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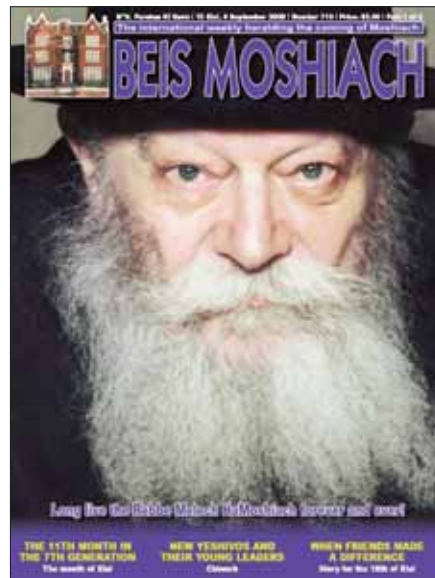
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USA

744 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn, NY 11213-3409
Tel: (718) 778-8000
Fax: (718) 778-0800
admin@beismoshiach.org
www.beismoshiach.org

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:

M.M. Hendel

ENGLISH EDITOR:

Boruch Merkur
boruch@beismoshiach.org

HEBREW EDITOR:

Rabbi Sholom Yaakov Chazan
editorH@beismoshiach.org

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A DEEPER RELATIONSHIP WITH G-D

Sichos In English

GIVING THE INTANGIBLE

Our Sages teach, [1] “A person who gives a coin to a poor person is granted six blessings; one who gratifies him is blessed elevenfold.”

Gratifying does not necessarily mean giving the recipient a greater amount. It means giving him a positive feeling, showing him that you care about him, and that he means something to you.

When one invests himself in another person, putting enough of himself into that person that the other person feels appreciated, he has given him something far greater than money. And therefore, he receives more ample blessings from G-d.

This leads to a deeper concept: Appreciation stems from involvement.

The deeper the relationship between people, the more one will appreciate the uniqueness that the other person possesses. This will not remain a passive potential.

When a person appreciates a colleague, he is motivated to act in a manner that reflects the connection they share, doing whatever he can for that other person.

Appreciating G-d's Kindness

These concepts apply, not only with our relationships with our fellow man, but also with regard to our relationship with G-d.

One of the fundamental thrusts within Judaism is hakaras hatov, appreciating the goodness which G-d constantly bestows upon us. And as with regard to appreciation of our fellow man, the emphasis is not only on the material dimensions of G-d's kindness, but on going deeper, and sensing the love and care which He showers on every person. [2]

In this vein, we can understand the sequence of our Torah reading, Parshas Ki Savo.

The Torah reading begins describing the mitzvah of bikkurim, [3] the first fruits which the Jews would bring to the Beis HaMikdash, and shortly afterwards, speaks of the establishment of a covenant concerning the entire Torah. [4]

What is the connection between these subjects?

The mitzvah of bikkurim was instituted to show that we are not ungrateful for the good G-d has granted us, [5] and to display our appreciation to Him for “granting us all the blessings of this world.” [6]

And this appreciation is not expressed merely by a verbal expression of thanks as we find

throughout our prayers, but through actual deed.

A person would select his first fruits, and make a special journey to bring them to Jerusalem to show his thanks to G-d.

Moreover, the first fruits would become consecrated, indicating that a lasting connection to G-d's holiness had been established.

Herein lies the connection to the entire Torah.

For in a larger sense, every aspect of a person's life is bikkurim, an act of expression of thanks to G-d for His goodness.

And at every moment, a person is standing before G-d and demonstrating that every element of existence shares an active bond with Him.

MORE THAN JUST A PHYSICAL LAND

As a preparation for the mitzvah of bikkurim, the Torah tells us: [7] Ki savo el haeretz, “And when you will enter the land that G-d... is giving you as a heritage.”

The ability to bring bikkurim depends on entering Eretz Yisroel, the land of which it is said, [8] “the eyes of G-d, your L-rd, are upon it from the beginning of the year until the end of the year.”

As a person enters Eretz Yisroel - and allows Eretz Yisroel to enter him - his sensitivity is heightened to the extent that he is able to perform the spiritual service of bikkurim, and indeed, have this mode of service characterize his approach to the Torah and its mitzvos as a whole.

A COMPLETE ENTRY

A deeper dimension of the above concepts can be grasped through considering the halachic implications of the word savo, meaning “enter.”

Our Sages explain that this word implies coming in entirely, without any portion of the body in question

remaining outside.

For example with regard to the contraction of impurity from a house plagued by tzaraas, discoloration associated with leprosy, it is written: [9] “One who enters the house... will become impure.”

On this basis, our Sages rule [10] that a person’s entire body must enter the house. If a person places only certain limbs inside the plagued structure, he does not contract ritual impurity.

Similarly, with regard to the transition to a state of purity, when speaking of the immersion of a utensil in a mikveh, it is written: [11] “It will enter the water... and become purified.”

This prooftext is interpreted to mean that the entire utensil must be submerged in the mikveh at one time.

The same law applies with regard to a person immersing himself; his entire body must enter the mikveh. If even one hair is above the water, the immersion is unacceptable.

In this vein, Ki Savo, entering Eretz Yisroel to bring the first fruits, means coming into the land in a full sense. Therefore, the verse [7] mentions not only entering Eretz Yisroel, but also that “you will take it as an inheritance, and you will settle it.”

For until the Jews had taken Eretz Yisroel as a heritage, and had settled the land, their “entrance” was not complete.

Only after they had settled the land could the atmosphere of Eretz Yisroel penetrate their thinking processes sufficiently to motivate the appreciation expressed by bringing bikkurim. [12]

THE WHOLE AND ITS PARTS

The above also enables us to understand a difference of opinion among our Sages with regard to when the Jews became obligated to

bring bikkurim.

The Sifri, in its exegesis of the phrase “And when you will enter the land,” states that the Jews were required to bring the first fruits immediately. As soon as an individual received his own portion of the land as a heritage, he was required to bring the first fruits as an offering.

The Talmud, [13] however, states that the obligation to bring the first fruits did not begin until after the completion of the fourteen years during which the Jews conquered Eretz Yisroel and divided it among the entire people.

What is the difference between these two approaches?

The extent of the entry into Eretz Yisroel which is required.

The Sifri maintains that as soon as each individual receives his portion of Eretz Yisroel, his entry into the land is completed and he is required to bring his offering.

The Sages of the Talmud, by contrast, maintain that until the entire Jewish people take possession of Eretz Yisroel, no individual’s entry is complete.

Only after every member of the people is settled in his home, can any individual be considered to have entered Eretz Yisroel in the full sense.

Two Levels of Thanksgiving

Alternatively, it can be explained that these two opinions refer to two different phases in the expression of our appreciation to G-d.

To cite a parallel in our daily Divine service:

As soon as we arise, we begin our day with Modeh Ani, a statement of thanksgiving to G-d for returning our souls. [14]

This expression of gratitude is natural and spontaneous, emanating from the core of the soul.

Nevertheless, it is underdeveloped, for it has not been cultivated by thought.

In our prayers, culminating with the Modim blessing of the Shemoneh Esreh, (Amida) [15] we offer a more complete expression of thanks.

The soul’s intuitive feelings of gratitude are enhanced by our prayerful meditation on the manifold manifestations of G-d’s kindness we enjoy.

Similarly, with regard to the obligation to bring bikkurim, entering Eretz Yisroel means going deeper and deeper into the spiritual dimensions of the land until one’s appreciation of G-d’s kindness is complete and all-encompassing.

This cannot be done immediately, but rather requires a long-term commitment to growth and development.

LOOKING FORWARD TO ENTERING ERETZ YISROEL

Moshe gave the Jews the promise of Ki Savo, that they would enter the Eretz Yisroel, while they were in the desert.

This phrase, however, serves as the name of the entire Torah reading, for the promise that we will enter Eretz Yisroel is sufficient to inspire a commitment to observe all the mitzvos mentioned in the Torah reading.

Similar concepts apply at present.

For we have been given the promise that we will soon “enter the land that G-d... is giving you as a heritage” led by Mashiach.

The awareness of this promise should inspire a commitment strong enough to overcome the remaining challenges of exile. And soon we will bring the first fruits as an offering to G-d in the Beis HaMikdash, thanking Him for all His kindness.

Adapted from: Likkutei Sichos, Vol. IX, pgs. 152ff; 289; Vol. XIX, p. 245ff; Shabbos Parshas Ki Savo 5750; Sefer HaSichos 5748, p. 634ff; Sefer HaSichos 5751, p. 810ff

[Continued on pg. 42]

NEW YESHIVOS AND THEIR YOUNG LEADERS

By Nosson Avrohom

*In recent years, new yeshivos have been opening up nearly every year, led by young roshei yeshiva and mashpiim. You may be surprised, but the fact that hundreds of parents are entrusting their children to them and are satisfied, means there is a big change going on in the world of Chabad yeshivos lately. * On what basis is a talmid accepted? How is the staff selected? How do the yeshivos turn out good, Chassidishe bachurim? As we start the new school year, we take a closer look at some such schools.*

PARTICIPANTS

Rabbi Asher Belinov
Rosh yeshivas Tomchei
T'mimim Elad

Rabbi Sholom Dovber Hendel
Rosh yeshivas Tomchei
T'mimim Ohr Yehuda

Rabbi Mordechai Mishulovin
Rosh yeshivas Tomchei
T'mimim Beitar Ilit

Rabbi Zev Reinitz
Rosh yeshivas Tomchei
T'mimim Beit Shemesh

In the not-too-distant past, there were a few historic Chabad yeshivos in Eretz Yisroel: in Kfar Chabad, Lud, and Toras Emes in Yerushalayim. Everybody sent their boys there as a matter of course. In recent years however, many new yeshivos have opened, some seemingly overnight, and now there is a large choice of yeshivos. How do you explain this phenomenon? What changed in the past decade?

R' Belinov: Today there are many talmidim. There are so many talmidim today that the old established yeshivos have practically the same number of talmidim they had before, despite the opening of new yeshivos. The previous standard, in which 200 or more talmidim learned in a yeshiva, is not always a positive one for every student. There weren't many choices years ago. If the talmid was drawn to the positive atmosphere in yeshiva, he was able to grow, but those talmidim who needed a more personal connection with someone in order to be able to handle being away from home and getting used to yeshiva life, often fell. The roshei yeshiva did not always catch things

in time. As a result, parents wanted additional yeshivos that would provide their sons with personal attention.

There is also the sicha of the Rebbe about opening a branch of Tomchei T'mimim in every city. The new yeshivos that have opened in the past decade are no different than Tomchei T'mimim of yesteryear. They have the same s'darim, the same style of learning, and devoted staffs and Chassidishe mashpiim. One thing changed for the good, to meet the needs of today's generation, and that is a degree of personal attention for the talmidim which is not possible in a large yeshiva.

R' Mishulovin: Chabad has grown a lot in recent years and it became necessary to open additional yeshivos. In retrospect, this has benefited each student as an individual, because there is competition among all the yeshivos which makes the staff work to prove themselves.

In the past decade, new yeshivos have been opened by those who attended yeshivos Tomchei T'mimim, who had already been with the Rebbe in 770 for at least the year of K'vutza; some were there for over a year. Boruch Hashem, I spent five years with the Rebbe, and so the entire inyan of Chassidishkait and hiskashrus to the Rebbe are different. The truth is, from a Chassidishe perspective, the Chassidishkait in yeshivos today has increased, as well as the yiras Shamayim.

There is one problem regarding the learning. Many of the new generation of grade school teachers seem to accept the notion that hiskashrus to the Rebbe is emphasized more through the derech of "yiras Shamayim" than through the derech of "lamdan" (when I say lamdan, I'm not talking about those who are proficient in Shas and poskim; I'm talking about



Rabbi Mordechai Mishulovin: Many of the new generation of grade school teachers seem to accept the notion that hiskashrus to the Rebbe is emphasized more through the derech of "yiras Shamayim" than through the derech of "lamdan". The Rebbe wants and demands that T'mimim also love to learn and that they learn!

those who love to learn). The Rebbe wants and demands that T'mimim also love to learn and that they learn!

R' Hendel: The yeshiva in Ohr Yehuda opened to fill a need and we were asked to strengthen three things. First and foremost is the issue of Moshiach. Moshiach is the focal point and the only remaining shlichus, as the Rebbe emphasized time and again. However, it is important that the chayus in Moshiach be led by the hanhala and not by the talmidim. There is a lot of chayus but also discipline and kabbalas ol.





In previous days, parents sent their sons away for three years in yeshiva and hardly got involved with how their children were doing. Today, parents are more involved and the many yeshivos, each with its own style, enable the parents to choose the best one for their son.

There's no denying that in some of these new yeshivos there are young roshei yeshivos; you are some of them. The image of a mashpia and rosh yeshiva used to be someone with a gray beard, someone with many years of experience.

R' Belinov: The truth has to be said without denigrating the veterans – youthful energy when applied properly is not something negative; on the contrary, it's something very good. The way of the world is that older people wear down as the years go by while the young men that are suited to this work understand this generation and are better equipped to deal with it.

A young staff lacks one thing and that is experience. This is why it is important that some of the rabbanim whose views are incorporated into yeshiva policy and those who set the tone in the yeshiva, be older and experienced.

R' Hendel: Although most of our staff is young, we know how to make the proper balance and we have some older, experienced staff members, too, like Rabbi Yitzchok Isaac Landau and the mashpia, Rabbi Chaim Ashkenazi. They lend support and work hand in hand with the younger staff. When you have a new entity with a young and dynamic staff that understands today's kids and their weaknesses along with older, experienced people, it's a terrific balance.

R' Reinitz: You know the saying, an old soldier, an old Chassid, and an old melamed are not worth anything. After a while, a melamed puts less of his heart into things. No offense is intended to anyone;

Rabbi Zev Reinitz: I once asked a maggid shiur in one of the yeshivos who had thirty talmidim, how many talmidim were still listening by the end of his shiur. He estimated probably five. The equation is simple. If a bachur in shiur alef loses interest in the material that is being studied, in shiur beis he will feel like a failure and in shiur gimmel he will be thrown out of yeshiva.



The second thing is a personal connection with each talmid, as opposed to looking at the talmidim as a group. The third thing is providing a derech in learning, both in quality and in quantity. We founded our yeshiva for these three things.

R' Reinitz: The new yeshivos are a natural consequence of growth. Just as new elementary schools opened in Chabad centers in Elad, Beit Shemesh, Rechovot and other places, so too branches of yeshivos opened. In addition, parents' awareness has grown in recent years.

experience and seniority are important but becoming a fixture is not useful. Some teachers, after being in the field for years, are cold, going through the motions, and this is harmful for the next generation. The world has changed tremendously. In the past, the world didn't have the attraction that it has today in every way.

