenker, a Chassid of the Alter Rebbe, related about the great kiruv and special guidance that Chassidim bestowed upon him when first came to Liozna, to the Alter Rebbe. For five months he listened and learned, until he felt ready to enter for yechidus.

R' Shmuel Munkes said about himself that when he went for yechidus for the first time to the Alter Rebbe, he resolved not to want anything tasty anymore.

R' Shmuel Dovber of Borisov said what he heard from R' Mordechai of Horodok who heard from the Alter Rebbe, “What is forbidden, is forbidden; and what is permissible is unnecessary.” R' Mordechai said – we lived three to four years with this until we incorporated it into every area of life, and only then did we go to

the Rebbe for yechidus.

The way it was with the Mittlerer Rebbe, whoever went to see him, whether a Torah scholar or a simple person, did not have yechidus until he first heard a review of a drush Chassidus that the Rebbe said, two or three times.

One of the authentic descriptions we have about preparing for yechidus is one the Rebbe Rayatz writes about R' Simcha Zissel, the father of R'

Entering the Holy of Holies, standing before the Rebbe, the piercing eyes, the holy words, all this melted down the inner core of the Chassid and he submitted to the Rebbe like dust of the earth.

Mordechai of Horodok, one of the great Chassidim and mashpia in Tzashnik. R' Mordechai's father was a Chassid of R' Avrohom of Kalisk and after his Rebbe told him to, he became mekushar to R' Menachem Mendel of Horodok. However, he was not satisfied since he understood his teachings but was unsuccessful in absorbing his avoda, an avoda of the mind. It was only when the Alter Rebbe went to Horodok and explained the teachings of R' Menachem Mendel that he understood and felt pleasure in Chassidus. Then

R' Simcha Zissel prepared to enter for yechidus in order to ask his opinion whether to become mekushar to the Alter Rebbe.

“One day,” related the Rebbe Rayatz, “when R' Simcha Zissel felt ready for yechidus – with R' Mendel Horodoker – in those days, they realized that in order to enter for yechidus, proper preparation in two areas was necessary: to make a proper spiritual accounting so as to be able to tell the Rebbe all of the maladies of the soul, both the ailments of the intellect and the ailments of the emotions, and to make a strong resolution to do whatever the Rebbe said, with mesirus nefesh.

“In addition, the day itself that he had yechidus had to be a proper day: The evening of the day before to read the bedtime Shma with cheshbon ha'nefesh, to rise at midnight to recite Tikkun Chatzos with the feeling that the destruction of the Mikdash and the exile of the Sh'china have to be felt within his own self that his personal Mikdash about which it says, “and they shall make Me a Mikdash and I will dwell in it” – was destroyed and the G-dly soul is in exile.

“With these thoughts he recites the Tikkun Chatzos with genuine bitterness, crying bitterly from the depths of the heart and then sitting down to learn Torah, purifying himself in the mikva, learning a regular portion of Chassidus before davening, davening with mind and heart and pleading to Hashem that He help him do t'shuva. He fasts that day and is involved in Torah. Only then does it become a day worthy of yechidus, and there is hope that the yechidus will help him.”



The Rebbe in his yechidus room

TWO CHASSIDIM

In one of the Rebbe Rayatz's letters he describes how two great Chassidim of the Alter Rebbe prepared themselves, R' Moshe Vilenker whom the Rebbe said was a "Chassid p'nimi," and R' Yekusiel Liepler who was called a "Chassid makif."

The Rebbe Rayatz writes – Moshe Vilenker took three years to prepare for yechidus and afterwards he remained in Liozna another seven years in order to bring the yechidus into actual avoda.

The Tzemach Tzedek related that the tzaddik R' Aharon of

Strashela told him that the first night after R' Moshe's yechidus with his grandfather, he was so deep in thought over what he heard from the Rebbe that he asked two men to watch over him so that he didn't miss words in Maariv and the bedtime Shma. This went on for two weeks until he got back to himself.

For R' Yekusiel on the other hand, just hearing a review of the Alter Rebbe's teachings and thinking about the inyan of Rebbe and Chassidus, got him very excited and he went immediately to Liozna. Upon arriving there, he felt ready to go for yechidus.

The elder Chassidim explained to him that preparations are needed for yechidus but R' Yekusiel, with his heart on fire, wanted none of that and in an outburst demanded they should allow him to enter for yechidus. When he was not permitted entry for yechidus, he climbed the wall and jumped through the window into the Alter Rebbe's attic room as he uttered a heartfelt cry: Rebbe! Cut away my left side where the Evil Inclination dwells!

At the sound of his cries the Alter Rebbe said: Master of the universe, it says, and You give life to all.

R' Yekusiel left in great joy, saying that the Rebbe gave him chayus. Indeed, that was the truth, the Alter Rebbe had given him chayus, but it was given for his heartfelt, makif'dike cry.

AT THE REBBE

After the great inner preparation, the great moment arrived and the Chassid entered for yechidus. Entering the Holy of Holies, standing before the Rebbe, the piercing eyes, the holy words, all this melted down the inner core of the Chassid and he submitted to the Rebbe like dust of the earth. In those moments, even mighty maskilim and ovdim of broad intellect stood trembling, their eyes streaming and their hearts melting within.

The Rebbeim were generally different in their yechidus, in how they responded and the wording of their brachos. In the description of the trip of the oved and maskil, R' Avrohom Dovber of Bobruisk, he describes the Tzemach Tzedek's room:

"The room in which the Rebbe sat was quite large, the walls lined with cabinets full of s'farim. The Rebbe sat behind a large table, upon which lay a few

s'farim, several boxes filled with coins, and two lit candles.

"As Father entered the chamber, the Rebbe was studying a seifer which lay open before him. But when we approached the place where the Rebbe sat, he raised his eyes from the seifer and gazed into father's face, and into mine. Father's entire body began to quake, and I also became flustered and began to weep silently.

"The Rebbe stretched out his holy hand to take the pidyon from my father, as father stood in his place, paralyzed with fear and at a loss for what to do next. He remained standing in silence, his head bowed, his eyes running rivers of tears which fell to the floor. At first he managed sufficient self control to keep from being heard, but within a few moments he broke into loud weeping, his voice wailing up and down the scale. Seeing Father crying like that, my heart went to pieces and I too began to cry in earnest as I looked into the Rebbe's holy face.

"The Rebbe read the pidyon that father had handed him, and studied it for some time. As he read it, he looked up into father's face, and into mine, from time to time. As soon as the Rebbe began speaking, Father ceased his weeping. He moved his lips silently, repeating every word the Rebbe spoke, but making no sound."

Another description of yechidus with the Tzemach Tzedek, was given by a maskil and oved, the elevated Chassid, R' Gershon Dovber of Bobruisk to the Rebbe Rayatz when the latter was a child:

"First," said the Rebbe Rayatz, "he described the Rebbe's face to me and then his place at the long table which had many s'farim on

it, big and small. The Rebbe sat on a chair dressed in white with a hat of sable on his head with a white turban underneath. Two candles were lit on the table and a Zohar was open before him.

"When I entered the Rebbe's room," said R' Gershon Ber, "I began to cry and my feet felt as though they were placed in cement for I could not move them. The gabbai, R' Chaim Dov told me to approach the table where the Rebbe sat, and a tremor went through my entire body and my knees knocked together.

"When I approached the table, the Rebbe asked me, 'What have you done in the ten years since you were here with your uncle, the Chassid R' Ezriel Yaakov Melamed?' I cried and told all, not withholding anything."

R' Gershon Dovber continued to describe the yechidus and in conclusion, the Rebbe Rayatz writes, "When I looked at his face as he spoke, I saw the great emotion he felt as he remembered those days, holy emotions that filled the entire world of this Chassid, maskil and servant of G-d."

By the Tzemach Tzedek it was understood that when he did not accept the pidyon, it was not a good sign. In 5615/1855 the Rashbatz had a son who when he was a year old became mortally sick. Rashbatz went to the Rebbe to give a pidyon and began to cry.

"Put the pidyon on the table," said the Rebbe. As much as Rashbatz pleaded, it did not help and he had to leave the pidyon on the table. When the Rebbe said, "It is already too late," he went home crying and found that the child was no longer living.

Half a year before the passing of the Tzemach Tzedek, it was

hard for him to speak but people saw wondrous revelations. The Tzemach Tzedek no longer wanted to receive Chassidim for yechidus for questions about material matters and he would say that he did not see the body but the light of the neshama and therefore he could not answer about material things.

It is said about the Rebbe Maharash that he would ask the person, "Where are you holding?" by which he meant what was the topic of the last yechidus he had with his father, the Tzemach Tzedek.

There was a Chassid who served as mashpia for the young married men in Vitebsk. Among his disciples was R' Shmuel Brin. This was a group of cold intellectuals. They had a minyan to themselves and the mashpia was their regular chazan. Their davening was quiet and protracted – with intellect.

The mashpia once went to the Rebbe Maharash and the Rebbe asked him too where he was holding. The mashpia answered, "Baal t'filla."

The Rebbe said, "A baal t'filla stands on the threshold. If he is a proper baal t'filla, then he is meritorious and he brings merit to many; if he is not fitting, he sins and causes many to sin." Then the mashpia said, "The Rebbe gave me a tickle under the heart and gave me a new soul."

When he returned to Vitebsk and davened Kabbalas Shabbos, many people gathered from the street to see what was happening at their minyan for this time they davened with greater enthusiasm than at Kol Nidrei.

Regarding the Rebbe Rayatz, R' Simcha Gorodetzky wrote in his diary, "When I was in Charkov I was given two messages to deliver to the Rebbe

Rayatz, one from the son of the old Chassid, Yechiel Menuchin, who said that when he was in Charkov in 5682/1922, he was asked to get involved in Maos Chittim before Pesach, but he did not get involved because his son died. He asked that I relay this reason to the Rebbe that he did not do as he promised.

The second mission was given to me by the Chassid, Yehoshua Eliyahu Volosov who had gotten entangled in his business and he asked me, "Tell the Rebbe that I messed myself up."

When I went to the Rebbe to give him an report, I went at night which was not the time for yechidus, and I spent four hours there. When I gave the report from Charkov, I said that Menuchin asked me to tell the Rebbe that he did not get involved in Maos Chittim as promised.

The Rebbe asked why, and I said his son was sick. "And what?" asked the Rebbe and when I did not answer he understood that he had died. He immediately said, "Really?" and I could see that he was brokenhearted. He began to cry with tears, the likes of which I hadn't seen except for when the shofar was blown. Then he took a handkerchief and wiped his eyes and forehead and said, "Nu, what else do you have to tell me?"

I told him I could no longer speak and the Rebbe said, "But you are a shliach and it's none of your business, speak!"

I told him that Yehoshua Eliyahu said he is in a mess and the Rebbe once again said, "Really? In a mess," and once again he cried out loud.

