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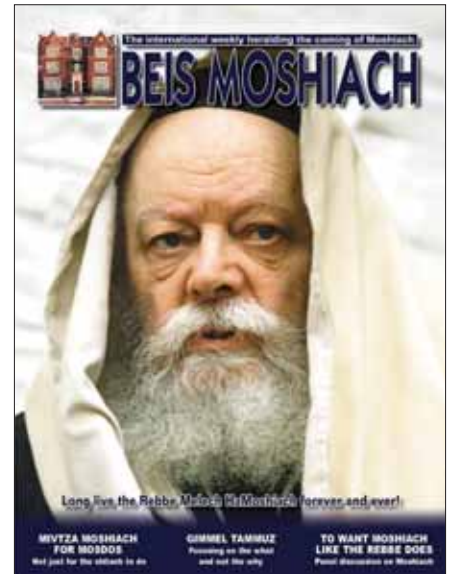
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# THE BRIGHTER SIDE OF KORACH

Sichos In English

## WHAT KORACH REALLY WANTED

The name of this week's Torah reading, Korach, provokes an obvious question: It is written: [1] "The name of the wicked shall rot," and on this basis, our Sages state [2] that a person should not be named after a wicked man.

Why then is an entire Torah reading named Korach?

For with this name, Korach's identity is perpetuated forever, since the Torah is eternal.

Among the explanations given is that Korach's desire was, in essence, positive.

Korach wanted to be a High Priest, to experience the absolute closeness with G-d that results from the entry into the Holy of Holies where His presence was manifest.

Indeed, when Moshe responded to Korach, he did not tell him that this objective was unworthy.

On the contrary, as Rashi relates, [3] Moshe said that he shared the same desire; he also wanted to be a High Priest.

Moreover, this is not merely a matter of desire.

At Mount Sinai, G-d told the Jewish people that they are "a kingdom of priests," [4] and our Rabbis interpret [5] this to refer to the level of a High Priest.

Every Jew has this potential within him. [6]

As such, Korach's complaint was

based on an essential truth: [7] "The entire congregation is all holy; G-d is in their midst."

Every member of the Jewish people has a spark of holiness.

Korach and his followers wanted this spark to flourish.

Indeed, they were willing to risk everything, even their lives, for heightened spiritual experience.

Therefore, even after Moshe had told them that bringing the incense offering would cause them to perish, they did not hesitate and brought the offering despite their awareness of the consequences. [8]

Naming the Torah reading Korach highlights the potential for spiritual growth each of us possesses and the desire we should show to make this potential manifest.

## INTENT VS. ACTION

This explanation is, however, insufficient, for good intentions are not enough.

It is primarily our actions and not our intent which G-d judges.

Whatever Korach's intentions were, in fact, he created a controversy which resulted in the death of thousands of people.

This is not a message which appears appropriate to be immortalized as the name of one of our Torah readings. [9]

Moreover, the very name Korach is associated with division.

The Hebrew root word korach

means "division" or "split," and our Sages [10] associate Korach, not only in fact, but also in source, with these tendencies.

Division runs in direct opposition to the purpose of the Torah which "was given solely to bring peace to the world." [11]

Why does a name synonymous with division serve as one of the names of the weekly Torah readings?

## TOTAL ONENESS

The resolution of this questions depends on the definition of the concept of unity.

Absolute, elementary oneness is impossible within the context of our material world.

As Rashi comments: [12] "The Holy One, blessed be He, has defined limits in His world. Can you turn morning into evening?"

Every entity has its own distinct nature.

The concept of division need not, however, run contrary to our endeavors toward unity.

On the contrary, unity is more complete when it encompasses divergent entities, each with a nature and tendencies of its own and these entities join together in complementary synergy.

This is the intent of the peace which the Torah was given to establish.

Not that difference should not exist, but rather that it should result

in harmony.

There is thus a place for Korach in the Torah - for the Torah's conception of Korach teaches that division can serve a positive purpose, and that diversity need not lead to strife.

## OUR OWN DECISIONS

Nevertheless, G-d desires man to achieve this unity on his own initiative.

He gives man the power - and the responsibility - to accomplish this goal, but also the free choice to determine the direction of his efforts.

This is also reflected in Korach's conduct.

He saw that after the sins of the Golden Calf and the spies, Moshe had prayed to G-d and had averted Heavenly decrees.

Similarly, Korach felt that although G-d had granted Moshe and Aharon their positions, through sincere prayer, he could affect a change and achieve his own spiritual ambitions.

He simply made the wrong choice.

Rather than take the initiative to establish unity by heightening the people's connection with Moshe and Aharon, he took a different course of action.

Instead, of seeing the possibility for harmony between differences, he caused them to clash.

Korach never realized his mistake.

His children did, however, proclaiming: [13] "Moshe is true, and his Torah is true," realizing that the truth which Moshe taught is the agent to bring about unity among our people, and enable every individual to fulfill his spiritual potential.

## A MATTER OF TIME

From a mystical perspective, [14] it is explained that Korach's

desires reflected the spiritual heights to be reached in the Era of the Redemption.

Then the Levites (Korach's tribe) will be elevated to the station of priests, and the entire Jewish people will reach pinnacles of spiritual experience, for "I will pour out My spirit upon all flesh." [15]

The rewards of that age cannot, however, be appreciated prematurely, but can be attained only as a result of our Divine service.

It is only through our selfless devotion to the Torah of Moshe and the directives of "the extension of Moshe in every generation," [16] the Torah leaders of our people, that we can elevate ourselves and the world to the level when "the world will be filled with the knowledge of G-d," [17] with the coming of Moshiach.

*Adapted from: Likkutei Sichos, Vol. V, p. 114ff; Vol. XVIII, p. 187ff; Seifer HaSichos 5748, p. 499ff; Seifer HaSichos 5750, p. 526ff*

## NOTES:

1. Proverbs 10:7.
2. Yoma 38b.
3. In his commentary to Numbers 16:6.
4. Exodus 19:6
5. The gloss of Baal HaTurim to the above verse.
6. This concept can be illustrated on the basis of the Kabbalistic principle (Tanya, Igeres HaKodesh, Epistle 29) every Jew will reincarnate until he fulfills all of the 613 mitzvos. Since there have only been a limited number of High Priests in history, how can all 600,000 Jewish souls fulfill these mitzvos? The answer is given that the High Priest is a comprehensive soul. He has a connection to all the Jews in his generation, and through him, it is considered as if they fulfilled the mitzvos of the High Priesthood.
7. Number 16:3.
8. See Rashi, Numbers 16:7.

We see a parallel with regard to the High Priesthood in the Second Temple period. Our Sages (Yoma 9a; Jerusalem Talmud, Yoma 1:1) relate that the

Romans would sell this office to the highest bidder. Therefore, with few exceptions, it was occupied by unrighteous men. Because their lack of virtue was not consonant with their holy duties, they would die within a year, and the office would be sold again.

On the surface, a question arises.

This was a pattern which continued over an extended period of time, and those bidding for the office knew what had happened to the previous High Priest and why.

And they could not have been totally ignorant of their own spiritual level. Why then were they anxious to receive this position? Didn't they realize the consequences?

The answer is that they did.

But they also treasured the opportunity of entering into the Holy of Holies and experiencing absolute oneness with G-d. And for this, they were prepared to give up everything - their fortunes and their lives. See the essay entitled "The High Priest's Chamber" in Seek Out the Welfare of Jerusalem (S.I.E., N.Y., 1994).

9. The challenge which Korach presented ultimately resulted in a strengthening of the High Priesthood, as reflected in the 24 priestly gifts mentioned in the conclusion of the Torah reading. Nevertheless, this does not represent a positive contribution of Korach himself. On the contrary, it was through the negation of Korach's influence that this advantage was achieved.

10. Yalkut Shimoni, sec. 991.

11. Rambam Mishneh Torah, the conclusion of Hilchos Chanukah.

12. Rashi, commenting on Numbers 16:5.

13. Sanhedrin 110a.

14. Likkutei Torah BaMidbar 54b et al.

15. Joel 3:1.

16. Tikkunei Zohar, Tikkun 69.

17. Isaiah 11:9, quoted by the Rambam, at the conclusion of his discussion of the Era of the Redemption in the Mishneh Torah.

