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# MIVTZA MOSHIACH: OLD HAT OR FRESH AIR?

*The desire to “live” with Moshiach dissipates sometimes when experiencing personal difficulties and this causes great frustration. How can we constantly “live” with Moshiach and Geula? How can we transmit the message of Geula to people who have heard it from us for years already? As important as it is to learn the sichos of 5751-5752, what about the rest of the Rebbe’s teachings? \* These questions were asked of three mashpiim in a forum held by the “Matteh Moshiach” in Eretz Yisroel.*

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Shliach in Ohr Yehuda

## LIVING WITH MOSHIACH ALL THE TIME – IS IT POSSIBLE?

**R’ Friedman:** Each of us wants to live with Moshiach and Geula with a chayus and simcha as the Rebbe wants, but our lives are full of ups and downs and changes that make it hard for us to stay on track for the long term. How can we take advantage of the good times, when we are inspired, and apply that inspiration and chayus to the “down” times that we experience?

**R’ Notik:** We all have ups and downs. All living things experience constant change. The only thing that doesn’t change is the picture on the wall. If the face in the picture is smiling, it will smile all the time.

In the Rebbe’s sichos and letters there is an answer for everything, and the answer is simple: kabbalas ol. What do I mean? When you feel inspired and you make a hachlata that you will give a shiur in D’var Malchus once a week, or every day after davening you will make sure that in the place you daven or work you will say a brief thought on Moshiach and Geula, then this is sacred. For this is the only shlichus that remains – kabbalas p’nei Moshiach Tzidkeinu.

If you have kabbalas ol, it makes no difference whether you’re in a good mood or not, or if you’re living with Moshiach today or not; you do what you have to do. Thanks to kabbalas ol, when you set aside your personal feeling and do what has to be done, you will feel the chayus in a greater way.

**R’ CLY Ginsberg:** The answer is simple but it needs to be repeated again and again. Everybody, men, women, and children, should commit to something they can do. The thing that gives chayus is learning the weekly D’var Malchus. Not a week should go by without learning it. Learn it again and again, with a chavrusa, in a shiur, before



davening or afterwards, learning with a k'vius b'nefesh.

With Hashem's help we will have sichos from 5769, but as long as we haven't heard sichos yet this Hakhel year, the sichos of the D'var Malchus are our main source of chayus.

I traveled today to Yerushalayim from B'nei Brak on the 402 bus line. I got on the bus and someone came over to me and asked whether I'd like a cup of tea or cold water. Then he announced, "Who wants to learn Gemara? We're starting a shiur in Daf Yomi now." Nearly everybody was willing. The driver said that if the passengers agreed, he would provide the microphone. We traveled for an hour and learned the Daf along with stories and parables. I felt it was a type of Hakhel. I felt ashamed ... look what he's doing, and what about me?

When he finished the shiur he said, "This is not my idea. It's a project of the Kaliver Rebbe. He said that whoever wants to do this on the buses will get microphones and Gemaras. Today we have thirty

maggidei shiur doing this on buses."

It was hashgacha pratit that I saw what can be done. The Rebbe says that the world is a keili, what about us?

**R' Notik:** There are some bachurim in Chabad yeshivos who, when they go on buses, ask the driver's permission and say something about Moshiach to all the passengers. This has been going on since 5755. Maybe we should start giving out D'var Malchus and have a shiur with the text. That would be great, with each one equipped with a microphone.

**R' Yossi Ginsburg:** In the sicha of 2 Nissan, 5748, the Rebbe said that the king is the heart of all Israel, so when the Rebbe is in the forefront of our minds, this gives us constant chayus.

There are two ways of looking at things: You can think that 15 years have already passed [since Gimmel Tamuz] and walk around with a Tisha B'Av face, or you can dance and rejoice that we are already in the year of "Chai," for it is 18 years already that we have this lofty

revelation in the world [since 5751 when the Rebbe announced that Moshiach proclaims that the time of your redemption has arrived].

Someone asked me today – What do we do? 18 years have passed already!

I asked him: The Rebbe says we have the "air of Moshiach." Does the air of Moshiach grow rancid? What are you afraid of?

Obviously, we want to have not just the air of Moshiach but the light and gilui etc. but we must remember that if we are connected to the Rebbe, then the Rebbe is the source of our lives and gives us chayus.

Another point – one of the sharpest things we heard the Rebbe say in the sicha of 28 Nissan was that everything was *l'hevel v'la'rik* – in vain. This wasn't said merely to shake us up; it's an instruction. In a very real sense, if we don't achieve our goal, we haven't achieved anything.

We can become weak and start to "live" with other things, and that's natural, because every living thing moves and changes. It may even be



the case that those who accomplish great things have a harder test, for oftentimes success can lead to distraction. Cognizant of this, the Rebbe says we need to be stubborn. A stubborn person is someone who cannot be enticed by material or spiritual things. This is what the Rebbe is saying, that at every stage, even when you feel “on a high” with unexpected success, that’s just vanity until and unless we see the Rebbe again. Until that point, we can’t stop being stubborn.

### **SICHOS OF THE PAST AND THE SICHOS OF THE D’VAR MALCHUS**

**R’ Friedman:** A Chassid once told me that while he knows that there is an inyan to reviewing the sichos of 5751-2 and inyanim of Geula, he nonetheless prefers reviewing a different sicha for which he’ll get greater feedback and which the crowd might enjoy more. What’s the right thing to do?

**R’ Notik:** Sometimes, in order to get people to listen more to the sichos of 5751-5752, you need to arouse their interest. If you review the same sicha every year, they won’t listen to the sicha of 5751-2. In my opinion, it’s fine to review a different sicha every time from Likkutei Sichos, but in the last four or five minutes say something of inyanei Moshiach and Geula from 5751-2.

The same applies for the Shabbos meals. You have to review different sichos. Nobody thinks that you have to close all the Likkutei Sichos and not learn them anymore. All the sichos from all the years need to be repeated in an interesting way and through this interest you will get people to enjoy listening to the final five minutes on Moshiach too.

When Rabbi Shabtai Slavaticki went on shlichus to Belgium, he asked the Rebbe for guidance. The

***I got on the bus and someone came over to me and asked whether I’d like a cup of tea or cold water. Then he announced, “Who wants to learn Gemara? We’re starting a shiur in Daf Yomi now.” Nearly everybody was willing. The driver said that if the passengers agreed, he would provide the microphone. We traveled for an hour and learned the Daf along with stories and parables. I felt it was a type of Hakhel. I felt ashamed ... look what he’s doing, and what about me?***

Rebbe told him to work half a day in diamonds. This seemed very strange to him, to go on shlichus and work half a day in diamonds? When he

got there, he realized that if he didn’t spend half a day on diamonds, he would be considered a nonentity. You’re not a mentch if you don’t work in diamonds there.

The same here: You have to know your audience and how to publicize inyanei Moshiach and Geula to them in the best possible way. Every place is different. If you daven in a shul of scholarly people, you have to review a sicha in Nigleh with a pilpul on points in Shas and not a Chumash-Rashi sicha. Then, when people are impressed, you use the final minutes for inyanei Moshiach and Geula. In the first ten minutes you turned the person into a keili and in the final minutes you filled the keili with light.

**R’ CLY Ginsberg:** In every sicha of 5751-2 there are many details and angles that can be reviewed over several years. Of course you are not supposed to close the Likkutei Sichos and all the sichos and maamarim need to be learned, but the main emphasis needs to be on this.

We have to be stubborn about 5751-2. Whatever form we present it in, we need to learn and teach it. The best way is for a person to learn the entire sicha a few times and live with it and try to get others to live with it to whatever extent possible, “lights of Tohu in vessels of Tikkun.”

**R’ Yossi Ginsburg:** We have a shiur on D’var Malchus every week for several years now yet I find that I’m learning something new every year. After all, we have been learning Tanya not only for 18 years but 200 years and each of us feels and knows that each time we learn Tanya, it’s fresh and we notice new things. The same is true for the D’var Malchus.

The words the Rebbe used in the sicha of 28 Nissan are, “lights of Tohu in vessels of Tikkun.” You can learn the sicha of the D’var Malchus and be so immersed in the “vessels”

of the sicha that the light isn't there. Sometimes you can listen to someone and the "hottest" lines in the sicha are said in such a factual and dry manner that the "fire" of the sicha is lost.

When reviewing sichos from earlier volumes, if the fire of inyanei Moshiach burns within you, then you will find the Geula angle in it, and either say it at the end or work it into the sicha as you say it.

In Chassidus it's explained that there are two kinds of teacher and student: the teacher who teaches material and the student knows a lot of information, and the teacher who teaches the method and ability to learn, and then the student knows how to learn, which is considered the better way. The Rebbe doesn't just teach us material but a way of learning. In the sichos of the D'var Malchus there is an array of topics in Torah, Nigleh and Chassidus, in p'shat, remez, drush, and sod and the Rebbe merely shows us how in every inyan and from every possible angle, you can put in the chayus of Moshiach. When you learn this way of thinking from the Rebbe, it will be expressed in how you learn Tanya, how you learn Likkutei Sichos, maamarim, and even Chumash and Rashi.

## PEOPLE WANT TO HEAR SOMETHING NEW

**R' Friedman:** For years now we have been promising our mekuravim that "hinei hinei Moshiach ba," and they say, "You told me that years ago." They're making a good point. Where's the fulfillment of the Rebbe's prophecy? How come the Beis HaMikdash is not built and we don't see the Rebbe?

**R' Notik:** In the sicha of 28 Sivan, the Rebbe says that Hashem, as it were, needs the Jewish people to proclaim that not only is Moshiach about to come and needs

*If you daven in a shul of scholarly people, you have to review a sicha in Nigleh with a pilpul on points in Shas and not a Chumash-Rashi sicha. Then, when people are impressed, you use the final minutes for inyanei Moshiach and Geula. In the first ten minutes you turned the person into a keili and in the final minutes you filled the keili with light.*

to come, but the true and complete Geula is actually here.

It's important to point out things in people's lives, in the world around us, and to show how we can see that Moshiach is continually having a greater and greater effect on the world. I met someone who said, "Nu, Moshiach, what's happening? Where is he?"

I said, "In the last 'general letter' that the Rebbe wrote, for Nissan 5752, he said that we see how Moshiach is operating in the world. Since that letter, every Nissan of

every year, we can see how this has intensified over the previous year."

I told him, "Look, the month of Nissan came and suddenly we hear that Egypt is the biggest fighter against Hamas and so in a roundabout way, they are defending Jews. True, they have their own interests; so did the firstborns in Mitzrayim, and yet the Rebbe points at this as 'the firstborns [themselves] killing the Egyptians.'"

I live in Yerushalayim among ultra-Orthodox Jews. When they ask this question (i.e., where is Moshiach), I say, "Tell me, did you believe that there would be a situation like this that in dozens of Chassidishe yeshivos, non-Chabad yeshivos, and lately even in Litvishe yeshivos, they learn Chassidus every week, Tanya, sichos of the Rebbe, maamarim of the Rebbe?"

"Would you have believed that there would be a shiur in the D'var Malchus every week with 25 participants in the home of the rosh yeshiva of Itri, Rabbi Elifant? Would you believe that there are occasional farbrengens and the singing of Yechi there?"

So when you talk to someone about this, you could say, "Listen, we are waiting for the big Event, for the Beis HaMikdash to descend from heaven and the Rebbe to lead the Jewish people on clouds etc, but at the same time the Rebbe is demanding of us that we be part of the Geula process."

We all know about the Rebbe's cry in the sicha of 28 Nissan, when two days earlier, in the sicha of 26 Nissan at the "general yechidus," the Rebbe said not to be ashamed but to go out and dance and see the miracles and wonders that Hashem is doing for us now, and that if someone says that he doesn't see it, then you need to explain to him that Hashem is doing miracles and wonders now.

So there are two simultaneous

approaches and this makes it easier to arouse the longing for Moshiach. For when you show that Moshiach is already in the world, this strengthens the cry of “ad masai,” because if we are already experiencing these giluyim, we want the ultimate hisgalus.

**R' CLY Ginsberg:** There is a point that I constantly repeat. Moshe Rabbeinu told the Jewish people in Egypt, “thus says Hashem, remember have I remembered,” and he did signs and wonders “and the nation believed.” But right after the Geula process began they took a big step backward, to the point that the Jewish people complained, “you have soured our spirits in the eyes of Pharaoh and the eyes of his servants, to give a sword in their hand to kill us.”

It was then, after Moshe Rabbeinu's news of Geula, that things went downhill and Moshe left the scene for Midyan (there are several opinions in the Midrash if he was there for three months, six months, or a year and a half). People asked, what's going on? Where is he?

The Rebbe repeats one line: In the merit of faith, our ancestors were redeemed from Egypt. When do you need faith? When you don't see and don't understand and still, “and they believed in Hashem and Moshe His servant.”

The same is true for our generation. The Rebbe began announcing the Besuras Ha'Geula, “the time for your redemption has arrived,” etc. and raised our consciousnesses to the highest awareness of Geula. Then suddenly...collapse, and along comes an Intifada, an expulsion from Gush Katif, economic woes, etc. The natural question is where is Moshe? Where is the Rebbe who announced the Besuras Ha'Geula? This is precisely the time that we need emuna which is the merit that

***We are waiting for the big Event, for the Beis HaMikdash to descend from heaven and the Rebbe to lead the Jewish people on clouds etc, but at the same time the Rebbe is demanding of us that we be part of the Geula process.***

got our ancestors out of Egypt.