When I left the Rebbe's room it was already one in the morning and Rebbetzin Shterna Sarah, the Rebbe's mother, waited in the

THE REBBE'S AVODA IN YECHIDUS

On one of the Mittlerer Rebbe's trips, he stayed in an inn not far from the town of Smargon. This was the month of Av and because of the good weather they decided to stay there for a week. When people heard about this decision, a large crowd gathered to greet him and he received them for private audiences, as is customary.

One day, in the middle of the day, when hundreds of people stood crowded together and waited for yechidus, the Rebbe suddenly asked for the door to be closed and the reception line stopped. The Chassidim who were there assumed the Rebbe was tired and had stopped for a rest.

Half an hour later, the gabbai, R' Zalman came out looking harried and with eyes red from weeping. He whispered something to the distinguished Chassidim who were present. When they heard what he said they blanched and were in a panic.

After an hour or two, some of the great Chassidim entered the house and heard, from behind the door, the Rebbe reciting T'hillim with an outpouring of his soul and much crying. A few of them fainted in anguish without knowing why the Rebbe was in such a state so that in the middle of a regular weekday he would stop receiving guests and would involve himself in avoda with such bitterness.

The Rebbe, having finished reciting T'hillim, began getting ready for Mincha but he was so weak from the avoda of saying T'hillim that he had to lie down for an hour and more to rest. Then he davened Mincha in the manner used during the Ten Days of Repentance.

When the Chassidim learned of this, they began davening Mincha in the manner used on a public fast day (because those who had already had yechidus and those who were waiting to be received, fasted).

After Mincha, the Rebbe went out to the yard, went up on the bima, and said a long maamer on the words, "Chomas Bas Tziyon Horidi KaNachal Dima." This discourse aroused great emotion among the Chassidim and greatly inspired them. Many years later they remembered this event.

The Chassid, R' Pinchas of Shklov, who was a distinguished Chassid in the time of the Alter Rebbe and one of the elder Chassidim in the time of the Mittlerer Rebbe, asked the Rebbe – a few days later – for an explanation.

For a moment, the Rebbe became saddened and then he said: When Anash come for yechidus and reveal the afflictions of their innermost hearts – each according to where he is holding – whatever they relate the Rebbe he has to find in himself in the most subtle manner and the questioner cannot be responded to with a tikkun and a real order of corrective behavior until he [the Rebbe] first fixes it in himself, and then he can give guidance and a method of rectification.

That day, someone came in and I was shocked by what he said and could not, heaven forbid, find within myself an iota of this in even the subtlest form. The thought came to me that perhaps, heaven forbid, this is the evil concealment that is found in the depths of the depths of klipa as is explained in Chassidus, and this thought shook me up to the depths of my soul to return to Hashem from the inner depths of the heart.

room where they waited for yechidus and asked, "What's this? You were in yechidus for over four hours? Why do you look upset?" She told me that she was worried because her son hadn't eaten yet and she thought I was coming right out.

I told her what I was doing there for so long and I also told her about the difficult news I had for him that I relayed without knowing it would have such an effect on him.

She said she did not know what to do because every time he held yechidus, the floor was wet afterwards, from tears.

WHAT DID THEY ASK IN YECHIDUS?

The early Chassidim did not bother the Alter Rebbe about material matters even when life was very difficult, but Chassidim throughout the generations, besides asking mainly about spiritual matters, also asked about material things. However, the focus of yechidus was clarifying spiritual matters.

The Rebbe, on Acharon shel Pesach 5710, explained that "in general, you speak to the Rebbe about two kinds of things: 1) a tikkun and spiritual parnasa, 2) a tikkun and material parnasa (but not coarse materialism).

Each category can be divided into three: children, life, and parnasa which are candle, table, bed. Life is a candle as it says, "the candle of Hashem is the soul of man." Parnasa is the table and children the bed.

Spiritual yechidus is also divided into three; candles – mitzvos, as it says "for a candle is a mitzva," table – Torah, bed – correcting one's iniquities and spiritual downfalls.

WHAT DID THEY GIVE IN YECHIDUS?

The elder Chassidim related that before a Chassid had yechidus, he would decide that he would no longer want what he desired. Needless to say, this was not about forbidden desires because – what is forbidden, is forbidden. It meant not wanting everything the heart desired, even permissible things.

They would also say: on the threshold of the Rebbe's beis midrash we left our natural middos. The mezuzos of *Gan Eden HaTachton* generated a yearning for love and fear [of G-d]. On these birthing stones was the flock of Chassidim born.

The Chassid, R' Pinchas Reizes, said, "When I had my first yechidus with the Alter Rebbe, I gave him my nefesh. When I went the second time, I gave him my ruach. When I went the third time, I gave him my neshama."

IF I WANTED TO CONCEDE TO MY G-DLY SOUL

There are many stories from yechidus over the generations as well as miracles regarding

material things and even more – spiritual miracles that transformed souls and saved souls. These stories were usually related by Chassidim but on rare occasions, the Rebbe would speak about a yechidus. One of these interesting stories was related by the Rebbe Maharash to his son, the Rebbe Rashab.

"Today, I had two guests. From one I got great pleasure and from the other, deep pain."

R' Eliyahu from the farming community of Abele near Lubavitch came and so did the Chassid, R' Eliezer of Polotzk, author of *Mishnas Eliezer*. These were the two guests the Rebbe Maharash was referring to.

When R' Eliyahu Abeler went in for yechidus, he asked him: "What's new with you?" He was a businessman and a simple person.

He answered, "Baruch Hashem."

"How is business?"

"Baruch Hashem, but Rebbe, I am greatly distressed about Yosef who is in our settlement. He has no success in anything. We collected money and bought him a horse and wagon so he could travel to the city with some merchandise and there is always a problem – the axles break, the horse breaks a leg, and then his horse is stolen. All these mishaps happen to him. Rebbe! What can I do to help him?"

And he sighed and burst into tears, saying: "Rebbe, give him a bracha."

The Rebbe Maharash said, "You can help him a lot. When a Jew feels the pain of his fellow Jew and makes a request on his behalf, he thereby removes all accusations and all the harsh judgments."

The Rebbe took a coin out of his pocket and gave it to R'

TANYA – ANSWERS FROM YECHIDUS

As was transmitted by the elders of Anash, the book of Tanya is a compilation of advice which the Alter Rebbe gave the Chassidim during yechiduyos over ten years, from 5540 to 5550 and in the summer of 5552 he began to organize the Tanya in the form it is now.

(Igros Kodesh Rebbe Rayatz, vol. 4, p. 274)

Eliyahu and said, “I want to be your partner. Hashem should help you so that you can do a favor for a Jew and it should be successful.”

R’ Eliyahu trembled and said, “Rebbe, you want to be partners with me? Do you know who I am? I am the coarse material discussed in Tanya whose sole rectification is by breaking.”

This is not the place to quote the Rebbe’s answer but the Rebbe derived much nachas from him.

When R’ Eliezer entered for yechidus and the Rebbe asked him what was new, he said that Baruch Hashem he had an in-depth shiur and the men were learning well and on Shabbos they extended their davening until after the minyan, they learned Chassidus, etc.

The Rebbe asked, “And what about middos?”

R’ Eliezer said, “Like prosperous young men.”

The Rebbe said, “The fault is in the educator, and not them. First and foremost, chinuch and guidance must be about good middos; not to learn the seifer, but to teach oneself. When you go home, start a free loan fund and each of them should set aside half of their dowry for this fund.”

“I won’t be able to influence them to do that,” said R’ Eliezer.

The Rebbe said, “If I said to do it – it will work. Tell the men that when they give, they are not giving of what is theirs, and if they do not give – they will not have that money.”

The Rebbe concluded, “When you come here the next time, bring me better news.”

When the Rebbe Maharash finished telling this to his son, he said, “If I wanted to concede to my G-dly soul, I would kiss R’ Eliyahu Abeler.”

Everybody had yechidus, even



the sons of the Rebbeim with their father. One of the more moving stories about a yechidus of a Rebbe’s son with his father was related by the Rebbe Rashab at the wedding of his sister, about a yechidus he had with the Rebbe Maharash.

The subject of the yechidus was a wondrous description about the descent of the neshama. The Rebbe Maharash compared this to a prince who was sent by the king to a wild environment for him to acquire knowledge. At first, he was sad about being far from his father but he slowly got used to his situation, he forgot where he came from, and he began acting like the wild people among whom he lived.

After a while, he suddenly remembered who he was and what his mission was and he woke up and remembered the face of his father the king. He made a strong resolution not to befriend fools any longer and he began working on the purpose of his being there until he completed it.

“I will never forget,” said the Rebbe Rayatz, “that moment and that scene when my father the Rebbe [Rashab] related this yechidus. Before he began talking he stood up and with his two

hands he gripped the edge of the table and looked for a long time at the chair at the head of the table – an empty chair which nobody had touched and was the place of the Rebbe Maharash.

“His face was white except for two red spots on his cheeks. Tears flowed from his eyes onto the table and he began to speak: I once had yechidus with my father, etc.

“Everybody present stood as he told about the yechidus except for our uncle Raza who remained seated, looking at the Rebbe and his eyes poured forth two rivers of tears which amazed all those who were there (Raza did not often cry).

THE YECHIDUS BURNED FOR SIXTY YEARS

As mentioned earlier, yechidus was the beginning of a Chassid’s path in life and it sometimes also changed him from one extreme to another. To Chassidim, even simple ones, their life’s work revolved around their first yechidus and they constantly lived with it.

The Rebbe Rayatz notes several times, the obligation of every Chassid to remember the

yeichidus he had, “A wise Chassid ought to picture to himself, at least once a year, how he stood in yeichidus by the Rebbe.”

Somewhere else he wrote in more detail about the obligation of every Chassid to recall his stay in Lubavitch, “To establish set times – each according to his circumstances – to recall each detail separately and to try and picture it in your mind, the scene as it was, the structure of the place and the sight of the people who were there at the time, and above all else – the face of the Rebbe, holy of holies.

“To remember – to the degree that it is possible – the wording of the brachos, what was said in yeichidus and the wording of the holy talks and at least the topics and to toil with the power of memory with great exertion, to remember everything possible.”

One time, the Chassid, R’ Dovid Tzvi of Chernigov exclaimed, “Oy, Rebbe!” and he fainted.

Afterwards, he related that he remembered a yeichidus that he had with the Tzemach Tzedek when he was bar mitzva, and the Tzemach Tzedek put his hands on his head and blessed him. He also remembered other private audiences that he had with the Tzemach Tzedek and when he did so, he fainted.

* * *

In one of his reshimos, the Rebbe Rayatz brings an interesting story about a Chassid of the Rebbe Maharash:

I knew one of the Chassidim of my grandfather, and R’ Pesach was his name. He was a very simple man. He was a wholesaler who brought merchandise from Homil to the shopkeepers in the neighboring towns and he made a good living out of this.

For Rosh HaShana he went with other Chassidim to my grandfather in Lubavitch. In his note he wrote about his work and he mentioned that he himself traveled with the wagon of merchandise. My grandfather blessed him abundantly and said, “You can constantly fulfill ‘lift your eyes on high – Shma is Yisroel.’”