A teacher who will try using the chinuch approaches of the previous generation won't be able to relate to today's talmidim. Not only won't he understand them; he can be destructive. The way things are at our yeshiva, we follow a dual educational policy, firstly adhering to the core Chassidic principles for which it is essential to consult with older mechanchim – I personally turn to my uncle, Rabbi Yaakov Reinitz of Lud, quite often – and secondly, to bring things down to the realm of action, for which we need a younger staff. I consider it very important that the staff participate in the Yemei Iyun organized by Rabbi Elimelech Shachar.

R' Mishulovin: I think that being a rosh yeshiva or mashpia is a talent you're born with. Experience hones your talent. There are older people who are not suitable and young people who are. Being involved in chinuch and understanding a bachur and how to handle his chinuch has nothing to do with age. On the contrary, a young person who is suitable can sometimes be better than an older mechanech thanks to the fact that he is still full of energy and is ready to invest more.

As roshei yeshivos you have to hire staff for Gemara, Chassidus, mashpiim, madrichim, etc. How do you go about this?

R' Reinitz: I once asked a maggid shiur in one of the yeshivos who had thirty talmidim, how many talmidim were still listening by the end of his shiur. He estimated probably five. Over the hour and a



Rabbi Asher Belinov: The approach is not to instill fear; it's there anyway since the talmid knows that his future is in the rosh yeshiva's hands. The job is to instill the feeling that the yeshiva is his home and that he will be taken care of and loved.

half of the shiur he lost the rest, and they simply waited for it to be over. It's hard for students to concentrate for that long and so we divided the shiur in Nigleh into two shiurim. The equation is simple. If a bachur in shiur alef loses interest in the material that is being studied, in shiur beis he will feel like a failure and in shiur gimmel he will be thrown out of yeshiva.

The maggid shiur has to know not only how to learn but how to teach. Bachurim today can't learn for hours on end. The world outside beckons. Videos and colorful books are more interesting. So we decided that a shiur need not begin with the s'varos of Abayei and Rava. The maggid shiur involves the boys in a discussion of the topic to be learned that day or goes beyond the topic



itself. They can be given a bio of the Amora and stories about him.

R' Mishulovin: First, I ask the Rebbe for a bracha because without it, even if we put effort into finding the right staff, the final result could blow up in our faces. When I'm looking for a maggid shiur, I'm looking for someone with patience and the desire to teach a bachur and not just the curriculum. I check to see whether he's good at explaining things and whether, during the years he learned in yeshiva, he was someone who helped others who had difficulties in their learning.

A maggid shiur has to be a talented communicator and have a pleasant personality. The final stage has to do with the hanhala of the yeshiva, which needs to give him the necessary support and work cooperatively with him.

R' Belinov: That someone can learn and teach is very important but it's not everything. They need to be devoted. If I know that a teacher will lose sleep because one of his talmidim does not understand the material being taught, I will happily hire him. Today, boruch Hashem, we are blessed with many young men who know how to open a book; that's no big deal. There are many s'farim available today that make it easy to prepare a Gemara shiur. What requires talent and dedication is the desire to make sure a talmid understands the shiur and acquires a chayus in his learning. In this area it's less important whether the teacher is younger or older; his devotion to the talmidim is more important.

R' Hendel: Someone who works in a yeshiva has to look at it as a shlichus. It's not that you give a shiur and that's it. Even a maggid shiur in Nigleh has to be a role model for t'filla and other things. The staff that we choose must be serious people who consider their work the Rebbe's shlichus and not just a job. A teacher has to put his

all into a talmid, even money, and guide him to maximum success.

A new school year is approaching and you get many requests from bachurim who want to be tested and accepted into your yeshiva. On what basis do you accept students – Marks? Information you get about him? The reputation of the elementary school he is coming from? How can you assess a bachur's yiras Shamayim?

R' Belinov: It's a combination of factors. I can't explain it on one foot. It's marks and a level of Chassidishkait and ruchnius and also desire. Sometimes you have a talmid who has a good head and gets good marks but he doesn't really enjoy learning and that isn't exactly a good thing. Then there could be a talmid whose marks aren't high but he's diligent, which is what's important. So it's not easy to explain how the hanhala decides who to accept. The factors include the desire to learn, diligence and other things.

R' Reinitz: Three things: level of learning, kabbalas ol and yiras Shamayim. In the past, yeshivos looked only at the bachur's level of learning and this caused many to go off the derech. In many cases, if the bachur is weak in learning and we see that he wants to learn, we have someone from the k'hilla help him.

At the same time, we cannot accept an entire class of weak students because a class of mixed abilities helps everyone. I once heard from the mashgiach in Lud, R' Butman, that even if we managed to create an entire class of superior students there would still be levels within the class because that's the way the whole world is set up.

R' Mishulovin: I can tell you that the last thing that influences me to accept a talmid to yeshiva is the entrance exam he took. Accepting a bachur depends primarily on the research we do through friends,

looking at his report cards of the previous two years; if I know the parents it definitely helps. Many of the talmidim come from the k'hilla in Beitar Ilit so some of them I know from the k'hilla and from shul.

Generally speaking, it's not the ability to learn that determines whether a bachur is accepted. The greatest emphasis is on Chassidishe behavior and the desire to grow. From the time he's accepted into yeshiva, the talmid's progress is in our hands. A talmid is not born perfect. Our job is to develop his Chassidishe behavior and improve his middos.

There is a lot of talk about devotion and dedication on the part of the staff. How does it translate into action?

R' Belinov: I'll give you an example. On the first day of yeshiva, I walked around the beis midrash and asked each talmid how his vacation was and how he's doing in general. I spoke to them openly and I believe they felt that the rosh yeshiva cares about them.

A talmid must feel that the staff loves him. When he feels that way, he will reciprocate that love. At the same time, a talmid is no fool and he knows that if there's a problem it will get to the rosh yeshiva and that thought scares him.

Today though, the approach is not to instill fear; it's there anyway since the talmid knows that his future is in the rosh yeshiva's hands. Nowadays, the job is to instill the feeling that the yeshiva is his home and that he will be taken care of and loved.

R' Hendel: The running of the yeshiva is divided into two. The mashgiach, Rabbi Levi Sameiach, is responsible for and involved with the bachurim, helping them out when needed. Rabbi Rosenblatt is more involved with the scholastic end of things. We have been able to achieve an atmosphere where the yeshiva is not run in an authoritarian way.

There is hardly ever a situation in which the bachurim and the hanhala play cops and robbers.

The educational approach in yeshiva is to create trust between the talmidim and the staff. The bachurim know that the staff makes efforts to give them a positive experience and they respond well to this.

Heavy-handedness alone doesn't get you anywhere. You also need respect and obedience, but along with that the talmidim should see that they are being cared for. There are personal conversations that take place with talmidim that make them feel there's a warm and personal relationship.

R' Reinitz: A mashpia has to be the talmid's "mother." He doesn't have set hours to be in yeshiva. A mashpia doesn't work in carpentry; he works with souls. He can't sleep if a talmid is sad or has a problem. If you love the talmid, he will flourish. You have to really love them. This feeling can be conveyed in a friendly "good morning" greeting with a warm smile.

I recently attended a course for educators and during one of the discussions, a young, talented teacher got up and said that he had learnt in yeshivos for six years and he never, not even one time, heard a "good morning" or "hello" from a staff member. What feeling does a bachur get in an atmosphere like that? A mashpia must be someone who lives with the bachurim and feels their pain. Our talmidim go to the mashpiim sometimes, after the Shabbos meal, to farbreng. I always tell the mashpiim that even if they're tired after a full day in yeshiva, if a talmid has a problem, they should ask the bachur to escort them home. By doing this, you acquire his trust.

The Rebbe Rayatz differentiated between a mechanech and a melamed. It's a different profession. However, in our generation even a maggid shiur has to be a



Rabbi Sholom Dovber Hendel:
Sometimes you can put hours into a talmid's chinuch and it seems as though words from the heart enter the heart and the talmid is on the right track, and then comes the summer break and he goes home and his time spent on the Internet pulls him down.

mechanech, regardless of the fact that in his official job description he is not a mashpia.

R' Mishulovin: A fatherly relationship, period. Like a son who feels his father's love, yet at the same time, he fears him, not a fear of punishment but a sense of respect. I would be more relaxed about sending my son to yeshiva when the person running it has experience in being mechanech his own children. If he was successful in being mechanech his own children, he will be successful with his talmidim. What we want is a talmid who will look back fondly at his days in yeshiva.



The work of chinuch today is to strengthen hiskashrus to the Rebbe...that every detail be done in a way to give the Rebbe nachas, and to think how we will look when the Rebbe is nisgaleh. When a bachur lives this way he has the strength to withstand anything.

What is the main issue we need to deal with today?

R' Belinov: The very fact that we don't have today what we had yesterday is a major issue to deal with. In the past, you would travel to the Rebbe for Tishrei and the rest of your year was built around what you drew from there. It's hard today, when we don't see the Rebbe. The main issue is to bring the Rebbe into everything – farbrengens, classes, even shiurim in Nigleh.

We have to say the truth – the T'mimim, with their hiskashrus to the Rebbe, are no worse than previous generations. Tishrei is coming up and about 90% of the bachurim in shiurim beis and gemmel are going to the Rebbe. That says a lot. It's an amazing thing that despite the concealment, the talmidim live with the Rebbe.

R' Reinitz: Once upon a time, a bachur who wasn't Chassidish was someone who read secular material or a newspaper. Not that long ago, it was someone who brought a transistor radio to yeshiva. Today, all that plus much more is contained in one little cell phone ...

Even if a talmid doesn't have a cell phone or other electronic gadgets, he is exposed to undesirable things. We can't stop emphasizing the importance of Chitas, going to the mikva every morning, and other Chassidishe practices, because those

are our only defenses.

R' Mishulovin: Talmidim used to have the ambition of leaving yeshiva as lamdanim (scholars) and wanted to work in chinuch. Today, because of the explosion in the number of shlichim and the fact that shlichus has become number one in importance to the bachurim, the talmidim don't think that becoming a lamdan is that important. You don't need to be a lamdan to be a shliach. You can just prepare a sicha on the parsha and that's enough. So, go try to instill in them the motivation to learn just for the sake of learning.

In the past, it wasn't that way. In our day, the institution of shlichus wasn't as big and famous as it is today and young men considered the ideal to be to sit and learn as they saw those older than them doing.

Today it is our job to get them to understand that a love for learning is not a contradiction to the ideal of shlichus; it can only help. Furthermore, chinuch is no less important as a shlichus than opening a Chabad house.

R' Hendel: The issue of the day has to do with the development of technology and the tremendous tests the talmidim have to contend with, such as the Internet. We had a meeting with the parents in which we explained to them the dangers of having the Internet in their homes.

Sometimes you can put hours into a talmid's chinuch and it seems as though words from the heart enter the heart and the talmid is on the right track, and then comes the summer break and he goes home and his time spent on the Internet pulls him down. In general, we are big believers in an ongoing relationship with the parents and it definitely helps.

You get children out of elementary school who are on their way to becoming young men. How do you turn a sapling into a tree?

R' Mishulovin: It says, "Educate a child according to his way." That's the method and it works. When you pat him on the back and congratulate him when he makes an effort; when you show him that his success makes you happy, too, he won't look for other things and from doing it for ulterior motives he will move on to doing it for pure reasons. At first he'll make progress and learn because of the prizes and the good relationship and later on, habit will become his nature.

When you explain to a talmid that you don't expect perfection from him, and that the world is made up of beginnings and they aren't always easy, even if at first he doesn't understand what t'filla with avoda is, he says the words more slowly and he will eventually get it. You as rosh yeshiva, as a member of the staff of the yeshiva, have to encourage him and explain to him that he shouldn't be intimidated even if he doesn't have the inner understanding. From the superficial he will get to the real thing. At such a young age it's hard to understand everything b'pnimius.

R' Hendel: Talmidim nowadays did not see the Rebbe and so the work of chinuch today is to strengthen hiskashrus to the Rebbe, whether through a video of the Rebbe, learning his Torah, or fulfilling his instructions; that every detail be done in a way to give the

Rebbe nachas, and to think how we will look when the Rebbe is nisgaleh. When a bachur lives this way he has the strength to withstand anything.

At the same time, the talmidim need supervision. Personal conversations are very important for talmidim and staff. Today, bachurim can achieve in a moment what they couldn't achieve in the past and so there needs to be less policing and more building up of the student, slowly and in a p'nimius'dike way. That's the only way to achieve educational goals.

R' Reinitz: I always say that a high school boy has the mind of an adult but the desires of a child. There are no magic formulas; you have to invest a lot of positive efforts. Every shiur in Chassidus has to turn into a sort of farbrengen; not the atmosphere of a classroom [that had to be a mistake; it didn't make sense] but one which fosters an openness. We have to explain to the

bachurim our relationship with the world and our environment and where it comes from.

You can develop topics and explain the relationship between the Creator and that which He created and not only stick to the text. The Rebbe Rayatz says that we are guaranteed that any effort will not go for naught. The world is enticing and we need to provide the talmidim with the necessary fortification. This is accomplished by nonstop efforts.

R' Mendel Futerfas once said that if outside the temperature is 25 degrees, the temperature inside has to be 65 degrees. All topics must be addressed, even sensitive ones, for that is the only way to shape a talmid's personality. For example, when Israeli Independence Day is coming up, the yeshiva world ignores it and suffices with a general statement that it's not for us. Today, it's necessary to explain why it's not for us and what the Rebbeim

thought about Zionism. When a bachur sees that the way of Lubavitch is the way of truth, he won't go looking in other fields even in his thoughts.

R' Belinov: High school is like a ladder with rungs. If you expect from the very beginning that when a talmid moves from elementary school to high school he will jump to the third rung, he's liable to fall off the ladder. In the HaYom Yom, the Rebbe says that the Chanuka lights teach us that every day we have to move up one rung. The same is true with a talmid.

In shiur alef we focus on certain topics. In shiur beis we add some more, and in shiur gimmel we raise the bar. This is how I am able to measure our success, whether we have succeeded in instilling in a talmid, after three years in our yeshiva, those things we set as our goals, so that we can justifiably say, "see the sprouts we have grown."

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ב"ה

TELLING IT LIKE IT IS

By Rabbi Yaakov Shmuelewitz, Shliach, Beit Shaan



Rabbi Meir Simcha Krichevsky at a shiur/farbrenge with mekuravim

INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE REBBE FOR ANY SITUATION

Rabbi Meir Simcha Krichevsky is a “shliach Torah” in Beer Sheva and he is blessed with the power of speech. He has a loud voice and an enthusiastic and persuasive manner of speaking. He uses this power of speech to be mekarev people to the Rebbe, his teachings, and his instructions.

This winter, a nine year old boy in Beer Sheva was severely wounded by a Grad missile. He was hospitalized in the ICU and relatives cried out for help, encouragement, and guidance.