# GIMMEL TAMMUZ: FOCUSING ON THE WHAT AND NOT THE WHY

By Rabbi Zvi Homnick

*We not only are not privy to the “why” by means of our limited intellects, we are often not even privy to the “what,” unless it is revealed to us. \* We need to focus on “What” G-d is telling us that He wants from us, and “what” we need to do to fulfill the mission that the Rebbe gave us, as explained in the most recent talks of the Rebbe. The only acceptable answer to “why Gimmel Tammuz” can be the “completion of the redemption” when we will be reunited with the Rebbe, “the king in his glory,” immediately, NOW!*

## WHO CARES WHY?

In the world that I grew up in, study about G-d or any of the basic tenets of Jewish faith was not part of the curriculum vitae for a young budding Torah scholar. Anybody with questions was told

(if they even bothered to ask someone in a position of authority) to focus on their learning and forget about any questions they may have. All the more so if those questions presented themselves as sources of doubt or as symptoms

of weakening faith.

It’s hard for me to recall exactly when and how it began, but as far back as my early elementary school years, people would turn to me with their questions and their problems. As I got into high school and beyond, many of those questions would be about matters of faith, especially from guys who were struggling with their Jewish/religious identity in the face of great temptation. I don’t know why anybody thought I had any answers, but they kept coming, and they were often guys much older than myself. It got to the point that in a number of cases, staff members approached me to consult me or enlist my involvement regarding a fellow student.

Now, personally, I could totally relate to those who were struggling with anger and resentment towards G-d, or with their baser drives and desires, but I had less than zero conception of or tolerance towards those who claimed that they had serious questions about the existence of G-d and/or the truth of Torah. In fact, long before I had heard the Chassidic expressions,



“just because you have *taavos* (sinful cravings), does that mean that G-d is no longer G-d?” I used to try to convey that same idea to all comers. Since most questioners tended to formulate their queries in terms of why, I often found myself saying, “who cares why,” since in almost all cases the person had a problem with the “what” and not so much with the “why.”

I remember once being approached by a fellow who was somewhat older than me and asking him why he was coming to me. His reply was that there were very few people he knew that actually thought about deep matters in an intelligent fashion. When I asked as to why he didn't approach the rosh yeshiva, he made it very clear that he thought he would only get a standard prepackaged answer as opposed to a thoughtful response tailored to him and his issues.

Over the years, I heard similar things from others who turned to me with serious issues, questions, and even important personal decisions. Although for some reason, (that Chassidic soul business again?), I never experienced doubts or struggles when it came to the basic faith and beliefs that are the bedrock of the Jewish belief system, I still felt that it was necessary to formulate cogent and coherent responses to those of a more intellectual bent that would not be sufficiently served by my simply pooh-poohing their questions or doubts.

Without the benefit of Chabad Chassidus and its relatively clearly structured approach, primarily rooted in revelation, I had to rely on a combination of my gut instincts, my eclectic research and my own thought processes. What I came up with was the idea that since we have no sensory access to metaphysical realities, the only way we know “what” is real is through

being told by G-d Himself by way of the Torah. It is only after we know the “what” that we can attempt to know the “why,” and even that is only insofar as He chooses to reveal His motives. Even when He does choose to reveal a reason “why” He did, does, demands any given thing, it is only a partial explanation on our level, since one can always ask “why” a given reason or motive is “legitimate.” At that point the original “why” becomes a “what” and what we are trying to discern is a whole new layer of reason “why,” which may turn out to be beyond our understanding. Thus, it is only appropriate to ask “why” as a means to achieving a better understanding of the “what,” but not to decide the veracity and/or acceptability of the “what.” The only time that we can use a “why” to determine a “what” is in those areas of Jewish law that were given over to the Torah scholars of each generation to decide, and even in those cases, the “why” has to have a very strong basis in the “what” of Torah as given by G-d Himself.

So even though from G-d's perspective the “why” comes before the “what,” we have to start with the “what” and only then try to figure out the “why,” and even then we can only try to find the “why” within Torah itself, as it is not our place to attribute motives to G-d or judge for ourselves whether those motives meet our approval. As the Torah teaches us, there are certain commandments that fall under the category of “rational commandments,” and there are some that are defined as being beyond the realm of the rational. And as the Rambam writes in his *Moreh Nevochim*, even the rational commandments have details and parameters that defy the limitations of reason and must ultimately be accepted on faith, and even the parts that we do understand have countless layers of depth that we can never hope to divine.

This rule of thumb helped me clarify and resolve a lot of questions for myself (even though they didn't “bother” me – clarity is good) and others, since a lot of



***In the talks and writings of the Rebbe, he focuses on how Gimmel Tammuz is the “beginning of the redemption.” This, despite the fact that at the time it was thought that exile might be worse because the authorities could take advantage of the fact that he was out of the public eye to carry out their nefarious plans by staging an “accident” or the like.***

“questions” result from a lack of clarity as to the “whats” and the “whys.” The only problem was that it left me feeling a little out of joint with the Lithuanian/Misnagdic self-perception of being a rationality-based approach to Jewish belief and practice, and from time to time, I would encounter certain ideas that appeared in the writings of those from that school of thought who did attempt to address matters and questions of faith, and find them quite disturbing.

### **BUT WHY?**

Later, I discovered that my personal process (along with the simple faith that I simply took for granted) was very helpful in understanding and relating to the ideas and teachings of Chassidus. Time and again, I found myself saying “aha” as I read and learned things that I knew instinctively to be true long before I encountered them in Chassidus. For example, there is the basic Chassidic concept that appears in the name of the Baal Shem Tov and is elaborated upon extensively in Chabad Chassidus, namely, the idea that the service of Hashem is

based on submission to His will and not on our limited understanding. In fact, if He didn’t command us to try to understand the “why” of things as explicated in the Torah, we would have no right to do so, as “who are you to try to understand G-d?” (Chabad Chassidus takes it a step further, as “who are you to act as if you have your own mind, independent of G-d, thus denying His absolute Oneness?)

When I began learning the Rebbe’s Chassidus, talks and letters, I was absolutely amazed at how much and how often the Rebbe makes the distinction between the “what” and the “why,” as well as the “why” that comes before the “what” and the “why” that comes after the “what.” Learning about the order of things in the higher spiritual realms (Will comes before, is higher than, and is the source of, Wisdom, but within the internal order of Will there is the “hidden” Wisdom that is a manifestation of the Delight and contains the “hidden reason” for Will...) just helped make it that much more real and obvious. This sense of “I knew that, but never quite in those words or in that

application,” (consciously and/or instinctively) when studying the works of the Rebbe, even as I found myself being blown away by a novel insight or interpretation, helped solidify for me the idea of the Rebbe as the “general, all-inclusive soul.” Because how else could I have “known” those things unless it somehow trickled down to me through the spiritual channel that is the Rebbe? It also gave me a tremendous sense of “how good is our portion, how sweet is our lot...,” since I knew and had known so many others that didn’t get or relate to these truths and realities.

There was one particular teaching of the Rebbe on the subject of when it is or is not appropriate to ask “why” that was totally new and breathtaking to me. The Rebbe presented and promoted the idea that when a believing Jew sees or hears about the suffering of another Jew, and in particular the suffering of Jews that results directly from being in exile, which has the added element of “My Name is desecrated amongst the nations,” then he has no choice other than to scream out, “but why?” It is precisely because he believes the “what,” i.e. that this situation can only exist if it is directly willed by G-d Himself, and he believes that we can never hope to understand the “why” of G-d’s reasons and motives even as we believe and accept that those motives are pure and infinite goodness incarnate, that he cries out to see that goodness revealed. The cry of “but why” is not questioning G-d and His goodness, it is pleading that G-d reveal Himself and His goodness in a way that even we can comprehend.

Additionally, the Rebbe points out that this question and cry of pain is only appropriate when it serves as an impetus to do

everything in one's power to correct the situation and bring about that final resolution. Only Moshe Rabbeinu who is prepared to do everything and anything to save and protect the Jews, to give up his life and his place in the Torah, to smash the stone tablets given into his hands by G-d Himself, only he can rightly ask, "Why have You made things worse for this nation, and why have You sent me?" If you just ask "why" and are not prepared to work to change the "what" to whatever degree that G-d has empowered you to do so, and especially if asking the question leads to a sense of helplessness and futility, that is a sign of weakness of faith and that the question originates with the Evil Inclination whose primary objective is to paralyze you into inaction or misdirect you into taking the wrong actions.