Reb Pesach went straight from the Rebbe’s study to find Rabbi Mordechai Yoel, who would be able to explain what the Rebbe meant.

Rabbi Mordechai Yoel explained, since he spent much of his time on the road, he was able to see the sky which was like the Throne of Glory and this was a segula for fear of Heaven, and that the letters of the word Shma, Shin, Mem, Ayin are the first letters of the verse “*Se’u marom eineichem.*”

The Rebbe Rayatz continued with the following reminiscence of his own childhood, when he was eleven years old:

“Twenty-five years later, in 1891, when R’ Pesach paid a visit to Lubavitch for Rosh Hashanah he told me in detail all about that first yeichidus in 1866, and added: ‘When Rabbi Mordechai Yoel explained me what the Rebbe had told me, I felt my soul lighting up, and from then on I yearned to understand the Torah. My neighbor, a Chassid whom we knew as Hirshel the Watchmaker, taught me every so often, so that within a few years I was able to study a few lines for myself out of Tanya, Torah Ohr and Likkutei Torah. The Rebbe’s words put me on my feet!’

“Years went by and Reb Pesach became a wealthy man and he moved to Lodz, where he dealt in manufactured goods.

Then in 1928, when he was about ninety years of age, he again repeated to me what he had heard in that yeichidus – and still with the same excitement and delight, as if this encounter had happened the day before. This time he concluded his recollection as follows: ‘From the time I first set out to try my own fortune on the road, I have always sought lodgings with large windows, and I always take a seat near a window, so that I will always be able to fulfill those words: ‘Raise your eyes heavenward.’

“Sixty-two years have now passed since I was privileged to hear from the Rebbe, your grandfather, that Shma is Yisroel. Throughout all those years, whenever I say Shma Yisroel, whether in the daily reading, or while the Torah Scroll is being brought out of the Holy Ark, or during the responses of K’dusha, or in the long V’Hu Rachum prayer, or after N’ila on Yom Kippur – I always recall that Shma is Yisroel. One request I have of Hashem – When the time comes for me to say my final Shma Yisroel when I return my soul to Him, I pray that He grant me a clear mind, so that then too I will be able to recall those words the Rebbe told me-Shma is Yisroel.’

“I will admit and not be ashamed,” wrote the Rebbe Rayatz, “that when I looked at the simple wholesaler from Homil, R’ Pesach son of Yisroel, and saw the majesty of his old age, his white beard, his refinement and the sincerity of his hiskashrus to what the Rebbe said, I envied him. That is the essence of a Chassid, a simple Jew of my grandfather the Rebbe Maharash.”

THE GUARD IS SLEEPING, BUT THE GENERAL MOVES ON

By Rabbi Zalman Notik
Mashpia, Toras Emes – Yerushalayim

Yesterday's emuna has become today's ChaBaD, i.e. intellect. It's time we started nourishing our emuna from even higher levels of hiskashrus and faith in Moshiach.

To my fellow T'mimim! The great and holy day of 3 Tammuz is approaching, a 24-hour period that the Rebbe MH"M calls the "beginning of Geula." In several sichos, the Rebbe emphasizes that while this day on the surface presents itself as the start of a harsh exile, its outcome causes it to be positive retroactively. Thus Gimmel Tammuz is the beginning of Geula, not in a way of a "descent for the purpose of ascent" but an ascent

that mistakenly seems like a descent.

I was sitting in shul in Shikun Chabad in Yerushalayim and thinking how to write this. Should I address our rational-Chabad part of ourselves and deal less with the makifim of emuna? How long and how far can you go with just the belief that the Rebbe is chai v'kayam, here with us, taking care of even our smallest problems; getting excited by yet another Igros Kodesh miracle; talking with the

people that you meet that there is someone in charge here and you can turn to him with your problems and get an answer and we need to follow his guidance, and only then do we reach the safe shores of a personal and collective Geula?

Enough! For fifteen years we have been living with blind faith. Perhaps it is time to switch to the avoda of Chabad/intellect and push the makifim/supra-rational faith up to the heavens.

As I was thinking about this, a Belzer Chassid (as per his request I am not saying his name) said to me:

"Last night, I saw the Lubavitcher Rebbe in a dream and he asked me many questions [I'm not repeating his entire story both for reasons of privacy and because it doesn't all pertain to us – ZN] and I answered the Rebbe and the Rebbe asked me more, etc."

When he finished his story, I cried out in my heart, "Rebbe, thank you! You answered me and resolved my doubts."

I considered what that Belzer Chassid said as a clear horaa to me: Talk only about emuna and show how emuna has penetrated even the intellect of a Belzer Chassid, because this man did not seem particularly excited about his dream so apparently, this is commonplace!

And that is the point, dear T'mimim:

Yesterday's emuna has become the Chabad of today. It is time that we nourish our emuna from higher levels of hiskashrus and emuna in the Moshiach. As it says in Chassidus in several places; a Jew needs to climb up levels of emuna.

THE REBBE SAYS: THE WORLD IS READY

This helps us address a familiar problem: If the Rebbe says the world is ready to welcome Moshiach and Geula, why are there claims from within our own camp that the

world is not yet ready, asserting that it pushes people away from Chassidus?

T'mimim! We are in the midst of the hardest nisayon which has no precedent since we became a people. We don't realize why our neshamos were chosen to learn in Tomchei T'mimim. The role of the T'mimim, as defined by three generations of Rebbeim, is to be "soldiers of the house of Dovid," whose mission is to vanquish those who "mock the footsteps of Your anointed one." Their job is to inculcate the simple faith that Moshiach is already here, in flesh and blood, and that the Geula is a present reality. The Rebbe said, on 28 Sivan 5751, that we can't suffice with the announcement that Moshiach is about to come; rather, Hashem, as it were, needs our proclamation that the true and complete Geula is already here.

As for the claim that this can push people away and the world is not a keili for this – the Rebbe himself addressed this (Shabbos Parshas Korach 3 Tammuz 5751) saying that when a Jew comes and says the world is not a keili for inyanei Geula, he should be told "On the contrary! Go out to the street and start talking Geula and you will see, with your own eyes, that not only isn't the world opposed, but the world – the nature of the world and the nations – is such that it demands from a Jew that he operate in Geula mode!

It's simple. Go "out of" yourself and start doing and you will discover this for yourself. Work to reveal somewhat your yechida, the shtus d'k'dusha that our Rebbe poured into you, in Tomchei T'mimim, and then you will discover the yechida of those Jews around you and you will see how the fire of Moshiach is burning within them.



Rabbi Zalman Notik

The Rebbe said, on 28 Sivan 5751, that we can't suffice with the announcement that Moshiach is about to come; rather, Hashem, as it were, needs our proclamation that the true and complete Geula is already here.

SLEEPING AFTER SIMCHAS TORAH 5745

Then the animal soul pulls out another card and says: What about the sicha from Simchas Torah 5745 when the Rebbe berated those who publicized that the Rebbe is Moshiach?

Answer it in a way that the

animal soul loves to hear, with a story:

Many years ago there was a war between France and England and as these long wars went, sometimes there were lengthy pauses in the fighting that lasted for hours or even days. During one of those periods, a French soldier stood guard duty at the front in the middle of the night. His instructions were clear: "The area in front of you is no-man's land. If you see any movement, shoot immediately without asking questions. Only the enemy would be moving around here and you can't lose the element of surprise. Shoot to kill, immediately!"

The soldier patrolled the area. Around him was utter silence except for natural night noises. A big moon was up in the sky. After weeks of battle, these few hours of quiet were a blessing. A great weariness overcame him and he noticed a small cave. A voice in his head said: Go in for just five minutes. Take off your load of weapons and ammunition belt.

Within two minutes, he was sound asleep. Twenty minutes went by and the battle resumed. The French began to advance their troops. Within hours, they had penetrated deep into the British area while the guard continued to sleep. Some more hours went by and the soldier woke up. He could hear the sound of tanks and people talking. And as a disciplined soldier ... he sprang up and while running he managed to load his weapon and release the safety catch. Within seconds he was shooting in every direction.

The groans of the wounded could be heard all around, what chaos there was in the camp! Finally, one soldier managed to stop the madness. The former guard was led to the commander who screamed, "What were you doing?"

He replied, "I was only filling the orders you gave me yesterday."

"I'm filling orders," shouts the obedient Chassid who slept after Simchas Torah 5745. But don't you know that the front line of battle has been moved several times? As the Rebbe put it, the world has already become a proper keili for the revelations of Moshiach!

Starting from the night of Simchas Torah 5746, one year later, the Rebbe said that the Nasi of our generation is the Moshiach of our generation, and he said he does not mind if you interpret this literally.

Starting with the new era that began on 22 Shevat 5748 and continuing with the era that began after 28 Nissan 5751, the Rebbe's answers regarding the Melaveh Malka of N'shei Chabad in Crown Heights on 28 Teives and the Rebbe's nonstop encouragement of Yechi before the world, allowing the media to come and broadcast the kabbalas ha'malchus live.

THE WORLD HELPS

The truth is it's not easy to internalize the change. It's not easy to change your worldview from an exile perspective to a Geula perspective. But sometimes, the world itself helps us out:

One day I was on a bus in the Geula neighborhood of Yerushalayim and opposite me sat a man with a long beard who looked like a rosh yeshiva or something of

The world around us is already conquered and yet there are people who continue to imagine that we are still in the combat zone and anybody around us is the enemy.

the sort. I thought: Zalman, you're on shlichus. Nu, spread the message of Moshiach and Geula!

You know when you get tongue-tied and you start wondering – who knows how he'll react, maybe he'll get upset with me, maybe it will create a chilul Hashem. On the other hand, the Rebbe said to publicize the Geula to everyone and you can't shirk your shlichus!

I decided to make a compromise with my animal soul and this is what I planned to do. A few seconds before I would get off the bus, I would say to him: Yehudi, Moshiach is about to be revealed and every good deed hastens his coming. That would protect me from an attack because by the time he would respond, I would be off the bus.

That's what I did. About 300

meters before my stop, I got up, turned to him with a friendly face and got out the sentence I had reviewed a few times in my mind. I was in the middle of my outburst when he called out, "You're a Chabadnik?"

Uh oh, I thought.

"Come back a minute, I want to tell you something."

He said this calmly and I was persuaded to sit back down. This is what he told me:

"Last year I wrote to the Rebbe in the Igros Kodesh and don't ask ... what a miracle and what a precise answer I got. It was absolutely *moradik* (awesome)."

Then he launched into a long story that lasted for nine more stops.

Chevra! The world is ready, the territory has already been conquered and the time has come to stop being scared of the world because we are among friends, not enemies.

If we are wondering what hachlata to make for 3 Tammuz, the answer is simple, it's written black on white in the D'var Malchus for Parshas Korach 3 Tammuz:

Don't be afraid of the world! When you start talking to someone on the bus, you discover that the world, the nature of the world, and even the nations of the world, are ready for Geula.

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Sivan 28 - Gimmel Tammuz Magbis

B.H. Sivan 15, 5769

To all Anash, Men and Women, G-d bless you.