In the writings of the Arizal (Seifer HaGilgulim, chapter 13), the Arizal compares Moshiach to Moshe and describes him thus: “Moshe will be a tzaddik, born of a man and woman, and his righteousness will be great and many shall go before him. At first he will not know that he is Moshiach, like Moshe Rabbeinu did not know that he had to be the redeemer, until Hashem tells him. So too, Hashem will be revealed to Moshiach and send him to redeem the Jewish people. Then he will know that he is Moshiach and some people will recognize him as such, but not all. Just as Moshe went up the mountain and stayed there for forty days and forty nights, so too with Moshiach, he will have an aliya of his body and soul like that of Moshe on the mountain, when he will receive the G-dly abilities to bring the Geula. Then he will return and descend the mountain and everyone will acknowledge him and

he will bring the Geula.”

The Arizal writes explicitly about our situation today and stresses that it's not a matter of the soul leaving the body but the neshama and body going up together in order to receive G-dly abilities to bring the Geula.

There is a maamer of the Alter Rebbe (N'viim p. 60) that explains that the statement “Dovid, King of Israel is chai v'kayam” is for our time when Moshiach will be hidden away. Even when it seems as though it is not the case, we need the emuna that he is chai v'kayam and in the merit of emuna, we will be redeemed.

These points can be made to people, and in my experience, it really inspires them to know that now it is emuna that will bring the Geula.

**R' Yossi Ginsburg:** It's explained that the distance between 99% and 100% [i.e. the attainment of absolute perfection] is greater than the distance between 0 % and 99%. So too here, when a person believes or trusts in something 99%, as time goes by and the thing doesn't happen, his belief wanes. A person who was confident that he would make a lot of money reaches the age of 40, 50, 60 and it didn't happen, and he is no longer so sure that it ever will.

However, if a person is 100% sure, then this doesn't weaken. On the contrary, the longer it takes, the stronger his belief gets. The nimshal is obvious. If we are convinced that what the Rebbe said is true, that Moshe is true and his Torah is true, then as time passes, even a difficult period of time, the belief gets stronger. The surprising thing is not the emuna but the amount of time that is passing without Moshiach coming. But we know that the amount of time left is shrinking and we will immediately see the Rebbe.



# TOMCHEI T'MIMIM IN BLOCK 17

By Rabbi Shneur Zalman Chanim

*Ironically, my relatives, along with thousands of Jewish refugees, found respite in a DP camp on the blood-soaked ground of Germany. In no time, they established a Chassidic community and even a yeshiva. \* The next chapter in the memoirs of R' Chaikel Chanim*

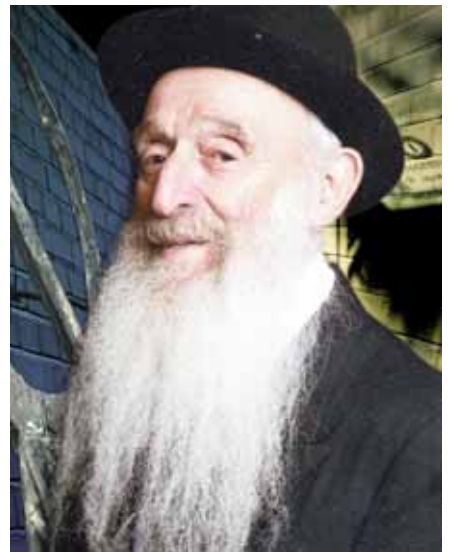
My parents stayed in the Hof camp, which I wrote about in the last installment, for only a few days. From there the Bricha agents took them in an American-owned truck to the DP camp in Poking. My parents and their group stayed there for about two months.

Germany had been divided after the war between Russia, America, England, and France. Poking, or the *Valdshtat* (forest city), as the locals called it, was in the American zone in the Bamberg district, not far from Munich. The camp served as a base for the American Air Force before being turned into a refugee camp. This DP camp, opened in January 1946, was the second largest Jewish camp in Europe. When my parents arrived there, at the end of Av of

that year, it was already populated by about 7000 people. According to the records of the refugee command, in October of that year the camp contained precisely 7645 Jews.

The camp in Poking was not a transit camp but an absorption camp. It absorbed the thousands of Holocaust survivors who had no place to go. In the first months of the camp's existence, the American army supplied their food. Later on, the UNRRA and the Joint supplied what was lacking and provided aid to those living in the camp.

Ironically, my parents and relatives, as well as thousands of other Jewish refugees, found respite here, on the blood-soaked ground of Germany. They no longer had a



need to flee for their lives. Though this wasn't their final destination, with their arrival in Poking my parents knew their frequent wanderings were at an end. They still lived out of suitcases but they were able to take a breather and plan their future.

Like the rest of the refugees, they also began rebuilding their family lives. My father, who was a communal worker by nature, got to work establishing a Chassidic community in this temporary location. The community gradually disintegrated as the members got instructions from the Rebbe where to settle on a permanent basis.

Bit by bit, on various occasions, my mother told me about the camp and with time, I put together a detailed picture of life in Poking.

"The camp consisted of rows of long, one storey barracks – 'blocks.' Each block had two doors, one at each end of the barrack, and a long corridor between them, with rooms on either side of the hall. All the barracks were identical and in order to differentiate between them, each block was given a number.

"We were given the largest room in Block 18. The room was for us alone. They gave us four folding beds and within a few days we also got a table and chairs.



“There were altogether a few hundred Chassidim in Peking, with our group of 46 arriving first. They gave us six blocks adjacent to each other at the edge of the camp. Block 17 was designated right from the beginning as the yeshiva and another block was designated as the shul and beis midrash.”

My mother immediately swept, scrubbed, polished and organized their room until it turned into a palace. Erev Shabbos, she took out a white tablecloth that she had brought all the way from Tashkent, and spread it out on the table.

“We were given about 2000 calories a day. The food included bread, flour, milk, eggs, oil and sugar. We often got cans of fish and meat and when special delegations from the Joint came on occasion we even got extras like coffee, chocolate, and cigarettes. The camp had a kitchen and a dining room but we Lubavitchers did not eat there because of kashrus reasons.”

## WHO WAS THE WOMAN THAT RESOLVED THE HALACHIC DEBATE?

My brother-in-law, the Gaon and Chassid R' Isaac Schwei, rosh yeshiva of Tomchei T'mimim in Montreal and rav on the rabbinical board of the Montreal, related:

“My father, R' Mordechai Eliyahu, received smicha from the Rogatchover Gaon and served as rav in Finland. In 1936, by order of the Rebbe Rayatz, we traveled to Estonia, where my father was rav and shochet. When the Nazis entered Estonia, we fled back to Soviet Russia. After many adventures we arrived in Vophkend, where my father became sick and died. Somehow we managed to join the Chassidim in Bucharja; my mother sent my older brother and me to Samarkand to learn in the yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim there



The Schwei brothers: R' Isaac, R' Aharon Yaakov, and R' Boruch Sholom

and then my younger brother and mother joined us.

“My mother, older brother Boruch Sholom and younger brother Yankel (today *mara d'asra* in Crown Heights) and I left Russia with most of Anash. We arrived in Peking with a group of Chassidim who had come from Bucharja via Lvov by forging documents and smuggling across borders. Fortunately, my mother knew Polish and she became our spokesperson.

When we arrived in Peking we received a quantity and variety of food that we were not used to. The Chassidim and rabbanim in the group began to discuss whether

according to halacha, considering the poor physical state of the children, the women, and even the men, we could eat the American canned food we were given.

“I was a young man and I saw the hesitation on the faces of Chassidim I respected as authorities. Suddenly an aristocratic woman entered the room. The rabbanim stood up for her and cleared a place for her and looked at her with respect. She politely said she wanted to say a few words and she asked the rabbis' pardon and permission. There was utter silence in the room.

“I heard,’ she said, ‘that the rabbis are discussing the food we

were given and don't know what to tell people to do. I hereby state that you can eat it without any question. If you are wondering how I can be so certain, I will tell you that I received packages from my son in America and among the things he sent were items like these. My son only sends me food that is unquestionably kosher.'

"After the woman left the room I heard Rabbi Avrohom Elya Plotkin and Rabbi Avrohom Maiyor (Drizin) tell their families they could eat it.

"I didn't know what to do and whether it was still worth being stringent and not to eat it. I asked my friend, R' Shneur Zalman Morosov to ask his father (R' Dovid Leib Morosov, oldest son of R' Elchonon Morosov, Hy"d) what I should do. I also wanted to know who the authoritative woman was whom the Chassidim so respected.

"I was told it was Rebbetzin Chana Schneersohn, wife of Rabbi Levi Yitzchok who served as rav in Dnepropetrovsk until he was arrested and died in exile after much suffering. They told me that the Rebbetzin was the mechutenes of the Rebbe and her son, R' Menachem Mendel, was his son-in-law. Obviously, she could be relied upon 100%."

## IS IT KOSHER?

The kashrus problem preoccupied the Lubavitcher refugees not only in Peking. While upstanding rabbis who led the Jewish refugees in the DP camps were lenient regarding kashrus on grounds of pikuach nefesh, because of the poor physical, medical, and emotional state of most of the refugees, the Lubavitchers did not rely on these leniencies. As Chassidim who went beyond the letter of the law, they were stringent.

R' Shneur Zalman Garelik (the first rav in Kfar Chabad) and R' Shmaryahu Sossonkin (known as R'

***Suddenly an aristocratic woman entered the room. The rabbanim stood up for her and cleared a place for her and looked at her with respect. She politely said she wanted to say a few words and she asked the rabbis' pardon and for permission. There was utter silence in the room... I was told it was Rebbetzin Chana Schneerson."***

Shmaryahu Batumer), for example, stayed in the Vienna-Austria DP camp with their families and another group of Anash. The camp conditions were difficult but apparently what made life especially hard was not knowing whether to eat the food the Joint gave them or not. They wrote a letter to their friend, R' Yisroel Jacobson who was in the United States:

*We are here in this country and its outlying areas, several hundred of our brethren, T'mimim and their families, until Hashem sends us His aid and we are able to see the Rebbe*

*shlita.*

*For now we have to live lives of privation both in our dwellings, which are not completely restful, and in our limited sustenance, especially when we cannot benefit from a number of the things that they give us from the various organizations because we are unsure of their kashrus. We are asked but do not know how to respond about certain things because we do not know how they are made, which is why we turn to you. Please investigate all the things that are sent here from your country. We get a kind of small fish in boxes called "conserves" (i.e. cans) and we need to know that it is not mixed with impure fish and that there is no question regarding the oil in it and no question about it being cooked by goyim. There is also powdered egg and we don't know whether it might be from forbidden birds, etc.*

*So too the cheese, whether it is cheese of goyim which Chazal forbade in all circumstances even if cured in a vegetarian manner... And also the powdered milk, whether it is gentile milk that a Jew did not see being milked.*

*Since our souls are parched and it is necessary for us to be able to benefit from these foods and there are old people and children, please find out together with others of our brethren, the rabbanim and T'mimim, and write a detailed letter about the hashgacha and reasons for ruling it as kosher. It is a matter worthy of expending effort, whether physically, because many are weak and need it, or spiritually because there are some who are not able to contain themselves and are being lenient with reasons that have no basis.*

*As well as the powders with which they cook soup or kasha.*

*Please take care of this with the rabbanim as soon as possible and send the response to one of the*

*camps you know as a residence of Anash and T'mimim, and write to them to forward the answer to us.*

*We await your response, your friends,*

*Shneur Zalman Harelik known as Shneur Berezner*

*Nachum Shmaryahu ben Avrohom Z"l Sossonkin*

## **CANS RECYCLED AS POTS**

My father bought plates and cutlery to my mother's satisfaction. On another occasion my mother related:

"At first, we recycled the large cans of preserves and turned them into pots. We put these 'pots' on two bricks that we placed outside on the ground with a space between them and underneath we made a fire out of twigs. At a later point your father constructed a Russian stove that heated the room and was also used for cooking and baking. I wasn't the only balabusta who made use of this luxury. I was happy to share it with neighbors who were eager to come cook in our kitchen. That is how our small 'palace' became the most popular room in the blocks.

"After a few weeks, Jewish Polish women discovered the remains of a plane not far from the camp. They suggested that we go there, as they had done, to take pieces of aluminum and make pots out of them. I purchased pots like these from one of the women who made them herself and they served us throughout the months that we were in Poking.

"Outhouses were in the yard and there were no showers or places to bathe at all. There was no soap. We washed in barrels that we filled with water and we washed our heads with rainwater. We collected rainwater in containers and found that rainwater left our hair soft, easy to comb, and shiny and was an

excellent substitute for shampoo and conditioner."