### WHAT AND NOT WHY

On Gimmel (the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of) Tammuz 1927, the Rebbe Rayatz was granted a reprieve to the already decided upon death sentence and ordered to go into exile. He was later granted a full pardon and allowed to go free on 12-13 Tammuz. In the talks and writings of the Rebbe, he focuses on how Gimmel Tammuz is the "beginning of the redemption." This, despite the fact that at the time it was thought that exile might be worse because the authorities could take advantage of

the fact that he was out of the public eye to carry out their nefarious plans by staging an "accident" or the like.

This is an illustration of the fact that when it comes to matters affecting the life of the Tzaddik, we not only are not privy to the "why" by means of our limited intellects, we are often not even privy to the "what," unless it is revealed to us. The only way that we know "what" the arrest and incarceration signify, and "what" each of the days of significance that follow mean and represent is based on what was revealed to us.

Another point that the Rebbe emphasizes regarding Gimmel Tammuz is that although the Rebbe Rayatz established the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> of Tammuz as days of redemption and celebration, to us, Gimmel Tammuz is a greater cause for celebration, because even though the Rebbe cares more about the freedom to be able to carry out his life's mission, we as Chassidim, care more about the Rebbe's life and personal safety. The Rebbe relates this to the idea that for those wicked people to be able to have any power over the Rebbe, the Rebbe had to voluntarily agree to the Divine Plan and undertake the real and painful suffering for the purpose of accomplishing his purpose. However, to Chassidim there can be no answer "why" the Rebbe must suffer that would satisfy on any level, and yet, since the Rebbe

determined that he must go through what he went through in order to do his work, the Chassidim throw themselves wholeheartedly into that work in order to accomplish "what" the Rebbe set out to accomplish.

These same lessons apply to Gimmel Tammuz in the year 1994 and the years that follow. The only idea we have regarding "what" happened that day and "what" is happening since, can be found in Torah, and especially the Torah that the Rebbe taught and revealed to us. Similarly, the only insights we can glean as to "why" must be sourced in those same teachings, even though they cannot and should not provide the satisfaction of understanding and acceptance of the situation. Yes, we need to scream and cry "but why?" and we need to completely reject any attempt to justify the current situation. However, all that has to serve as the impetus to focus on the "what," and not be distracted by the pain and confusion expressed in the "why." We need to focus on "What" G-d is telling us that He wants from us, and "what" we need to do to fulfill the mission that the Rebbe gave us, as explained in the most recent talks of the Rebbe. The only acceptable answer to "why Gimmel Tammuz" can be the "completion of the redemption" when we will be reunited with the Rebbe, "the king in his glory," immediately, NOW!

**ADD IN ACTS  
OF GOODNESS & KINDNESS  
TO BRING MOSHIACH NOW!**

# PROGRESS ON THE FINAL FRONTIER

## GIMMEL TAMMUZ PANEL DISCUSSION

Prepared for publication by Avrohom Rainitz

*How can we “live with Moshiach” and what does that mean? Can we reach a point where we want Moshiach like the Rebbe does? Why is it important to publicize the identity of Moshiach and did the Rebbe tell us to do so or just approve it when asked? How can we be mekarev the frum world to the knowledge that the Rebbe is Moshiach?*

*\* Presented for Gimmel Tammuz. \**  
*Part 2 of 2*

### HOW TO PUBLICIZE MOSHIACH'S IDENTITY TO POILISHE CHASSIDIM

When you visit a shul as per the Rebbe's directives and you know that talking about Moshiach's identity will be met with opposition, should you say it anyway or not?

R' Chazan: The Rebbe taught

us that hafatza needs to be done in a way of “va'yakri” and not “va'yikra,” i.e. our job is not only to announce what we believe but to make sure that others start believing it too. So when you know in advance that in a certain shul there is opposition to the subject of Moshiach's identity, if you will start out talking about it you won't accomplish anything.

In such a case, you need to be patient. In the first weeks focus on general sichos of the Rebbe so you win people over. After the people learn to appreciate the Rebbe's teachings, you can start quoting to them from sichos that address who Moshiach is. Experience has shown that once people connect with the Rebbe's teachings, they can also connect to the belief that the Rebbe is Moshiach. That is precisely what we want - that *they* believe, not just that they know that *we* believe.

Once, on a flight to Israel, a Chassidic Jew sat next to me. On my other side sat a Jewish woman who did not seem to be religious, but when she saw that there was a picture of the Rebbe on my *Beis Moshiach* magazine, she started telling me a story that she had with the Rebbe. When she finished her story, the Chassidic fellow told me that he is a teacher in a Skverer elementary school and last Gimmel Tammuz he told the children a miracle story he heard from a friend.

This man had received a dollar from the Rebbe but after Gimmel Tammuz he lost it. He was upset by this and in his heart he asked the Rebbe for a replacement. That day, when he bought something in Manhattan, he received a dollar from the Rebbe in his change!

He finished his story by telling his students: “You see, the Lubavitcher Rebbe is alive!”

What happened here? I didn't say that the Rebbe is chai v'kayam but since the world knows that Lubavitcher Chassidim believe the Rebbe is chai v'kayam, when he told the story he felt it was natural to say that the Rebbe is alive.

The same applies with the identity of the Rebbe as Moshiach. Within all groups they know that Lubavitcher Chassidim believe that the Rebbe is Moshiach. So when a Chassid goes to a shul to speak,



the people know what he believes but since they are not yet mekushar to the Rebbe, they may not be keilim to accept this. Our job is to make them into keilim by teaching the Rebbe's sichos or by telling miracle stories of the Rebbe (depending on the time and place) and when they are mekushar, they will be able to accept, and gladly so, the fact that the Rebbe is Moshiach.

The Rebbe once said that when the Rebbe Rayatz first came to Poland, the talmidim of the yeshiva disseminated his maamarim without the title page so people wouldn't know who wrote it. Once people got used to the Rebbe's style and liked it, they started using the title page and many were niskarev to the Rebbe Rayatz and his teachings.

Obviously, the goal is not to disseminate the maamarim without the title page. The goal is to be mekasher people to the Rebbe. It's just that sometimes, in order to reach the goal, you have to use other means.

**R' Hertzl:** A Lubavitcher whose father is a mekurav to Chabad once told me that some years ago he traveled to London and he visited a number of shuls. When he entered Poilishe shuls he was welcomed warmly and offered coffee and cookies. At another shul they asked where he was sleeping. But when he entered a Chabad shul someone told him that the knot in his t'fillin was not according to Chabad custom. He responded: "Did you ask me how I am? Whether I had something to drink? Whether I ate? Why are my t'fillin the first thing you talk about?"

I am not implying that this one incident reflects on Chabad as a whole, but we can certainly take a lesson from it. The Rebbe's way is to help every Jew, whether materially or spiritually.



**R' Sholom Yaakov Chazan**

***Obviously, the goal is not to disseminate the maamarim without the title page. The goal is to be mekasher people to the Rebbe. It's just that sometimes, in order to reach the goal, you have to use other means.***

Unfortunately, there are people who are drawn to the extremes – either they only focus on the gashmius, by opening a soup kitchen or something like that without making sure that a spiritual message goes along with the gashmius, or they only focus on ruchnius and forget the gashmius.

The right way is to combine both. When someone sees that you are concerned about his gashmius, it is easier for him to be receptive

to the ruchnius messages you convey.

For example, when someone comes to 770 (and there are thousands of visitors every year), if we go over to him and the first thing we do is offer to help him put on t'fillin or start explaining that the Rebbe is Moshiach, or even if we suggest that he write to the Rebbe for a bracha through the Igros Kodesh – he might not be receptive. But if you go over and show an interest in him and show him where he can get a coffee, then afterwards, when you ask him to put on t'fillin, he might also say Yechi and write to the Rebbe with a greater feeling of connection.

The same is true when a Poilisher Chassid visits 770 (as we see that many are coming in recent years). If you start by talking to him in his language about things that interest him (and there is a lot of material in s'farim of Polish Chassidus about the eternal life of a tzaddik and about tzaddikim who were referred to as Moshiach) then he will feel that he is being given his "space" and he will be open to hearing more about sensitive subjects such as who Moshiach is.

**R' Schapiro:** In Chassidus it explains the difference between a moshel and a melech. A moshel is a ruler who imposes his rule while a king is crowned by the people. When we say "ein melech b'lo am" it means that the **people** are the ones who coronate the king. This is what "kabbalas ha'malchus" is all about. Just as for Chabad Chassidim, the kabbalas ha'malchus needs to be in a p'nimius'dike manner (deep, not superficial), so too for those outside Chabad whom we are trying to reach. They need to accept the Rebbe as king in a p'nimius'dike way. This doesn't happen by force.