We are soon approaching the very auspicious day, Gimmel Tammuz. This day comes in close proximity with Sivan 28, the auspicious day that the Rebbe MH"M and the Rebbetzin arrived in the United States.

Obviously, these are very opportune days, especially when it is connected to the number ten, when one should again evaluate his or her "Hiskashrus" (connection) with the Rebbe, and more important, to utilize these special days to 'strengthen' the Hiskashrus to the Rebbe.

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With this in mind, we therefore urge each and everyone of anash, men and women to support Kupas Rabbeinu in every possible way.

In this merit may we be "zoiche" that much before Gimmel Tammuz, the Rebbe will be revealed as Melech Hamoshiach and redeem us from this deep and bitter Golus and lead us all to the true and final Geulo, NOW MAMAOSH.

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THE REBBE'S WEDDING GIFT

By Nosson Avrohom

Translated by Michoel Leib Dobry

During all the years that Rabbi Shneur Halperin stood at the Rebbe's side during dollars distribution, he never watched a more wondrous story unfold than this one.

It was during a Sheva Brachos celebration. On the men's side, the invited guests and friends gathered together and sat down in a uniquely festive atmosphere. The participants proceeded to relate a variety of special stories that they had experienced personally in the presence of the Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach, including some marvelous instances of Divine Providence. Of course, they also took advantage of the opportunity to discuss ways how to intensify the spreading of the announcement of the Redemption and the identity of the Redeemer among the Jewish People at-large.

There was one story related on this occasion that I decided must be put in writing, as I saw that all the participants were especially overcome and thrilled when they heard it. It had been told by Rabbi **Shneur Halperin**, the Rebbe MH"m's shliach in the M'vo'ot HaChermon settlements of northern Eretz Yisroel, who experienced it himself in 5750, during the time he



Rabbi Shneur Halperin

spent with the Rebbe in "Beis Chayeinu."

"When I was a bachur in 770, I would customarily stand at the Rebbe's right during Sunday dollars distribution, absorbing the wondrous and G-dly revelations during those hours. I witnessed prophecies and their fulfillment, brilliant advice, and

exciting brachos to a wide cross-section of Jews. The Rebbe would briefly listen to people tell their tales as they pleaded for help, and in most cases, they got a clear and precise answer, even before completing their story.

"Among all these precious moments, there's one specific story that remains emblazoned in my mind forever. It took place at the beginning of Adar 5750, while at my usual post near the Rebbe for dollars distribution. A middle-aged American Jew passed by, got his dollar together with the Rebbe's 'Bracha v'hatzlacha' as the line moved him forward toward the door out.

"Then the Rebbe turned to his right and gestured that they should call this Jew back. The line stopped, and since I was standing near the Rebbe, I went over to the gentleman to call him back. He was amazed and a bit excited, and when he stood before the Rebbe again, the Rebbe handed him two dollar bills and made him a shliach to give them to a chassan and a kalla. Before he had a chance to digest what the Rebbe had told him, the Rebbe turned to the next people in line. He stood near me, totally perplexed, giving a look as if he didn't quite understand what the Rebbe wanted from him.

"He turned to me and asked me if he could be certain that he heard correctly: The Rebbe meant for him



to give the dollars to a chassan and a kalla. Since I heard the exchange as well, I assured that he had in fact heard correctly, as that was exactly what the Rebbe had said. He then asked me which chassan and kalla did the Rebbe mean. I tried to inquire whether he was married or if someone in his family was about to get married, such as one of his children. However, he replied that he knows of no one among his family or close friends who is about to get married, and then he suggested that perhaps the Rebbe's request came as a result of mistaken identity.

"Of course, I explained to him as clearly as I could that the Rebbe doesn't make mistakes, and I suggested that he purchase the videotape showing him pass by the Rebbe, in order that he can prove to himself with absolute certainty that the Rebbe did indeed designate those dollars for a chassan and a kalla. 'If the Rebbe made you a shliach for a chassan and a kalla,' I told him, 'you will be able to find the ones that he intended.'

"Since the man had to rush to a business meeting in Manhattan, he asked me if I could buy the videocassette for him, and he gave me his mailing address where I could send the tape.

"I promised him that I would do so, and I bought the tape that same evening and mailed it off to him. A few days later, I called him to find out if it had safely arrived, and it had. This Jew was still in a state of utter astonishment, as he told me that he seen the videotape and the Rebbe really had designated the dollars for a chassan and a kalla. The problem was that he didn't have the slightest idea which chassan and kalla the Rebbe meant. 'Perhaps the Rebbe made a mistake?' he tried again to suggest. However, I explained to him again about the unique nature of a Rebbe, and the proven fact that the Rebbe is never in error.

"Two weeks passed and he called me again. He said that he is about to enter a major business deal and he wants very much to ask the Rebbe

for his bracha before taking any critical steps in connection with this offer. I suggested that he write a letter to the Rebbe with his request and mail it to the Rebbe's secretariat, and the Rebbe would surely find a way to respond. He listened most attentively to my suggestion, but he explained to me that this wasn't just another business transaction. This was a major business deal that was so important that he felt that he had to meet with the Rebbe again face-to-face.

"All of my efforts to explain that if every Jew wanted to meet with the Rebbe personally on every proposed business deal, the line on Sunday would last forever. Still, the man was determined for whatever reason that he had to see the Rebbe. In hindsight, I understand how wrong I was. When a Jew wants to come to 770 and see the Rebbe, the last thing you should do is to try and convince him not to come. Why did I do so? To put it simply, I wanted to lessen the Rebbe's burden.

"The following Sunday, as I was

standing again at the Rebbe's side, I noticed this man at a distance, waiting in line. When his turn came, he passed by the Rebbe, who gave him a dollar and said, '*Bracha v'hatzlacha*'. The man then began to speak to the Rebbe regarding the business deal he was about to close, and asked for a bracha for success. The Rebbe blessed him, gave him another dollar, and the man then started to leave. Suddenly, the Rebbe called him back again, gave him two more dollars, and asked him to give them to a chassan and a kalla. This time, the man was already totally confused.

"I saw that he was considering whether he should go back and ask the Rebbe which chassan and kalla he meant, but the line had already moved forward and he was on his way out. There was no chance of turning around and coming before the Rebbe again. He stopped near me, and again asked me if the Rebbe had actually given him the two dollars to give to a chassan and a kalla, and I assured once more that he had heard correctly. From where I was standing, I could hear everything quite clearly, and that was exactly what the Rebbe had said. He asked me again to buy the videotape of the entire exchange, and I happily acceded to his request.

"In the meantime, I also became a bit curious as to what exactly the Rebbe meant. This was already the second time that the Rebbe had given the same enigmatic instruction, and as chassidim, we know with absolute certainty that such things don't occur by accident. Thus, together with this Jew, I found myself waiting to see how things would develop. A few days later, I had the opportunity to speak with the Rebbe's secretary, Rabbi Yehuda Leib Groner. I related to him the entire chain of events in this matter, and then I asked him how we would know what to do in light of the

I will always remember the reaction of this Jewish businessman: 'Wow! The Rebbe really doesn't make mistakes!'

Rebbe's request. R' Leibel thought for a moment, and then he suggested that we write a letter that he would submit to the Rebbe.

"I called this gentleman and informed him of Rabbi Groner's suggestion that he write a letter to the Rebbe and ask which chassan and kalla he meant. Since his two meetings with the Rebbe were his first two times ever in Lubavitch, I gave him specific guidance on how to write a letter to the Rebbe. The man jumped at the opportunity, and that very same day, he spelled out his puzzlement in writing and faxed the letter to the mazkirus. At the first opportunity, I gave Rabbi Groner a hard copy of the letter.

"A few days later, on Yud-Alef Nissan, the Rebbe's birthday, the Rebbe issued a written reply of just a few words: **'A chassan and kalla who are getting married (on Lag B'Omer or) a few days before the Shavuos holiday, and he can give them through the rav performing the ceremony in his city'**. Overcome with excitement, I quickly called the Jewish businessman and told him about the answer from the Rebbe that had just been received. I asked him if he knows a rav in his city. It took him a little while to find the name of a rabbi familiar to him, for the simple reason that he had no connection to his city's very small Jewish community. It also turned

out later that the 'rabbi' whose name he gave me belonged to the Reform Movement. I explained to him that the Rebbe was surely not referring to a rabbi of this type, and I asked him to keep looking for another rabbi in his city, and this time, an Orthodox rabbi. When he continued to claim that there weren't any, I continued to reply that if the Rebbe so writes, that means that there must be one.

"After another few days, he found the rav of his town's small Litvisher-chareidi community, and I told him to go to the rav with the dollars he had received from the Rebbe in order that the rav can present them to a bride and groom for whom he is performing the wedding ceremony on Lag B'Omer, as the Rebbe wrote in parentheses, or a few days before Shavuos. It was just a day before the Pesach holiday, and the whole thing seemed rather puzzling.

"Pleased to have an apparent solution to the mystery, he went to the rav. However, to his great disappointment, the rav, who was indeed the only Orthodox rabbi in town, told him that he has no plans to perform any wedding ceremonies on the dates indicated.

"When he called to tell me what the rav had said, I asked him if this was the only Orthodox rabbi in town. When he said yes, I replied that we have no choice other than to sit tight and see how things develop. I naturally wished him a 'Kosher and Happy Pesach', and the next time we spoke was (predictably enough) a few days before Lag B'Omer.

"He called me up very excited. He said that the rav had just called him to say that a young Jewish couple had come to ask him to perform their wedding ceremony on Lag B'Omer. His animated tone of voice managed to sweep me away as well. I asked him to give the four dollars to the rav in order that he could give them to the young couple.

"On Erev Lag B'Omer, the man

called me again and told me that the chassan had been in an automobile accident, sustaining a broken leg. As a result, the wedding had been postponed indefinitely. When I heard this, my whole body shook. 'I am sure that the wedding will take place a few days before Shavuot,' I replied.

"I explained to him that the Rebbe had written the words *Lag B'Omer* in parentheses, an allusion to the fact that this was meant to be the original date, but something will happen and the wedding will be postponed until a few days before

Shavuot – and that's exactly what happened.

"I also took part in the wedding celebration, held in an elegant events hall. It was a tremendous *Kiddush sheim Lubavitch* to hear a Litvisher rav proclaim under the chuppa that someone had already prophesized the entire chain of events leading up to this moment, retelling the whole story in depth as he gave the bride and groom two dollars each from the Rebbe." Rabbi Halperin concluded his story with great emotion, despite the fact that he had already told it many times before:

"I will never forget the blissful feeling as I closed the circle under the chuppa, when the chassan stood with his crutches while the rav told the incredible story to the large crowd of assembled guests. As in a moving picture, I saw the entire episode unfolding in my mind, from the first encounter at Sunday dollars to the man's stubborn determination to see the Rebbe again to the amazing answer he finally received. I will always remember the reaction of this Jewish businessman, 'Wow! The Rebbe really doesn't make mistakes!'"