## **THE "EDUCATION MINISTER" AND THE "TREASURER" ANNOUNCE THE OPENING OF A YESHIVA**

The camp in Poking grew to the size of a city. Most people were not religious and the Zionist parties set the tone and were the dominant

## **THE REBBE RAYATZ'S CONCERN FOR THE REFUGEES**

The Rebbe Rayatz already concerned himself with kosher food for war survivors many months before the escape from Soviet Russia. He led a great campaign so that the Joint and UNRRA would supply kosher food to the refugees in Europe. This is what he wrote on 6 Nissan, 1946:

*I received a telegram from Rome in the name of 7000 Jews in camps and another 5000 Jews scattered throughout Italy who plead for kosher food for Pesach and kosher soup kitchens after Pesach. As of now, only a few of them receive these basic requirements. Representatives in the camps said there is a danger of a hunger strike because no kosher food for religious Jews is like no food at all ...*

*As mentioned, the urgent request in the telegram made by our brethren scattered in Italy, especially those still in camps, is not only about Pesach, but also the kashrus situation in general. It is a holy obligation for the Joint to extend aid to our needy brethren, to properly pay attention to the religious sensibilities of our rescued brethren. Kosher food can satisfy the hunger of all hungry people while non-kosher food helps only irreligious Jews but for religious Jews is no food at all. We need to remember that most of our rescued brethren are undoubtedly religious at heart.*

*I think it is unnecessary to go on at length about the importance of this matter. I hope with all my heart that the Joint will take the necessary measures to fix the situation in Italy. I would appreciate it if you let me know what is happening ..."*

Then, on 5 Iyar, 1946, the Rebbe wrote again:

*... Thank G-d, our efforts with the Joint, the State Department, UNRRA, the Agriculture Department in Washington, etc. bore fruit and nearly all of our brethren in Italy received kosher provisions for Pesach. I thank my friend for his joining me in this.*

*Washington's attitude in general, according to their official response, was encouraging because they all expressed their interest in the fate of the Jewish refugees and promised to help to the best of their ability."*

Apparently, the Rebbe's efforts bore fruit, for when Anash arrived at the camp in Poking many of the products they received from the Joint were already kosher.

force in the lives of the DP's. The camp was run by a committee that was organized by the refugees. Schools, yeshivos, Talmudei Torah, and youth movements were founded, as well as shuls and a mikva.

The Joint and ORT ran vocational training programs to help people qualify for work. The supplies department administered the food supplies and its distribution. A civilian police force





**The barracks in Poking**

was established among the Jewish populace in the camp which served in most matters instead of the establishment American military police. There was also a medical clinic and a Jewish newspaper.

As for the Chabad Chassidim, they had barely gotten a roof over their heads and they had already started learning and teaching Chassidus. Even before arriving in Poking, R' Nissan Nemenov was told by the Rebbe Rayatz that as soon as he arrived in the American zone he should found a yeshiva. This is what R' Jacobson wrote to the Rebbe on 27 Tamuz, 1946:

*I went to meet with R' Nissan Nemenov's group on the border [in Czechoslovakia] and to arrange their trip to the American zone ... I spoke with R' Nissan about starting a yeshiva as soon as he arrived in Munich, and to try to attract many talmidim."*

On 15 Elul, 1946, as soon as they arrived in Poking, R' Nissan, the "Education Minister" as the NKVD called him, held a meeting of Anash and announced the founding of Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim within the Poking DP camp. A committee was chosen to run the yeshiva. R' Nissan appointed a rosh

yeshiva, teachers and mashpiim, and gave each of them a job and the age of the talmidim he would teach.

As for my father, whom the NKVD called the "Treasurer," even before becoming familiar with the conditions of the camp or knowing how he would provide for himself, that very night he announced that he would continue supporting the yeshiva.

A month and a half later, at the beginning of Cheshvan, 5717, R' Avrohom Elya Plotkin, a member of the hanhala of Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim, wrote to the Rebbe Rayatz:

*"I would like to give another report and accounting of the situation here. Thank G-d our holy yeshiva is set up here in all its divisions. The number of all the talmidim is about 120, may they increase, and over them are teachers and supervisors. To the joy of us all they are learning with great diligence and within a short time they have grown ...*

*"Another new thing was founded here, a beis midrash for rabbanim and shoctim. It's a new mosad that was created between the walls ... here on the road, between constrictions and boundaries, at a*

*time when there is no grasp and no contact with the world of reality and the present for they have no share and lot etc. and they remain suspended between heaven and earth. They all gathered together and came to the same conclusion, to review their learning and remember that which was forgotten, preparing themselves in the corridor and learning Nigleh as well as Chassidus all day, with an order and with supervision, until late at night. Many of them are learning the crafts of sh'chita and b'dika and a few are studying for smicha.*

*That is the spiritual picture. In short a beautiful picture that gladdens the heart.*

*The material situation is not one to complain about because relatively speaking, our conditions have improved over what they were. Though there are still deficiencies, in general the positive outweighs the negative.*

At the same time, R' Nissan also wrote a report from the yeshiva to the Rebbe Rayatz:

*"A picture of the Tomchei T'mimim here, at least from a bottom-up perspective: there are 48 talmidim, out of whom 20 learn Gemara, Rashi, Tosafos and commentaries with good and deep understanding. Even in earlier times this class would be considered one of the greater classes and they are learning well. They are young and boruch Hashem they have a good understanding in their learning. There are twenty younger than them, one class learns Gemara with some Tosafos and one class learns Gemara without Tosafos, and eight are beginning to learn Gemara. They are also boruch Hashem good boys and they learn very well, and they all behave well, daven in a special minyan with supervision and the like. In all details, they comport themselves in a manner befitting*



*talmidim of Tomchei T'mimim.*

*"Another twelve little ones learn with the proper preparation to also eventually enter the four cubits of Tomchei T'mimim and surely the Rebbe will have much nachas and pleasure from them, may Hashem help and we see this soon. For even in the glory days this would be considered a good picture, boruch Hashem, especially according to our situation in the past, and this is truly a wonder from G-d.*

*"The older talmidim number close to 50 and most of them learn according to the schedule of the big Zal (i.e. in Lubavitch) four hours of Chassidus. The study of Chassidus is Tanya and the maamarim of the Rebbe that we have here, for we sorely lack any writings. They learn those individual maamarim that we have copies of here, and in one class I teach the maamer Reb Berechya from 5643.*

*"But some of the older ones are in such a state that they learn only two hours of Chassidus a day like the schedule in Shtetdrin, and they learn Nigleh the rest of the time, for although they are older, because of the situation in our previous country they were distant from learning for a long time. Some of them are actual baalei t'shuva and one can hope that in them will be fulfilled the verse about extracting the precious from the profane, etc. Therefore, due to their standing in learning Nigleh they need someone to learn with them so for now, they can only learn two hours of Chassidus a day, which consists of Tanya inside and reviewing by heart.*

*"Of the older ones there are those who are capable of a good knowledge of Nigleh and understanding of Chassidus and who also think in Chassidus before davening and spend some time on t'filla. They are generally suitable receptacles to receive the light which*



**Refugee children learning in Peking**

*is good and from day to day the necessity of seeing the Rebbe becomes felt even more, may Hashem help us in this soon."*

## **SPECIAL LEARNING PROGRAM**

The ones who fell between the cracks were the boys who were nineteen – twenty who had spent the difficult years in Russia without being able to learn. Some of them had a scanty knowledge of limudei kodesh while others barely recognized a Jewish letter. As far as their age they belonged in yeshiva, but in their knowledge they were not even equal to little schoolboys.

R' Shneur Zalman Teibel saw what could happen if these boys were permitted to wander around without a suitable framework. With the sensitivity he excelled in, he was able to gather them one by one and he learned with each one himself, one-on-one or in small groups, at first reading and writing and then Chumash and Rashi. When they were capable, he went on to Mishnayos and Gemara until most of them turned out to be talmidei chachamim.

In general, having what to do

and parnasa were big problems for the refugees. The parnasa problem? Nu, the Lubavitchers had that problem too (and how!) but being occupied? How could being occupied be a problem for Chassidim? Those who "worked" in the yeshiva were busy over their heads. Those who were not involved in teaching were occupied with the avoda of t'filla and the avoda of middos. For them, their stay in the camp was a wonderful time in which they toiled in Torah and avoda like the good old days in Lubavitch.

The menahel, R' Nissan, instituted that all the men, like the talmidim in yeshiva, have a schedule. They began early in the morning, when they said the daily T'hillim as it is divided over a week, then davening, and then learning Nigleh and Chassidus, with breaks, until Maariv. Some men studied the laws of sh'chita and how to sharpen the knives.

As for the girls' school and more on life in Peking, that will be discussed in the next installment, G-d willing.

*In memory of my mother, Leah bas R' Shmuel. Her yahrtzeit is 27 Sivan 5757.*

# BREAKING THE SOUND BARRIER

By Nosson Avrohom

Translated by Michoel Leib Dobry



With great pride, Rabbi and Mrs. Hillel Rinus are counted among the primary founders of Yitzhar, an idealistic settlement located in the Judean Mountains. They arrived there shortly after their wedding, a little more than twenty-five years ago. Instilled with the ideology of love for the Land and the Torah of Israel, they came with the goal of making the area blossom and participate in the settlement of the Promised Land. “I am happy to report that our settlement today is filled to capacity. The demand here is great, and we are fighting the government to allow us to continue building.”

Anyone familiar with Rabbi Rinus knows that he is the image of a learned Torah scholar, pleasant and hospitable. While our conversation naturally turned to the situation in Eretz Yisroel today, the subject that actually brought us together for an interview was an amazing “miracle” that he had experienced with one of his children, due to a bracha from the Rebbe exactly nineteen years ago.

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“Nineteen years ago, we were blessed with another son. We were simply overjoyed and very excited. A new child had come into the world, a new soul with new talents. At his bris, all of the families that founded this young and vibrant yishuv took part. The joy that filled our hearts knew no bounds.

“The baby left the hospital completely healthy in body and spirit, and as any good set of parents, we started putting together a plan for our child’s future. Yet, to our great pain and sorrow, this marvelous feeling had been replaced within a few months by one of deep sadness.

“One bright afternoon, literally as if out of a storybook, an Israel Air Force Phantom jet flew low over the homes on the yishuv at an unusually high rate of speed, shaking their foundations and even shattering many windows. Once in a while, air force pilots would engage in training as part of photographic exercises in the mountain ranges. We would watch them on maneuvers during their military operations, but they had never made a fly-by at such a low altitude before. The effect of the

aircraft’s movements created a sonic boom powerful enough to make a person’s heart stop. There wasn’t a person on the yishuv who didn’t jump at the sound.

“Everyone was very startled, with one notable exception: The baby lay in his crib, calm and tranquil, as if nothing had happened. He seemed so still and unresponsive that it set off a warning light in our minds. We were gripped by fear – not because of the jet plane, but due to the baby’s reaction or the lack thereof. At first, we tried to convince ourselves that this was just a temporary condition – after all, he’s still just an infant and his hearing simply hasn’t been properly developed. Yet, when we would periodically try to make some noise around him, he didn’t even notice us. We tried to draw his attention to bells ringing and other sounds, but there was no response.

“A few days later, we got on a bus and traveled to Tel Aviv. In those days, transportation conditions were not as they are today. Not every family had a car, and the journey was most circuitous. After getting proper direction from more regular



travelers, we found our way to 'Machon Micha', an Israeli institute that diagnoses and treats the deaf and mute population. The center is located in the northern Tel Aviv neighborhood of Ramat Aviv. We arrived there extremely worried, offering silent prayers in our hearts that our fears would turn out to be baseless.

"We anxiously waited and worried. Would we hear the worst? How difficult would it be for us as parents to deal with this situation? Realizing we must thank Hashem for whatever life brings, our mouths nonetheless did not relent from saying T'hillim.

"The dreaded moment arrived. After a lengthy and comprehensive series of tests and probes, the specialist called us in to give us his diagnosis.

"He was brief and to the point, without trying to hide or smooth anything over. Clearly and simply, he explained to us that our beloved son was diagnosed as severely hearing impaired. In dry medical terms, he was 'deaf'. He added that there was a slight chance that with the help of recently developed

***In dry medical terms, he was 'deaf'... I exchanged looks with the doctor and with my wife, and the overall feeling was that our world had been destroyed. It is impossible to describe the feeling of utter hopelessness that engulfed us.***

hearing devices, he might be able to have a modicum of hearing restored. I exchanged looks with the doctor and with my wife, and the overall

feeling was that our world had been destroyed. It is impossible to describe the feeling of utter hopelessness that engulfed us.

"The doctor made an appointment for us, when we would begin to deal with this situation and learn together about the world of the deaf and hearing impaired, including the use of sign language.

"It took us a while to recover from the shock of this medical diagnosis. We returned home broken and confused, but we quickly pulled ourselves together and decided that we would not allow such feelings of despair to control our lives. Although we started going to 'Machon Micha' regularly to learn sign language and for more testing by the experts, we were also determined not to accept the finality of this situation, as gloomy as it appeared. The Lubavitcher Rebbe's reputation as a miracle worker had made waves throughout Eretz Yisroel, and we had heard stories of wondrous personal salvations that had come as a result of the Rebbe's bracha. We decided that the time had come to write to the Rebbe and ask for his blessing.



"I turned to the first Chabad chassid that I met and asked him if he could give me the fax number for the Rebbe's office in Brooklyn. Along with the tremendous efforts we were investing for our son's welfare, we also decided to write to the Rebbe and ask for his bracha. We intensified our prayers and made good resolutions in Torah and mitzvah observance. That night, we composed a lengthy correspondence on our son's condition, and asked the Rebbe to nullify this decree – no less.