This is connected with the general idea of Geula. Chassidus

explains that the advantage of the revelation of G-dliness in Yemos HaMoshiach is that it comes as a result of the avoda of the tachtonim. Since kabbalas ha'malchus is an essential aspect of Geula, the preparation for it has to be done in a similar way, i.e. as a result of the avoda of the tachtonim. It's not that we should proclaim Yechi and others should listen but to get them to a point where they themselves proclaim Yechi and accept the Rebbe's Malchus in a p'nimius'dike way.

Some might ask, don't we see that the Rebbe quotes the Midrash that Avrohom would force his guests to thank G-d for the food they ate? The Rebbe explains that there is an advantage to this even though it was forced and when it comes to mitvtzaim like mitvza t'fillin we sometimes take a similar tack, in a nice way of course, but with a certain element of coercion.

The answer is that mitvza Moshiach is different. The mitzvah of t'fillin has a tremendous effect even when it is done without kavana; it is the act itself that is essential. When it comes to Moshiach, the heart of the matter is the person's kavana, especially when we're talking about accepting the malchus of the Rebbe! If you are accepting it, you are not being forced!

I remember that after the sicha of 28 Nissan, 5751, Anash from all over the world signed a k'sav kabbalas ha'malchus and sent the signatures to the Rebbe. It was like a k'sav hiskashrus and people took it very seriously (by the way, any Chassid who did not sign to it at the time should get a form and, after carefully reading it, should sign and commit to obeying the Rebbe's horaos). Can this be something that is forced? Of course not!

The entire inyan of Moshiach is that Hashem have a dira



R' Sholom Dovber Schapiro

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ba'tachtonim and Chassidus explains that the chiddush is that the tachtonim, as they are tachtonim, will be receptive to the highest revelations. So if the tachtonim are not truly receptive,

then the main point is missing.

## **SUCCESS IN PUBLICITY, LACK OF SUCCESS IN PREPARING**

**Nearly two decades have passed since the Rebbe said to publicize the Besuras HaGeula and to prepare people to greet Moshiach. Have we been successful?**

**R' Hertzl:** We certainly can't say we succeeded because if we had succeeded, the Geula would be here already. You can say that we have been partially successful.

The question needs to be divided into two parts: 1) Were we successful in our publicity campaigns? 2) Were we successful in preparing people for Geula?

The easier part of mitvza Moshiach is the publicity and we can say that we have been very successful in this. Millions of Jews know that the Geula is more imminent than ever and hundreds of thousands have heard the Besuras HaGeula from Lubavitchers. Of course, as long as we haven't reached the entire world we did not completely carry out the horaa but we can say we have done a lot.

It's relatively easy to do because all you need are some ideas of how to publicize the Rebbe's message that Moshiach is about to come and that we need to prepare, and there are many ways to do this.

The publicity itself has several advantages: 1) The Rebbe wants the world to know that the time has come for Geula and we achieve this through mass media, big events and so on. 2) Some people are moved by the publicity to make real changes. 3) Some people, because of the promotion, go to a Chabad house and attend shiurim on inyanei Moshiach and Geula. 4) Even someone who does not attend shiurim, when he meets a

Lubavitcher and talks to him about Geula, he already knows that the Lubavitcher believes that the Geula is coming in our day and that the Rebbe is Moshiach.

Since media campaigns target a very broad audience, even if it doesn't "speak" to one segment of Jews, it will "speak" to others. Publicity always helps. Therefore, generally speaking, our promotion of inyanei Moshiach has been effective and has conveyed the message that the Rebbe told us to convey.

When you talk about preparing the world though, I think we have a lot of work left to do. Although we have spoken to hundreds of thousands of people, how many of them have internalized the message? How many of them have changed their lives in order to prepare for Moshiach's coming? Any little move counts and we can rightfully say that everybody did t'shuva, but is this what we call success?

It's true that in recent years there have been numerous baalei t'shuva who left their secular lives and became Chassidim of the Rebbe. Most of them believe the Rebbe is Moshiach and they live with the Besuras HaGeula. But within the religious camp we haven't been successful in getting people to be mekasher to the Rebbe, his teachings and his horaos.

As of now, large numbers of the religious population are not open to hearing the Besuras HaGeula and they definitely don't believe that the Rebbe is Moshiach. In the best case scenario they are not opposed but they are still far from accepting the Rebbe's malchus.

In the Rebbe's first year of his nesius he said that every Chassid must be mekarev at least ten Jews to the Rebbe (and he repeated something to this effect again in 5752, before 27 Adar). How many



R' Shneur Zalman Hertzl

***As of now, large numbers of the religious population are not open to hearing the Besuras HaGeula and they definitely don't believe that the Rebbe is Moshiach. In the best case scenario they are not opposed but they are still far from accepting the Rebbe's malchus.***

years have passed since then, and how many Jews did each of us bring to the Rebbe in that time? How many Jews started learning and living inyanei Geula as the Rebbe wants?

As R' Chazan emphasized earlier, spreading the Besuras

HaGeula has to be in a way of "va'yakri" and not "va'yikra." It's not enough that we talk and they listen. They themselves need to live with the emuna, longing and anticipation of the coming of Moshiach; they themselves should be saying Yechi.

Those who go on mivtza t'fillin and say Yechi with their mekuravim, ask yourselves: How many of them understand what they are saying? How many relate to it? How many of them actually accept the Rebbe's malchus? Are they willing to fulfill the Rebbe's horaos?

(It should be noted that just saying the words of Yechi, even without any kavana, accomplishes something. The Rebbe says in one of the maamarim about kabbalas ha'malchus that the main thing is saying it. Nevertheless, obviously our shlichus to prepare the world for Moshiach doesn't end with that.)

Just like all of the Rebbe's mivtzaim, this mivtza will also penetrate the consciousness of the world at large. Many years have passed since the Rebbe announced the mivtzaim of t'fillin and Neshek and other groups have adopted the Rebbe's ideas. Today you can see religious-nationalist kids manning t'fillin stands and Gerrer women giving out Shabbos candles. Mivtza Moshiach, including the identity of Moshiach, will also eventually get through, but if we do it right we will speed things up.

The Rebbe emphasizes that the avoda of shlichus has to be in a way of "when you come to a city – follow its customs." That means we need to do serious research to find out what will interest Jews of one particular group and excite Jews of another sect and work with each one accordingly.

For Polish Chassidim, for example, we can collect material even from their own s'farim about



He told them that he was a guest from Eretz Yisroel who came to the Rebbe for Simchas Torah and he described the atmosphere in 770. He got them excited to the point that at the hakafo afterwards they all sang Yechi. Some of them even asked the bachurim for their flag lapels and put them on their own lapels. The old gabbai went over to R'



**“Where will you be Pesach night? Eating the Korban Pesach in Yerushalayim!”**

**R' Chazan:** We are seeing lately that the message of the Besuras HaGeula is starting to penetrate the religious sector and surprisingly, it's starting in Litvishe circles. In recent years there is a great interest in learning the halachos of the Beis HaMikdash and during the Three Weeks there are big advertisements from Litvishe organizations about dozens of shiurim in Hilchos Beis HaBechira. They note that we are mamash in the generation of Geula.



**Litvishe and Chassidishe g'dolim who  
gave their approbation**

It just goes to show that nothing is impossible. It all depends on us: if we do what we're supposed to do, if we explain the concepts of inyanei Moshiach and Geula, we can accomplish what the Rebbe wants – that the entire world be ready to welcome Moshiach.

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## Sivan 28 - Gimmel Tammuz Magbis

B.H. Sivan 15, 5770

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

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

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

"KUPAS RABBEINU," was established with the full consent and blessing of the Rebbe, with its purpose and goal to make every effort that all of the Rebbe's activities, institutions etc. continue unchanged. By supporting Kupas Rabbeinu, one is actually participating in many of the Rebbe's activities, and thus strengthening their *Hiskashrus* to the Rebbe.

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

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

**VAAD KUPAS RABBEINU**

**Rabbi S.M. Simpson**

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# IF SHE CAN DO IT...