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ב"ה

A CHANGE AS GOOD AS A REST

Translated By Michael Leib Dobry

As soon as they go into the classrooms, they daven, say Chitas, and then they learn three classes in Torah subjects. During the nearly hour-long recess, special counselors arrive to engage the girls in a variety of activities including arts and crafts, aerobic dancing, indoor and outdoor games, library, and a collection of videos to arouse their interest and curiosity.

In response to the Hebrew article printed in Issue #696 (pgs. 36-39), regarding the Rebbe's disapproval of summer vacations for students in Chabad schools, the editorial staff of the Beis Moshiach Magazine received numerous responses from readers, parents, educators, and even a few girls' school principals.

We were happy that the subject aroused some debate, and if parents and schools are reconsidering their plans for this summer or next, it will have been well worth it for us.

*One of the more interesting responses that we heard came from Mrs. **Nechama Navon**, principal of the Ohr Menachem Chabad Girls' School in Tzfas, in which she tells about what has occurred in this school for the past two years – a*

learning framework under the name "Vacation with a Different Flavor":

A few weeks ago, we were most happy to read a most helpful and important article (by R' Menachem Ziegelboim) about the summer vacation in schools, which brought up for discussion what we might call an open secret about how necessary it is for school administrations to create learning programs for its students during the lengthy summer break. We remain faithful to the words of the Rebbe, who repeatedly expressed his adamant opposition to such a long vacation, which quite often can cause irreversible educational damage, as is explained clearly and in great detail in the article.

The tremendous investment and blessed activities by our educators throughout the year can all go down the drain during these lengthy drawn-out summer days of immense boredom that lead to idleness and a lack of productive activity. It's true that it's not always so easy to ask classroom teachers and educators, who invested most of their strength and energy during the academic year, to pass up their four (or more) weeks of summer vacation, especially when they have to work as hard as they do in preparation for the coming year. Nevertheless, with a little creativity and proper reward for their labors, it's possible to reach an appropriate solution.

At the Ohr Menachem Chabad Girls' School, we are already in our second year of conducting a study framework during the first month of the summer vacation, under the title "Chofesh B'Taam Shoneh" ("Vacation with a Different Flavor").

I wish to take this opportunity to include other school principals in this program that we have designed to enable them to build programs of a similar nature, and we will be happy to offer assistance to anyone who turns to us with a request for guidance and direction based on our experiences.

First of all, I wish to point out that this framework is not a replacement for summer camp, which takes place during the second month of vacation. The framework

during the first month is dedicated completely to Torah studies, designed for all students in our school, Sundays through Thursdays, from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m., and as soon as they enter the school grounds, they are greeted by the taste of juice and cake as a means of encouraging them to arrive on time.

As soon as they go into the classrooms, they daven, say Chitas, and then they learn three classes in Torah subjects. During the nearly hour-long recess, special counselors arrive to engage the girls in a variety of activities including arts and crafts, aerobic dancing, indoor and outdoor games, library, and a collection of videos to arouse their interest and curiosity. During this hour, the teachers indulge themselves with an enjoyable breakfast prepared for them each morning. Thus, we have essentially combined Torah study with a program of recreation.

Parents pay fifty shekels per week for each child. This price includes a daily sandwich, donated by Collel Chabad's "Eshel Binyomin Zefat" soup kitchen, run by Rabbi **Zeev Yisroel Crombie**, who helps us all year round. While this may appear to be an expensive project, nevertheless, with thorough and proper planning, every principal can see that this worthwhile venture can be achieved without the need to break one's head over how to raise the money for such a large budget. Last year, we prepared for the participation of 120 out of our 450 students, yet when we closed the registration, we had a list of two hundred and fifty names!

The most exciting and encouraging feedback is to see the girls' great enthusiasm and delight. Their enjoyment is clearly visible on the faces of each and every one of them, and they express it at every opportunity. While we naturally give out coupons for proper davening and chassidic conduct, the most important thing to see how the girls

Last year, we prepared for the participation of 120 out of our 450 students, yet when we closed the registration, we had a list of two hundred and fifty names!

themselves cooperate and utilize every moment. I was deeply moved by what one of the students told me last year: "All year long, we learn with tests and grades, but now we can learn the way we're supposed to learn..." We invest the same effort during the recess the way we do during the learning hours. Everything is done in the most impressive way possible to obtain full cooperation.

In order to achieve this, we give the teachers complete freedom of choice to teach whatever subject they wish, provided that it is Torah in nature, and each one prepares her own lesson plan. We have emphasized to the parents that this program is optional, not mandatory, and their cooperation has been most productive and quite amazing. The parents don't even have to send their children off with breakfast, as they receive everything at the school.

Part of the staff consists of interns and seminary students, and there are also teachers who gave up part of their vacation to continue working as part of their shlichus. Mrs. Chaya Marantz serves as a special coordinator, running the project with considerable aptitude. Our constant guiding motto throughout the year is maintained in this program as well – everything is

done out of joy.

It is appropriate to note that this program exists in addition to the camp that takes place after Tisha B'Av, thereby creating a situation where the students are not at home during the vacation for indefinite periods of time.

In light of the tremendous and growing success, we want the children at home without an organized framework for as little time as possible. We decided to increase this year's program to four weeks, from Yud-Gimmel Tammuz until Erev Tisha B'Av, when we will develop a special program suitable for these days that will soon be transformed into a time of happiness and joy.

The parents can't stop thanking and blessing us out of a sense of understanding that the school cares about their daughters and is ready to invest in them beyond what is required. There's a popular joke out there that goes like this: There are two good reasons to be a teacher: July and August...We'll leave that joke as it is, but with a change in context: July and August are definitely great reasons to be a teacher, but not in order to escape on holiday, but rather to strengthen and expand their work in education. We do a lot of educational projects during the year, but we always ask ourselves if they are being done in accordance with the Rebbe's wishes. With this project, we feel that our efforts are entirely with the Rebbe in mind!

We will be happy to help any learning institution interested in joining this most important shlichus in the fulfillment of the instructions of the Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach. As a result and even long before then, may it be G-d's Will that we should merit the complete revelation of the Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach, immediately, mamash!

(Interested parties may contact Mrs. Navon at +972-54-565-4392.)

WHEN DREAMS COME TRUE

By Aryeh (Arnie) Gotfryd, PhD (www.arniegotfryd.com)

There are good dreams in which Torah subjects are made known to the person dreaming... each person according to his diligence in his divine service during the day.

—The Rebbe, HaYom Yom, p.8, 4 Tevet.

Everybody has their problems – money, love, health... My burning issue, back in the day that I first walked into the Lubavitcher Rebbe's office, was nothing of the sort. True, that visit made a tremendous impact – I walked in a skeptic and left a chassid. But it was actually the strange chain of events that followed that transformed my burning issue into a gratifying, lifetime hobby – discovering G-d through science.

THE SETUP

Ever since childhood, I dreamed of being a scientist. Microscopes, telescopes, lab coats, watching the stars, the bugs, the wonders of nature, all that stuff fascinated me. Besides, as a public school kid without any Torah knowledge, I understood that scientists were the people that knew everything – when the sun would burn up, how we got here, how to cure diseases – everything.

Eventually it looked like that dream was coming true. I was well on the way to a PhD in Applied

Ecology at the University of Toronto and enjoying a very secular lifestyle when I first encountered Chabad (I guess it happens to everybody sooner or later) in the form of Rabbi Manis Friedman.

After capturing my attention with every student's favorite topic – love, dating and relationships – we got into a six-hour argument, mainly over how science is right and religion is wrong about everything. For the first time I met someone who had answers for all my questions and questions for all my answers. By the time dawn came, I was in a state of what you might call suspended disbelief, no longer so sure of my secularism nor won over by the rabbi's faith.

I started to explore the prayer book, the Torah, the Jewish community and traditional observance. The more I took on, the more I enjoyed it. I realized that those rabbis haven't been twiddling their thumbs for 3,000 years trying to memorize the ten commandments – there was a whole lot more to Judaism than I previously thought.

After relocating to the heart of the Jewish community, I started to keep kosher and Shabbos and got engaged to a wonderful Jewish girl. Life was great, but something was gnawing away at me. Despite success in my studies, in life, and a steady stream of environmental consulting contracts, I still wasn't

fully happy.

The truth was, I was bothered my truth, meaning: I had gone into science because I believed that was the best way to truly understand the world we live in. But in the end science is just a human endeavor, and as clever as we are, the 'truths' we discover in science are tentative and probabilistic. The truth of Torah on the other hand is certain and absolute since it is the wisdom of the Creator.

Wading through ecological journals for insight into the wonderful world of nature is something between panning for gold on a good day and looking for a needle in a haystack on a bad one. Not so with Torah. You just open the book anywhere, read any word and voila! There it is, staring you in the face – infinite, eternal, clear, certain, unequivocal, absolute Truth – 100% of the time.

Given my quest for truth, obviously yeshiva was where I wanted to be. But given my loyalty to those Chabad rabbis who were guiding me on my Jewish journey, graduate school is where I had to stay – I needed to finish my degree, had no funds for yeshiva anyway, and was soon to be married. Instead of feasting on the Tree of Life, I was consigned to chewing on the tough shells of secular science. What a *galus* (exile)!

DEEP CALLING TO DEEP

In May of 1982, I traveled to Brooklyn to see the Rebbe for the first time and get his blessing for my upcoming wedding. Frankly, I expected something larger than life but in fact, the Rebbe looked to be nothing so unusual. Wise. Saintly. Scholarly. But not so astounding that an ocean of people should be continuously following him around, parting like the Red Sea into walls of humanity as he would pass through. I started to wonder whether this was a cult or authentic Judaism. Was the Rebbe all that he was cracked up to be?

I set my doubts aside to compose a *kvittel*, the customary note one presents on such occasions. In addition to requests for a happy, healthy and prosperous married life, I added a personal plea: Since I had no choice but to pursue secular studies rather than Torah for the greater part of the day, could the Rebbe at least help me that I should be able to find G-d within science.

With *kvittel* in hand, I stood on line with two hundred other international grooms and brides-to-be, who were organized by language for group audiences in the Rebbe's office. Eventually it was our turn to enter, then my turn to step forward and place my note on the Rebbe's desk.

That's when it happened. The Rebbe scanned the *kvittel*, then looked up at me with a fixed, penetrating gaze that left no doubt that I was being "known". In what couldn't have been more than three seconds, it felt like my entire past, present and future were laid out before this man, that in the intensity of the moment he came to know more about Aryeh Avraham ben Chana than he would ever know about himself. So disorienting was this wordless soul to soul contact, that I literally did not hear so much as a single word of the Rebbe's ten

minute shower of blessings and sage advice.

THE FIRST DREAM

A few weeks later, I had a dream, the most vivid of my life. My wife Leah and I were sitting together with the Rebbe in our living room. The Rebbe produced a publication entitled "SCIENCE Volume 64, No. 4 (No. 1)". The font and layout of the title was identical to the prestigious academic journal by the same name, the weekly magazine of the American Academy for the Advancement of Science. "Here is something to help you think", said the Rebbe to Leah. And then he opened it up.