"I remember all this as if it happened only yesterday. We didn't ask for an improvement or for ways to deal the situation more successfully – we asked that our son begin hearing.

"What happened just a few days later can only be described as a miracle. A few months after this whole story began, at around the same time of day and under the exact same circumstances, another low-flying Phantom jet swooped down over the yishuv, making an ear-shattering noise that shook all the windows.

"The baby again lay in his crib in the living room, but this time his reaction was totally different. His entire body shook from the frightful noise, and he looked quite startled. He began to cry, and had difficulty calming down. I looked at him for several minutes, incredulous and

bewildered. I even pinched myself to be certain that I wasn't dreaming or imagining things. Never in my life was I so overjoyed to hear a baby cry... This was a child who had just been diagnosed as functionally deaf by the biggest medical professionals around. How did this happen?

"The very next day we made our way to 'Machon Micha,' understandably full of excitement.

"After a most thorough and nerve-racking examination, the examining physicians conceded that they were completely taken aback by this sudden apparent recovery. Still, they remained skeptical, and they asked us to come next week for another examination, when they would make comparisons.

"We went back home with the child, and in the meantime, we did our own tests to determine whether his hearing had actually returned. He began to react to noises and stimulations around him. We found it hard to believe that this was really happening. It was a hard to erase in one moment, the misery of yesterday's reality.

"A week later, we came to the center again, and the tests continued.

"At the fourth meeting, an unbelievable thing happened. As soon as we passed through the gate, one of the center's directors invited us into her office for a private meeting. I remember her words well:

'My dear Rabbi and Mrs. Rinus, we have no scientific explanation for the change that took place in your child's hearing condition! This is a medical miracle of the highest order – one that we have never encountered before. The reality of the situation is clear: The first time you came here, your child was deaf, and now his hearing is perfectly normal! You have nothing to do here – Be well and we hope to never see you again under such circumstances...'

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It's quite apparent that despite the many years that have passed since then, Rabbi Hillel Rinus has difficulty hiding his emotions, which became more and more visible as he reached the end of his story:

"The very same low-flying Phantom jet that revealed the problem was the one that showed us that the problem was solved. I have not the slightest doubt that the Rebbe read our letter, saw our misery, and removed the Heavenly decree in the same way it had come forth. Everyone had predicted that our son would have no end of trouble in school at every level. They expected serious learning disabilities, and even claimed that he would be unable to function as a normal child. However, all this proved false. He has grown up to be a gifted youth with a sharp mind and a talent for education. Thanks to the Rebbe."

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# THEY ARE READY, THAT'S FOR SURE

By Rabbi Yaakov Shmuelewitz  
Shliach, Beit Shaan

*I'll never forget the excitement when the Rebbe announced, "The avoda of shlichus is over... the only remaining avoda is to be actually ready to welcome Moshiach" \* Now, 17 years later, it's the Jews on the street who are excited.*

## I WAS THERE

I remember that sicha of Thursday, Rosh Chodesh Kislev. I stood there facing the Rebbe. My son Sholom Ber, who was four years old at the time, was with me. I held on to him as he stood on the table opposite the Rebbe. I wanted him to hear the Rebbe. Every so often I glanced at him to see whether he was listening and understanding. The Rebbe quoted the Mishna in Brachos, "all the days of your life – to bring to Yemos HaMoshiach." The Rebbe gave an explanation (in addition to the simple meaning) that all our actions and involvements during the days of our lives need to be permeated by one goal, to bring and hasten the Yemos HaMoshiach.

The Kinus began on Shabbos

Mevarchim Kislev, Parshas Chayei Sarah, 5752. According to the schedule, the Kinus officially began at 1:30 with the Rebbe's farbrengen. We shluchim were focused on this sicha when the Rebbe would tell us the updated horaos for the coming year.

I had one little problem. What was I supposed to do with my son during the farbrengen? I had a spot to stand in but you couldn't get even a pin in there and surely not a little boy who might suddenly talk or cry.

I didn't have many options. I brought him to 770 and put him down on a bench, where he fell asleep. I miraculously reached my usual spot and heard the first sicha of the farbrengen, but immediately afterwards I was told that my son

had woken up and I had to go out to him. Those were the last sichos that I heard from the Rebbe, Chayei Sarah and Toldos 5752 on the following Shabbos.

## MOSHIACH ON DIZENGOFF AND IN A MONASTERY IN INDIA

Rabbi Chaim Nevo, who operates a Chabad tank, maintains that the topic of Moshiach has already trickled down to all segments of the population. Not long ago he visited Dizengoff Street in Tel Aviv, one of the longest and busiest Tel Aviv streets, and one of its main cultural, entertainment and shopping centers. It's not what you would call a Chassidishe place.

R' Nevo noticed a young man running towards the tank. With all his earrings and odd get-up it was hard to tell whether it was a man or woman. He shouted something but it was only as he got closer to the tank that R' Nevo could make out what he was saying: "*Rak Moshiach*, I am just waiting for Moshiach." They got into a conversation and R' Nevo explained how to prepare for Moshiach's coming.

The tank is decorated with pictures of the Rebbe, Moshiach flags, and Yechi signs. Whoever enters the tank or even passes near it immediately sees that it's advertising Moshiach. One of the shluchim once jokingly said to R' Nevo, "You don't have to travel to the Rebbe – you're with the Rebbe all day in your tank."

R' Nevo has his routes. Every Sunday is devoted to soldiers. The route includes Afula, the Golani junction (where today there is a Chabad house run by R' Shmuel Rosenberg), Chatzor, Machanayim, and Kiryat Shmoneh. Thousands of soldiers convene in all these places as they make their way to their bases in the north. R' Nevo puts on t'fillin with them and gives out material,



hastening the Geula.

“One day,” said R’ Nevo, “I went over to a group of soldiers and suggested that they put on t’fillin. Some of them said ‘Go over to that Yemenite guy. He is the son of a rav and he’ll put on t’fillin.’ Indeed, that refined looking young man who looked like a tzaddik (except without a yarmulke) put on t’fillin and his colleagues all followed suit.

“I met him again the following week, and later on too. He was slowly making his way up in the ranks and each time I met him he was somewhere else. He was an officer, he fought in Gaza and Genin, he lost some of his good friends, but he was always happy to meet me. He rolled up his sleeve, put on t’fillin, and the others were inspired to do likewise.

“One day, he told me that we wouldn’t be meeting again since he was finished with the army and would be traveling. A few months later, I received warm regards from him from the ends of the world ... I met one of the shluchim in India who told me that in a monastery in India, he had met five Israelis, none

of whom were willing to put on t’fillin, but then a young, dignified-looking Yemenite came over and happily put on the t’fillin. He told the shliach that he was willing to do so only thanks to R’ Chaim from the tank.

“I hope that by now he has left the monastery, puts t’fillin on himself and his friends, and reads *Beis Moshiach* ...”

## MOSHIACH’S SUKKA

“Last Sukkos,” continued R’ Nevo, “I had a sukka on wheels and whenever I showed up at an army camp I played “Moshiach, Moshiach, Moshiach” on the loudspeaker. The soldiers came into the sukka, said l’chaim, sang, and prepared for the Geula.

“One day of Sukkos I went to a big camp in the Golan Heights. As soon as the soldiers heard the music, they came en masse to the sukka and began dancing. I had to calm them down so the sukka wouldn’t collapse.

“After the dancing they sat down in the sukka and we began to talk. I

explained to them that sitting in a sukka strengthens our anticipation for the future sukka, the sukka made out of the skin of the Leviathan which we will sit in, near the Beis HaMikdash.

“The soldiers expressed their joy by composing a song in my honor, a military song. They got up and sang: Chaimtche, Chaimtche, tche, tche.

“If you’ve been in the army, you know this expressed great admiration.”

## MOSHIACH IN THE COURT

R’ Yaakov Reinetz, veteran Chassid in Lud, relates:

“Every Shabbos a certain individual comes to our shul from a distant neighborhood. He walks for over an hour in order to daven in a Chabad shul. He is a lawyer and works as a public defender in the court system. He told me an interesting story.

“At the court there was a competency hearing for a man who chased after someone with a knife. He was accused of attempted

murder. In the testimony that appeared in the prosecution file it said that during the chase he screamed, 'I am G-d, I am Moshiach!'

"The judge said the man should be hospitalized in a closed psychiatric ward since it is the Lubavitcher Rebbe who is actually Moshiach.

"The lawyer emphasized that it wasn't the fact that the man proclaimed he was G-d that motivated the judge to hospitalize him. It was his claim of being Moshiach which made no sense to him."

### ALL BECAUSE OF A SIGN

The mashpia R' Zalman Notik of Yerushalayim relates:

"I gave a shiur in a neighborhood of Yerushalayim. I debated whether to speak about Moshiach directly or in general terms. I decided to first speak in general about the Rebbe and Chassidus and only at the end to speak about Moshiach. When I began talking about Moshiach I heard a sigh of relief from one of the people. 'Finally, I was waiting for that the entire shiur.'"

R' Notik uses every opportunity to publicize the Besuras Ha'Geula and he has many stories to tell:

"Years ago, we hung up a sign on the house that said, 'Hichonu L'Vias HaMoshiach' (get ready for the coming of Moshiach). One day, a young woman knocked at our door and asked whether we were the ones

***At the court there was a competency hearing for a man who chased after someone with a knife. He was accused of attempted murder. In the testimony that appeared in the prosecution file it said that during the chase he screamed, "I am G-d, I am Moshiach!" The judge said the man should be hospitalized in a closed psychiatric ward since it is the Lubavitcher Rebbe who is actually Moshiach.***

who hung up the Moshiach sign. She said, 'Every time I pass the sign, it gives me a good feeling.' We wrote down her address and kept it, just in case we would need it.

"Two years later, it was a Hakhel year (5755) and we called her. We had her entire family around the table and we made a "Hakhel." We explained that in a year of Hakhel there is a mitzva to gather and speak words of Torah and yiras Shamayim.

"The continuation of the story is that one of the sons registered for a Chabad elementary school and from there he went to Chabad yeshivos, where he is still learning.

"All because of a sign."

### STARTING THE WEEK WITH MOSHIACH

One of the Chassidim in Yerushalayim has an unofficial custom in his home that when they make Havdala and the father says, "Hinei," everybody choruses, "Hinei Moshiach Ba," three times and only then does he go on to recite Havdala,.

One time they had a guest, a mekureves, and she heard how they did Havdala. She liked it and when she eventually got married to her husband, who was a Lubavitcher but not enthused about inyanei Moshiach, she let him know that she wanted to continue this "Hinei Moshiach ba" in Havdala. He agreed and that is how they say Havdala till this day.

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# THE WHOLE LAND: WHAT SHLUCHIM CAN DO

By Raanan S. Isseroff

## *A Report on the Shleimus HaAretz Conference for Shluchim in Crown Heights held Dalet Tammuz, June 26, 2009*

Shluchim gathered on Friday, Dalet Tammuz, in Yeshiva Chovavei Torah in Crown Heights, Brooklyn to discuss strategies for Shluchim to convey the Rebbe's message of Shleimus HaAretz to their communities.

The timing of the meeting capitalized on the Torah context, as the previous week's parsha was Shlach, the story of the spies, and the following Shabbos was the parsha of Korach.

Shlach discusses how the Jews were not willing to settle the land of Israel. Rather, they wished to continue living in the Midbar with the clouds of glory surrounding them and the Mann falling from heaven every day. But they were

missing the point. Their purpose was specifically to go into Eretz Yisroel and get involved with practical mitzvos, a divine service of much greater value to the Creator than a spiritual life in the desert.

Korach's problem was simply with Moshe Rabbeinu, accepting the authority of Toras Moshe without question.

These same two issues plague our people today and are at the heart of the woeful situation in Israel: The secular state of Israel has given up on our divine mandate to settle the land and consequently millions of Israel's Jews are in danger for their lives. Secondly, there is a serious

vacuum in leadership and whatever there is, is not aligned with Moshe Rabbeinu or "his G-d"! The situation is absolutely unsustainable.

This landmark conference, hosted by "Crown Heights Women for Shleimus HaAretz", "The Crown Heights Committee for Shleimus HaAretz" and the "Shleimus HaAretz Talk Show" was the brainchild of Mrs. Tamar Adelstein and Raanan Isseroff. Shluchim met to suggest ideas of how each shliach can start advertising the Rebbe's message of Eretz Yisroel Shleima.

First to speak was Rabbi Yehoshua Hecht – President of the Rabbinical Council of Connecticut and Director of Chabad of Norwalk. Rabbi Hecht spoke of the problems inherent with Israel's continuing to pursue the Oslo Peace plan and the current land giveaway agreement being proposed by PM Netanyahu's government. Mr. Netanyahu recently agreed in principle with President Obama to give away the West Bank area and most of Jerusalem.

Rabbi Hecht described how tragic, foolish and suicidal it is to promote such an evil plan calling for the forced evacuation of some 480,000 people, most of whom stand to lose their jobs as well as their homes.

Rabbi Hecht discussed the problem of the American Jewish community's indifference towards Eretz Yisroel and the need for Shluchim to approach this head on by having their congregations begin lobbying to educate the American public to influence Israel to cancel this terrible plan. Each Shliach has local federations and Rabbanim who can be approached and taught about the Lubavitcher Rebbe's perspective on stopping Israel's continued



insistence on talks for the creation of a terrorist state in the name of “peace”.