Someone informed Rabbi Krichevsky and he went to the hospital immediately.

The frightened father begged him for advice about what to do for his son’s recovery. There were other rabbanim there who tried to calm the father with hugs and encouraging words; one suggested that the father commit to using a hotplate on Shabbos, but the father wanted to do something then and there.

R’ Krichevsky thought for half a minute, thinking of those things the Rebbe wants from every Jewish child and then he told the family: First thing, buy a letter in a Seifer Torah. Second, buy a Siddur and pushka and put them

near the boy.

The family put the Siddur beside the child and put the pushka in the next room so that whoever came to visit put a coin in it. This is how everybody learned that there are clear instructions from the Nasi HaDor for every situation.

This incident is only an example of R’ Krichevsky’s approach. He always has the Rebbe’s book of segulos with him and whenever anyone asks him a question or has a problem with health, children, shalom bayis, parnasa, etc. he opens the book to the right chapter and tells the person what the Rebbe said to do. As it says in the sicha of Parshas Shoftim, we need to publicize that there is a prophet and we have to listen to his instructions.

Once an anxious mother of a soldier who was drafted into the most recent war begged the rav to tell her what she could do to protect her son. R’ Krichevsky opened to the HaYom Yom for 9 Tammuz, where it says that the best advice for parents who need a yeshua for their children is to support Torah study. He guided the mother as to who to give to and one more person became connected to the Rebbe.

HOW COME YOU DON’T TELL PEOPLE?

R’ Krichevsky was once berated by a donor. This donor had gotten a gift from the rabbi, the book *Bracha V’Hatzlacha* by Rabbi Chaim Sasson. He read some quotes from the Rebbe, one of which said that the mitzva of tz’daka brings bracha to all that the giver needs.

The donor asked R’ Krichevsky for an urgent meeting and when he came, the man asked him, “Do you believe what the Rebbe says? Do you know

that tz'daka saves you from all problems? So why don't you tell everyone? That's criminal! You don't have any problems because you are connected to the Rebbe but you should know that the people around you are suffering! Each one has problems whether shalom bayis, health, an argument with a mother-in-law. Why don't you tell them there's a solution?"

Since then, R' Krichevsky "has no choice," occasionally also guiding the person to whom to give – the main thing being the fulfillment of the Rebbe's instruction.

R' Krichevsky gives dozens of shiurim in private homes, shuls, and at big events. He nearly always focuses on sichos from 5751-2 and using the Rebbe's words, he gives out segulos, horaos, yeshuos, and nechamos.

THE REBBE'S CHILD

Rabbi Yaakov Slonim, shliach to Givat Mordechai and Ramat Beit HaKerem in Yerushalayim, has been on shlichus for seven years and can be proud of his long list of accomplishments including preschools, a shul and many other activities. He recalls a moving story that happened shortly after he went on shlichus in 5762.

One day, a woman and her son approached him and she asked, with an American accent, whether there was a Chabad preschool in the neighborhood. When he asked her why she was looking for a Lubavitcher school (she didn't look Lubavitch) she pointed at the child and said, "You see this boy? This is the Rebbe's child."

The woman explained that before she married she had a rare liver disease that affected her ability to have children. She visited the top doctors but they

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all said she didn't have a chance. She went to rabbis and tzaddikim until she met a shliach in California who suggested that she fly to New York, approach the Rebbe for "dollars," and ask for his bracha.

She listened to the shliach and went to New York, stood on line, and asked a woman from the community who spoke English and Hebrew to go along with her. Her plan was to tell the Rebbe about her illness but when it was her turn, she was too awestruck to say a word. She stood facing the Rebbe and heard the Rebbe say, "refua shleima." She didn't even know what the words meant. Then she was swept along in the line and out the door.

Greatly disappointed, she said to the woman who was with her, "What did he say? He spoke to me in Yiddish." The woman told her that the Rebbe had blessed her with precisely what she needed.

That very night the woman felt a change for the better and she called to tell her parents. At her next exam the doctor couldn't believe that she was the same

patient. "The disease is gone," he informed her. He asked her which doctor she had gone to.

"I got married," the woman concluded her account, "and here is the child who was born, thanks to the Rebbe. That's why I want to register him in a Chabad preschool."

BAR MITZVA ON MATZADA

The shluchim of the Rebbe go the lowest places on earth. Rabbi Shimon Elharar is shliach to the Yam HaMelach area. I've already written about his work with the employees of hotels. In addition to that, he initiated a unique project that many shluchim benefit from.

R' Elharar discovered that on top of Matzada (which is near Yam HaMelach) there are the remains of an ancient shul from the time of Bar Kochva's rebellion. He invites families and groups who want to celebrate a bar or bas mitzva in a special way to do it here. He has an excellent staff and he combines the celebration with prayer as well as

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divrei Torah and Chassidus. He puts together an attraction that draws people even from far away in other countries.

“A group of several families from a city in the US came here to celebrate a bar mitzva along with their shliach. We met on the mountaintop and I began the program, a tour with explanations. When I asked the bar mitzva boy’s father to put on t’fillin too, he happily agreed and even asked the other men to join him.

“Later on, the shliach who had accompanied the group told me that he could not believe his eyes. This man had consistently opposed doing mitzvos and ‘ancient customs,’ as he put it, but apparently the climb on the mountain had changed something in him. Suddenly, he was ready to do mitzvos.”

HEAD OF STATE

About a year ago, I was at a big farbrengen of Anash in Tzfas where Dr. Yitzchok Krauss spoke. He is a lecturer in Bar Ilan and author of *HaShvii*, a book about the Rebbe. He said that on one of his visits to the US, he met with a shliach who gave him his business card. Dr. Krauss saw that the shliach called himself, “Head of

State.”

Dr. Krauss asked the shliach why he called himself the head of state and he replied it was because he was responsible for all the important things in the state. Mayors and other government figures are responsible for the little things like sanitation, secular education, highways etc. but the shliach takes care of the big things like chinuch, chesed etc.

At first, Dr. Krauss was taken aback by the shliach’s approach but after thinking about the work of a shliach he realized that they have complete responsibility for every child in their city and state; they feel a sense of responsibility for families in need and the education in all schools in that state. Dr. Krauss liked the idea so much that he told us at the farbrengen, “You are Chabad Chassidim! You are shluchim of the Rebbe! You are responsible for all the important things in the world.”

The Rebbe says there is an allusion to this in the words of the Sages “look at three things” (Pirkei Avos). It’s not enough that you think about yourself (1) and your connection to Hashem (2). You need to think about the world (3) and see how to insert the “alef” into “gola” (exile) and

transform it into Geula.

THANKS TO T’FILLIN

The following story was heard by R’ Yosef Lipa Alperowitz, a resident of Meia Sh’arim, from his neighbor, a Poilishe Chassid who teaches in the Darkei Ha’Torah elementary school in Yerushalayim:

A member of a kibbutz in the Yerushalayim area was married and had a son and daughter. A few days before Pesach 2008, the girl became sick and had terrible headaches. The doctor examined her and found that she had meningitis. Her condition deteriorated and she was hospitalized, unconscious, in the ICU in Hadassah Ein Kerem.

Tragically, the next day the mother had a heart attack and was hospitalized in the ICU, attached to machines in the same hospital, though on a different floor. The father was understandably broken by these tragedies.

Two days later, the doctor who was treating the daughter said that they didn’t really have a way of helping her but he knew of a certain medication that was not included on the government approved list, which could be bought for thousands of sh’kalim at a certain pharmacy on Ben Yehuda. “It pays to try it,” he urged them.

The father went to Ben Yehuda and on the way he met a Lubavitcher who asked him if he wanted to put on t’fillin. The man said he wasn’t religious and had never put on t’fillin and he certainly wouldn’t do so now in the middle of the street. The Lubavitcher thought he might put on t’fillin somewhere else and he suggested that they go into a nearby shul.

They went into the Zaharei Chama shul (known for the

sundial on the front of the building) and the man put on t'fillin. He was very overcome by the health crises as well as the t'fillin, Krias Shma and davening. The Lubavitcher asked him why he seemed so worried and the man burst into tears and told him what was going on.

After the t'fillin and davening, the man went to the hospital. He first went to see his daughter. He was shocked to see that she wasn't in her bed. He feared the worst but the doctor reassured him, with a big smile, that she had opened her eyes an hour and a half before, had started talking and had asked for water. She seemed to be out of danger and had been taken for an examination to see whether she

could be released from the hospital.

Encouraged by his daughter's improvement he went to see his wife. He arrived at her department and saw his wife walking towards him as though she hadn't just been in bed and attached to machines!

"Why did you get out of bed?" he berated her.

She explained that an hour and a half ago she felt enormously better and the doctors were considering releasing her.

This man has work connections with the menahel of the Darkei Ha'Torah school and when they met, he excitedly told him about the double miracle that happened to his family thanks to

the t'fillin and the davening.

"You religious people have a treasure. T'filla and mitzvos save lives. Go and tell the world! Thousands of people don't know about this treasure."

The menahel was so excited to hear about this double miracle that he called an assembly of his students and teachers and told them the story. One of the melamdin repeated it to R' Yosef Lipa and thanks to him, we have been able to share it with you.

Perhaps we can say that the t'fillin shel yad, which correspond to the heart, cured his wife and the t'fillin shel rosh, which correspond to the brain, cured his daughter.

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Upon this statement I affix my signature, Sunday 20th Tamuz 5766



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THE TWELFTH MONTH IN THE SEVENTH GENERATION

By Rabbi Sholom Yaakov Chazan

*In our generation, the phrase “the king is in the field” became synonymous with Elul. In nearly every sicha and maamer said in Elul, the Rebbe mentioned the Alter Rebbe’s parable and the lessons we can learn from it. * Why is it that only in the 7th generation has this parable taken center stage in our avoda of Elul? * Why did the serious atmosphere of Elul in Lubavitch in Russia become a joyous atmosphere in Lubavitch in Brooklyn?*

It is commonly thought that the basis for the different perspective Chassidus has on the month of Elul is the famous mashal (parable) of the Alter Rebbe of the “King in the field.” The Alter Rebbe describes how in the month of Elul the king

goes to the people in the field and he greets all who wish to see him in a gracious manner.

With this mashal, the Alter Rebbe showed that the month of Elul is not only a month of self-accounting and preparation for the

Days of Judgment, which is how it is commonly viewed, but is also and primarily a month of opportunity to get close to Hashem. Hashem approaches everyone, even those in the field, and there is no need for special preparations in order to be received by Him.

Since we are in the seventh generation, we look at this mashal through the perspective of the Rebbe’s sichos and maamarim. The Rebbe magnifies and elevates the idea of the “King in the field” and its effect on the avoda of Elul to the point of making it the “heart” of Likkutei Torah of Chumash D’varim (maamer, “Ani L’Dodi 5746”).

The Rebbe takes the ideas of the mashal and applies them to daily life and this utterly changed the character of how we celebrate Elul. The Rebbe examines the details of the mashal and shows how close Hashem is to us in this month and how happy we ought to be over the lofty revelations of this month.

The change in thinking about Elul reached its peak at the farbrengen of Shabbos Parshas Shoftim 5748. After the Rebbe presented the question of the Alter Rebbe – since the 13 Middos of Rachamim (Attributes of Mercy) are revealed in Elul, the month should be a holiday (for the inner meaning of every holiday is the supernal holiness that shines on that day), and he explained the Alter Rebbe’s answer, that since this revelation is in a manner of the “King in the field,” it does not contradict mundane matters and doing work – the Rebbe presents a question: a Yom Tov is not just about not doing work but is also a time for simcha. Given the special G-dly revelation during Elul should, should we not have a special mitzva of simcha during these days? Especially when Hashem shows a smiling countenance to all and “as waters reflect a face” – it should



arouse a special simcha in us!

The gist of the Rebbe's long explanation in that sicha is that the simcha from the revelation of the 13 Middos HaRachamim in Elul and from the fact that the King is in the field, is so great that it goes beyond the idea of mitzvah! The Rebbe says that the simcha in the month of Elul is greater even than the simcha of Purim since regarding the simcha of Purim there is a mitzva while there is no command for Elul, not even in the Acharonim and not even in drushei Chassidus.

A week later, the Rebbe continued to speak about the same point. The Rebbe gave other reasons for the simcha (thirty days before the Z'man Simchaseinu – i.e. Sukkos, the marriage of the Rebbe Rayatz, and the year of "Tismach"-5748) and called for an increase in "simcha in its pure form" in order to bring the Geula.

The following Shabbos, the Rebbe even connected the cheshbon ha'nefesh of Elul to simcha – a spiritual accounting should also be made regarding simcha – how much did you do and how much do you have left to do. The final days of the year ought to be used, said the Rebbe, to grab more Jewish simcha.

The Rebbe's message was clear and it penetrated deeply within the consciousness of the Chassidim. The natural serious atmosphere of Elul began to be diluted with great simcha. The month of mercy and Slichos had an additional name – the month of simcha, rachamim and Slichos with the emphasis on simcha. Even at the farbrengen of the Shabbos of Slichos, the Rebbe instructed several times over the years that they should go to recite Slichos with joy and dancing, *shokeldikerheit* (tipsy).

For the young ones among us, who grew up on the Rebbe's sichos, especially the most recent sichos, the month of Elul is obviously one of simcha and elevated spirits because of Hashem's revelation to us, and even the spiritual accounting that certainly must be done, is permeated with the avoda of simcha. They think that this was always the way it was in Lubavitch and that this is the chiddush of Chassidus in how we regard Elul since the time of the Alter Rebbe.

ELUL IN LUBAVITCH WITHOUT THE KING IN THE FIELD

If you study the teachings of the

Chabad Rebbeim, as well as Chassidic history, you will see that the basis for simcha in the month of Elul is the famous mashal of the "King in the field" which appears **one time** in the Alter Rebbe's teachings. It is **not mentioned** in the teachings of the Mittlerer Rebbe; it is mentioned **once** in the teachings of the Tzemach Tzedek; there is **no mention** of it in the teachings of the Rebbe Maharash and the Rebbe Rashab, and it appears only **one time** in the teachings of the Rebbe Rayatz!

Obviously then, until the Rebbe, this mashal wasn't a central idea for the month of Elul. We can assume that the maskilim didn't focus on it and the ovdim didn't learn any derech in avodas Hashem from it for the month of Elul.

Chassidus had wrought a great change in the outlook of the month of Elul and from a month of fear of punishment and fear of judgment it became a month of awe and t'shuva from the root meaning to return and get close to Hashem again and a time to prepare to coronate the King on Rosh HaShana. But the atmosphere of the month of Elul was very far from being joyous!

The Rebbe Rayatz's gripping description of the atmosphere of

After generations of working in the field, we are finally getting to see the King as He is revealed to the people of the field. Could there be a greater simcha than this?