On the first page was a background of blue sky with white, fluffy clouds. The text on the page was beautifully typeset in English with a crisp, black font and wide margins on the page. I started to read what seemed a little like Psalm 104, all about the wonders of nature, the hydrological cycle, wildlife and vegetation, humanity and the meaning of life in the presence of G-d.

As I read on, the clouds on the page started to move through the sky and a fresh breeze brought a most subtle and delicious fragrance. Orchestral music welled up featuring inspired melodies, elegantly harmonized, and the pleasure of the experience was overwhelming. To this day, I am convinced that it was a foretaste of 'Gan Eden'. The Rebbe turned the page and the next page was even better, and the next better yet. Then the Rebbe said, "Let me know when you get to page seven" and I woke up.

Amazed by this dream world visitation, I felt compelled to share it with Leah, especially since the Rebbe had addressed her directly. With great excitement I related the experience in detail to which she responded, "That's interesting."

I was a little crestfallen, but on second thought it was perfectly understandable because after all, it was only a dream. Or was it? I've never been much of a dreamer. In general, I either remember nothing, or sometimes some gray and jumbled images that vaporize as soon as I awaken. This was entirely different: Crisp, clear, colorful, lucid, lengthy, multisensory, meaningful and memorable. Absolutely not my style. I felt there had to be more to it.

THE BURIED TREASURE

The next reasonable step was to seek out Science Vol.64, No. 4 (No. 1) and especially page 7. As a graduate student in the University of Toronto's Department of Zoology, it seemed likely to find such a popular journal in the Zoology library and find it I did, but only with volume numbers dating back to the 200's, some half a century after the envisioned Volume 64. Over time, I tried the Physics library and the Chemistry Library and the General Science Library but none of them had back issues that old. Well, forget it, I told himself, it's only a dream, so I put it out of my mind. Almost.

After nearly two years of subliminal nagging I finally decided to put the matter to rest definitively, one way or the other. Off I went to where scientists rarely go – Fort Book, or so we called it, the gigantic concrete structure housing the University of Toronto's central reference library for humanities as well as a complete card catalogue data of all the holdings belonging to the university's dozens of libraries. (Remember this was 1984, long before Google searches.)

Sure enough, ancient issues of Science were listed and were archived in one place only on the university campus: In the storage stacks of the Science and Medicine library.



Well what a room that was. Special access was arranged to the cellar where outdated books were shelved on long parallel bookcases, mounted on tracks and rollers. There were no spaces at all between the 20-odd bookcases, so at first glance there seemed to be no way to access any of the books. The trick was that each bookcase had a kind of steering wheel mounted on the end. When it was spun, several dozen times around like a ship captain's wheel, a space would slowly emerge between two bookcases so you could walk in to retrieve a reference, provided of course that no one spins the wheel the other way to squash you while you're in there.

In moments, it was in hand: Volume 64, dated the summer of 1926, with its various issues. Now I would finally see if there was

anything to this odd dream. The article in issue No. 4, page 7, was entitled "Science for Humanity's Sake" by William Blum. In his address upon receiving the American Chemists' Medal, Blum mentions that science has never disproved the existence of the soul. He goes on to explain that because the study and application of science are spiritually uplifting, science and religion interface in man. Nonetheless each discipline has its own domain, with science describing how G-d works while only religion can address why the world works that way.

Turning to the other reference in the dream, Issue No. 1 of Vol. 64 of Science, on page 7, one finds of all things a poem by Louis Agassiz about the joy of discovery, quoted by B. T. Baldwin, president of the prestigious Sigma Xi research

society. The poem reads:

*Come wander with me,
In regions yet untrod,
And read what is still unread
In the manuscript of G-d.*

How inspiring! Right then I recalled my request of the Rebbe, asking to partake of G-dliness within science. Well here it was! I remembered the beautiful dream, with its bibliographic references. And now I had in hand two buried treasures precisely related to the dream and to the encounter with the Rebbe. My first thought: This must be the finger of G-d. How else could someone walk over to a haystack looking for needles, pick at two random locations and find two needles?

My second thought was, "Nah, dumb luck." Or maybe in the 1920's it was still fashionable for scientists

to refer to G-d in their scholarly speaking and writing. So page by page, I checked all of Volume 64 and many other volumes in the 1920's and 30's. No spiritual references whatsoever. I tried the '40's and '50's and '60's to be safe. Perhaps other scientific weeklies, like *Nature*, had the odd celebration of spirit. On the contrary, they were all spiritually mute in the extreme. After literally a full day of scouring journals, I felt justified to conclude that the alternative hypothesis was disproven.

The probability of a chance correlation between the dream and the reality was virtually nil. Reluctantly, I decided to act on the Rebbe's "instruction", in his saying "Let me know when you get to page 7". The gist of my letter to the Rebbe was: Sorry to bother you, but I had this dream, and it took me a while, but I found these facts, so I'm letting you know. Was this a communication from you? Shall I act on it or forget about it? If you did send it, enclosed are copies of the articles referred to in the dream. Now what?

NO ANSWER IS ALSO AN ANSWER

On this question alone, the Rebbe would not answer. Not in this letter and not in any other. In fact over the following four years, I wrote the Rebbe eight separate times about all kinds of things, always adding a request that the Rebbe either acknowledge or negate the meaningfulness of the fact that I'd 'gotten' to page 7. The Rebbe answered everything, except this issue. Meanwhile, I became involved in researching and writing about the relationship between religion and science, especially with reference to Judaism.

THE SECOND DREAM AND ITS INTERPRETATION

In the fall of 1987, on the 8th of

Tishrei 5748, I had my second dream encounter with the Rebbe. The Rebbe was in bed, horribly ill and emaciated. He called to me for a glass of water. "Hot or cold?" I asked. "Cold," the Rebbe answered in a quiet, definite voice that could split mountains. I ran to get some cold water, brought it to the Rebbe and just as I was handing it to him, woke up in a trembling sweat at 4:59 am, just a minute before the alarm was due to ring.

Could the Rebbe really be so unwell? I was terrified. Deeply disturbed, I made my way to shul with a sinking feeling in my gut that my world was coming to an end. My friend and mashpia Rabbi Yosi Yarmush took one look at my distraught face and said, "What's the matter with you?"

"Nothing, Yosi. Do you know how to do the HaTavat Chalom ceremony? I need a bad dream reversed."

"You should tell your dream to the Rov. He's a dream interpreter."

"I don't want the dream interpreted. I want it to go away."

"You need to tell the Rov."

"Look, are you telling me that Jews believe in dream interpretation?"

"Have you ever heard of a book called the Chumash?"

"I get it. You're talking about Yosef. That's something else."

"Oh, so the Torah is just a history book."

"No, no, I don't mean that."

"Aryeh, if there's anyone who knows how to interpret dreams it's the Rov."

After morning prayers, I approached the Rov, Rabbi Dovid Schochet, chief rabbi of the Lubavitch community in Toronto and long-time head of the orthodox rabbinate in Toronto. He kindly convened a post-minyan minyan for the Hatavas Chalom Service, following which I related to him this disturbing dream. The Rov replied:

"When a person gets sick and recovers, it is a kapara, an atonement. The Rebbe was unwell but now he is fine, B"H, so you don't have to worry about that. Usually we are used to thinking how we need the Rebbe, so we are not so attuned to how the Rebbe needs us. You have merited to see not only that you are needed but also how you are needed. Water symbolizes Torah; it flows from a high place to a low place. Water however may be hot or cold. Hot signifies emotions and cold signifies intellect. The Rebbe is telling you that he needs your intellectual service in Torah and Mitzvos."

As the Rov was speaking, I was overcome with emotion as never before. Tears flowed freely and sweat seeped from every pore. I felt strangely light, as if a 200 pound weight had been lifted from my shoulders. In a word – catharsis. Immensely relieved and with a new-found spring in my step, I thanked the Rov and headed out the door of the weekday sanctuary into the hall.

BINGO!

Mere seconds after taking leave of the Rov, I bumped into Rabbi Moshe Spalter, the administrator of the Chabad House, in the hall. "Aryeh, I've been meaning to show you this book for over a year but I couldn't find it till now. It just turned up this morning. Here." I did a double take as he casually handed me the Hebrew paperback.

The cover was blue, a blue sky with white, fluffy clouds. The first dream. The title, *Emuna U'Mada – Faith and Science*.

Gingerly, I leafed through the first few pages. It was a collection of letters from the Lubavitcher Rebbe on a wide range of topics. The very first chapter was entitled, "Proof for the Existence of the Creator." It is a rational, step-by-step essay demonstrating the necessity of G-d's existence according to the criteria of

science and common sense. The Rov's words rang fresh in my ears, "he needs your intellectual service in Torah and mitzvos." I slowly rushed my way to page 7.

Among the hundreds of words on page 7 of Emuna U'Mada, there are precisely two in bold type – *teyur* and *biyur* – description and explanation. There the Rebbe writes that laws of nature can only describe how the world works but in no way can they explain why nature works that way.

The point the Rebbe was making was exactly the point raised by Blum on page 7 of Science, Vol. 64, No. 4! I was dumbfounded. Out of the blue, so to speak, I was suddenly holding the blue sky, white clouds and content of the first dream delivered at the very moment of the second dream's interpretation as a directive for intellectual service in Torah. Moreover, all of this was obviously the fulfillment of my request at yechidus for help finding G-d through science.

No doubt about it. These events had been stamped with the Divine fingerprint, i.e., the synchronicity of many low-probability events in unified and meaningful way. My first thought – I must write the Rebbe. My second thought – Silly! He won't answer you! Still, I knew that now I had to fulfill the Rebbe's request, "Let me know when you get to page 7." So I made my way to Crown Heights to let the Rebbe know. But how?

I was still pondering this question on Sunday of Parshas Lech Lecha,

5748, as I waited on line with thousands of others to receive a personal blessing from the Rebbe and a dollar for tz'daka from his hand. I knew they would be pushing from the back and pulling from the front so there would not be more than 2 seconds to tell the whole megilla. Prudently, I distilled the whole matter down to two words, meaningless to anyone else, which I blurted out as once again, the Rebbe and I made eye contact. My proclamation of "*Biyur V'Teyur!*" must have sounded pretty strange to the chassidim standing around. But it didn't sound strange to the Rebbe, because immediately the Rebbe responded with such a loud, emphatic and resounding "Amen!" that heads were turning to see why the Rebbe was shouting.

That was the end of the dream and the beginning of the work.

THE WORK BEGINS

Within days, I was invited by Professor Yirmiyah (Herman) Branover to participate in the first international Torah/Science conference co-sponsored by his B'Or HaTorah magazine and R' Shalom B. Lipsker's Aleph Institute. Observant Jewish scientists from the world over were to gather during Chanuka 5748 in Miami Beach to show explore the synergy of Torah and science.

"Aryeh, do you have a topic in mind?"

"As a matter of fact I do. Description and Explanation in the Sciences."

Following the conference, I was delegated the task of preparing the proceedings for publication. The resulting Feldheim book, "Fusion: Absolute Standards in a World of Relativity" has as its first chapter Aryeh's translation of the Rebbe's letter from Emuna U'Mada quoted above. And as its fourth chapter, is his essay called "Beyond Description: The Boundary Between Religion and Science."