Next to speak was Rabbi Sholom Ber Wolpo. Rav Wolpo, a veteran activist for many years who has received many brachos from the Lubavitcher Rebbe for his work on Shleimus HaAretz, is a great-grandson of Rebbetzin Menucha Rochel Slonim, the daughter of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Rebbe of Chabad, the Mittlerer Rebbe.

Rav Wolpo discussed how the police have opened three criminal files on him for his patriotic efforts to advertise the plight of the Jews of Eretz Yisroel who are being victimized by a government gone mad. While discussing the three “tikim” (criminal files) Rav Wolpo received a standing ovation. After all, not everyone can boast of such mesiras nefesh from the constant harassment of police and civil authorities who are unhappy with Rav Wolpo’s selfless work to stop them from suicide!

Wasn’t it only a short time ago that Israel advertised its ambitious plans to develop the outlying areas? Weren’t the chalutznikim lauded as “heroes” and “heroic settlers of the land?” Wasn’t “Chalutz!” the battle cry of the generation after the Holocaust? Over 75% of Olim who end up staying are religious. As such, the Aliya office recruits heavily from the religious community.

Today, “Chalutz”, “Settler” and “Mitnachalim” are dirty words. The once lauded “Settler” is derided in the Israeli media and worse, he is called a “criminal”, “thief” and worse by a government intent on running the Jews off the land of the Bible, the land of Avraham, Yitzchok and Yaakov. A government claiming to be for the Jewish citizens of Israel while working to accomplish the

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dress or behavior.  
By doing this, we  
cause the divine  
presence to  
automatically join  
with us to effect  
the second part of  
the pasuk:  
“l’hatzilcha l’latet  
oyvecha lifanecha”  
– to save us and  
cause our enemies’  
downfall - Seifer  
HaSichos 1970,  
vol.2, pp.195-196.***

goals of the Arab enemy. As the saying goes about Shaul HaMelech, who attempted to be kind to the king of the Amalekim: “Those who are kind to the cruel, end up being cruel to the kind”.

The Israeli government has spent years bending over backward to be kind to Arab terrorists so that today, it ends up being cruel to the Jews of Israel who are suffering mercilessly from the kindness of Israel’s government.

For advertising this already very public fact, Rabbi Wolpo has been the victim of countless police investigations.

Rav Wolpo called on Shluchim to establish an American office for Shleimus HaAretz. Rav Wolpo brought his new color English language magazine “Israel Shelanu” to show off to the Shluchim. This is the English version of the already popular Hebrew: “Yisroel Shelanu” that Rav Wolpo’s organization: “Vaad LeHatzalat HaAm V’HaAretz” puts out on a weekly basis at no charge. To order, email Rav Wolpo at [sos-israel@012.net.il](mailto:sos-israel@012.net.il).

The next speaker, Rabbi Kalmanson, discussed the necessity for shluchim to get involved and not to minimize and dismiss what is going on in Eretz Yisroel as “politics”.

Rabbi Zalman Liberow of Chabad of Flatbush lauded the beauty and timing of Rabbi Wolpo’s “Israel Shelanu” magazine. It is the only English weekly magazine on the subject that Chabad offers for outreach. Rabbi Liberow suggested that an email version be mailed to the Shluchim. This would provide valuable information on the situation in Eretz Yisroel that a shliach could pass on to his mekuravim. (It was later suggested to mail a paper version to the Shluchim as well).

Rabbi Yehuda Friedman, Director of Chabad House of Mill-Basin and Chabad House of Georgetown (Brooklyn), spoke next at length about the necessity of simply getting the Rebbe’s

words “without p’shetlach” out to the public. This itself would impress people.

Rabbi Shmuel Grumach, director of Chabad of Beit Dagan in Eretz Yisroel, told of the trials and tribulations that an Israeli shliach is faced with in the normal course of his work in relation to Shleimus HaAretz. He described his visit to the town of Sa-Nur before it was destroyed and given away to the Arabs.

The residents there made a demonstration to protest the unfair treatment they were getting from the Israeli government, which had enticed most of the residents as new Olim to settle the hinterlands of Israel. The residents of Sa-Nur invested their dollars into making the desert bloom at the behest of Israel’s government, which sent shluchim to America, Britain, South Africa, France and other countries to lure Jews into making “Aliya”. Little did the Olim know the sinister plans the government had in store for them and their possessions.

If they had, they most probably never would have come.

Sa-Nur’s beleaguered residents are forgotten by the rest of Israel and abandoned by its own government, essentially thrown to the wolves by the media by being characterized as “parasites” and worse. The residents have now decided that even at this late stage, a protest demonstration is in order.

Rabbi Grumach and his family, who participated in the demonstration, never dreamed they would be victimized by such unrestrained violence as the soldiers used against them. They even beat his wife and assaulted his daughter.

What was pointed out at the conference is the media whitewash that Mr. Netanyahu’s

***Flood the American congressional committees that oversee US Middle East Policy with hundreds of personally written letters, faxes and emails which protest the US military’s training of Fatah terrorists and that decry the United States’ demands that Israel stop building in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria.***

plan is getting. Instead of revealing the outlandish fact that most of Jerusalem is slated to be given away, the media only reports that it is the West Bank that is going.

The reality is that around 480,000 Jews live in the areas slated to be given away, the large majority of them religious. The question that came to everyone’s mind was: Why isn’t the government giving away Ramat Aviv or Haifa? Why is it that all the places being given away are where religious Jews live?

Then Rabbi Yekutiel Rapp, Mashpia in 770, spoke words of encouragement and thanks for the Shluchim who attended. Rabbi

Rapp discussed the importance of Shluchim advertising the plight of Eretz Yisroel and the terrible fate that awaits them if the Peace plan is pushed through.

Rabbi Rapp reminded the crowd that in 1970 the Rebbe brought out “Mivtza Tznius” as a direct means of protecting Jews in Eretz Yisroel: “Tznius for Eretz HaKodesh”.

The Rebbe said, “We must utilize the special bracha of Eretz Yisroel by making it our business to be Tznius... There should not be seen in the Jewish people any “ervas davar” – immodest dress or behavior. By doing this, we cause the divine presence to automatically join with us to effect the second part of the pasuk: “I’hatzilcha l’latet oyvecha lifanecha” – to save us and cause our enemies’ downfall” - *Seifer HaSichos 1970, vol.2, pp.195-196.*

Rabbi Rapp pointed out that the situation with tznius can affect the situation in Eretz Yisroel for the better.

A campaign should be started by shluchim to improve the problems with Tznius. The Rebbe is telling us that this can have a direct effect on the situation!

We had a surprise speaker: Israeli Journalist David Bedein, the Bureau Chief for the Israel Resource News Agency and the President for the Center For Near East Policy Research ([www.BehindTheNews.com](http://www.BehindTheNews.com)) called in minutes before Shabbos from Eretz Yisroel to discuss with us his suggestions. He advises us to flood the American congressional committees that oversee US Middle East Policy with hundreds of personally written letters, faxes and emails which protest the US military’s training of Fatah terrorists and that decry the United States’ demands that

Israel stop building in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria. Those committees are the Near East Subcommittee and its parent, the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee, chaired by Senator Robert Casey and Representative Gary Ackerman, respectively.

The conclusion was that the Israeli government needs to hear voices of protest, both from Israel and from the US and abroad. It was pointed out that there is a great confusion amongst Jews over who is the responsible party for stopping the terrible catastrophe of Oslo. Does one petition the President of the United States to "lay off of Netanyahu?" Does one reprimand the government of Israel for putting its Jewish citizens in danger? Who do we put our energies into convincing to help stop the destruction of Israel?

The Rebbe historically always pushed Israel's government not to give in to the demands of America. We don't find that the Rebbe felt he must talk to the Americans because they were the problem!

In discussion with MK Katzav when he came to visit, the Rebbe told him to tell Shamir not to give in. Over and over again we find that the Rebbe spoke with Israel's diplomats to encourage them to stand strong in the face of obviously difficult American demands. It was only with Camp David that we began to see the

***Today, the players have not changed. They have simply gotten deeper into a quagmire that the Rebbe tells us is not irreversible: All we need to do is stop all talks and take back all land. Then terror will stop within 48 hours, because this is the true source of the terror. When Israel chooses to stop, so will the terror.***

truth in the Rebbe's prophetic vision. Right after Sinai was given away and "Peace" was made with Egypt, our now "peaceful" neighbor proceeded to move its armies and weaponry up to Israel's border. Obviously, the Rebbe points out, they have a

different idea of what "peace" means than we do. After all, what peaceful brotherly nation needs its armies right on its neighborly peaceful border...?

We too can learn from this. Today, the players have not changed. They have simply gotten deeper into a quagmire that the Rebbe tells us is not irreversible: All we need to do is stop all talks and take back all land. Then terror will stop within 48 hours, because this is the true source of the terror. When Israel chooses to stop, so will the terror.

Israel's government can at any time cry: "Foul play!" All the agreements have been violated and broken. Not one cease-fire has been kept. Terror continues non-stop. The world does not expect - and in fact is shocked - that Israel keeps to *any* of the Oslo accords. Why should it? Nobody in his or her right mind would. Yet millions of shekels continue to flow from Israel to the PA. Hundreds of convicted terrorist murderers are set free to murder again. Who set them free? Not the United States. Not President Obama.

It is a test from above. If, as the Rebbe says, we are the generation of the Midbar, it makes sense that our biggest mesiras nefesh is supposed to be specifically for Eretz Yisroel. We must stand up for the land and declare: HaAretz Hi Tov M'od!

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# REB ZALMAN SKOBLO

Prepared for publication by Menachem ben Eliezer

## HE PREFERRED THE BEIS MIDRASH TO HIS HOUSE

The Chassid, Rabbi Zalman Skoblo was born on 3 Sivan 5652/1892 to Rabbi Yitzchok and Mrs. Gittel Leah Skoblo, a distinguished Lubavitcher family.

In his early childhood years he loved to sit and learn. He related that as a child in the town of Horodishatz he thought, "Shas is so large and there is so much to learn. There is no time to spend at home!"

At a young age he sat in the beis midrash where he learned and also slept on one of the benches. His sister would bring him food from home.

In 5663 (or 5664), when he was only eleven years old, he joined the Tomchei T'mimim branch in Horodishatz. This yeshiva was founded in 5661 and existed until 5671.

When he became bar mitzva, R' Zalman transferred to Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim in Lubavitch itself. There, R' Zalman became one of the outstanding talmidim. Rabbi Yisroel Jacobson, who also learned in Lubavitch, called him, "ha'tamim ha'metzuyan" (the outstanding Tamim).

At this time, R' Zalman had long peios which were his distinguishing feature. That's how his fellow T'mimim remembered him years later. He cut them only when he was drafted in the Russian army and he did so for the purpose of saving his beard.

He later related that after he was drafted, the officers ordered that he take off his beard, to which he cleverly told them, "They will say that in the Russian army they behave like the Germans." The officers stopped bothering him.

In Tomchei T'mimim there was a "Kupas Bachurim," which was founded at the initiative of the Rebbe Rayatz. From the memoirs of elder T'mimim it seems that the fund





played an important role in their lives. The goal of the fund was to help cover the living expenses of new applicants. Until they were tested and accepted, the fund helped those who were without means. It also helped those talmidim who, for various reasons, could not eat in the yeshiva kitchen.

The fund was run by a gabbai who was picked from the bachurim and for a period of time, R' Zalman was responsible for the fund. This testifies to his standing among the bachurim and the trust they had in him.

One year, on Erev Yom Kippur, R' Zalman visited the office of the Rebbe Rayatz, who was the "acting dean" of the yeshiva, in order to make an accounting of the money in the fund. The Rebbe seemed wound up and very tense and his face looked terrifying. R' Zalman dared to ask, "What happened that you are so tense and wound up?"

Instead of replying, the Rebbe Rayatz opened a drawer in his desk. The drawer was divided into compartments and in each compartment there was money. "You see?" said the Rebbe. "All this is tz'daka money and an accounting must be made."

R' Zalman related this incident to R' Eliyahu Landau and concluded, "At that moment I realized that I could not just relate to him in a collegial manner as I had done before. The Rayatz is completely different ... [i.e. in a different league]."

## SHAME AND PRAISE ARE THE SAME TO YOU

While learning in yeshiva, the Rebbe Rashab and Rebbe Rayatz became fond of him and he was one of the mekuravim of "Beis HaRav" and one of those who merited a

personal relationship.

R' Zalman later related to his grandson that when the Rebbe Rashab farbrenged or said a maamer, it was extremely crowded. It was very hard to squeeze in and find a good spot where you could hear the Rebbe, but I – said R' Zalman – was helped by my friend, R' Shmuel Katzman (later his brother-in-law) who was very



**R' Zalman Skoblo in his youth**

strong. I would always go with him and thanks to him I would get close to the Rebbe Rashab.

R' Eliyahu Landau related, "After R' Zalman moved to Eretz Yisroel, he would go every day to the zal of yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim in Lud, where he would learn and daven. One day, I asked him to farbreng with us. It was at the start of the Yemei Hagbala before Shavuot. He agreed to farbreng. In general, he

did not speak much. A word from him was an entire sentence. It was only afterwards that he told me that he agreed to farbreng because that day (3 Sivan) was his birthday.