By T. Jacobson

*The story of Chaya Mushka Alnatanov, a Bas Chabad who doesn't allow her handicaps to deter her from preparing the world to greet Moshiach.*



## BIRTHDAY PRESENT

In order to appreciate true Chassidic strength you have to meet Chaya Mussia Alnatanov. An hour spent in her company sets your priorities straight and amazes you – and maybe embarrasses you, too. Her *hiskashrus* to the Rebbe MH”M and his *horaos* and her passion to connect everyone to the generation’s source of life, spur her on in her work as the Rebbe’s *shlucha*. What makes this extraordinary is that Chaya Mussia is not an ordinary *bas Chabad*. She is what is called a person with “special needs,” but despite her physical limitations she is utterly devoted to the Rebbe’s *horaos*. She demonstrates that **anyone** can be a *shlucha* of the Rebbe and bring the *Geula*.

The Alnatanov family is a Chassidishe family far from the spotlight. This year, Mrs. Ruti Alnatanov, Chaya Mussia’s mother, thought about what gift she could give to the Rebbe for *Yud-Alef Nissan 5770* and decided to publicize Chaya’s story in order to give the Rebbe *nachas* and to give women and girls a heroine to emulate. Exposing herself to the public eye goes against the grain for Ruti and so she asked the Rebbe about it in the *Igros Kodesh* two times. The Rebbe thanked her for her gift. This led to my visit, which made a profound impression on me and filled me with great admiration for the parents, children and especially Chayale. The Alnatanov home is one where you will find *hiskashrus*, *Moshiach*, *Geula*, *Ahavas Yisroel*, and *simchas ha’chayim* enveloping you as soon as you walk in. It is no wonder that such a devoted soldier of the Rebbe emerged from this home.

## FAMILY BACKGROUND

In order to understand Chaya’s

uniqueness we asked Ruti to give us a little bit of family background:

\* \* \*

I was born in moshav Meitav in Chevel Taanach, to the Yosef family. We were traditional, keeping Shabbos, kashrus and more. My parents, who came from Kurdistan, were from very religious homes. I attended the Chabad school in Taanach. My father a"h was very active in the school, fighting government bureaucracy on its behalf. Although he wasn't officially a Chassid, he was very mekushar to the Rebbe and he instilled this emuna in us.

I was in a Chabad school until eighth grade and went to high school in Kiryat Tzanz in Netanya. I then went to teacher's seminary in Chaifa, taking the preschool track. Through the family of R' Avrohom Dunin, shluchim in moshav Meitav, with whom we were very friendly, I met the legendary family of R' Reuven Dunin in Chaifa. It was at his home that I went from being a mekureves to a full-fledged Chassida of the Rebbe. I became engaged to Amnon Alnatanov who had attended Chabad yeshivos and we were married in 5743.

A year later, our oldest daughter, Chaya Mussia was born. We named her for the Rebbetzin even before 22 Shevat, 5748.

## CHILDHOOD

Chayale's birth began as a natural birth but complications set in. The baby was in distress so I had a C-section. Apparently during the birth she was deprived of oxygen but we only discovered that later.



Chaya was in the NICU for two weeks and then we took her home. A few months later I sensed that she wasn't developing normally but the doctors didn't notice anything wrong. As a premie she was being monitored but the doctors didn't think her development was unusual. Chaya was two and a half when she began having seizures. She was hospitalized and given medication. Instead of helping her, it only made things worse. They tried treating her with other medications but her condition deteriorated. Throughout this time we wrote to the Rebbe but did not receive a reply. We continued writing and asked for a bracha and guidance and finally we received a response which said to consult with a family doctor.

We went to the family doctor who was already familiar with Chaya and we updated her on the situation and said we had an answer from the Rebbe. She

recommended that we take Chaya to Hadassah hospital in Yerushalayim. The doctors in Afula did not want to cooperate, but Dr. Mordechai Lemberg, a Lubavitcher Chassid, helped us deal with the red tape and get a referral to Hadassah Ein Kerem.

The doctor we met with immediately denounced the treatment Chaya had gotten until then and explained that the medications were contraindicated. At Hadassah they discovered the source of the problem – an inability to break down a certain nutrient and a deficiency in vitamin B. They gave her the vitamin she lacked and she improved dramatically. She made significant progress and even began

to walk.

The lack of oxygen at birth caused brain damage which is called cerebral palsy (CP). She attended a preschool for children with her condition and unlike her physical development, her mental development was fine. Her teachers recommended transferring her to a Chabad school, and we gladly did so.

Chaya did well there and was one of the best in the class despite her physical limitations. Until fourth grade she was in a regular classroom and was accepted by her teachers and classmates.

## MORE CHALLENGES

After several years, her seizures began again. We went to another doctor who saw on the EEG that she was suffering from epilepsy. The new treatment provided only temporary relief. They tried all kinds of medication but without

***Chaya had an attack during the visit and I tried to help. I offered a cup of water, which didn't help. I went over to the piano and began to play but that, too, didn't help. I began to sing Tanya and Chaya responded to that. Her connection to Tanya is deep.***

success. Doctor after doctor tried to treat her but all were unsuccessful. The epileptic attacks came in different forms, some of them so severe that she lost consciousness.

They recommended that we consult with the Israeli organization for epileptics and they told us about Dr. Schiller at Rambam hospital in Chaifa. We asked the Rebbe for a bracha in the Igros Kodesh and the letter we opened to said that Hashem gives doctors permission to heal and we should go to a doctor who is an expert in his field. We went to Dr. Schiller and he discovered that Chaya was suffering due to a buildup of one her medications. He treated the problem while we emphasized that we had a bracha from the Rebbe. Chaya gave out Moshiach cards at every visit.

We ended up in the emergency room many times over the years. Chaya had attacks that we couldn't control and necessitated emergency medical treatment. Some of the attacks were very severe and as a mother, it was very hard for me. One time, we rushed to the emergency room and Chaya continued seizing. My husband remained by her side and I went to the phone to call (I don't remember who anymore) to ask for the Rebbe's bracha. I stood near the public phone crying and pleaded with the Rebbe to help me.

A man with a beard and knitted yarmulke came over to me and asked me what was wrong. While we spoke he took out a picture of the Rebbe and said, "This will help you," and he walked away.

I went back to my daughter. She was doing well and the hospital soon released her. It was another proof that the Rebbe was constantly with us. The Rebbe gives us encouraging answers all along. Since Chaya suffered from various kinds of attacks and her body was overloaded with medication, she was weak and contracted an infection in her pancreas. We went to the hospital when Chaya did not feel well, and the tests showed that everything was more or less normal and they wanted to release us.

Before they released us another doctor came in who reviewed the results and discovered that her body was rejecting sugar. He hospitalized her, did another test, and saw that her condition was very serious. The doctors said she was sick because of all the pills and this caused us to rethink our approach and to switch to homeopathy.

## **ON A MISSION**

Until she was 21 Chaya learned in an appropriate setting as per the law regarding the handicapped. When she completed that, we could not find a good program for

her and she was home all the time. After a lot of looking we found a program at Gil V'Oz near Beit Shaan, a half an hour away from our home.

It was called a day center for the elderly but they also had disabled young people in the program. Chaya got settled there but since she grew up in a Chassidishe home she was very sensitive to those things that were not *al taharas ha'kodesh*. The music disturbed her a lot and anything that wasn't done according to Chassidishe standards bothered her. The place wasn't frum and the people there came from kibbutzim and moshavim and couldn't be told what to do.

The way it worked at Gil V'Oz was that each client had a talk once a week with one of the directors who was a social worker. In this conversation they could raise topics for discussion, complaints, criticism, suggestions etc. The center provides individualized activity plans in which each client is given an activity program of their choosing. Chaya wanted to learn Torah and the staff tried to accommodate her, but Chaya was bothered by the atmosphere and the mixed genders. There were some frum people on the staff but even they could not change the tenor of the place.

In her weekly talk with the social worker, Chaya was sad. She wanted to make a difference, to be a shlucha, but she didn't get the cooperation. The social worker, who understood her, devoted the first ten minutes of their conversation to listening to Chaya and in the following ten minutes she spoke and Chaya listened. Chaya told her about Chassidus, about the Alter Rebbe and Tanya and how she wanted to learn more and join shiurim. She told Chaya a little bit about herself; that she was



drawn to spiritual matters even though she had grown up in an irreligious home.

That is how Chaya's shlichus at Gil V'Oz began. She gave out pictures of the Rebbe to whoever wanted them. The employees in the kitchen and the caretakers learned to ask for the Rebbe's bracha for every problem and we would write to the Rebbe for them in the Igros Kodesh.