Throughout the twenty years since then, this service continues to be my hobby, my passion, my gift to the Rebbe, my contribution to "kabbalas p'nei Moshiach b'poel mamash."

Books included "Living in the Age of Moshiach" by Mendelson Press, "Mind Over Matter: The Lubavitcher Rebbe on Science, Technology and Medicine" by Shamir Books, and "Faith and Science," a textbook I created for the accredited course I taught on the subject at the University of Toronto.

There have been radio interviews, video productions, and hundreds of lectures in dozens of cities on three continents. Hundreds of articles have appeared in academic, secular, and Jewish publications as well as on websites like chabad.org, chabadworld.net, and on my own website, arniegotfryd.com.

But it's all nothing until our goal is achieved, when we will see our Rebbe once again with the revelation of Melech HaMoshiach in the true and complete redemption immediately NOW!



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R' AHARON CHAZAN

By Avrohom Rainitz

A chacham, a baal middos tovos, an askan and most of all, a chassid, R' Aharon Chazan was a pillar of spiritual strength against the bastions of secularism both in Russia and in Israel.
* Part 2 of 2.

[Continued from last issue]

THE BATTLE FOR CHINUCH

The Chazan family's first four years in Moscow were relatively quiet. Throughout those years, their daughters did not attend school. R' Chazan tried to cover this up as much as possible but neighbors began to catch on. He was reported to the school authorities and an official came to his house and demanded that his daughters attend Soviet school. That night, R' Chazan decided to flee to a distant section of Moscow called Kliazma.

After living in Kliazma for seven years, the Chazan family was given a piece of land in Bolshevo, a new section in the Kaliningrad area where they built a spacious five room house. They did not register their children for school. As a large family in a new neighborhood, they could not hide for long from their curious neighbors, and school



Rabbi Aharon Chazan's memoir

authorities began pressuring them to register their children.

In light of their threats, R' Chazan had no choice but to register some of them, and he tried to minimize it as much as possible. He wasn't afraid of the school's

influence on his children, knowing their strong character, but he was afraid of the requirement to attend on Shabbos. How long would they let him do as he pleased?

On Sunday in Nissan 1960, an acquaintance brought him a copy of the local *Pravda* newspaper, published in Mitishatzky, the main city in the region. It had a letter to the editor signed by teachers of the school under the headline, "The public is called upon to rise up."

The writers asked the public to protest "what is going on in our city Bolshevo. The children of the Chazan family who attend our school do not attend on Saturday because of religious reasons. Their parents have deeply instilled in them their religious stupidities so that the children themselves say they are 'fervent believers' and cannot transgress the laws of their religion."

The writers went on to say, "Furthermore, on Saturdays, the pupils are busy cleaning all the school buildings. This work teaches the children to love labor, based on the new law (promulgated under Khrushchev and at his initiative). Chazan's children also transgress this law. This interferes with class unity. Chazan should not think that his children are his private property. They belong to the entire Soviet public. We cannot allow ourselves such criminal neglect. We call upon the municipality and the factory where Chazan works to correct this serious breach."

This accusatory letter about R' Chazan, and especially the editorial response which followed, terrified the Chazan family. They were sure the government would be on their heels and who knew how far things would go?

"Did you read the letter in the paper?" asked his friends throughout the day. "This is very serious. You must weigh whether the path you have chosen is the right

one.”

Discouraging words such as these only intensified their worries. However, R' Chazan and his family decided not to give in.

Over the coming years, until they left Russia, R' Chazan and his family were called to various meetings with educational committees where they were threatened. The mayor even visited their house several times. R' Chazan did not give in and miraculously, the threats just remained threats and nothing happened.

LEAVING RUSSIA

Amazingly, R' Chazan's stubborn adherence to Torah without compromises was what led to his release from Russia, with his entire family, against the odds. In the 1960's R' Chazan submitted several requests to emigrate and was rejected each time. Seeing that the usual channels would not work, he decided to try something original and daring which would focus attention on his demands.

Step one was to seek to have three of his sons accepted into the single official yeshiva that operated in Moscow in 1957. The yeshiva's function was solely as propaganda, to show the world that the Jews of the Soviet Union could live their lives as they pleased. The truth was that only a few talmidim learned there and they were persecuted.

R' Chazan presented his request to the rosh yeshiva, who refused him, claiming the law did not allow him to accept students under 18 years of age. R' Chazan went to the office of the deputy minister of religion and introduced himself and said what he wanted. Naturally, he was rebuffed. R' Chazan continued to exert pressure and write letters. He was clearly heading for a confrontation with the government.

After a long and tiring process which included meetings and



Rabbi Aharon Chazan visiting one of the Talmudei Torah he founded

The writers asked the public to protest: “Their parents have deeply instilled in them their religious stupidities so that the children themselves say they are ‘fervent believers’ and cannot transgress the laws of their religion.”

confrontations with officials in various government offices, R' Chazan was sent a letter from the prime minister's office which said he should submit his request to OVIR again.

R' Chazan took his wife and

three of his scrawniest children and went to OVIR. In the waiting room there were also many tourists from abroad. He asked the secretary to let them see the director but she refused. He began shouting, and then so did his family.

“We demand to meet with the director! We demand to meet with the director!”

One of the secretaries rushed over and seeing the commotion the Chazans had made in front of the tourists she brought them to the director's office.

“You didn't have to make such a racket,” she chastised them.

They finally met the director, a man named Raznetzov, face to face.

“Who are you?” he asked.

“I am Aharon Chazan from Bolshevo.”

“Ah, you're the one who wrote OVIR countless times. You wrote letters to Premier Kosygin, you visited the center for the communist party, and you went to Soslov and even President Podgorny, but they still don't let you leave. I am sorry comrade, but there is nothing else I can do. They are not willing to allow you to leave for Israel. You will

never get permission. Better give up since nothing will help.”

R' Chazan jumped up and screamed, “What? You won’t let us travel to our relatives? Are we meant to die here? We cannot live here. Look at our children. They are weak and sickly. They are starving because they cannot obtain kosher meat or milk. What do you want, for us to die of hunger? Why don’t you let us join our relatives who will help us get proper food?”

“It’s not up to me. Those over me do not allow it.”

“Who are those appointed over you? Give me their addresses.”

He wrote on a paper, “Pyetrovka 38.”

“What office is that?” asked R' Chazan.

“You mean to say you have lived in Moscow for twenty years and you don’t know what office is located on Pyetrovka 38?”

It was the main office of the NKVD which, of course, R' Chazan knew about, but he wanted him to write the address in his own handwriting so that he could go there with proof that OVIR had sent him to them.

A young clerk who sat near the director added, “Over there you won’t use that tone of voice.”

R' Chazan took the note with the address and got ready to leave.

“Wait a minute,” Raznetzov suddenly said.

“Did you say that you need kosher food for your children and you don’t have the means to obtain it? Go to the big synagogue where they can help you with that.”

R' Chazan knew that this was said maliciously and a waste of time but he acted naively and followed instructions. He went to the gabbaim of the shul and said that at OVIR he was told that the gabbaim could help him buy kosher food.

The gabbaim burst out laughing. “Since when do we have a budget to

supply kosher food to needy families?” They looked at him as though he had lost his mind but he insisted that they write him an official letter saying that they could not supply him with kosher food.

The next day, R' Chazan and his wife went to Pyetrovka 38 where they told him to submit all his complaints in writing again and they promised he would receive an answer within a few days.

R' Chazan and his wife returned home very hopeful. Within a few days they received a letter from the NKVD which said they were permitted to leave!

THE BATTLE FOR THE RELIGIOUS LIVES OF RUSSIAN IMMIGRANTS

Between the years 1969-1973 a narrow opening enabled tens of thousands of Russian Jews to leave for Israel. Their absorption was abysmal. Those terrible scenes which many remember from the early years of the State like the assault on the children of Yemen and Morocco, repeated themselves with the Russian Jews. The establishment resorted to their tried and true methods of exerting pressure, trickery and treachery, and even threatening the civil rights of the hapless immigrants and turned them away from their religion.

R' Chazan felt it his obligation to welcome his fellow Russian Jews. Since the government exerted its force from the very start, at the airport, he decided to wait at the airport in order to provide an alternative to the secular culture the immigrants were greeted with.

Since he worked for the office of religious affairs, he received permission to stand at the airport. For many months he worked on convincing the immigrants to request being transferred to religious institutions.

After ten months, an order came down that he stop his activities. R' Chazan was called to the absorption office at the airport and there, under some pretext, they took away his permission to be there and told him to stop his nighttime trips.

He then focused his attention on extricating young immigrants from the arms of the Left. He sent youngsters to special schools that were founded at that time.

Later on, with the encouragement of the Skulener Rebbe, he helped open a school for girls. It was very successful and over the decades hundreds of Russian girls passed through who learned about Judaism and afterwards established religious homes.

R' Chazan’s daily schedule was packed with activity. In the morning he examined sifrei Torah and most of the day he spent traveling the country, to infuse a spirit of Judaism in the Russian immigrants. There was not a single absorption center he did not visit and he remained in close contact with the immigrants whether for the purpose of making a bris, a wedding, or arranging for their children to attend proper schools.

He spoke with various organizations willing to help found Talmudei Torah where immigrant children learned about Judaism in the afternoon from religious teachers. Over the years, dozens of Talmudei Torah were founded all over the country from Nahariya to Dimona in the south. Many of the children went on to learn in Torah institutions.

BRISSIN

Most of the immigrants were uncircumcised since the communists forbade it. Since this is a foundation of our religion, R' Chazan threw himself into this work. Under the auspices of “Vaadat Klita – Agudath Israel,” ads were publicized in

Yiddish and Russian in the one Russian newspaper that existed at that time. The ads said that whoever was interested in a bris should contact a certain address.

Thousands of requests came in and sometimes, 5-6 brissin were done in a day.

Sometimes, people did not feel comfortable going to a hospital and R' Chazan would bring the mohel to their house. In the early years he traveled all over by public transportation but after a while, the Vaadat Klita provided him with a driver which enabled him to use his time more effectively.

TIRELESSLY

Over the years, R' Chazan visited "Beis Chayeinu" on a number of occasions and had yechidus with the Rebbe. The Rebbe encouraged him in his holy work and asked some people who visited him to help R' Chazan in his work.

In 5750, when the mass immigration from Russia began after the fall of communism, a group of Rachmastrivka Chassidim became involved with immigrants. They asked R' Chazan to head the organization Ezer L'Achim. He readily agreed. He concentrated on distributing Jewish books and religious items to new immigrants. They occasionally arranged a mass bar mitzva for families of immigrants that they knew.

In his final years, after his advanced age no longer enabled him to travel from city to city and from moshav to moshav around the country, he became involved in ascertaining the Jewish ancestry of Russian immigrants in situations where that was required. He often met with immigrants who had civil marriages and wanted a Jewish marriage. He made many chuppos for couples who were already married many years.