"He told us about his first yechidus. He didn't want to tell us about the content of the yechidus but we pressured him and he relented. He said it was accepted practice for Chassidim not to relate their yechidus but he told us one thing, that when he was about to leave, the Rebbe taught him a lesson in avodas Hashem, 'If you are denigrated or praised, it should be absolutely the same to you.'

"R' Zalman said this in amazement about the Rebbe, to explain his greatness. The Rebbe said this to a very young bachur, a child really, and treated him with such seriousness. He was amazed by the Rebbe and went on to extol this. Yet when I heard this, I was more amazed by R' Zalman, because the Rebbe did not say this to everyone!"

R' Zalman related that he was fourteen when he had yechidus with the Rebbe Rashab and he said about himself that after that yechidus, the issue of caring about what people had to say about him was gone - and it never came back!

R' Landau added, "When I asked him about a certain spiritual matter he said to me in surprise, 'After the first yechidus!?' (Meaning- could such a problem come up after the first yechidus?!) It wasn't possible!"

## MIRACLES AT THE RUSSIAN DRAFT OFFICE

When it came time to be drafted, he was sent a draft notice. The danger in serving in the Russian army was obvious and R' Zalman went to the Rebbe Rashab to ask for his bracha to be exempt from army

service. He snuck into the Rebbe's home, knocked on the door, and entered the Rebbe's room where the Rebbe sat with an open Gemara. The Rebbe spoke to him at length.

R' Zalman related that the Rebbe mentioned many statements of Chazal and cited the source with the page number. Sometimes, with certain quotes he told R' Zalman to look them up. When he quoted something in Tanya, he said, "It's an explicit Tanya."

R' Zalman did not say what took place at that encounter but before he went to the draft office he went to the Rebbe again for a bracha. The Rebbe did not bless him.

At that time, if you were called before the draft board, you could go to any draft office you chose, even one not in your place of residence. At the first interview you underwent medical exams, registration, etc. It seems the Rebbe sent him to a draft office in some city and that is where he went. A Chassid lived there who knew an askan. The two of them met with the askan who suggested that they pay a lot of money and bribe a woman who knew the doctor at the draft office who would rule out R' Zalman for the army.

The amount he asked for was enormous. Having no choice, R' Zalman's friends collected the money and paid the askan in full. However, on the appointed day, R' Zalman realized that the askan hadn't done anything and salvation would not come about through him.

His beard had started to grow and he looked healthy. When he went to the draft office, he went for the medical exams and the nurse in the room said to the doctor, "Such a nice looking boy – exempt him from the army." And he was exempted.

To R' Zalman it was clear that his release had nothing to do with the efforts of that askan and he asked for his money back. Those were days of hunger and privation and the

## **"YOUR SON WILL RETURN"**

R' Avrohom Skoblo, R' Zalman's son, related:

When I came of draft age, my father told me to lift heavy things in order to cause a hernia. I was not drafted but a short while later the war broke out and everybody was drafted into that terrible war. It looked as though the Soviet Union would be defeated.

My father accompanied me to the train. We had to go forty kilometers and on the way he said to me: Tonight, my mother a"ch came to me in a dream and asked me what is happening in the world. I said that a world war had begun. She asked: What connection does it have with you? I said: My son Avrohom is drafted. She said: You should know that he will be wounded but he will come back alive.

And that is what happened. When I was on the outskirts of Berlin, I was wounded by a bullet in my hand but I returned home in good health.

***When I told him that the Likkutei Dibburim of the Rebbe Rayatz had been published and it said that Chai Elul is the birthday of the Alter Rebbe and the Baal Shem Tov, he was overcome with emotion and he said, "We never heard about this in Lubavitch."***

large sum of money belonged to his friends and could be used to purchase food and basic necessities.

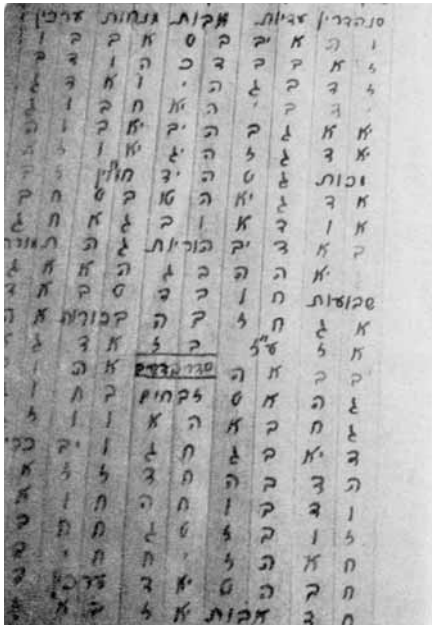
The askan refused to return the money and R' Zalman went to his house to discuss it with him. R' Zalman was a quiet person by nature and never got angry and raised his voice but here he felt that a terrible

injustice had been done. He knew that the money the bachurim had collected to save him was urgently needed by them. This caused him to raise his voice to that askan and he even forcefully banged on the table and the table broke. Seeing this, the askan decided to refund the money and the money was returned to his friends.

## **HE CRIED FORTY YEARS LATER**

R' Zalman worked on publishing the Rebbe Rashab's maamarim, including the famous Hemshech 5672. He was also the one in charge, in Lubavitch, of printing and giving out these "k'savim." In order to enable him to do this job, the Rebbe brought a mimeograph machine from abroad and R' Zalman arranged and directed all the printing of the maamarim.

It once happened that a policeman passed by and noticed this work. Perhaps at that time you needed a government permit to print things and they didn't have one. The policeman began questioning him about how he was allowed to print and R' Zalman answered firmly that this was Torah that the Rebbe said to the students of the yeshiva and they



**R' Zalman's letter code for Mishnayos**



**R' Zalman saying a bracha at his granddaughter's wedding**

had to have copies of the Rebbe's maamarim in order to be able to study them. Surprisingly, the policeman left him alone.

When the Rebbe Rashab gave the maamarim of 5672 for printing, he told him that he wanted the talmidim to learn and be involved in these maamarim. This was when he was still in the middle of the series and hadn't finished the hemshech yet. R' Zalman said, "It's still in the middle." The Rebbe smiled and said, "With Hashem's help, I hope to finish it."

R' Zalman continued to print the maamarim afterwards too, and between the years 1921 and 1929 he would print maamarim while wandering through the country, traveling from place to place in the underground work of spreading Torah in the framework of Tiferes Bachurim.

His hiskashrus to the Rebbe Rashab was strong and soulful. R' Landau related that when R' Zalman was in Eretz Yisroel, he stayed with his father, R' Yaakov Landau (who was his friend from Lubavitch). After the davening, they spoke "and I sat on the side and listened.

Suddenly I remembered that it was 2 Nissan (the day of the histalkus of the Rebbe Rashab). As soon as I mentioned it R' Zalman said, "And since then we remain orphans," and the two of them began to cry with copious tears.

"It was about fifty years after the histalkus, such a long time, and after the many upheavals that transpired in the interim and much suffering. The normal course of nature would be for those feelings to dim, and yet, two elderly people cried bitterly for the Rebbe, decades later! That was their hiskashrus to the Rebbe."

## **BUILDING HIS HOME**

After the yeshiva in Lubavitch was closed in 5677/1917, R' Zalman went with R' Shmuel Katzman to the Charson district where they remained on and off for two or three years. In 5680 (or 5681), R' Zalman married the righteous Tzivya Freida a"h. The wedding took place in Charkov.

In Cheshvan 1922 their son Avrohom was born. The man later to become the 7<sup>th</sup> Nasi of Chabad, the Rebbe MH"M, was present at the

bris (years later, when Avrohom had yechidus, he said to the Rebbe, "The Rebbe attended my bris." The Rebbe said, "Yes, I traveled with my brother to Rostov)."

Until 1926 R' Zalman lived with his family in Charkov where many Chassidim lived at that time and there was even a yeshiva there.

In 1926 R' Zalman and his family moved to Horodishatz where his parents lived. He continued to travel among different cities and spread Torah under the auspices of Tiferes Bachurim.

In 1929-30 he manufactured talleisim for Anash for a living. He learned the craft of refining the wool as well as spinning and how to weave material, which he used for k'dusha, to make talleisim. As he made them and would tie on the tzitzis, he reviewed Mishnayos by heart.

There was a time that R' Zalman was unable to obtain the color black in order to dye the stripes of the tallis. Instead, he took the wool of brown goats, and after processing the wool, he made special threads which he made into stripes.

"R' Zalman told me that he took



great pleasure in this work,” said R’ Landau. “As he spun the threads on the machine, he would learn Mishnayos by heart and review it until he knew it well and only then move on to the next Mishna.

“Among his remaining personal effects there was a notebook that he kept where he wrote down all of the Mishnayos. It enabled him to remember the Mishnayos even if he did not have the s’farim because he marked down all the first words of the Mishnayos using a letter code. When he saw the first word, he immediately remembered the entire Mishna. That’s how R’ Zalman learned the entire six orders of the Mishna by heart, word by word!”

The Skoblo family moved to the nearby Jewish town of Rudnia. At that time, there was a famine which was perpetrated by the government and millions died of starvation. His son Avrohom relates that during this time, he and his father dug a well in the yard in order to have what to drink. With a little bit of money and goods that was sent to them by the brother-uncle Yona Skoblo, they managed to survive.

## THE REBBE CAME IN A DREAM HOLDING A KNIFE

R’ Zalman was weak for many years. The reason for his weakness was the difficult period he experienced during World War II. Although he wasn’t drafted into the army per se, like other citizens he was drafted into backbreaking defense work against the Nazi enemy. He was sent to work on fortifications and jobs like paving roads around Moscow. The weakness of his body which resulted affected him the rest of his life.

Throughout this time, R’ Zalman did not eat any cooked food. He refused to put anything treif into his mouth and he sufficed with a bit of bread, sugar and water when he found it (and he didn’t always find

***Before I left for Eretz Yisroel I deliberated over whether to travel to the gravesite of the Rebbe Rashab in Rostov. On the one hand, I yearned to go so greatly... On the other hand... I finally decided that it would be tremendously embarrassing to show my face to the Rebbe and I did not go... It’s a pity I didn’t go. When you go to your father, you don’t take into consideration whether you will be ashamed... You just go!***

it). There were days that he did not eat at all and some days he only ate potatoes and sugar. This resulted in malnutrition which lasted several years.

R’ Zalman related that some time before he was enlisted in this defense work, he saw the Rebbe Rashab in a dream handing him a sh’chita knife. “I asked the Rebbe whether this meant I should study sh’chita. The

Rebbe said, ‘The sh’chita of chickens won’t hurt.’ I did not end up studying sh’chita and during the years of famine, I noticed chickens walking around. If I had known sh’chita, it would have been very useful to me.”

## HE IS ONE OF US

After the war, the Skoblo family reunited and returned to Charkov. At that time, there were several active minyanim, shoachim, etc. so that Judaism hadn’t died out there although everything was done secretly. Some time later, a Torah scholar who was not a Lubavitcher Chassid, Rabbi Eliezer Felzenstein came and became R’ Zalman’s chavrusa. Every day, until R’ Zalman moved to Eretz Yisroel, R’ Eliezer went to his house and they learned Gemara, halacha, and Chassidus together.

R’ Dovid Abba Gurewitz relates:

In Tamuz 1968, R’ Mottel Kozliner and I decided to locate the holy gravesites in Lubavitch that had been neglected for fifty years, to clean them up, and mark them with a gate, both out of respect and so that every Chassid would know where the graves were. When I planned the dangerous trip I thought of including one of the elder Chassidim who had learned in Tomchei T’mimim in Lubavitch. I had R’ Zalman Skoblo in mind.

I went to Charkov and went to the house of R’ Eliezer Felzenstein whom I knew from his visits to Tashkent. After the Shabbos meal we went to R’ Zalman. The elderly Chassid was sitting at the table and learning. R’ Eliezer quickly told him, “He is one of ours,” as he pointed at me, so that R’ Zalman wouldn’t be uncomfortable about a stranger in his house.

I knew that I had a difficult task. R’ Skoblo was old and long-suffering. After I introduced myself, a conversation ensued about friends

in common from Tashkent and Samarkand. With great feeling he began recalling events from the glory days in Lubavitch. He told wonderful stories about the mashpia, R' Gronem. When I told him that the Likkutei Dibburim of the Rebbe Rayatz had been published and it said that Chai Elul is the birthday of the Alter Rebbe and the Baal Shem Tov, he was overcome with emotion and he said, "We never heard about this in Lubavitch. A lot of the history of the Rebbeim is only being revealed lately and only a little bit has reached us, as well as maamarim from the Rebbe, the Siddur T'hillas Hashem, and the Tanya."

When he said this, he showed us a different Tanya that had been printed in Vilna and had the autograph of the Rebbe Rashab on it. We were gripped by awe as we held this Tanya.

It came time to talk about the trip though from his state of health I could see there was nothing to talk about. However, I saw his yearning for Lubavitch and his strong desire to accompany me on the trip, to return to the place where he had basked in the light of the Rebbe Rashab together with his fellow T'mimim.

You can readily imagine how pained he was when I told him the reason for my coming to him. He looked extremely sad as he said, "You can see that just walking to shul on Shabbos which is two blocks from here, is a big problem for me. How could I go to Lubavitch which is so far away?" And he began to cry.