One of the women, a Holocaust survivor from a kibbutz who originally came from a frum home, said that since the war she was angry at G-d. We began to slowly be mekarev her and she softened a little. When she confided that she was worried about one of her daughters, who was having complications in her pregnancy, I suggested that she write to the Rebbe. We wrote a letter and she made a good hachlata and the next day she happily announced that all was well. We brought her a picture of the Rebbe and since then she started attending farbrengens at the kibbutz with the shliach R' Ro'i Tor.

Chaya was disturbed by the opera music which played in the background in the computer room. I asked permission to play Chabad niggunim and the person in charge made it conditional on the agreement of those who visited the computer room. Agreement was obtained and we began playing the niggunim of the Alter Rebbe. Menachem is an old man who is a genius and very knowledgeable. He spends much of his time in the computer room working on a book he was writing. Menachem was particularly impressed by the niggunim and he asked that we continue with it. In the ceramics room niggunim were played too, at Chaya's initiative.

The organization Joint Israel founded a support group for the handicapped. The project includes



Chaya's mitzvaim bag

a 'house father and mother' who make home visits to the disabled, do activities with them, walk with them and make sure that the house is running properly. Boruch and Roytal, Chaya's mentors, are kibbutznikim, special people with lots of Ahavas Yisroel. They learned Chassidus from Chaya, got CD's from her (more about that later) and Boruch said that Chaya is accomplishing things with him that nobody else has managed to accomplish!

## A TANYA THAT STOPS ATTACKS

Chaya has started giving out CD's of *Sharim Tanya* (Singing Tanya) wherever she goes, whether to her daily study program, doctor visits, the emergency room, etc. She is in constant contact with R' Elor Volner, who produced these terrific CD's.

Two years ago, the organization Yad L'Yeled HaMeyuchad, in conjunction with the special education teacher's program at Beis Rivka seminary, started a mentoring project. A student there, Michal Bronsberg of Afula, came to us to meet Chaya. I explained to her that Chaya is interested in

inyanei k'dusha and especially loves to listen to niggunim and to learn Tanya. Michal brought the Sharim Tanya CD as a gift and it became a very important part of Chaya's life.

As per her request, we played the CD when she had an attack and it helped (and helps) her improve. Chaya found the telephone number of R' Elor on the packaging and asked to speak to him, and that is how their connection began. She wanted to meet R' Elor personally and we went to Rishon L'Tziyon to the Volner home.

\*\*\*

R' Elor tells about meeting Chaya:

"Two years ago, the parents called me and said that Chaya really enjoys the Tanya CD. They wanted to visit and I was happy to oblige. Chaya had an attack during the visit and I tried to help. I offered a cup of water, which didn't help. I went over to the piano and began to play but that, too, didn't help. I began to sing Tanya and Chaya responded to that. Her connection to Tanya is deep. Her connection to spirituality, Torah and Chassidus is very impressive. Chaya seeks to



**A dollar from the Rebbe that Chaya received from her teacher Malka Nisselevitz. Malka won the raffle for trips to the Rebbe several times and ended up receiving 90 dollars from the Rebbe. Malka and her husband have given out the dollars for educational purposes, raffles, etc.**

learn more and more. She buys CD's for distribution and gives them out all over.

"She has given out 100 CD's to date! That's an impressive achievement for any bas Chabad and an especially great achievement for Chaya who, despite her limitations, does her shlichus with a consistency that we would all do well to emulate."

## TRAVELING BEIS CHABAD

It's a fact. When Chaya is in the midst of an attack, listening to Sharim Tanya revives her. The CD player is always accessible in her "Beis Chabad" bag, ready to be used when she needs it.

Everyone who knows her is familiar with her mitzvaim bag, which contains Moshiach cards, CD's, an mp3 player and other material. In a bigger bag she has what her students call "the blue book" – *Maschilim Tanya*, and the non-Jews she meets learn about the Seven Noachide Laws when she gives them the "7 for 70" cards.

A day program was recently opened at Mercaz Gravsky in Migdal HaEmek. A visit of a few hours at the Center did what a

hundred interviews could not do and gave me a lot of material for my own soul searching. To what extent do I make use of my abilities to proudly be mekasher those in my environment to the Rebbe MH" M?

At the Center I saw the warm interaction between Chaya and her teachers and caretakers, and I witnessed what I had been told by Ruti. Chaya is loyal to the Rebbe's request that inyanei Moshiach and Geula be internalized, each in their own way. And who could remain indifferent when Chaya presents hiskashrus to the Rebbe, Tanya, Igros Kodesh etc. in her sweet and determined manner? Her smile helps her accomplish her goals as I was told time and again.

Natalie, the art teacher relates:

"I met Chaya in Cheshvan. She wanted to work with paper mache and I listened to her ideas and we got started. Chaya helped with the preparations and everybody loved the results – magnificent pomegranates. That's how we connected, through art. In the middle of the project, which requires monotonous work, we began talking about searching for spirituality. I asked questions and Chaya supplied me with the right answers.

"I have been seeking spiritual meaning for many years now and my meeting with Chaya was no coincidence! Yesterday, she gave me a Tanya for beginners. I began reading but the material was too hard, so Chaya and I arranged to learn together on Mondays when the Center is quieter. We began with chapter one. Chaya reads a line and explains it.

"Yesterday there were other people there and when Chaya began explaining they all listened, even the biggest talkers. I am at the beginning of my spiritual journey and I am happy that I have a teacher with such a pure neshama. We will continue to learn and progress together."

A teacher named Hila relates:

"I know Chaya as a diligent student, serious and responsible, who loves to learn Torah. Thanks to Chaya I learned about Tanya. We learn together in the blue book (Tanya for beginners) with Chaya directing the shiur towards important topics. We began with math but she directed the lesson towards the study of Tanya.

"Chaya gave us CD's from Elor Volner. She writes stories and I feel more like a student than a teacher. When Chaya has a hard morning we listen to Sharim Tanya for ten minutes and then we can begin our studies."

Dorit, the physiotherapist relates:

"Chaya teaches me a lot about Tanya, about the Lubavitcher Rebbe and the history of the Chabad Rebbeim. From Chaya I learn what faith is. She wants only Chassidic music; nothing else will do. She teaches me about simchas ha'chayim. When Chaya climbs the ladder she brightens the room with her laughter. I feel that she imbues me with a lot of compassion. She introduced me to Chitas and she gave me a Chitas as a gift. With Chaya's help I asked the Rebbe a

question in the Igros Kodesh and opened to a precise answer. Thank you to Chaya and her special mother.”

Ruti concludes:

“I thank the brilliant organization Yad L’Yeled HaMeyuchad of Aguch and those who run it: Rabbi Menachem Blinitzky, Rabbi Reuven Kupchik and Mrs. Sarah Rivka Lifsh, the coordinator of activities. This organization gives so much to parents who see that there are other families of Anash in similar circumstances. It unites us into one big family. It’s no comfort that others are suffering too but the achdus on Shabbatons gives us so much. Thanks for everything: the lectures, the fun outings, the subsidized Shabbatons and your devotion.

“As believing Jews who learn Chassidus, we have to be battel to G-d’s will. Of course, like all parents, our desire was to raise a healthy, normal child but if Hashem’s will is that our daughter be this way, then we accept that and fulfill our shlichus to transform the world into a dira for Him, together with Chaya, with joy.

“Although today, people accept special needs children more readily than in the past, there are still people who think that raising a special needs child at home is not good for the rest of the family; that it’s burdensome and requires enormous reservoirs of money and emotional and physical effort that are at the expense of the other children. In our experience, we see that the opposite is true. Yes, it’s very hard, but our children have not only not lost out; they have gained so much. While other parents work to develop Chassidische middos and Ahavas Yisroel in their children, our children live with it every day. They stand by Chaya of their own

volition, with joy and pride in her and her achievements. They learn to give, to deal with hardships, and to relate with love to those who are different.”