Elul in Lubavitch expresses feelings of inspiration, awe and mercy and does not say a word about simcha. It's a special description that expresses the feelings in the hearts of Chassidim in Lubavitch, from the maskilim and ovdim to the simple people; and throughout this lengthy description there isn't even one Chassid who thinks about the King in the field. Not a single mention of even one feeling of simcha about the revelation of the 13 Middos of Rachamim.

ELUL IN THE 7TH GENERATION – THE KING HAS ARRIVED

In the sicha of Parshas Shoftim 5750, the Rebbe explained that the mashal of the “King in the field” actually sums up the avoda of the Jewish people in this world which is “to make Him a dwelling place down below.” As the Rebbe put it, “That is, so even the field (the lowest one can go) is the place (the dwelling) of the King.”

This explanation immediately raises the question – since the avoda to make Hashem a dira ba'tachtonim takes place all year long, the idea of the “King in the field” applies all year. But in Likkutei Torah and the Rebbe's sichos and maamarim, the idea of the “King in the field” pertains only to Elul and not to the rest of the year?

This can be explained by the Rebbe's explanation that the idea of the “King in the field” is comprised of two parts: 1) the advantage of

the **field**, that the king is revealed in a field to the people of the field, the lowest possible place, 2) the revelation of the **King** – that even in the field, the King is revealed in all His glory.

Throughout the year, says the Rebbe, the emphasis is on the avoda in the **field**, i.e. preparing the field so that it is fit for the King to be revealed there. The King is in the background in that we know that the purpose of the avoda is the hisgalus of the King. During Elul though, as the conclusion of the entire year and the preparation for the avoda in the year to come, the emphasis is on the purpose of the avoda in the field throughout the year which is the **hisgalus of the King** in the field.

Based on this explanation of the Rebbe, perhaps we can compare all the generations of Chabad until the seventh generation to the months of the year and say that although they knew about the mashal of the “King in the field,” that the purpose of the work in the field is the hisgalus of the King – the emphasis was on the work in the field and not on the revelation of the King.

When the revelation of the King is merely in the background of the avoda, it's enough for the Alter Rebbe to mention it once and another few times in the teachings of the Tzemach Tzedek and the Rebbe Rayatz. Obviously, even when the main avoda is in the field, there is no reason for any special simcha, and the atmosphere of Elul is one of inspiration and seriousness in the special avoda

alluded to in the acronyms for Elul: Torah, Avoda, G'milus Chassadim, and T'shuva.

In the seventh generation though, being (like the month of the Elul) the completion of the avoda of all the years of galus, and the preparation for the avoda of the years of Geula – the emphasis is on the purpose of the avoda in the field throughout the years of galus – the **revelation of the King** in the field, as in the allusion in the fifth acronym for the word Elul – Geula.

Since in our generation the main emphasis is on the **revelation of the King**, we have to put the mashal in the forefront of our Elul avoda, for this is the main idea of Elul in our time. The special simcha of this month is also understandable since after generations of working in the field, we are finally getting to see the King as He is revealed to the people of the field. Could there be a greater simcha than this?

MELECH HA'MOSHIACH IN THE FIELD

Since, in our generation, the inyan of Elul has been revealed as the revelation of the King, as Chassidim we ought to connect this to the hisgalus of the Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach. Even though the mashal of the “King in the field” is about Hashem, “tzaddikim are likened to their Creator,” especially when we are talking about Hashem's S'firas HaMalchus. In the sicha of Erev Rosh HaShana 5752 it's explained how “the kingdom of Hashem is connected with and revealed in its entirety through Dovid Malka Meshicha (whose inyan is S'firas HaMalchus).”

The Rebbe himself connected the mashal of the “King in the field,” at the very start of his nesius (the year in which the Rebbe taught us about hiskashrus, 1950-1951),

to the hisgalus of the Rebbe Rayatz in this month. This is what the Rebbe says (sicha 18 Elul 5710):

“Even someone in the ‘field’ which is not a settled place but a place where grass, animal food, grows, which refers to the animal soul, and ‘Eisav was a man of the field’ – in the month of Elul the Rebbe comes to him while he is in the field and not only doesn’t the Rebbe get angry for the bother that they bothered him to come to this lowly place, but to the contrary, he [the Rebbe] receives him graciously and with a smiling countenance with the joy that sweetens judgment (as we know from the story of the Alter Rebbe in jail).

“When the Rebbe comes to the field, whoever wants to greet him may do so, and they all stand ready to greet him and don’t even have to push ... since the Rebbe himself is welcoming them all graciously and providing for all. All you need is to not be a fool and cry out, ‘Abba, save me’... Nobody is demanding great and wondrous things from you, only one inner cry, ‘Abba, Abba save me, Abba Abba have mercy on me’ ...”

The Rebbe connected the mashal to the Rebbe and the Chassidim from the very start of his leadership and the idea is that much more prominent in recent years, after the Rebbe began connecting every event to the Rebbeim, especially to the Rebbe Rayatz Nasi Doreinu. (For example, in a sicha for 18 Elul, the Rebbe began by saying that since it was 18 Elul, one of the days of the Sheva Brachos for the Rebbe Rayatz ...). The Rebbe put it simply at the beginning of the sicha of 10 Elul 5751, “It is customary to connect every inyan with Nasi Doreinu, the Rebbe, my father-in-law.”

All the more so should we, as Chassidim, connect every event and

inyan in Torah with the hastening of the hisgalus of the Rebbe MH”M, especially connecting all people to the Navi (Prophet) of the generation and the Nasi HaDor, as the Rebbe said to do in the sicha of Shoftim 5751.

The difference between the avoda of all year and the avoda of Elul is also expressed in the conduct of the earlier Rebbeim versus the conduct of the Rebbe – whether in saying maamarim and farbrengens and yechidus and in leadership. Starting with the Alter Rebbe, there were maamarim which were said only for his sons, and maamarim which only talmidei ha’chadarim could attend, but not all Chassidim. There were limitations on traveling to the Alter Rebbe. Each Chassid had permission to visit on specific occasions as set forth in the Takanos Liozna.

The same was true in subsequent generations. There were certain limitations and not everybody was allowed to be present at farbrengens or when maamarim were said. When the Rebbe Rayatz was in Poland there were varying limitations on attending his talks, and there were limitations regarding yechidus. Their conduct could be compared to a king in his palace.

But in our generation, all the doors were opened and all limitations removed, like the “King in the field.” Whoever wanted to, could come attend the Rebbe’s farbrengens and have yechidus, men, women, and children.

YOU JUST HAVE TO WANT

But even within the seventh generation there was a long stretch of time that was like the rest of the months of the year, when the work focused on the field. Chassidim knew that the Rebbe is Moshiach

and he would bring the Geula to the world, but the avoda focused on spreading Chassidus the ultimate goal of which was to bring Moshiach. In those years, the Rebbe acted more as a king in his palace and those who wanted yechidus had to wait a long time for an appointment and make the proper spiritual preparations.

In more recent years, the king left his palace for the field. Yechidus was changed for “dollars” and even farbrengens and sichos were used by the Rebbe to respond to individual questions. From year to year the revelation of his activities in the “field” of the Jewish People and the nations of the world became progressively more revealed.

Like in the mashal of the “King in the field,” where **whoever wants** can approach the King without prior preparations, the Rebbe wrote about the distribution of dollars for tz’daka and the farbrengens: **“Whoever wants** asks for a bracha ...and is answered.” “Every farbrengen now is like a yechidus for **those who want it.**” You just have to want and you are accepted by the king and you receive his brachos.

Just as it is when the king goes out into the field, our current activities must focus on welcoming him, as the Rebbe said to the shluchim in 5752, that the avoda of shlichus today is “to greet Moshiach Tzidkeinu b’poel mamash.”

During Elul we should promote traveling to the Rebbe and davening on the Yomim Nora’im with the Rebbe in Beis Moshiach – 770, where the Rebbe, MH”M is and the place where he will first be revealed, immediately now.

*Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu
V’Rabbeinu, Melech HaMoshiach
L’olam Va’ed.*

RABBI SHMUEL ELOZOR HALPERIN, A”H

By Shneur Zalman Berger

Rabbi Shmuel Elozor Halperin a”h was a Chabad elder, rav in the Beis Yisroel neighborhood of Yerushalayim, and chairman of the Igud Tzetzta’ei Admur HaZakein * Life story of a Chassid and mekushar, presented in connection with Chai Elul, birthday of the Alter Rebbe.



Chabad suffered a great loss with the passing of Rabbi Shmuel Elozor Halperin a”h, who spread the wellsprings of Chassidus Chabad in Yerushalayim. In the Beis Yisroel neighborhood where he was a rav, he inspired many people to learn Chabad Chassidus and with his connections with Admurim and rabbanim, he explained the Rebbe’s position on various pertinent topics. He was mekushar to the Rebbe and he connected others to the Rebbe even in the early years of the Rebbe’s nesius. In the articles that he published in various public forums he explained the Rebbe’s mitvzaim and was himself a role model as he participated in mitvzaim. He used his brilliance and tremendous knowledge of Nigleh and Chassidus to spread the wellsprings and thanks to him, many people were exposed and drawn to Chabad.

Last summer, an anthology of his articles was published that explain topics such as what a Rebbe is, as explained in Toras Chabad, mitvza MiHu Yehudi, Mitvza Neshek, Mitvza Yom Holedes, and other articles that answer questions and challenges to some of the mitvzaim. His tremendous scholarship in Nigleh and Chassidus are apparent in these articles.

HE LONGED FOR THE TANYA

Rabbi Shmuel Elozor Halperin was born on the first day of Sukkos 1932 in Yerushalayim to his parents R' Chanania Yosef and Reb. Braina. The Halperin family is illustrious with an ancestry that goes back to the Baal Shem Tov, the Alter Rebbe and other great men.

As a child he attended yeshivas Chayei Olam in Yerushalayim and then he continued in Slabodka in B'nei Brak. Even back then he was drawn to Tanya as he related:

"I attended a Litvishe yeshiva because although we breathed the air of Chassidus at home in our childhood, the awareness of the study of Chabad Chassidus was not developed enough in the environment in which I lived. The Chassidische chinuch in those days was based more on stories of tzaddikim and Chassidim and unfortunately, I have to say that that there was no one who reached out to our circle, to teach us Tanya. I remember the feeling of longing I had when I would page through a torn volume of Tanya that was lying around in yeshivas Chayei Olam."

The absence of any study of Chassidus and the longing to dedicate himself to Torah without distractions, led him to study in yeshivas Slabodka, but his soul continued to be drawn towards Chassidus and of course he did not abandon his family's Chassidic practices.

He once said that on Shavuos 1950, since he was a new student in Slabodka, they allowed him to go home for Yom Tov. When he returned to yeshiva, the rosh yeshiva, Rabbi Isaac Sher asked him, "Did you read the Tikkun Leil Shavuos?" This was something the Litvishe did not do.

He answered jokingly, "Although there is no reason for a ben yeshiva to know what it says in the books of



His father,
Rabbi Chanania Yosef Halperin

the Prophets Yeshaya or Yirmiyahu etc., I still think it's a good idea and important to at least know of the existence of these holy books. If you say the Tikkun Leil Shavuos once a year, at least you get that minimal bit of knowledge."

The rosh yeshiva had nothing to say in return and he even enjoyed the answer.

THE ULTIMATUM: QUIT THE TANYA OR QUIT THE YESHIVA

He found out that there was a Tanya shiur and he was one of the first to participate in the shiur that was started by the talmid, R' Yisroel Nachman Gesheid. The mashpia, Rabbi Chaim Shaul Brook came every week to teach Tanya to the students of Slabodka who were interested. The shiur took place in a room of the big shul in B'nei Brak. About twenty talmidim of the yeshiva took part.

R' Shmuel Elozor heard eleven shiurim and they stayed with him for years to come. Then the hanhala announced that it opposed the shiur. R' Shmuel Elozor decided he would continue to attend the shiur which took place during their free time and

was not at the expense of the yeshiva's schedule. The hanhala still opposed it and the rosh yeshiva told him that he had to choose between the shiur in Tanya and the yeshiva.

For this reason he left the yeshiva along with his brother Levi Yitzchok. The rosh yeshiva was disappointed with their decision and tried to dissuade them but R' Halperin said, "I cannot possibly continue to learn in a yeshiva where the study of Tanya is forbidden, especially when we learn it in our free time."

Their leaving the yeshiva created such a furor that even the Chazon Ish who led the Misnagdim said that the yeshiva had been too hasty.

In Iyar 1951, he went to yeshivas Toras Emes in Yerushalayim and quickly became close with the rosh yeshiva, Rabbi Moshe Aryeh Leib Shapiro who was also the rav of Beis Yisroel. Young R' Halperin quickly became one of his mekuravim.

COMMOTION CONCERNING THE K'SAV HISKASHRUS

Even though he was a new talmid in a Chabad yeshiva and although only a few months earlier the Rebbe had taken over the nesius, R' Halperin was considered the leader of the mekusharim to the Rebbe. This was because he was a witness to the proceedings that led to the hiskashrus of the Chassidim in Yerushalayim, to the Rebbe.

Like many Lubavitcher Chassidim, he had heard about the Rebbe from those who knew him. After the passing of the Rebbe Rayatz, he saw how the g'dolei Chassidei Chabad were mekasher to the Rebbe and this greatly affected him. On several occasions he told about the Kinus Hiskashrus that took place in Yerushalayim in Av 1950 at the initiative of Rabbi Berel Chaskind who came especially from the United States to inspire others to hiskashrus to the Rebbe.

R' Halperin said that many Chassidim attended the gathering, rabbanim and mashpiim, including: R' Shlomo Yosef Zevin, R' Chaim Naeh, R' Shmarya Nachum Sossonkin, R' Ezriel Zelig Slonim, R' Moshe Gurary, R' Dovid Goldberg, R' Chania Yosef Halperin (his father), R' Yehuda Leib Slonim, and R' Moshe Weber. They decided to ask the Rebbe to accept the Chabad leadership and they drew up a "k'sav hiskashrus," a letter to that effect. That's when a commotion erupted over the wording.

This is how he described the commotion at that historic gathering:

"R' Zevin composed a dramatic letter, full of emotion, in a clear and wondrous style in which he turned to the Rebbe [Rayatz]'s son-in-law, on everyone's behalf, to accept the leadership which was coming to him and which he deserved, so as not to cause, heaven forbid, a severing of the chain of light whose first link was the Alter Rebbe.

"According to the proposed version, the Rebbe's name was mentioned in the greeting with the addition of various adjectives, but the gaon and posek R' Chaim Naeh (the friend of, and the same age, as R' Zevin) suggested that the letter begin the way you write to the Rebbe: K'vod K'dushas Admur shlita. In other words, this wasn't a petition on the part of Anash, but a fait accompli without awaiting his consent. R' Naeh said that otherwise he wouldn't sign to the letter and his suggestion was accepted and the correction was made. All of Anash signed with awe and trepidation."