## THE OFFICER ROSE IN HIS HONOR

R' Zalman was once called to the police station. When he returned afterwards, he said what happened. When he was taken in to see the police chief, the man stood up in his honor and treated him very well.



**R' Zalman in Rudnia**

The officer said, "You can learn with the old people but woe if you teach the young."

Nevertheless, he did not stop teaching the young. His grandchildren and other boys who lived in Charkov visited his home in order to hear divrei Torah and Chassidus. He sat and learned constantly, especially after he stopped working.

## MOVED TO SEE CHILDREN ANSWERING AMEN

R' Zalman moved to Eretz Yisroel in 5729/1969 after much suffering and not before going through a difficult test. Two years earlier, in 5727, the communist government approved his leaving for Israel. R' Zalman, who was an old man already, sold his house and belongings and packed, and then traveled on the train for days.

But then the Six Day War began and the Soviets canceled his visa. R'

Zalman had to retrace his steps. He related:

Before I left for Eretz Yisroel I deliberated over whether to travel to the gravesite of the Rebbe Rashab in Rostov. On the one hand, I yearned to go so greatly that I cannot put it into words. On the other hand, the great shame in showing my face was enormous. How could I show my face to the Rebbe, looking as I did ... I finally decided that it would be tremendously embarrassing to show my face to the Rebbe and I did not go."

When he related this, he cried and said, "It's a pity I didn't go. When you go to your father you don't take into consideration whether you will be ashamed to show your face or not. You just go to your father!"

After moving to Eretz Yisroel, he lived in the Chabad neighborhood in Lud. He felt quite at home, readily mingling with the many Chassidim, the cream of the crop, living there. He felt a great chayus living near yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim. In a letter that his wife wrote at that time to her son Avrohom who remained in Russia, she described R' Zalman as a fish in water.

R' Zalman was recognized as one of the ziknei Anash, a Torah scholar, a tremendous baal avoda, and a man of glowing countenance and deep emotion.

He couldn't help but cry when he saw schoolchildren answering "amen yehei shmei rabba" enthusiastically. It was a sight he could not behold in communist Russia and it moved him tremendously. He would cry when he heard children say amen.

R' Landau relates that R' Zalman asked to be able to attend shiur and listen along with the talmidim.

"For a time we learned Yoreh Dei'a together. I was amazed how fluent he was in it as though he had just learned it."

He wasn't completely at peace in

Eretz Yisroel since his son Avrohom and his family remained behind the Iron Curtain. R' Zalman knew that most Jews ended up absorbing the coldness and communist heresy and moving away from a life of Torah, not to mention the assimilation.

For religious people, like Avrohom and his family, life was extremely difficult. R' Zalman worried about his descendents if they were forced to remain in Russia. In nearly every copy of the notes he would send to the Rebbe, he mentioned this:

**Pidyon nefesh to the Rebbe shlita, please arouse great mercy for me, Shneur Zalman Moshe ben Gittel Leah that Hashem help that I be inspired to true t'shuva and that Hashem strengthen my health materially and spiritually and that I merit to see my son and his entire family very soon and get much nachas from them, materially and spiritually.**

Having had bitter experience with visas and their cancellation, R' Zalman asked the Rebbe in another letter that the requests submitted by his son to obtain visas work out well:

**My son Avrohom ben Tzivya who is in Charkov submitted a request for permission to move with his family to Eretz Yisroel about a month ago and he waits for an answer soon, with Hashem's help, and I request the Rebbe's bracha that he get permission without obstacles and that it all work out successfully.**

Indeed, that year, Avrohom and his family moved to Eretz Yisroel after a difficult journey.

At that time, by order of the Rebbe, no more apartments were designated for Anash in Lud. R' Zalman, who wanted his son and grandchildren to live nearby, wrote a heartfelt plea to the Rebbe from which we see how important a Chassidishe education for his family

was to him:

**... I have a request of the Rebbe. This is my portion of all my toil, and the only thing I want, that my descendents be educated and directed according to the way of Torah and Judaism in our spirit, and this was my entire goal in my many efforts to leave Russia and move to Eretz Yisroel, to save them from the darkness there and bring them here, knowing that if they remained there, what their end would be. Boruch Hashem, I merited to see a good beginning in my efforts in that I merited to move to Eretz Yisroel and to bring them here too despite the many difficulties this entailed. My hope and prayer to Hashem is that He strengthen me in the future too, to continue in my work in their chinuch for good.**

Needless to say how much this affects my soul, what their future will be and how their behavior will be. The only way, it seems to me, to attain my desire is to educate and guide them only if they are near me ... Therefore I present my request from the depths of my heart before the Rebbe, that an exception be made and you tell them to give them an apartment in Shikun Chabad in Lud ... Likewise I request the bracha of the Rebbe that I merit to see nachas in my efforts and that I derive much nachas from all my descendents, Yiddishe and Chassidishe nachas.

Shortly thereafter, the Rebbe sent instructions to make an exception and allot an apartment to Avrohom and his family.

## THE CHARACTER OF A TAMIM

R' Zalman once said that he never told a lie. As for something that wasn't true and wasn't a lie – he hadn't refrained from that entirely. Even when he was interrogated by

the KGB, when he didn't tell the truth, he still tried not to lie but cleverly worded his answers to get around it.

R' Meir Gruzman, one of the roshei yeshivos in Tomchei T'mimim in Kfar Chabad, related:

"Now and then I would visit R' Zalman in his house. He did not speak much but one of the things that really got to me was that he always sat on the edge of his chair. You constantly saw kabbalas ol on him. I paid attention and never did I see him sit back comfortably in a chair! I consider this a big thing!"

R' Landau relates:

"When R' Zalman moved to Eretz Yisroel and lived in Lud, he would come to the yeshiva and sit in on my class. He spent most of his day in yeshiva. He would sometimes farbreng with the younger talmidim. He once spoke about the avoda of t'filla that while davening, you should not think about anything aside from the words. He spoke strongly about the need to daven with kavana and when davening 'nothing should exist except for t'filla, and one should be focused only on the Siddur and on nothing else going on around.'

"The talmidim listened but it was hard for them to believe that there are people who while davening feel that whatever is going on around them does not exist, and they concentrate fully on the words. Some bachurim decided to test him, to see whether R' Zalman did what he demanded of them.

"Afterwards, they told me what happened. R' Zalman's regular seat for davening was at a shtender near a large window. They took their places at the window and as he davened Mincha they took pictures of him. They thought he might yell at them or pick up his head but he did not notice what was going on and did not even look up. He was completely immersed in his davening



and they were very impressed.

"I also learned from the following incident. I once asked R' Zalman something in ruchnius and he gave me an answer that seemed very lofty, not on my level at all. I went to the mashpia R' Shlomo Chaim Kesselman who was very sick at the time and in bed. He could barely move. I went to his room and told him that I was coming from R' Zalman Skoblo and I had asked him such-and-such and what he answered me. R' Shlomo Chaim kind of jumped in bed and said in wonder: "That R' Zalman was a Chassidishe bachur, we all knew that; but to this extent? I didn't realize."

## WITH A LUCID MIND

R' Landau relates:

"One time, R' Zalman asked me to arrange a minyan for a *mesiras modaa* (making a legally binding announcement). The kabbalists write that when a person dies, the Satan stands near him and tells him to deny G-d, and the neshama refuses but we are afraid lest due to the confusion of the moment the neshama will agree. Therefore, while still of sound mind one should pray to Hashem in advance.

"R' Zalman was healthy at the time and I tried to dissuade him so he wouldn't be thinking about death. I told him he would live long etc. It was awkward but since he insisted, I did as he asked. He told me that he would prepare a list for me of the people he wanted to come and participate in the minyan.

"When the minyan gathered at the appointed time, there was a very somber atmosphere. It was a frightening scene. R' Zalman said the nusach with great kavana and then said Shma Yisroel with tremendous feeling that is indescribable. Then I offered cups of schnapps and we said l'chaim and wished him long life. But his



R' Avrohom Skoblo receiving a dollar from the Rebbe

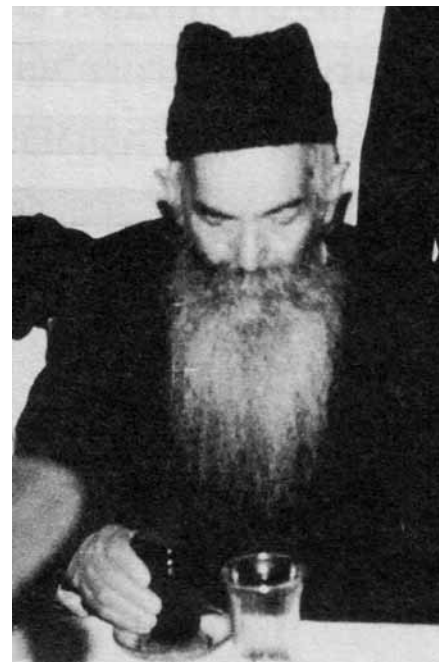
preparations for the next world were a powerful lesson.

"In the latter period of his life, after the passing of the mashpia, R' Shlomo Chaim Kesselman, he asked that his grave be near R' Shlomo Chaim. I did as he asked and spoke about it to R' Lazer Nannes who was in charge of the plots belonging to Kollel Chabad and he said he would fulfill his request.

"I went to R' Zalman and told him that his request was accepted. (From the way R' Nannes treated the request, I saw how much he esteemed R' Zalman. I didn't have to say more than that R' Zalman made the request and he said: If that is R' Zalman's request, then we will surely do that).

"One day R' Zalman said to me: I have the feeling that my spot is being taken away. When I asked him what he meant, he did not specify, but this was his feeling.

"The night before he passed away, there was a terrible car accident in which four Lubavitchers were killed on their way back from a wedding. Among those killed was Rabbi Shneur Zalman Garelik, the rav of Kfar Chabad. R' Garelik was buried in the spot next to R' Shlomo Chaim."



R' Zalman reciting the Birkas HaMazon

R' Zalman passed away on 8 Sivan 5734/1974 at the age of 82. He was buried at the head of R' Shlomo Chaim. His heart's desire that all his descendents go in the way of Torah and mitzvos was realized. All of them are Chabad Chassidim, mekusharim to the Rebbe MH"m.

*The article is based on the book "A Lubavitcher Tamim" which was edited by Rabbi Menachem Mendel Bronfman.*

# “BEIS MOSHIACH”

By Mendel Tzfasman

*In the center of Kiryat Malachi, at the junction of Jerusalem and Ben Gurion streets, over a row of restaurants and a popular shopping center, is a Chabad center called “Beis Moshiach.” It attracts dozens of Anash and T’mimim as well as pre-observant youth. All activities that take place there are done to prepare for the hisgalus of the Rebbe MH”M.*



The setting was the school of the religious kibbutz, Ein HaNetziv, in the Beit Shaan valley during the summer of 1979:

The bell rang and the students ran out to play. One student, Sholom Fash, was asked by his teacher to remain behind.

“I want to talk to you,” she said. When the eight year old went over to his teacher’s desk, he wasn’t surprised by her question which she asked in all sincerity, “Why do you need to be different? Your chareidi behavior automatically makes you a laughingstock.”

The child’s answer, as she later related to his mother, amazed her. He said, “Look at me. You see, nothing happened to me because they laughed? So let them continue laughing.”

As time passed, this response became a principle that shaped his character. Today, R’ Sholom Fash is known in Kiryat Malachi as the director of “Beis Moshiach.”

## MILITARY PREP SCHOOL, ARMY SERVICE, AND THEN K’VUTZA

I had planned on speaking to R’ Sholom about his work for an article but he isn’t one for publicity. This is not a cliché but the truth. Our “argument” was clinched by a sicha that a Chassid in his shul reviewed one Shabbos, in which the Rebbe explains that just as the avoda of the High Priest had to be done in a garment decorated with tinkling bells, so that “the sound of his entering the Holy will be heard,” so too, a

person shouldn’t be modest and do his work quietly but has to publicize what he does.

Sholom’s parents, Isser and Ziva Fash, are baalei t’shuva who became Lubavitch through their friends, Lubavitchers in Chevel Taanachim. Sholom remembers the Shabbos and Yom Tov meals, the Melaveh Malka or Chol HaMoed Pesach meals when his parents sent him to the Sossonkin, Dunin and Klatchi families so they would be sure he ate kosher food l’mehadrin and was in a Chassidic environment.

At the kibbutz, despite it being a religious kibbutz, Sholom and his family had to contend with the daily stares of people who kept a close watch on them. For example, on Independence Day, when all the members said Hallel with festive



fervor, the children of the Fash family read Pirkei Avos in order not to stand out. Even the switch from a knitted kippa to a black yarmulke was done gradually. At first he ordered a dark blue yarmulke, “So they wouldn’t notice and quiz me.”

His father’s decision to let his beard grow wasn’t easy. It was only when his wife and children joined forces and “stole” the afikoman and refused to return it that he committed to growing a beard.

Sholom was on K’vutza in 5752, a year of upheavals as well as unusual giluyim, but unlike his fellow talmidim, he didn’t go on K’vutza after learning for six years in Chabad yeshivos (he did that after he got married when he learned in Kollel for over six years) but instead went into the army. In the army, Sholom commanded a

tank. He used his position to instill Jewish values in his men and colleagues. He spent his military vacations at the Chabad yeshiva in Tzfas. He describes his leaving the army for K’vutza as “going out of galus to Geula.”