* * *



Rabbi Aharon Chazan receiving the Yakirei HaIr (Outstanding Residents) award from the mayor of B'nei Brak, R' Moshe Irenstein

The gabbaim burst out laughing. "Since when do we have a budget to supply kosher food to needy families?" They looked at him as though he had lost his mind but he insisted that they write him an official letter saying that they could not supply him with kosher food.

During the Shiva, one of the visitors said that five years earlier,

when R' Chazan was over ninety, he met him on Tisha B'Av and told him about an immigrant family that needed spiritual help.

After reciting Kinot, the man asked R' Chazan when he could meet with him in the coming week so they could arrange help for this family. R' Chazan looked at him in surprise and asked: Later in the week? Why not now?

The man tried explaining that he didn't want to bother R' Chazan on a fast day, especially at his advanced age, but R' Chazan would have none of that. He called for a taxi and went to see the family and didn't leave until he had arranged for religious schools for all the children.

One of the visitors at the Shiva summed R' Chazan's life up in a sentence: Just like Aharon HaKohen – Rabbi Aharon Chazan made sure to light the menorah wherever he went. Like Aharon HaKohen, he lit the candles in a way that they were "lights that illuminate."

Rabbi Chazan merited a long life and saw a fifth generation of descendents. All of them follow in his ways and many are shluchim of the Rebbe MH"M.

HAVE YOU SEEN HASHEM LATELY?

By Rabbi Yaakov Shmuelewitz
Shliach, Beit Shaan

In Tanya, the Alter Rebbe writes that the revelation of G-dliness in this world is “through the Tzaddikim and the signs and wonders in the Torah.” The shluchim, as emissaries of the Tzaddik of the generation, are often privileged to experience such revelations more than most. The following are some stories of Divine Revelation on shlichus.

BACK POCKET DISCOVERY

Rabbi Nechemia Schmerling, shliach in Kfar Yona, relates:

A few years ago, we had to put a lot of money into our preschools that were growing faster than expected, thank G-d. We took loans and our debts mounted until we had no money left for everyday expenses. Among our debts was money owed to Matteh Moshiach for their Geula pamphlet which we give out in the hundreds every week in the shuls of Kfar Yona. At a certain point they

stopped sending us the pamphlets until we would pay up.

Of course I didn't want to stop distributing this important pamphlet and I made an arrangement with them whereby I brought them cash every week to pay for that week's pamphlet in addition to chipping away at what I owed them. Then one day I couldn't even scrape together the money for the pamphlets. The end of the week was approaching and I didn't know what to do.

At this same time, my wife started a clothing gemach. Many

people had become more religiously observant and it was necessary to provide them with suitable clothing. My wife got bags of clothing from other gemachs in Beitar and B'nei Brak and went through them, looking for clothes the mekuravim would like.

Among the rest of the stuff she found a pair of pants that she thought would fit me. I did not want them but she insisted I try them on. For the sake of shalom bayis I agreed to try them on and as I did so, I put my hand in the back pocket and found sixty dollars! There was no way of finding out who the money belonged to since the clothing had traveled from gemach to gemach in various cities.

I made a quick calculation, transferring dollars into shekels and was surprised to discover that it was precisely the amount I needed in order to buy the bundle of pamphlets. I made it to Kfar Chabad, paid for the pamphlets, and was able to give them out that week.

DISCOVERING SHABBOS IN THAILAND

I sometimes hitch rides. One day, I had to get from Beit Shaan to Kfar Chabad in order to bring a car back from there. I figured I would take whichever came first, the bus or a ride.

A nice guy stopped for me and we got into a friendly conversation. When he heard that I'm a Lubavitcher and even a shliach, he told me this story:

“Three years ago, I went with my wife to Thailand. We saw many interesting things but the most amazing thing of all was Friday night at the Chabad house. Do you know what I discovered there at the Chabad house? I had always thought that Shabbos is just a day off, but over there in Thailand I suddenly realized that Shabbos is a sacred

day. For the first time in my life I saw the women light the Shabbos candles. It was very touching. Then the t'filla took place with singing with the light on the faces of all the people. And you know what? There was even something holy in the food; it was not like it was at home.

"I told my wife, 'Listen, I want our house to be like this every Shabbos.' Don't think I'm shomer Shabbos. I travel on Shabbos, but since then, although three years have gone by, we haven't missed a single Shabbos. Every Friday my wife lights the candles and my son and I go to shul. We return home, make Kiddush, wash, and have a Shabbos meal, because Shabbos is a holy and special day."

So Rabbi Nechemia Wilhelm, if you're reading this, you should know that you have faithful students who, thanks to a Shabbos with you, changed something significant in their lives. We can multiply this story by the number of Chabad houses and by the number of guests over all the years and come up with a mind-boggling estimate about the number of neshamos reached in the revolution which the Rebbe has created, a revolution to bring Moshiach.

IN THE TEACHERS' ROOM

My wife Chani also tries to tell people about the great z'chus in being mekasher to the Rebbe. One of the places she does this is the teachers' room (with a staff of about 100 people) of a religious school in Beit Shaan where she also teaches.

They have all heard already that if there are problems with health, shalom bayis, parnasa etc. during recess they can speak to Mora Chani. In her cubby in the teachers' room is a volume of Igros Kodesh and they can ask for the Rebbe's bracha. Chani tells them to make a good hachlata, explains the Rebbe's answer, and things work out. There

For the sake of shalom bayis I agreed to try them on and as I did so, I put my hand in the back pocket and found sixty dollars! I made a quick calculation, transferring dollars into shekels and was surprised to discover that it was precisely the amount I needed in order to buy the bundle of Geula pamphlets for my community.

are stories of people who recovered, operations that were cancelled, and problems that were solved.

One day, two teachers sat and talked in the teachers' room. One of them spoke about trying to sell their car for half a year already, with no luck. Her friend suggested that she speak to Mora Chani and get a bracha.

"What? Ask for a bracha to sell a car?"

They asked Chani and she said that if it disturbed them, they could ask. They sat down and wrote the letter and read the Rebbe's answer, and then recess was over.

The dramatic end of the story took place during the next recess. All the teachers heard the shouting. "Chani! I can't believe it! My husband called fifteen minutes ago to say the car is sold!"

Some week later, the same teacher had a new problem, an argument with an old friend.

"My friend isn't talking to me and she doesn't let her daughter visit us. I'm upset, I can't sleep, I can't eat, this is a disaster. I hate her. I'll fight her. The whole city will know about this. It's war."

Mora Chani calmed her down a little and they wrote to the Rebbe. The answer was clear. "Great is peace, and the more you increase in shalom and Ahavas Yisroel, the greater the bracha."

The teacher committed to changing her approach and the next day she reported about the miracles that took place. "We made up. She came to my house and we drank coffee together and everything is all right. It's a miracle. Even my husband said he was ready to forgive and there was no need to fight."

This teacher says the Rebbe's chapter of T'hilim every day; her mezuzos are checked, and her husband puts on t'fillin. Life changed and improved both in the mitzva arena and in the blessings in their life.

Nearly every day another teacher writes to the Rebbe for a bracha, makes a good hachlata, and good things result. This goes on in Chabad houses, homes, places of work, etc. all over the world. People write to the Rebbe and receive answers. It's really incredible.

ON THE KIBBUTZIM

R' Roi Tor is a shliach in the Beit Shaan valley where he works with the people on kibbutzim. Only recently, the weekly brochure that he gives out among the kibbutzim announced that a shiur takes place

nearly every evening at one of the kibbutzim. If you are familiar with the “anti” atmosphere that once was the norm at kibbutzim, you appreciate the enormous change that has taken place.

Last Yom Kippur, R’ Tor arranged for t’fillos at some of the kibbutzim. Dozens of Jews participated, some of them for the first time in their lives.

An older woman later related that a few weeks before Yom Kippur she felt inspired and looked forward to Yom Kippur. “I must get to shul on Yom Kippur.” She looked for places she could go to since her kibbutz did not have a shul and then she noticed an announcement about t’fillos on Yom Kippur.

Unfortunately, there were also people opposed to the t’fillos and they did not keep quiet. There were challenges like, “Who gave them permission to conduct t’fillos?” but there were also the faithful who wrote a letter of support and sent it to the secretariat of the kibbutz with copies to all members.

At one of the kibbutzim they decided to continue with t’fillos on Friday nights. R’ Tor goes to the kibbutz before Shabbos along with two friends to be able to complete the minyan. They daven, make Kiddush, have a light meal, and then walk back to Beit Shaan!

STRING OF REVELATIONS

In Chadera there are more than ten shluchim and stories come from

all directions. One of them is from Rabbi Boruch Beckerman:

A shliach from a neighboring city told me about a supervisor at the Education Ministry who lives in Chadera who was sitting Shiva for his father. We both went to be menachem avel, a visit that got the supervisor much more involved in Judaism and Chabad.

In stage one, the supervisor, who was not religious, was surprised to hear enormous chiddushim from the wealth of knowledge in Jewish sources. Following that, he began to put on t’fillin and convinced his friends too. When he heard from his friends about a girl seeking her way in Judaism, he referred her to the Chabad school in Ramat Aviv. In short, he became an unofficial representative of the Chabad house and he spread the wellsprings.

Before last 3 Tammuz, he heard about a Chassid who was traveling to the Rebbe and he gave him a list of requests for a bracha. Two weeks later, the supervisor went to the Chabad house and gleefully announced that everything he had asked for had been fulfilled. One woman had become pregnant, someone’s son who was abroad had suddenly returned home ... all thanks to the Rebbe.

Another shliach in Chadera, Rabbi Tuvia Kasdan who serves as the rav of the shul in the Neve Chaim neighborhood, related:

My wife and I were unsure whether to invite guests for last Rosh HaShana. We were living out of boxes because we were about to

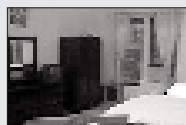
move, we had a lot on our heads, the Yomim Tovim were coming up, and hosting people was expensive. While still undecided one of the mekuravim came to the house and gave me a pack of coupons worth thousands of shekels.

I distributed the coupons to mekuravim and the needy and still had plenty left to go shopping and buy generously for our guests. We saw Hashem’s help in being mekarev Yidden.

I recently asked Rabbi Yochanan Butman, one of the shluchim in Chadera, to come with me to the opening ceremony of a real estate office. The owner was from Chadera and he was opening another branch in Tel Aviv. R’ Butman spoke very well and it reflected well on Chabad and on the businessman who is a mekurav to Chabad. It was only later that we realized what an impact the visit had.

The day after that visit, R’ Butman and I made a number of calls in Chadera. We went to a new office building and decided to check it out. There was a large lawyers’ office and we asked the receptionist to allow us to meet her boss. He came out (which was unusual in itself, for we did not make an appointment) and the moment he saw us he said, “I saw you yesterday at the ceremony in Tel Aviv and I thought, ‘How is it that there are Chabad rabbis in Chadera but in order to meet them I have to travel to Tel Aviv?’ I decided to make contact with you so I too would have a rabbi. And here you are!”

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