GREATNESS IN THE REBBE'S TORAH

When he first started learning in Toras Emes he received his first letter from the Rebbe. The letter made him feel that the Rebbe



Speaking at a farbrengen in the Tzemach Tzedek shul in the early years

understood him and this greatly strengthened his hiskashrus to the Rebbe so that he felt a tremendous urge to get other young bachurim to be mekushar to the Rebbe.

What did young Lubavitchers know about the Rebbe back then? R' Halperin said:

"The Rebbe's gadlus in Torah was famous. Rabbi Yitzchok Isaac Herzog [see issue 706], the Chief Rabbi of Israel, who knew the Rebbe, spread the word in the lifetime of the Rebbe Rayatz. He would speak about the Rebbe with great admiration and amazement.

"The gaon, R' Zevin who knew the Rebbe well, spoke in high praise of the Rebbe's breadth and depth of knowledge. The posek, R' Chaim Naeh spoke in glowing terms of the Rebbe's greatness in halacha (for he had corresponded with the Rebbe even before the nesius)."

His hiskashrus that resulted from the letter and the descriptions he heard from the distinguished Chassidim continued to grow. He drew others in his wake and within a short time instead of being considered just another new talmid he was one of the leaders who supported the Rebbe's kabbalas ha'nesius in yeshivas Toras Emes. In those days, the yeshiva was going through a disruptive crisis, which did not enable a proper and orderly acceptance of the nesius.

DIRECTOR OF TZEIREI CHABAD IN YERUSHALAYIM

In those early years, the Rebbe went on a major campaign to spread the wellsprings and a branch of Tzeirei Chabad was formed in Yerushalayim. The appointed members of the hanhala were: R' Zushe Wilyamowsky (the Partisan), R' Elozor Ehrentrau, R' Nachum Rabinowitz, R' Zev Dov Slonim, R' Shimon Jacobowitz, R' Hillel Rabinowitz, and R' Shmuel Elozor Halperin and his brother Levi Yitzchok. After a brief while, R' Shmuel Elozor was appointed secretary and acting director while still a bachur.

One of their main activities was gathering Chabad youth in Yerushalayim and founding a yeshivas Erev. The main branch was founded under his guidance in the Chabad shul Beis Yisroel. Many of the talmidim of the yeshivas Erev continued on to learn in the Mechina that was founded alongside yeshivas Toras Emes. R' Shmuel Elozor put in great effort into the yeshivas Erev which was mekarev many to Chabad.

At that time, the work of spreading the wellsprings wasn't at all easy and wasn't even fully accepted internally. The bachurim as well as the older men did not know how to digest the idea that they had to speak Chassidus in shuls for Yud-Tes Kislev or other dates in the calendar. R' Halperin was the one who pushed all of the Rebbe's campaigns in Yerushalayim in that early period.

When he came of age, he married Chasa Yocheved, the daughter of R' Yehuda Zundel Hager. Her maternal grandfather was Rabbi Shmuel Aharon Shazuri (Weber), the first secretary of the Chief Rabbinate of Israel and the right hand of R' Kook. She was a descendant of great people

including: the Baal Shem Tov, the Admur R' Aharon of Karlin and many others.

Before the wedding, R' Zevin asked the Rebbe whether he could help with the wedding expenses and the Rebbe replied that although the situation was difficult, R' Shmuel Halperin was an exception to the rule and he sent a sum of money to help with the wedding.

On the Shabbos before the wedding, Shabbos Mevarchim Elul 1957, the Rebbe asked during the farbrengen whether a relative of R' Shmuel Halperin was present so he could say l'chaim on his behalf. When no relative could be found, R' Nachum Rabinowitz said he wasn't a relative but a good friend and the Rebbe told him to say l'chaim.

In the years to come, R' Halperin wrote many long and detailed letters to the Rebbe and received many answers that pertained to all the roles he served in.

R' Moshe Tzvi related:

"I was once with my father in the secretary's office and he asked the secretary, R' Binyamin Klein whether the Rebbe had read the letter he had recently written. R' Klein answered him and then said, 'The Rebbe takes your letters home and reads them during the meal.'"

ROSH YESHIVA OF TORAS EMES

R' Halperin was appointed, with the Rebbe's bracha, the menahel ruchni of the Mechina of yeshivas Toras Emes. Later on he was promoted and appointed maggid shiur and mashpia in the yeshiva itself and a few years later he was appointed rosh yeshiva.

He went to the Rebbe for Tishrei 5724/1963. At the Simchas Beis HaShoeiva farbrengen the Rebbe suddenly said, "Where is Halperin, the rosh yeshiva of Toras Emes? Give him [mashke] for all his talmidim."



Speaking at the first gathering of descendents of the Alter Rebbe

R' Halperin said, "I cannot possibly continue to learn in a yeshiva where the study of Tanya is forbidden, especially when we learn it in our free time." Their leaving the yeshiva created such a furor that even the Chazon Ish who led the Misnagdim said that the yeshiva had been too hasty.

As for the yechidus of this visit, he said:

"They arranged yechidus for me and for Professor Branover at the end of one of the nights so that we would not have time constraints. The Rebbe said, 'You are the rosh yeshiva of Toras Emes and therefore, your 'zahir t'fei' (special mitzva) is the Torah of truth and the entire channel of hashpaa goes through that.

"During the yechidus we heard knocking on the door as a sign to finish up. I began to move backwards but the Rebbe said, 'If you want a response to everything, you have to stay.' The Rebbe asked me to see to it that the mashpia, R'

Moshe Weber should return to his work in yeshiva. As soon as I left, I wrote that to the hanhala of the yeshiva and reported to the Rebbe who responded with his thanks."

During the time he worked as rosh yeshiva, everybody knew that he was expert in Nigleh and Chassidus. The talmidim listened eagerly to his shiurim. His talmidim from that period, who came to be menachem avel during the Shiva, told his sons that he had a special way of explaining things that they liked.

As rosh yeshiva from 1964-1977 he received many letters from the Rebbe regarding the spiritual running of the yeshiva. Along with

the tremendous encouragement came a constant demand to expand the yeshiva and develop it in quality and quantity. Even when he wanted to leave the yeshiva, for various reasons, the Rebbe did not allow him to do so.

The director of the OK, Rabbi Berel Levy, came up with an idea of publishing a journal about kashrus issues and having R' Halperin be the editor. In his negative answer, the Rebbe said (as related by B' Levy), "Do you want to take my man in Toras Emes from me?" Obviously, that idea was shelved.

When it was suggested that he serve as a member of the editorial board of the Encyclopedia Talmudis, the editor, R' Shlomo Yosef Zevin only allowed him to work part-time because he knew that the Rebbe wanted him to be fully involved with Toras Emes.

Because of his genius and knowledge he was asked by yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim in Lud to visit them every week in order to test the bachurim. He administered these tests for years both when he served as rosh yeshiva in Toras Emes and even in later years, despite his many involvements.

CHAIRMAN OF THE IGUD HA'TZETZA'IM

With the Rebbe's bracha he founded the *Igud Tzetzta'ei Admur HaZakein* (organization of descendants of the Alter Rebbe). He even published a book of descendants. Over the years, under the auspices of this organization there were gatherings of descendants and activities to strengthen Judaism and Chassidus among the descendants.

The initiative to found the organization was taken in 1972, when the Rebbe announced the establishment of 71 mosdos to mark his 70th birthday. R' Halperin came up with the idea of founding an

ספר הצאצאים

אילן יוחסין

לצאצאי הוד כ"ק רבנו הגדול קדש הקדשים מופת דורות האחרונים הנאון האלקי

מֶרֶן רִבִּי שְׁנִיאוֹר זִלְמָן מְלִיאָדִי נִשְׁמָתוֹ עֲדָן אֲדֹמִי"ר הֹקֵן כָּל הַתְּנִיָּא וְהַשְׁוִי"ע, מִסֵּד חֲסִידוֹת חֲבִיד

שִׁשֶׁת הַדּוֹרוֹת שֶׁל רַבְּנוֹ, מִשְׁפָּחָה וּמִשְׁמֵחָה. שְׁמוֹת וּמִסְטֵימֵי עַד דּוֹר הַעֲשָׂרִי וּבִכְלָל זֶה תּוֹלְדוֹת חַיִּים שֶׁל רַבְּנִים, אֲדֹמִי"רִים, גְּדוֹלֵי הַחֲסִידִים, אֲנָשֵׁי מַעֲשֵׂה וְחֻמָּה מִמְּשַׁפְּחוֹת בֵּית רַבִּי.

כֹּלל: מִבּוֹא עַל שִׁטְנוֹ הַמִּיּוֹחֵד, וְהַשְׁפָּעָתוֹ לְדוֹרוֹת. – דְּבָרֵי יְמִימָם. תּוֹרָה וּסְפָרִים שֶׁל שְׁבַע רִעּוּסִים, נְשִׂאֵי חֲבִיד לְדוֹרוֹתֵיהֶם, יַחַד עִם נְשִׂאֵי דוֹרוֹת הָרַב הַשְּׁבִיעִי מְנִירוֹת חֲבִיד, וְעִמּוֹד הָאֵשׁ לְכָל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּכָל מִשְׁבּוֹתָם, הַנָּאֻן הָאֲמִתִּי, הוֹד

כ"ק אֲדֹמִי"ר מִנְחָם מַעֲנֵדל שְׁלִיט"א שְׁנִיאוֹרִסוֹן מְלִיבֹאוֹוִיטֵשׁ

לִיקוּט וְחֶבֶר
הָרֶב שְׁמוּאֵל אֶלְעָזָר הִיילֶרֶסוֹן

The Book of Descendents lists the names of thousands of descendants all over the world

organization that united the descendants of the Alter Rebbe, thus being mekarev many of them to the path of Toras HaChassidus. The Rebbe approved the idea and encouraged him and even said that R' Halperin should run the organization.

The first gathering took place on Chanuka 5733 in Beit Ha'Am in Yerushalayim. Elder Chassidim who were descendants of the Alter Rebbe graced the dais, including the rosh yeshiva of Tchebin, Rabbi Boruch Shimon Schneersohn, Rabbi Ben-Tziyon Schneersohn – the Rebbe's uncle, Rabbi Yehuda Leib Slonim, Rabbi Shaul Meshayev- then the most senior descendent at the age of 95, and many others.

It was very exciting as hundreds of descendants from all backgrounds and from cities all over Israel convened. This first activity, which was encouraged by the Rebbe, made a strong impression on the participants.

This gathering was the cornerstone for the organization's activities. They decided to hold annual gatherings for the descendants and to publish a book of the descendants of the Alter

Rebbe. On Erev Pesach of that year, the organization sent hand-matzos to many descendants, and gifts to the boys and girls who became bar/bas mitzva.

From that point on, R' Halperin worked tirelessly to publish the book of descendants. The work was difficult and complicated. He went through phone books, put ads in newspapers, and sent thousands of questionnaires to the descendants he was in touch with, in the attempts to locate additional descendants from the Alter Rebbe's extended family.

In the coming months, R' Halperin came up with the idea of a special kinus of descendants for young people. The kinus took place in Av 5733 in Beit Shazar in Kfar Chabad and was attended by hundreds of youth from all over the country. R' Halperin gave a presentation to these young people about the Alter Rebbe and his work. A child named Binyamin Cohen came especially for the event from the United States and brought regards from the Rebbe's court. Raffles were held and a movie of the Rebbe was shown.

Reactions to the kinusim were inspiring. Descendants from all backgrounds didn't stop expressing how impressed they were by the whole thing. One of the letters that R' Halperin got was from Mr. Aharon Yoel Schneersohn who was assistant editor of *HaAretz* who wrote, "It was an impressive and moving meeting with the other descendants of the Rebbe of Liadi. It was our first meeting and I hope not our last."

R' Halperin derived much encouragement from the Rebbe's responses. The Rebbe even sent money for the event and other activities the organization would do. The Rebbe sent special instructions regarding the book of descendants. He said it should be accurate and gave other instructions. It was particularly amazing and moving to

be told to write about the Rebbe thus: "The children of the Rebbe shlita of Lubavitch are the talmidim and Chassidim and baalei t'shuva, in the hundreds and thousands around the world. May they merit to welcome Moshiach Tzidkeinu soon, in our days."

When R' Halperin wanted to put Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka's picture in the book, as she too was a descendent of the Alter Rebbe, the Rebbe said it wasn't for him to say and to ask her. R' Halperin asked the Rebbetzin but she, in her characteristic modesty, refused.

As for another less illustrious descendent of the Alter Rebbe, the writer Asher Ginsberg known as "Achad HaAam," the Rebbe said not to use his literary name, "Achad Ha'Am," only his real name.

Seven years of difficult work were invested in this book. It was complicated and sensitive. Throughout all those years, the Rebbe regularly inquired about when the book would be published. In a letter from the end of Shevat 5738, the Rebbe added a handwritten note, "When will the book of descendants finally be published?"

The tremendous work was finally completed, and on Chai Elul, the birthday of the Alter Rebbe, 1980, the thick book came off the press. The book begins with a series of articles about the Alter Rebbe's teachings and approach. Then thousands of names are listed from around the world. R' Halperin sent the Rebbe a copy with R' Zalman Schmerling, himself a descendent, who gave the book to the Rebbe during the farbrengen on Erev Rosh HaShana 5741. The Rebbe accepted it with a show of great appreciation and a luminous countenance. A Chassid who was present at the farbrengen noticed that when another book was placed on top of the book of descendants, the Rebbe quickly removed it.

On Hoshana Raba of that year,



Rabbi Chanania Yosef Halperin completing Shas at a 19 Kislev farbrengen.
From right to left: Rabbi Levi Yitzchok Halperin, Rabbi Shmuel Elozor Halperin, Rabbi Chanania Yosef Halperin

They arranged yechidus for... the end of one of the nights so that we would not have time constraints. The Rebbe said, 'You are the rosh yeshiva of Toras Emes ... and the entire channel of hashpaa goes through that'. During the yechidus we heard knocking on the door as a sign to finish up. I began to move backwards but the Rebbe said, 'If you want a response to everything, you have to stay.'

R' Halperin went to the US and when lekach was distributed he presented the Rebbe with a copy of the book of descendants bound in leather and inscribed with the verse, "and Aharon bore the names of the Jewish people."

The Rebbe said, "I already have one," and then immediately said, "Two are better." The Rebbe added with a smile, "I hope that in the seven years to come it will be easier

than the last seven years."

R' Halperin brought a special leather bound edition for the Rebbetzin. She looked through it and said, "I know my husband and he will go through this book from cover to cover."