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Ruti’s daughter who graduated high school chose the special education track in seminary. When she was asked why she picked it, she said that she has a lot of experience thanks to her sister,

## DON’T WORRY

Ruti relates:

My three brothers, Efraim, Menashe, and Shimshon, served as soldiers in the Yom Kippur War. Efraim was in the Golan Heights, serving first as an artillery operator and then as a tank commander. The news from the northern front was terrible and my parents were very worried. It sounded like no soldier would make it out alive. As the war progressed there was no communication between the soldiers and their families and our imagination, fueled by the harsh reality, conjured the worst. From the moment the depressing news from the north started coming in, my parents acted like mourners. My father was inconsolable. Our strong, optimistic father, full of emuna and simcha, didn’t eat or drink. They were also worried about my other two brothers who fought further south but they were mainly apprehensive about Efraim on the Heights. It was very hard for us children to deal with the complete change in our home.

One night, my father had a dream that the Rebbe came to the moshav with a large group of Chassidim. The Rebbe led the way and near him stood my father and another member of the moshav. The Rebbe was in the center and the Chassidim were behind him, dancing and rejoicing. In the dream, my father was very sad as he was in real life at that time. The Rebbe said to him: “My son, why are you sad?”

My father told the Rebbe that he was worried about his sons who were fighting in the war. The Rebbe calmed him and said: “Don’t worry. The three of them will return in peace.”

The other person asked the Rebbe why he related to my father with such warmth and wasn’t that way with all of them and the Rebbe answered, “Because he is a precious Jew.”

As I have said, my father was very mekushar to the Rebbe.

My father woke up that morning, washed his hands, and was back to his old self. Life returned to normal. When we expressed surprise over the change in him, he explained that he had seen the Rebbe and was no longer worried. Boruch Hashem, my three brothers were miraculously saved.

May this story serve as an ilui neshama and z’chus to R’ Yitzchok ben Dovid Yosef, a Chassid and mekushar to the Rebbe MH”M.

Chaya, and she wants to provide help and love to other special needs children.

The Gemara (Yuma 35b) says, “Hillel obligates the poor, R’ Elozor ben Charsom obligates the rich, Yosef obligates the wicked.” Allow me to add: Chaya Mussia Alnatanov obligates us all, the N’shei u’Bnos Chabad of the generation of Geula.



# WHERE IS THE HOUSE WE BOUGHT?

By Nosson Avrohom

Translated By Michoel Leib Dobry

*We had moved into a small unfurnished basement apartment without even a phone. We remained hopeful that the day would come when the Rebbe's bracha would be fulfilled – and that day came more quickly than we ever could have possibly thought...*



The scene of a typical street in Tzfas' Ramat Menachem Begin neighborhood

According to the general rules established by reality, R' Guy and Dalia Shemi from Tzfas' Ramat Menachem Begin neighborhood should not even be living in their house! Anyone who heard about their plans twenty years ago to buy a home there merely chuckled. All the apartments had been sold, and what neighborhood resident would now sell his apartment shortly after he bought it? Furthermore, even they could find such a person, he would surely ask an exorbitant price. Yet, the reactions of the various real estate agents and others with whom they spoke didn't make them lose their calm and composure. They knew that they were equipped with the Rebbe's bracha, and in such a situation, the laws of nature don't apply.

The Shemis lived for two months in an old basement without a telephone line.

Yet, despite all this, their faith was not weakened, and they continued to believe and remained optimistic. In the end, as in many other stories with the Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach, the reality surpassed their wildest imagination. Not only did they get a house in one of the best parts of the neighborhood, but they paid a bargain price for it, as if they were one of the first buyers. Their acquaintances and new neighbors were positively stunned when they heard their story, to put it mildly, and none of them had the slightest doubt of the hand of Divine Providence that arranged for it all. "We didn't even know where the house was located when we bought it..." R' Guy recalled with some emotion. "We were told an address, the Rebbe gave a bracha, and we put down the money without even going to check it out."

\*



“I was born and raised in Rosh HaNikra on the Lebanese border in a non-Torah observant home. At the time, I still knew virtually nothing about living a life based on mitzvos or how to fulfill them. However, I always sensed that something was missing in my life, creating a feeling of emptiness that merely intensified over the years. In practice, a tremendous process leading to a deep and inner revelation began when I completed my military service, and it grew infinitely stronger during a big trip that I made to Australia. My roommate on the trip would leave the apartment every Friday to go spend Shabbos at the Chabad yeshiva in Sydney, which set aside a special room for Israeli guests.

“Every Motzaei Shabbos, he would come back charged with excitement, and eventually I found myself swept up by his enthusiasm, asking if I too could drink from the well that filled him anew each week. The bachurim in charge of the activities with the backpackers were Rabbi Yossi Ginsburgh (today the rosh yeshiva in Ramat Aviv) and Rabbi Shlomo Raskin (today on shlichus in Germany). They were there after their year on ‘k’vutza’ with the Rebbe and were very active in their activities with these young people. After my first meeting with them, I felt that I had found a hidden treasure. One Shabbos led to another, each visit spurred the next, until I was quickly counted among their growing circle of newcomers to the teachings of chassidus.

“Shlomo Raskin was my primary teacher and study partner. We would sit for long hours and study all the Torah subjects. It can be said that he built the initial foundations of my spiritual world. With every passing day, I committed myself to fulfilling more and more mitzvos.

“Shortly after Chaf-Zayin Adar

***One Shabbos led to another, each visit spurred the next, until I was quickly counted among their growing circle of newcomers to the teachings of chassidus.***

Rishon, 5752, all the bachurim who had come from the United States on shlichus went back to ‘Beis Chayeinu’, and I joined them. I had already managed to hear about and internalize the concept of what a ‘Rebbe’ is and the nature of his strength, and I had a burning desire to see it for myself. I spent a period of time in 770, which built me into a proper chassid and I decided to enlist in the king’s legion.

“From there, the journey to the yeshiva in Tzfas was indeed a short one.

“In Tishrei, 5754, I married my wife, who had gone through her own process of kiruv and had been learning in the Machon Alte Institute. We made the decision to stay and live in the Holy City of Tzfas, near the Chabad community where we could learn from those who already had far greater experience than us in the ways and teachings of chassidus.

“A few days after our *Sheva Brachos*, the Chabad day care network in Tzfas opened a branch for the residents of the new neighborhood of Ramat Menachem Begin. Ten children had been registered and my wife was offered a position there as an assistant. In the meantime, we rented an apartment in Kiryat Chabad and we were quite happy.

“A few months later, my wife asked me why we don’t just buy a house in the new Ramat Menachem Begin neighborhood. At first, I rejected the suggestion with a shrug of the shoulder, but I

understood rather quickly that she had been seriously considering the whole idea and had developed a very strong connection with the neighborhood. For my part, I preferred to remain in Kiryat Chabad and be close to the center of action. We eventually decided to ask the Rebbe and act in accordance with his reply. This was around Shevat, 5754.

“I called the secretariat and spoke to Rabbi Groner. I told him the whole story about how my wife wanted to move, while I opposed this idea for my own reasons. I requested that he ask the Rebbe two questions: a) Should we buy an apartment now or should we wait? b) Should we buy specifically in Ramat Menachem Begin? After a few days, Rabbi Segal from Afula called to give me the Rebbe’s unequivocal answer: move to Ramat Menachem Begin and deal with the matter now without delay.

“If this was the Rebbe’s answer, there was no putting things off. We went out to start looking for a house in the neighborhood.

“The company that built the neighborhood was government-operated – Shikun V’Pituach. All of the hundreds of houses there had been constructed according to a similar design – a standard three-room dwelling. This was part of the overall plan for massive construction throughout Eretz Yisroel to accommodate the large waves of immigrants coming from the former Soviet Union. Many new immigrants were arriving in

***At ten o'clock in the evening, we heard someone pounding at the door of our apartment. It was Doron Tzur. "I've been looking all over town for you!" he exclaimed.***

the country at the time and there was no place to settle them, requiring the government to double and triple the number of residential homes. Within a few months after the sale of these low-priced housing units commenced, all of them were gone like hotcakes. When we called the company's offices and asked about the possibility of buying an apartment in the neighborhood, the clerk on the line laughed and told us that not a single place was left.

"The cost of the apartments available through this project was significantly lower, and the residents also received a nice government grant. They jumped at the offer. The next stage was going to the real estate agents. We asked them to inquire if perhaps someone purchased an apartment, regretted doing so, and now wanted to sell it. We ran around from one agent to another, but every one of them without exception gave us a negative response. There were those who agreed to try and help us find something, but they too came back empty-handed. We didn't want to hear about any apartments elsewhere in town. The Rebbe had given us a bracha for a place in Ramat Menachem Begin, and that's where we would live. In the end, after several long days of searching and rushing around, we learned that there were two buyers who wanted to sell.