While serving in the army, he received firsthand reports about what was going on in Chabad from guys who read and listened to newspapers and radio respectively. So he remembers the sicha of 28 Nissan in which the Rebbe announced, “I have done my part; from here-on-in do what you can to bring Moshiach Tzidkeinu.” The guys told him that in the paper it said that the Lubavitcher Rebbe had despaired of Moshiach!

He describes his arrival at 770 for the first time as a Chabadnik, dressed the part (he had gone with

his father to the Rebbe on other occasions, before his K’vutza year):

“Before the flight I bought a hat and suit which I put in my suitcase. When I got to Crown Heights I went to the mikva first and only then ‘put on the uniform’ and walked into 770 as a Tamim.

## OBSESSED WITH SHLICHUS

After he got married to his wife Avishag, the daughter of R’ Shmaryahu Hillel, the young couple lived in Lud. While learning in Kollel he began to work with Eliyahu Gabbai, running a Chabad house in Ramle. Even when they moved to Nachalat Har Chabad in Kiryat Malachi, after three years of outreach work and learning he





Sholom before K'vutza



Sholom Fash teaching soldiers. Once a tankist, always a tankist.

*When the eight year old went over to his teacher's desk, he wasn't surprised by her question, "Why do you need to be different? Your chareidi behavior automatically makes you a laughingstock." The child's answer, as she later related to his mother, amazed her. He said, "Look at me. You see, nothing happened to me because they laughed? So let them continue laughing."*

continued to yearn for shlichus.

"As soon as we arrived at our apartment which was in a building populated by pre-observant Jews, we noticed that their children were wandering around outside with nothing to do. We got the children together for a Tzivos Hashem club that we held twice a week."

Along with the work with the children, Sholom got involved with a series of shiurim given in shuls in town that were organized by R' Elimelech Hertzl and R' Moshe Hillel, and he began to give shiurim on Geula and Moshiach at two shuls. Later on, when he began to

work as a sofer, he opened an evening Kollel in his building's *miklat* (bomb shelter).

He and his wife developed personal relationships with the neighbors in order to be mekarev them. One neighbor began to dress modestly and to cover her hair. As a result, her entire family became more involved in Jewish life. There were many other cases like that.

### FROM THE GALUS SHELTER TO THE GEULA BUILDING

When the program expanded and

included shiurim for women and girls, Mrs. Esther Kreisman, today the principal of the seminar "HaYahalom Sh'b'Keter" (the Diamond in the Crown) said, "The *miklat* is galus and we have to get out to a place of Geula!" Together with Mrs. Fash, she walked the streets one winter day in 5764 until they came to the most central area of the city and announced, "The Beis Moshiach will be located here."

The place overlooks the main square of the city and is located at the junction of Jerusalem and Ben Gurion streets, above a row of restaurants and a popular shopping

center, which attracts young people day and night. It turned out to be an excellent location. Sholom got in touch with the owner of the building who was willing to rent it to him.

R' Shabtai Weintraub, a friend of Sholom's from K'vutza days, announced at a farbrengen that they needed to have an "Oneg Shabbos" every Friday night and bring kids up to Beis Moshiah. For five years now, the two of them run a program for youth on Friday nights where the kids hear Kiddush, sing Shabbos z'miros, hear about the weekly parsha from a Geula perspective and miracle stories about the Rebbe.

Over the years, hundreds of kids have attended the Oneg Shabbos. They made hachlatos, their spiritual personality was shaped, and all without exception became strongly connected to the Rebbe. Sholom tells us about one of them:

"Kfir, a graduate of Oneg Shabbos and now in the Air Force, decided one Shabbos to keep Shabbos properly. Even after he went to the army where keeping Shabbos is difficult, he remained faithful to his commitment. One Shabbos, when he was given the assignment of guard duty in a distant place, he went Erev Shabbos with a driver to his nighttime guard post and sent the driver off.

"It poured that Shabbos. His friends suggested that when his guard duty was over he should return by car to where they slept so he wouldn't get soaked but he said, 'I promised the Lubavitcher Rebbe that I would keep Shabbos. He will make sure it doesn't rain.' When Kfir walked the two kilometers back to where he was sleeping, not a drop of rain fell!"

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At Mrs. Kreisman's seminary there is a program of lectures and farbrengens for women and girls.



Yoni Fein in a pre-Shavuot program



Young people from Kiryat Malachi at Beis Moshiah

Many girls have made good hachlatos and every week there is a rotation amongst the girls, whose numbers continue to grow, and they take turns telling of iskafia they did that week.

Beis Moshiah doesn't only invest in the future generation. Every day, seniors attend the Kollel Tiferes Z'keinim which is directed by R' Shneur Zalman Maatuf, where they learn Mishna and Halacha, Midrash and Geula.

Beis Moshiah's outreach to everyone, including parents, boys and girls, brings entire families to the Rebbe without the "side effects"

that are sometimes caused by being mekarev just one family member.

Until recently, Beis Moshiah ran a Kollel. The men heard excellent shiurim and received personal direction from the Rosh Kollel, R' Shmaryah Hillel and his son, Moshe. They were tested for smicha by Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu and Rabbi Yitzchok Yehuda Yaroslavsky, secretary of the Vaad Rabbanei Chabad.

On Rosh Chodesh Iyar 5768, the Kollel format changed and it became a yeshiva for baalei t'shuva with full room and board.





children learning Mishnayos and Tanya by heart

## THE CHAYUS OF 770

When the Oneg Shabbos activities expanded, a Chabad shul opened at Beis Moshiach. This was on 15 Tamuz 2004. At first there was a minyan only on Shabbos, but when Anash returned from 770 at the end of Tishrei 5765, they decided to have minyanim there on weekdays too.

I visited Beis Moshiach for the t'fillos and farbrengens on Shabbos. It's hard to put the atmosphere into writing but I can definitely recommend that if you end up in Kiryat Malachi for Shabbos, don't miss the farbrengen at Beis Moshiach, a farbrengen which begins by learning together from kuntres Heichaltzu or kuntres Ahavas Yisroel.

Beis Moshiach has something unique that distinguishes it from other shuls. You can always hear one of the many miracle stories which abound, or firsthand accounts from Jews who have come to the rational conclusion that the world is ready for Geula, or just experience an "ordinary" farbrengen where people really open up. You will see bearded elderly Chassidim dancing on chairs arm in arm with young Chassidim or T'mimim. You may be present when an idea is presented and by the end

*He has given out raffles, valuable prizes like a dollar from the Rebbe, a laptop, a digital camera, mountain bikes, stylish shoes, etc. The students learn lines of Tanya and Mishnayos by heart. It's heartwarming to see T'mimim sitting in public parks together with kids being tested on lines of Tanya, Pirkei Avos, or Mishnayos by heart.*

of the farbrengen it is fleshed out, up to and including delegating the various jobs and working out how every last penny will be covered.

A good idea for every Chabad house to copy is the first minyan. Every Shabbos, while Anash are busy learning Chassidus in the other room, there is a minyan for mekuravim which begins at 7:30 a.m. After they are finished, they sit down to a short farbrengen with Sholom. If you think that a short farbrengen doesn't make an impact, the reality here proves otherwise. During these brief farbrengens important hachlatos are made like the group that flew to the Rebbe with Sholom.

This short trip made a tremendous impression on them. One of them began to grow a beard and looks like a born-and-bred chareidi. Another one decorated his car with stickers that urge people to prepare for Geula by adding in mitzvos and good deeds. Another one arranged times to learn p'nimius ha'Torah and inyanei Geula. They enthusiastically told their friends, the people who daven in the first minyan, "you feel that the Rebbe is here and looking at you." The natural envy of those who did not go on the trip makes them resolve to form another group that will go to the Rebbe.

## LIGHTING UP THE KIRYA

As loyal Chassidim, the people who work at Beis Moshiach prepare the people of their town to greet Moshiach and don't just talk about this to those who take the initiative to come to them. The ways they interact with people are varied.

Their crowning achievement has to be their work with youth. Every day, a group goes from Beis Moshiach, led by Shneur Zalman Maatuf, to the Amal school in Kiryat Malachi and the elementary school of the neighboring moshav, Be'er



Tuvia, in order to put on t'fillin with the students. There are some interesting stories connected with this outreach that began with enormous opposition from the parent committee who protested what they called religious coercion. However, by now, they are welcomed with open arms.

Before every Chassidishe date, like 19 Kislev, 10 Shevat, 11 Nissan, or 3 Tammuz, Sholom thinks of ways to get the kids to a farbrengen at Beis Moshiach. He has given out raffles, valuable prizes like a dollar from the Rebbe, a laptop, a digital camera, mountain bikes, stylish shoes, etc. The students learn lines of Tanya and Mishnayos by heart. It's heartwarming to see T'mimim sitting in public parks together with kids being tested on lines of Tanya, Pirkei Avos, or Mishnayos by heart.

Before Yud Shevat, Beis Moshiach had a contest in which whoever signed up others on the Kabbalas HaMalchus form was entered into a raffle for a dollar from the Rebbe. Another dollar, not raffled off, was given to the person who signed up the most people. The number of people who participate in the contests continually amazes even Sholom.

Erev Yud-Alef Nissan, a group of bachurim and Sholom set up a table and a big video screen in the business district on which they showed videos of the Rebbe. They invited passersby to join the farbrengen.

Sholom is always coming up with creative ideas. Before Shavuot he held an evening of preparation for Mattan Torah in which the kids sat around a bonfire and enjoyed a barbecue with Yoni Fein who accompanied himself on the guitar and told them about the Rebbe and how he became a mekurav of the Rebbe.

For Lag B'Omer, the Beis Moshiach staff builds a magnificent



Members of the Kollel



Mekuravim at a farbrengen in Beis Moshiach

## THE SEUDAS HODAA THAT MADE A MIRACLE

Five years ago, Yosef Yitzchok Fash, Sholom's brother, was critically wounded. He was serving as staff Sergeant of a reconnaissance unit of the Golani Brigade near the Philadelphi Corridor in southern Rafiach and was hit in the head by an Arab sniper's bullet that went through his helmet. The doctors were skeptical about his survival but the prayers and the emuna in the Rebbe's brachos that were received via the Igros Kodesh, triumphed.

On Shabbos, two days after the injury, Sholom held a farbrengen at Beis Moshiach which he called a "Seudas Hodaa for the miracle." Immediately after Shabbos, his mother said that she didn't move from her son's bedside and that Yossi had regained full consciousness and had started speaking and was now designated "lightly wounded – a walking miracle."

float with a Moshiach theme and the truck leads the parade in Kiryat Malachi and invites all viewers and participants in the parade to take an active role in bringing the Geula by doing mitzvos and good deeds. Every year, their float is a hit. The truck is donated by someone in memory of his son who used to be a student at Beis Moshiach and was killed in a car accident.

## MIRACULOUS LIVING

When I asked Sholom to tell me miracle stories, he had a hard time because he has almost gotten used to his unusual way of life. With some pressure from me, I managed to extract a few stories though not before he said this, “Whenever we have to pay for something or another and we don’t have the money, we get in our car and go, with absolute confidence that by the time we reach our destination, we will get the money.

“For example, we had to make a certain payment one evening and we had no idea where the money would come from. Yet we knew that if we needed to, we’d pay it! I left that afternoon for a nearby moshav for mivtza t’fillin as we do every day. When we finished with mivtzaim, we turned around to leave when a boy on a bicycle said, ‘Excuse me, do you collect tz’daka?’ He added, ‘Can you bless my family?’

“When I answered yes to both questions, I said I would write to the Rebbe for a bracha for them. He took out a bag of coins and gave it to me with the names of his family members. When I got home, I opened the bag and to my surprise it was the amount of money we needed.”

One year, Sholom arrived home on Erev Rosh HaShana, and when he got out of his car he heard a loud noise which let him know that his car had breathed its last. He jokingly told a friend that he spoke to shortly



Kollel Tiferes Z'keinim



The mayor of Kiryat Malachi and his deputy at the menorah lighting.

thereafter that they were starting the year 5768 whose acronym is *tihei shnas Savanna chadasha* (may this be the year of a new Savanna [van]).

The friend who got a good laugh out of that had no idea that he would be the messenger for Divine Providence. Right after Rosh HaShana, a friend of his called from abroad and asked him to pass along a nice donation to a tz’daka that was close to his heart, on his behalf. He lost no time but went with Sholom to buy a new, you guessed it, Savanna.

The van is decorated with the Rebbe’s picture, with Yechi, with Moshiach flags and a quality loudspeaker. It is known as the Geula Tank and Sholom drives it in



The Geula Tank

Kiryat Malachi in order to publicize the Rebbe’s message.

Beis Moshiach conveys this one message: every action, every mitzva, everything you learn needs to be done for the purpose of welcoming the Rebbe MH”M. When I asked Sholom whether this message is for everyone, he said, “The Rebbe says the world is ready for Geula and this is the reality. We sometimes stop in fear of what people will say but experience has shown that when you’re straight-talking, people accept it.

“To the people who come to Beis Moshiach it is clear that the Rebbe is coming imminently to redeem us. Sometimes they even wish one another, ‘Yechi HaMelech’ instead of the standard Israeli greeting.”