A short while later the Rebbe said a farbrengen should be held in the home of the chozer, R' Yoel Kahn, whose wife, formerly Butman, was also a descendent. The Rebbe sent a

When R' Halperin wanted to put Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka's picture in the book, as she too was a descendent of the Alter Rebbe, the Rebbe said it wasn't for him to say and to ask her. R' Halperin asked the Rebbetzin but she, in her characteristic modesty, refused.

special letter in honor of the book and also paid for an appreciable part of the expenses with the request that the book reach the home of every single descendent.

The following year, 5734, R' Halperin went to the Rebbe for Tishrei again. The Rebbe asked him to organize a gathering of the descendants in the United States. He asked that this be done in that month of Tishrei. So on Hoshana Raba the gathering was held. One of the Rebbe's secretaries told R' Halperin that the gathering gave the Rebbe much nachas.

Before the gathering took place, R' Halperin went to the Rebbe's house on President Street in order to invite the Rebbetzin. On this occasion, the Rebbetzin listed all the branches of her family tree and said she was a Schneersohn from all sides.

The Rebbe's regard for the organization was so unusual that when shluchim wrote to the Rebbe about descendants of the Alter Rebbe in their town, the Rebbe told them to put them in touch with R' Shmuel Halperin.

Among the descendants are Lubavitcher rabbanim and mashpiim as well as Admurim from Satmar, Bobov, Kotzk, and Alexander, and famous Israeli public figures like former Knesset member Shaul Yahalom and Avrom Burg, the judge Misha'el Cheshin and others.

The activities of the organization

reached thousands of descendants, some of them not at all religious. The annual gatherings and other activities, together with the book of descendants, brought a spiritual awakening to many. Those belonging to other religious segments of the Jewish population came closer to the Rebbe and Chabad.

One of the activities entails going to the gravesite of Rebbetzin Menucha Rochel, the granddaughter of the Alter Rebbe, who is buried in Chevron. R' Halperin did a lot to protect her grave and organized the annual visit to her grave.

In recent years, when he was weaker, his son R' Yitzchok Meir continued the work of the organization and was in touch with thousands of descendants who received handmade matza from him for Pesach.

RAV OF BEIS YISROEL

The Chabad minyan in the Beis Yisroel shul was founded by his father, R' Chanania Yosef in Iyar 1953. He founded the shul together with the leaders of Chabad in Yerushalayim. The shul is a hub till today and is a center for hafatza.

R' Chanania Yosef was rav of the shul but he also took responsibility for the administration of the shul, organizing shiurim and the Chassidishe farbrengens held there.

After the passing of the rav of the

Beis Yisroel neighborhood, Rabbi Moshe Leib Shapiro in 1976, his talmid R' Shmuel Elozor Halperin succeeded him. This appointment spurred on all the activities of bringing people closer to Chabad. R' Halperin developed what had been done earlier by his father and R' Shapiro in spreading the wellsprings of Chassidus. Throughout the years he maintained the Chabad shul in Beis Yisroel from a spiritual standpoint with shiurim and farbrengens. After the passing of his father in 5748, he also became the rav of the shul.

WITH RABBANIM AND ADMURIM

R' Halperin was also chairman of the Vaad HaRabbanim for Shleimus Ha'Am, which served as an arm of the Vaad L'maan Shleimus Ha'Am since 5730, and a member of the rabbinic group Pikuach Nefesh. He also had the honorary title of "Rav Chevras T'hilim HaOlamis shel Kollel Chabad" that was started by the Rebbe Rayatz and the Rebbe.

For many years he was the talmid and household regular of R' Shlomo Yosef Zevin. He learned Torah from him and carried out important missions for him. R' Zevin gave him smicha for rabbanus and dayanus, and lobbied for his appointment as a member of the editorial staff of the Encyclopedia Talmudis where he was editor in chief.

R' Halperin carried out many Chabad missions in the homes of g'dolei Yisroel and much can be written about that. In order to convey a general sense of what this role entailed, the following is a description of one such encounter as related by R' Halperin himself:

"It was in connection with the proclamation signed by 32 rabbanim and g'dolei Yisroel about amending the Law of Return. Among the first I turned to was one of the genuine geonei ha'dor, Rabbi Yechezkel

Abramsky who welcomed us, the members of the delegation, with open arms and unusual warmth.

"I remember that in the long conversation which ensued, he laid out for us his acquaintanceship with the leaders of Chabad, starting with the Rebbe Rashab and the Rebbe Rayatz and then the Rebbe. When he began talking about the Rebbe, he was full of excitement and amazement when he said that there was never anything like his massive works in spreading Torah and preserving Judaism. When we referred to the proclamation, he on his own said, 'Give me the proclamation and I will sign it,' and he was the first one to do so."

He had many special meetings with the Gerrer Rebbe-the "Beis

Yisroel," with the Tchebiner Rav and many other Admurim and rabbanim.

THEY CAME TO CONSOLE

In recent years R' Halperin was very sick and he suffered greatly. He passed away on the morning of Taanis Esther at the age of 76. The funeral took place the same day, leaving the Beis Knesses Chabad "Beis Yisroel" for Har HaMenuchos.

So much more can be said about his many activities to fight to increase "kavod Lubavitch" and the honor of the Rebbe in Yerushalayim.

He is survived by five children: Mrs. Sarah Wilhelm (wife of R' Nachum), Mrs. Hadassah Jacobowitz (wife of R' Yona), R'

Yitzchok Meir of Nachalat Har Chabad, R' Moshe Tzvi of Yerushalayim, and Mrs. Rochel Leah Eisenbach (wife of R' Tzvi Akiva). His brothers who survive him are R' Shimshon Leib and R' Levi Yitzchok, director of the Science and Technological Institute for Halacha.

During the Shiva, residents of Beis Yisroel, Chabad Chassidim in Yerushalayim and from all over the country, came to the modest home in the heart of the religious section of Yerushalayim near Kikar Shabbos. Among those who came were many Admurim and rabbanim including the Alexander Rebbe, the Modzhitzer Rebbe, the Admur of Butchan, Rabbi Meshulam Sholom Weinberger of Tchaba and others.

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WHEN FRIENDS MADE A DIFFERENCE

By Menachem Ziegelboim

A story about the Baal Shem Tov and the power of Ahavas Yisroel, presented for his birthday, Chai Elul.

PART I

It was a dark, cold night in Teives 5504/1744. The snow covered the ground as far as the eye could see and there were intermittent flurries. In a dim corner of the Shomrim LaBoker beis midrash sat Moshe Chaim. He was despondent, and for good reason. Years had passed since he had married his wife Miriam, and they still had no children. His friends and neighbors in Denberg all had children. Not that he was jealous, G-d forbid; he just yearned for children of his own.

Actually, his wife had given birth several times, after many years of waiting, but tragically, their three daughters had each died within a month or two of their birth.

The wind knocking at the

windows, the darkness and the cold, intensified his feeling of gloom.

Every now and then he took a sip of tea as though attempting to warm and console himself, but his pain was too great.

At a nearby table sat Moshe Yosef the blacksmith, Tevele the greengrocer, Yisroel of Polotzk, and some other simple householders. They sat around a bottle of vodka and spoke loudly enough for Moshe Chaim to overhear. They had what to talk about ...

This was a time of spiritual arousal in Denberg and the inspiration of this revival was Gedalia Boruch the cobbler. He appeared to be a simple cobbler. His wife Basha did incantations, removed the Evil Eye, and had various segulos to calm little

children who tossed in their sleep. They had three children, a son and two daughters, who were born after many years.

The couple had come to live in Denberg just three years before and had already made a big impact on the town. People noticed that since their arrival, the number of b'nei Torah coming to the town had increased. These men preferred staying with Gedalia Boruch and Basha than sleeping in the local *hekdesch* that was designated for the poor. Some of those b'nei Torah would even lecture in the shuls. How different they were than those other maggidim who rebuked them and described the seven levels of hell that awaited those who sinned.

It was Shavuot 5498/1738 when Gedalia Boruch suddenly changed his ways. Without prior announcement, after the Torah reading, he spontaneously went up to the bima of the Chevra Kadisha shul, banged on the table and quieted the surprised crowd. He spoke about Mattan Torah and about the kindness that Hashem did with the Jewish people by giving us the Torah.

Then he said that recently, one of the hidden tzaddikim, a tremendous lover of Jews, had been revealed. This tzaddik spoke in praise of the Jewish people and provided them with a new path in the service of Hashem. The guiding principle of his ideas was to serve Hashem with joy, with good middos, and with Ahavas Yisroel. Gedalia Boruch was referring to the Baal Shem Tov whose light had begun to shine.

Gedalia Boruch went from there to the other shuls, Poelei Tzedek and Shomrim LaBoker, and the town of Denberg buzzed. Groups of people could be seen throughout the town, standing and discussing the latest news. Some of them had heard miracle stories from Gedalia Boruch about R' Yisroel Baal Shem

Tov. Probably, some of them imaginatively embellished these stories.

Since then, for about two years, Gedalia Boruch had spread the teachings of the Baal Shem Tov among the residents of Denberg. The height of the spiritual awakening was in Tammuz, 1741, when Gedalia Boruch brought a group to Mezhibuzh to spend a few months with the Baal Shem Tov until after Sukkos. When they returned to Denberg in high spirits, full of teachings and ways of avoda, the town was finally taken over by the Chassidim.

Now, Moshe Chaim sat in his corner and inadvertently overheard what they were saying. They sat and told stories about the Baal Shem Tov and described his greatness.

At a certain point, Tevele spoke up. You couldn't avoid hearing his loud, raspy voice. He spoke about a childless couple who were already on in years, who went to the Baal Shem Tov and pleaded for a bracha for a child. The Baal Shem Tov promised them a son, telling them to give a certain amount of money to redeem captives. Some time later, the woman gave birth to a son who was handsome and gifted. When they brought him to the Baal Shem Tov, he blessed the older couple that they would have much nachas from him and would lead him to the chuppa.

Moshe Chaim heard this and he got up with a big sigh. He wrapped himself in his winter coat and left the beis midrash, tramping home through the snow.

At the first opportune moment, he repeated what he had heard to his wife and suggested that if such a holy man lived in Mezhibuzh, perhaps they should travel to seek his blessing. Moshe Chaim was still hesitant. He wasn't sure whether he wanted to go to the tzaddik.

***The Baal Shem
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heard.***

His wife was a righteous woman. Most of her free time was spent on acts of chesed. She helped provide medication and food for new mothers, assisted kallos and raised orphans. When she heard from her husband about his idea of going to the Baal Shem Tov, she noted with satisfaction that she had also heard about his greatness from her friend Basha. She hadn't dared to suggest it to her husband so as not to distress him even more.

PART II

The decision to go wasn't easy. Moshe Chaim had never left Denberg, the town in which he had been born and raised, and in which he had married and lived for the next thirty years. He was so apprehensive that he had never even visited his in-laws and relatives who lived about thirty miles from his town. "Roads are known to be dangerous," he would repeat to his wife, though he did want to travel to the tzaddik.

His wife tried many times to

instill him with courage to make the long trip but he just couldn't muster up the nerve to go. Miriam's heart overflowed with pain but she wouldn't force him.

One day they heard that a group of people from Denberg, led by Gedalia Boruch, were planning a trip to Mezhibuzh for Shavuot. Moshe Chaim knew the opportunity had come. He wouldn't have to go alone and deal with the uncertainty of a long trip, but could travel with a large group of people he knew who were familiar with the way.

The group set out on Rosh Chodesh Iyar, 1774.

The great day arrived. Moshe Chaim and Miriam entered the modest room of R' Yisroel Baal Shem Tov. They poured out their sorrow to him, about the many years without children and then the deaths of their three daughters.

The Baal Shem Tov gazed upon them but did not say a word. The couple tried to add an explanatory sentence but to their dismay, the tzaddik did not react. This is not what they had expected from the wonder-working tzaddik who helped all who turned to him, at least according to what they had heard in the stories from the people in Denberg.

Greatly disappointed they left the tzaddik's room and went to the place where they were staying. They spoke with Gedalia Boruch, head of the group, and told him what had happened. He advised them to wait a few days and then to try again.

A few days later they went to the Baal Shem Tov again and poured out their hearts once more, but this time too, he looked at them and did not respond. When this happened a third time, Miriam fell on the floor in a faint. When she revived, she burst into bitter tears but still the Rebbe remained silent.

The one who took care of all their needs in Mezhibuzh was Gedalia Boruch, one of the veteran

and ardent Chassidim of the Baal Shem Tov. He had already come to understand and appreciate somewhat the ways and workings of the Baal Shem Tov; he had been present on many occasions when the Baal Shem Tov had exhibited tremendous Ahavas Yisroel, and so he realized that the situation was very serious. He gathered a few of his friends, some of the distinguished Chassidim, and together they came up with a plan to help the couple.

They knew that if the tzaddik himself had not helped, it was an indication that the gates of heaven were closed to them. They decided to convene a minyan of knowledgeable Jews and spend three days in fasting and prayer, pleading that Moshe Chaim and Miriam be blessed with children.

“We will see how the Rebbe will respond and how things will work out,” concluded Gedalia Boruch.

This was not an easy time for Moshe Chaim and his wife. They watched as other Jews who came to Mezhibuzh, including members of their group, went to the tzaddik and each of them left with brachos and happy faces. They were even witness to some miracles that took place before their eyes. They saw dangerously ill people who were brought to the tzaddik begin to recover and mentally ill individuals who were healed. They saw childless women leave with brachos and promises. There was no end to their anguish.

PART III

For three days, the ten talmidim of the Baal Shem Tov sat in a side room and fasted and prayed, pleading on behalf of the couple. They were careful not to stop for a moment; surely not to speak mundane talk. This was kept secret and nobody but they knew about the fasting and prayer that they had

undertaken out of their tremendous Ahavas Yisroel.

On the evening of the third day, as night fell, they went to daven Maariv, a t’filla that would conclude their fasting and prayer. As they stood there davening, the Baal Shem Tov’s attendant came and told them that they were invited to the tzaddik’s home for a seudas mitzva.

“A seudas mitzva?” wondered Gedalia Boruch. “What is the occasion?”

The attendant shrugged. “I don’t know. All I know is that a few hours ago, he told me to prepare a proper meal.”

A short while later, Gedalia Boruch and his group were sitting around the tzaddik’s table, breaking their fast. Around them sat the *chevraya kadisha*, the great disciples, as well as many guests who had come to Mezhibuzh. None of them knew the reason for the seudas mitzva, just as no one – aside from the tzaddik, of course – knew that this seuda broke a protracted fast.

The Baal Shem Tov’s face shone and he looked extremely pleased. He related Torah insights and Chassidus on the p’sukim, “love your fellow as yourself” and “behold, how good and how pleasant when brothers sit together.” He also related some stories on the topic of Ahavas Yisroel and how precious and highly regarded helping a fellow Jew is in Heaven. He expanded upon the importance of an action of brotherly love, those who aroused great mercy on their fellow Jew in his time of need and tore up a divine decree of seventy years for him, transforming a curse into blessing and death into long life.

Gedalia Boruch and his friends now understood that the reason for the seudas mitzva had to do with the spiritual efforts they had made in the last few days. They were thrilled to know that their plan had

been successful.

Gedalia Boruch then told Moshe Chaim and Miriam about their resolution to daven on their behalf and how their efforts had been accepted in heaven and their decree had been torn up, as they had understood from the tzaddik. “Presumably now the Rebbe’s bracha will bring down a neshama for you,” he concluded.

The couple, together with the rest of the group, returned to Denberg, happy and confident that a healthy child would be born. Indeed, the Baal Shem Tov’s bracha and the prayers of the minyan were effective and 2 Iyar, 1775, one year after they left for Mezhibuzh, and 33 years since they married, Miriam gave birth to a son who was named Shlomo.

Thirteen years later, Shlomo traveled with his father to Mezhibuzh, where he was blessed by the tzaddik with a good memory and long life. He was married at the age of 17 to the daughter of Gedalia Boruch, and was called “Shlomo Basha’s” for his mother-in-law, who was known for her segulos and good deeds.

This story was related by R’ Shmuel Gurewitz to the Rebbe Rayatz shortly before his bar mitzva. This Chassid heard the story directly from R’ Shlomo Basha’s, who was one of the elder Chassidim of the Alter Rebbe and Mittler Rebbe and one of the distinguished members of the Chassidic town of Denberg.

“The Chassidim, R’ Shlomo Basha’s and R’ Avrohom Zalman Sagi-Nahor were the oldest Chassidim and everybody, even the older men, gave them great respect. They sat in the front at every gathering and Chassidic farbrengen,” writes the Rebbe Rayatz in his memoirs.

(Seifer HaToldos HaRayatz, vol. 1, p. 125)

THE SCHIFF THAT WEATHERED THE STORM

By Nosson Avrohom

*Whoever visits Kfar Chabad is familiar with the complex of buildings that houses yeshivas Ohr Simcha (HaBucharim). The man responsible for this institution is a modest, shy Chassid who nearly left his educational askanus but a powerful dream got him back on track. * An article about one of the finest Chabad schools in Eretz Yisroel and the man who started it.*

If you know R' Berke Schiff, founder of Ohr Simcha in Kfar Chabad, you know that he doesn't enjoy titles such as "founder" or "menahel." R' Berke is a quintessential Chassid and is quiet and introverted by nature. He doesn't pride himself on his achievements even though he has built a unique and successful

school that has educated thousands of talmidim.

The school that R' Berke founded is one of the largest and finest mosdos Chabad in Eretz Yisroel. It provides an education for children who come from disadvantaged homes and consists of a high school, beis midrash, and smicha program. Hundreds of

talmidim are being educated there at any given moment and the lists of graduates numbers in the many thousands.

The story behind this institution includes a thrilling, open miracle from the Rebbe who is also its founder. R' Schiff kept the story to himself for thirty years upon the advice of his friends of those days, the mashpia R' Mendel Futerfas a"h and R' Simcha Gorodetzky a"h, and his mashpia, R' Moshe Nisselevitz. Today, when he decided the time had come to publicize the story, he does so shyly. You can see that he is not a talker but a doer.

I met him in his office at yeshivas Ohr Simcha where he was busy cataloguing the contact information and photographs of his students.

"I have the pictures of all the students," he said proudly. "Each talmid is a world. Look at what sweet children they are." He showed me the pictures, and contrary to his natural demeanor, he gushed with Chassidic warmth reminiscent of a bygone era, "They are all the Rebbe's children," he sighs happily. "The Rebbe is with us," he says.

FROM ENGINEER TO HIS LIFE'S MISSION

An article in issue 633 of Beis Moshiach was devoted to R' Schiff's work behind the Iron Curtain in Soviet Russia under the auspices of CHAMAH which was founded by R' Moshe Nisselevitz, R' Berke's mashpia, to whom he says he owes his spiritual life. Another article should be devoted to the Talmud Torah that was located in the Schiff house. Even more could be written about the building of mikvaos, about kosher sh'chita, and then the miraculous exodus from Russia in 1972 with the help of his relative, the

journalist R' Gershon Jacobson [see issue 695], and the Rebbe's amazing bracha. From Russia, the family went to Eretz Yisroel and settled, like many other immigrants from Russia, in the immigrant hostel in Kfar Chabad.

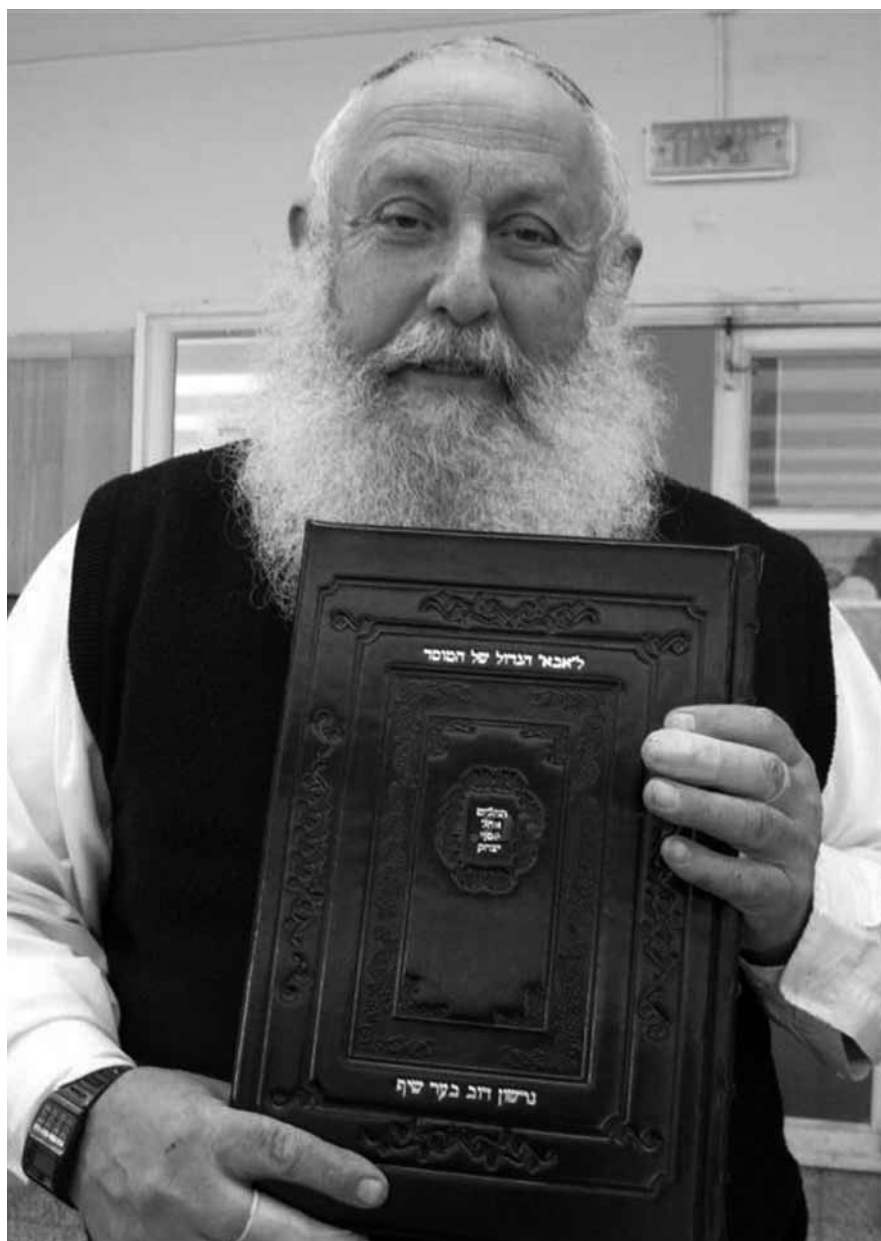
"We quickly adapted to life in Eretz Yisroel. We met friends, relatives and many Chassidim from the distant past and those we had met only recently, who left Russia before us. During our stay in the immigrant hostel all our needs were met. We studied Ivrit in an Ulpan that was tailored especially to us and where spiritual and Chassidic themes weren't lacking. The rav of the place was none other than Rabbi Simcha Gorodetzky.

"A few months passed and while looking for employment I heard that the aircraft industry needed engineers. I quickly offered my qualifications.

"I trained in Russia to be an engineer and while there ran a large company by myself. Happily I was accepted for the job. At the time, I didn't know that the assistant chairman of the company was a relative of mine on my wife's side and when I went to work and discovered this, I was happier still.

"My colleagues predicted that it would not be difficult for me to rise in the ranks in the company and that I would have a rosy future. But I soon lost interest in the work. I had quickly learned the job and the acclimation process didn't take long, but something about the day's routine –leaving the house around six in the morning and then returning at six in the evening, made me feel that I was wasting my time. This is not why I had come to the Holy Land.

"After a few months of donning my white coat every morning and working in the laboratories, I realized this wasn't for me. In Russia I had the privilege of



The story behind this institution includes a thrilling, open miracle from the Rebbe who is also its founder. R' Schiff kept the story to himself for thirty years upon the advice of his friends of those days, the mashpia R' Mendel Futerfas a"h and R' Simcha Gorodetzky a"h, and his mashpia, R' Moshe Nisselevitz.

When I left the Rebbe's room, my joy was boundless. The Rebbe had assigned me my life's work.

undertaking a tremendous amount of underground work in support of Yiddishkai in Samarkand. Having spread Judaism and being mekarev so many Jews to Torah and mitzvos, I didn't feel satisfied in my new position.

"In Samarkand, under the influence of my mashpia, R' Moshe Nisselevitz, and in addition to my work as director of a company where one of the advantages was being able to hire Jews who would not work on Shabbos – I had hired a manager under me and I threw myself into helping R' Moshe with his outreach work. And now I would have a regular job and forget all that?

"I decided to quit, to the dismay of my colleagues and my fellow immigrants. Fortunately, the Rebbe invited me and my brother and cousin Betzalel to 770 on his account. The Rebbe asked whoever left Russia at that time to visit 770 for Pesach. We were thrilled. It was my first visit to the Rebbe and the impressions of that visit resonate within me till this day. When we passed by the Rebbe to get a piece of shmura matza, the Rebbe asked my oldest son Yerachmiel whether he knew the Four Questions that we say in the Hagada. My son answered in Yiddish that he knew them. The Rebbe was very pleased.

"On the first day of Pesach, the Rebbe announced that after davening there would be a farbrengen. When the davening was over we rushed to eat the Yom Tov meal and then hurried back to the farbrengen which had already started in 770. In the middle of the farbrengen, the Rebbe stopped

speaking and said, 'There are some children here who just left the Soviet Union. They should come up and ask the Four Questions. If they aren't here, then their parents are asked to do so.'

"I can't possibly describe the feeling I had when my son and nephew went up to the farbrengen bima and recited the Four Questions in Yiddish. I'll never forget it. The Rebbe's pleasure was apparent. Their recital demonstrated the eternality of the Jewish people. Despite all the persecution and extermination, these young children were able to easily recite the Four Questions. When they finished and left the bima, the Rebbe said we should sing the Russian niggun with the words, 'We won't be burned by fire nor drown in water,' as though to show everybody that despite everything, the eternal people is fearless and will continue to preserve our religion.

"My first yechidus, which changed my life, was arranged for after Chol HaMoed Pesach, before our return to Eretz Yisroel. The yechidus was 18 minutes, a relatively long time. The Rebbe asked questions, expressed interest, and we answered briefly, hardly speaking.

"To my wife, who is a dentist, the Rebbe said that he knew of a specialty course that was about to begin in Eretz Yisroel, the first of its kind in her field, and she should register. Then, as though reading my thoughts, the Rebbe said, 'There are enough engineers in Eretz Yisroel. You have to worry about 'u'faratzta.' I asked what I should do and the Rebbe laid it out

in simple terms that my shlichus would be to help immigrant children attend proper schools.

"When I left the Rebbe's room, my joy was boundless. The Rebbe had assigned me my life's work."

BUILDING MOSDOS FOR CHILDREN

R' Schiff returned to Eretz Yisroel with a lot of positive energy. He met with his mashpia, R' Moshe Nisselevitz, who lived in Nachalat Har Chabad where he started reestablishing CHAMAH in Eretz Yisroel. He told R' Moshe about his shlichus.

At that time, many immigrants were coming from Bucharria and settling in Ashdod. R' Nisselevitz, who had already decided to work with these immigrants, suggested that R' Schiff be the one in charge of the projects he had in mind for this population.

"It was decided that a dormitory for these immigrant children had to be built.

"The situation wasn't easy but who thought of comfort back then when in the balance was the desire to provide these children with a proper chinuch? Close to eighty children aged six till fourteen lived in the Ezras Nashim of one of the shuls. I was in charge of running the place and was provided with funding by CHAMAH. I went every day from Kfar Chabad to Ashdod for seven months. Boruch Hashem, we soon had to look for another, larger location. That's how we got to the premises of yeshivas Achei HaT'mimim in Rishon L'Tziyon which had closed around at that time.

"Although the dormitory had grown, I still felt this wasn't the shlichus the Rebbe intended for me. If the Rebbe told me to work with the immigrant children, the Rebbe certainly expected me to work on a much larger scale.

During those years there were big waves of immigration from the Soviet Union. I spoke to R' Mendel Futerfas and R' Simcha Gorodetzky and asked them what they thought the Rebbe wanted me to do.

"When they heard in detail what the Rebbe had said to me in that first yechidus, they said that to the best of their understanding the Rebbe meant it literally, that I should go around Israel and make sure that immigrant children got a Jewish education. I decided to do as they said.

"I bought a car and began driving the length and breadth of the country in order to find religious schools that would accept the immigrant children in their city. I was naïve and after a short time I realized that this was no easy job because not everybody realized the urgent need to provide these children with a proper chinuch. There were schools that agreed to take in a few children but that was nowhere near enough. The principals pushed me off with one excuse or another and I was at a loss. I tried my best to explain the importance of the matter but this fell on deaf ears. Each one referred me to a different school. I wasn't getting anywhere.

"I went to the Rebbe for Tishrei 5734. I planned to tell the Rebbe about my attempts and failures during yechidus and to ask how I should proceed.

"A year and a half had passed since my previous visit to the Rebbe and I was very excited to see the Rebbe once again. I looked forward to yechidus and getting the Rebbe's guidance. I told the Rebbe about my attempts to work with principals of religious schools and get them to accept the immigrant children and how each one had refused.

"The Rebbe listened and then said, 'Make a mosad like that in



Back then – R' Berke Schiff with students of the school

At this point, the Rebbe shocked me again and said, 'You won't lack for money' and he made a dismissive motion. Well, if you have a promise like that from the Rebbe...

Kfar Chabad!"

"I hadn't expected this and I guess because I was so surprised I dared to say that making a mosad like this would be very costly. At this point, the Rebbe shocked me again and said, 'You won't lack for money' and he made a dismissive motion. Well, if you have a promise like that from the Rebbe ...

"I returned to Kfar Chabad with two important things: firstly, that the Rebbe wanted me to open a school for immigrants in Kfar Chabad, and secondly, a promise that money wouldn't be lacking.

"Today, as I walk within the complex of buildings that we built over the years, I am happy. I know that not many schools in general, certainly not Chabad ones, have built so many buildings. You can't help but see the Rebbe's bracha.

"Those who are involved in communal work know how hard it is to build one building and how expensive it is. It's also so hard to get the necessary building permits. Throughout the years we were careful to take money only from places that the Rebbe would approve of. More than once, fellow askanim urged me to take money from sources that I knew the Rebbe did not approve of, but I ran away from their seductive offers as from fire, and in the end we were successful. I felt then, at the beginning, the way I do now, that the Rebbe is with us in every detail.

"When I returned to Eretz Yisroel I didn't lose a minute but immediately met with R' Simcha Gorodetzky and told him what the Rebbe said in yechidus. What remained to be done was to get things moving and start opening a mosad. We decided to include the residents of the Kfar.

"We held a meeting for the Kfar and it was decided that everybody



would participate. Whoever was able to would take a boy or two into his home and provide them with room and board. Whoever was unable to do so, would at least make a monetary donation.

"My friend, Lipa Klein, came to help me start the mosad and he is the secretary of the institution till this day. I remember that the family of Rabbi Ashkenazi agreed to take two children and the family of the lawyer, Tzivin, took two children. The learning took place in the central shul. Later on, we used some abandoned shacks as classrooms.

"We quickly realized that we had to have a dormitory. Having the students scattered throughout the Kfar couldn't last much longer and it created problems. The decision was to bring prefabs and to place them in an open lot near yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim, but then the Yom Kippur War broke out and all trucks were used for the war effort and we couldn't transport the prefabs we had ordered from Acco.

"What did we do? I went to Gaza and rented a semi-trailer and in the middle of the war we brought them to the Kfar and set up the dormitory. The talmidim moved to learn on the bottom floor

of yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim."

I DESPAIRED

The number of immigrant students increased from day to day because of our good reputation. Not only that but throughout the country we had people working to register immigrant children for Kfar Chabad. In the meantime, the entire first floor of yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim was full of students, as well as the ground floor of the dormitory of the yeshiva.

"Yosef the Bucharian was the wagon driver who was in charge of transporting the food from where it was prepared to the dining room of the yeshiva. He ended up serving as a porter for the residents of the Kfar," recalled R' Schiff with a smile. He pointed out that of the buildings he brought only one remains, in the place where Reshet Oholei Yosef Yitzchok is housed.

"Despite the new arrangement which was better than the early days, it still wasn't ideal. Having the mosad scattered throughout the Kfar wasn't convenient, so I was very happy when one day R' Mendel told me that he had good news for me. The Beis Rivka – which was located where we and the Talmud Torah are located today

– was going to leave its large premises in the center of the Kfar and move to a new place outside the Kfar, what is known as Kfar Beit today. He told me that I could get the place after they left. I began planning how to turn the place into a fine mosad.

"I felt greatly encouraged that our dispersion, wanderings, and reliance on other people's favors had finally come to an end. Now I would be able to have all the students, the beis midrash, the classrooms, the dining room and dormitory, all in one place. I even visited the area and thought of which building would be suited for a beis midrash and which for a dormitory. I was very optimistic, but not for long.

"One day I found out that Beis Rivka had left. I rushed over and was devastated when I discovered that most of the buildings had been grabbed up by other people who wanted to make a Talmud Torah there. That is when I realized that I wasn't the only one who had eyes on that location.

"I was so upset and disappointed. The part left for me was mostly sand and stone and the few buildings that remained were in a state of neglect. I had hoped to get the good buildings but they had been taken. I made great efforts to convince them of the importance of giving me the buildings but they said – and some would say they were right – 'With all due respect to immigrant children from Bucharria, we first have to take care of our kids so they can learn under proper conditions.' I saw there wasn't much of a chance that I would get what I wanted and I was greatly distressed.

"They told me I could take the rest of the area, the place where we are today, although there were hardly any buildings there. My disappointment about what happened was as great as my hopes

had been prior. This feeling grew from day to day until I felt completely burnt out. I decided that I no longer had the strength to carry on and perhaps I wasn't the right person for the job.

"Still, I had clear directions from the Rebbe so I didn't know what to do. I tossed and turned at night. I had thoughts like, 'Maybe it would have been better if I had continued working in the aircraft industry, building planes and making a nice living.'

"I went to R' Mendel and told him how I felt and said that I could not continue, apparently this wasn't for me. I had no more strength for this.

"He listened patiently and said, 'Let's go to Yerushalayim to R' Simcha (who had also arranged a significant part of the funding for the mosad) and consult with him.' We spoke at length and at a certain point they asked me to leave the room since they wanted to talk without me. When I went back in, R' Gorodetzky said, 'The Rebbe gave you a shlichus; it wasn't we who got you into this; on the contrary, you told us the horaos you received from the Rebbe and got us involved when you asked us to help you. Now you want to leave? Write to the Rebbe.'

"I got home late at night and I decided to write to the Rebbe. I poured my heart out on paper and filled five pages and concluded that it seemed I wasn't the man for the job; I no longer had the inner fortitude to run this mosad. I told the Rebbe about looking forward to getting the buildings vacated by Beis Rivka and how others had gotten ahead of me and my only hope for establishing the mosad on solid ground had vanished. I asked the Rebbe to release me from the shlichus he had assigned me. In my mind I had already begun planning how to close the mosad and send the talmidim to other places."



Before I had a chance to think, the Rebbe was near me. He stopped, facing me, and looked at me piercingly. It was a gaze that combined seriousness and compassion, love and demands, innocence and strength. Of course, I immediately lowered my gaze and wished the ground would swallow me up.

LIKE A LIVING VISION

"A few days went by and one evening, after a tiring day, I went home feeling exhausted. In my mind, the mosad was closing. I had not been able to sleep in previous nights and my tiredness had caught up with me and I fell asleep immediately. That night, I had a frightening dream that completely changed the entire situation. The dream, in all its details, comes to me now as though it just happened. It was so real, such an amazing vision.

"Although thirty years have passed since then, I remember it all clearly. In retrospect, the dream was the impetus that laid the groundwork for the flourishing of

the mosad that started then and continues till this day, with the Rebbe's brachos.

"In my dream I saw myself in 770. Next to me were thousands of Chassidim, all waiting for the Rebbe to come down for davening. They announced that the Rebbe was coming down and you could see the anticipation of the crowd. The Rebbe suddenly appeared in all his majesty as he strode in swiftly. I wanted to run from the pathway but I found myself in the front row. The crowding did not allow me to move back.

"Before I had a chance to think, the Rebbe was near me. He stopped, facing me, and looked at me piercingly. It was a gaze that



R' Simcha Gorodetzky (speaking). Next to him is R' Mendel Futerfas and standing on the left is R' Berke Schiff

combined seriousness and compassion, love and demands, innocence and strength. Of course, I immediately lowered my gaze and wished the ground would swallow me up. I felt a tremendous shame – here I was asking the Rebbe to release me from the shlichus he had assigned me, and for what? Why had I become so frightened? Was it a lack of money? That wasn't lacking, as the Rebbe had assured me. Was it a lack of talmidim? No, I was getting more all the time. So what did I want? A thought suddenly occurred to me. Was I broken because of a few setbacks? I, who had come from Russia and knew what hardship was when it came to Jewish chinuch, was broken because of some askanim? Where was the mesirus nefesh that I had for children in Russia? Did that mesirus nefesh that we had in Russia when we had a Talmud Torah in our home grind to a halt because of some side issue when I came to Eretz Yisroel?

"I felt all this in those few moments as the Rebbe looked at me. I felt that the Rebbe's looking at me cleansed me and gave me fresh kochos and perspective. I

didn't know what to do with myself because of my shame. If only the Rebbe would continue walking, I thought in my dream, I would fly back to Israel immediately and set aside all my thoughts of closing the mosad and get to work. My body was covered in a cold sweat.

"Not only did the Rebbe stop near me, he approached me, took my hand, and took me with him on his way to the bima where he davened. I could feel the warmth of the Rebbe's hand and I felt like a cow going to the slaughter.

"Now, I thought, the crowd will look at me and the shame... oy, the shame... Surely the Rebbe will walk me up to his platform and my shame will be revealed to all. The Rebbe didn't say a word; he didn't have to say anything. One look from the Rebbe changed my feelings from one extreme to the other. Suddenly, near the steps going up to the bima the Rebbe let go of my hand and continued on his way, and I woke up.

"I got up out of bed, completely shaken up. I couldn't sleep the rest of the night. My entire body was in a sweat. The dream was so palpable that I felt like I was in shock. It took me hours to calm

down and begin to understand what happened to me. I felt that the Rebbe woke me up, shook me and cleansed me, and gave me renewed chayus."

FROM NO DORMS TO TWO

This incredible dream is what led to the founding of yeshivas Ohr Simcha with all its buildings. Four buildings went up in addition to the renovation of some other buildings.

"For a long time after I woke up, I felt the warmth of the Rebbe's hand. Obviously, I didn't need a written answer to my letter. I didn't wait for a written response. I had gotten an answer in such an intense manner that I could never have anticipated.

"The next morning, when I went to work I was no longer thinking about closing the mosad. All my thoughts were focused on one thing – how to build a dormitory on the new land we had just gotten and how could I put up more and more buildings for more students. When I told the chairman of the vaad of Kfar Chabad, R' Shlomo Maidanchek the dream, he was excited to hear it and said, 'Why one dormitory? Make it two.'

"That day I went to R' Simcha and said that I would take the land we had gotten from Beis Rivka and although there were hardly any buildings on it, we would build not just one dormitory but two.

"When he heard this he thought I had lost my mind. In the past few days I had wanted to drop it all and now I was saying I wanted to build two buildings! After I told him my dream he understood and joined in my excitement. We decided that now I would write the Rebbe again. Just as I had written about my desire to leave, I would write him about my desire to build.

"We sent the letter in which I

related the chain of events and unlike with my previous letter, I received an answer quickly. The Rebbe had made two lines under the words, “two dormitories” and drew a line to R’ Shlomo Maidanchek’s name to indicate that he should be a partner in our work.

“From then on, we were successful. A short while later I found a contractor, Mr. Yitzchok Bistari who built all my buildings. He builds a lot in Kfar Chabad and is a wonderful person. He said to me, ‘Berke, open the project up to a public bidding and I will be cheaper than the cheapest price you get.’ He also agreed to begin construction without advance payment, and he built as I paid.

“Within a short time we had two dormitory buildings. The Rebbe was with us all the way. We consistently saw the realization of his brachos.

“In the ‘Shnas HaBinyan’ we built the third building where the offices and dining room are. A week before the end of that year, R’ Shloimke came to me and said, ‘Berke, you need a building for a dining room and the talmidim are crowded. It’s Shnas HaBinyan now with all the brachos, why not take advantage?’

“That same day, without a shekel in my pocket, I called the contractor and we began to build. Within a short time we had finished building the shell but still lacked the money to make it into a proper building. The Rebbe helped and by the end of that year we celebrated the Chanukas HaBayis.”

ARIK SHARON HELPED

“One day, Ariel Sharon, then the Minister of Construction and Housing came on a tour of Kfar Chabad, accompanied by the principals of various schools. He visited us and b’hashgacha pratis he came when the students were



R’ Berke Schiff showing a model of the new building to Mr. Yitzchok Herzog

washing their hands for lunch. He saw how crowded they were.

“When he finished the tour of the Kfar, he sat down with the principals in the vocational school to hear their requests. I was there too and each one stated his needs. He dismissed their requests by saying it wasn’t under his jurisdiction or he would try to help them. When it was my turn he asked me what I wanted. Apparently his visit to our mosad made a strong impression on him; it helped that he saw that the talmidim did not come from Lubavitcher homes.

“I said, ‘You visited our school today and saw the shell of the building at the entrance. That is the dining room that we want to build so it won’t be crowded.’ He looked at his chief of staff and said, ‘Make sure the building is completed, it’s important.’ A few days later I got a phone call from his aide and he gave me a large sum of money that enabled great progress to be made on the building. Not long afterwards, the Housing Ministry gave us an identical sum of money and that is how, even before the end of the year, the building was finished.

“The fourth building, which is

used as a dormitory by the students of the high school and yeshiva g’dola is a story in itself. It also stood for a long time as a shell until one of the graduates connected me with philanthropist Lev Leviev who visited the yeshiva, was duly impressed, and gave a nice donation that enabled us to finish the building.”

LOOKING BACK THIRTY YEARS

“I can sit a whole night and recount all the stories and all the hashgacha pratis in the building and establishing of the mosad. Today, as I look back, I can say with certainty that without the Rebbe’s brachos we would have nothing. Since that horaa in yechidus to open a mosad, and the promise that we wouldn’t lack for money, and certainly that amazing dream, the way was paved for us to get it all done.

“Fortunate are we that we are Chassidim and our steps are guided by the Rebbe’s light. I hope that publicizing these miracles, as the Rebbe asked us to do, will hasten the hisgalus with the true and complete Geula, now!”

Notes:

1. Bava Basra 9b.

2. In this context, there is a connection with the month of Elul in which Parshas Ki Savo is always read. For Elul is associated with the verse "I am my Beloved's and My Beloved is mine" (see Timeless Patterns in Time, Vol. II, p. 153), emphasizing the love relationship between G-d and mankind.

3. Deuteronomy 26:1-11.

5. Rashi, gloss to Deuteronomy 26:3.

6. Sefer HaChinuch, mitzvah 606.

7. Deuteronomy 26:1.

8. Deuteronomy 11:12.

9. Leviticus 14:46.

10. Chulin 33b. See Tosafos, entry Dicolei.

11. Leviticus 11:32.

12. When one of the Tzemach Tzedek's chassidim asked him for his blessings to make aliyah to Eretz Yisrael, the Tzemach

here," i.e., fill your immediate environment with the holiness of Eretz Yisrael (Igros Kodesh Admor Rayatz, Vol. I, p. 485). Thus in an extended sense, the above concepts have significance beyond the geographic boundaries of Eretz Yisrael.

13. Babylonian Talmud, Kiddushin 37b; Jerusalem Talmud, Shevi'is, 6:1.

14. Siddur Tehillat HaShem, p. 6.

15. Ibid., p. 58.

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