"Each of them was asking an astronomical price for their

apartment, much more than they had paid to the state-run company that sponsored the housing project. Under pressure to buy an apartment? No problem. Just pay double; that'll do the trick. As time passed, we discovered that the project had been due to hit the market at the start of 5752, but at first no one was interested. People were hesitant about moving to a new neighborhood at the edge of the city limits. However, there were a number of residents who courageously took up the offer. Others soon followed them until all the houses had been sold.

"After a lengthy period of searching, we had just one option, an apartment going for forty-five thousand dollars – almost twice what he had paid. When he saw that we were serious in our desire to buy, even at such an exaggerated price, his appetite grew. He told us that the house was in fact not his, but his wife's, and she had decided that she wants fifty thousand dollars for it. To this type of extortion, we would not agree.

"In the meantime, we had moved into a small unfurnished basement apartment in the nearby Canaan neighborhood without a telephone or even the most minimal conditions (cell phones were not very accessible in those days). Nevertheless, we continued to believe in the Rebbe's bracha with complete faith. While we had stopped actively looking for apartments, as we had already exhausted all our options, we

remained hopeful in our hearts that the day would come when the Rebbe's bracha would be fulfilled – and that day came more quickly than we ever could have possibly thought...

"One of the real estate agents in town with whom we had been in contact, R' Doron Tzur, a most admirable Jew from the 'knitted kippa' community who had great respect for the Rebbe, came to us with some amazing news that we could hardly believe.

"When we had come to him a few months earlier to ask if he could find us a house in the Ramat Menachem Begin neighborhood, he looked at us with astonishment and merely asked, 'Are you serious?' It simply sounded futile to him to ask for a house in a neighborhood where all the houses had been sold. Yet, when we told him we had the Rebbe's bracha, he was satisfied and said that he would try to help us.

"Then, just two months later, after Chaf-Zayin Adar, 5754, at ten o'clock in the evening, we heard someone pounding at the door of our apartment. It was Doron Tzur. "I've been looking all over town for you!" he exclaimed. Since we had no telephone, he had a difficult time finding me. When he calmed down, he said that he had found a house for us!

"I stood there stunned and surprised. He explained that there was a Jew who had cancelled his apartment purchase, and the property had returned to the original seller, the Shikun V'Pituach Co. One of the company's clerks, an old friend of Mr. Tzur, informed him of this development. It seems to me that my intense desire for a house in the neighborhood had touched his heart. He had already spoken to the clerk previously on the matter, asking that he should call him if a house in the neighborhood should

become available. Now when the clerk called him, he quickly started looking for me before someone else got wind of the offer...

"The very next morning, I drove with him to the company's offices in Karmiel, still unable to absorb what was happening. Before we headed out, I stopped at the bank to request an entitlement certificate for a mortgage. I had no understanding of the process; I knew only one thing – I was taking out a loan with the Rebbe's bracha, which would only produce good results for me. When we arrived at the company's offices, where

Doron already knew all the clerks, he went straight to the saleswoman and told her about me and my interest in this house. She agreed without any objection, and thus without even seeing the house or knowing where it was located, I signed on the deal. I submitted the entitlement certificate to her, made an advance payment of a few thousand shekels, and bought the apartment at the original price paid by the first owners.

In addition, we received a government grant amounting to approximately fifteen thousand dollars, and thus we ended up

paying only fifty thousand shekels, part of which we received in another conditional loan if we lived in the house for at least fifteen years. When I came to check the apartment that I had bought on paper, I discovered that it was in an excellent location, a corner street with a marvelous view – all thanks to the Rebbe.

"The truth must be said," Guy Shemi concluded, "we didn't lift a finger. We received our house with the Rebbe's bracha on a silver platter..."

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ב"ה

# EXCUSE ME FOR LIVING: ISRAEL AT THE BRINK

By Raanan Isseroff

Israel's PR Damage Control Department made available on YouTube a number of videos showing "what really happened" on the flotilla.

The sad part is that Israel's government brought this calamity upon itself by pandering after American money in exchange for talks about giving away Jewish land. Now Israel is scrambling to make a PR victory out of their own bumbling excuse for diplomacy.

The Arabs' argument that the Jews are aggressors was predicted in the first Rashi in the Torah on "B'Reishis Bara." Rashi writes there in the name of Rabbi Yitzchok: "The day will come when the non-Jews will accuse the Jews of stealing the land from its inhabitants." The giving away of land in response to their complaints that we are aggressors (echoing Rabbi Yitzchok's nevua that they would protest: "*Listim Atem*") acts as a "proof" that the Arab argument is correct!

For if not, why are we giving away land? Israel itself is constantly escalating this argument by pandering after America to sit down and negotiate with the terror government Israel has created and given legitimacy to. Simply sitting down for talks about "peace" gives terror and its means a legitimacy it never had before in the history of the world.

Since the Arabs have now "proven" that they are the trodden upon helpless victims and we Jews are the aggressor, they are now rightfully entitled to run the unjust blockades to aid their beleaguered brethren. And Israel (I don't say Eretz Yisroel here) is stupidly feeding it. Last Tuesday, Netanyahu was supposed to come back to Washington for more "feeding" of this idea. Thank G-d, he is delayed for a short time. Only more terror and hatred of Jews around the world will result.

This is exactly what the Rebbe warned us about! The blame for

this sorry situation rests squarely on the shoulders of the Israeli government, for their being greedy on backs of Israel's citizens!

Our responsibility now as Lubavitchers is to show the world that what happened is just one more proof of the truth of the Rebbe's nevuos (prophecies) about what would happen if we even sat down for talks... Use the energy of this moment to point out to Israel and its extensions, AIPAC and JRC (the Jewish Republican Coalition), that constant lobbying to Washington to continue this failed cause is only bringing more calamities upon our Jewish brethren around the world.

Now more than ever we must realize that this is a PR war and it must be countered with the same ammunition. They are putting millions into a clever Madison Avenue created campaign and we must realize that we need to do the same thing!

This past week was Parshas Shlach, the parsha about those Jews who didn't want to go into Eretz Yisroel and ended up dying in the Midbar. The Rebbe has said many times that WE are the reincarnations of the Dor HaMidbar (the generation of the desert that never went into the Land). If so, this underscores our generation's particular challenge to have mesiras nefesh to hold onto and appreciate the preciousness of Eretz Yisroel.

We need to have the mesiras nefesh that the Alter Rebbe described as, "BeOd Nafsho," that we are doing this like our lives depend on it. And indeed it does. For in truth, if this giveaway of Jerusalem goes through, we stand on the brink of (Chas V'Shalom) .... So far, our campaigning has been too light. Even the advent of the 15<sup>th</sup> year since Gimmel Tammuz hasn't shaken us up enough to take appropriate action.



We have become spoiled by all the good gashmius of this generation. We are not the generation of the Holocaust. We did not experience their suffering and as such, we do not truly appreciate the depths of where Israel's government is taking its citizenry. They are leaving the country utterly indefensible, at the mercy of over 30,000 missiles from the north and a vicious terror state in its gut that in minutes can cut off the north of the country from the south.

Right now the message needs to be that "With a Peace Like This We Don't Need Enemies!" The Torah has a more "Peaceful alternative to Peace." In the very Rashi where Rabbi Yitzchok prophetically predicted the nations of the world decrying us as robbers, the solution is spelled out for us. Israel must admit that G-d gave the land to whom He chose. Before the sickness was created the cure, and many hundreds of years ago Rashi spelled out for us the answer to what we have to do.

Israel's government has its finger on the button, not Obama. In a minute they could turn around and use the Torah to regain legitimacy for Israel's claim to the land. In a short war, they could re-annex the terror state areas they have given away and reclaim the Golan Heights which Syria is now

***Even the advent of the 15th year since Gimmel Tammuz hasn't shaken us up enough to take appropriate action. We have become spoiled by all the good gashmius of this generation. We didn't experience the suffering of the Holocaust and as such, we do not truly appreciate the depths of where Israel's government is taking its citizenry. They are leaving the country utterly indefensible, at the mercy of over 30,000 missiles from the north and a vicious terror state in its gut...***

putting scuds into.

This needs a loud voice yelling at the right person. NOT Obama. It needs to be yelled non-stop by all Lubavitchers everywhere. On Facebook and blogs, in faxes and telephone calls to all the Israeli embassies and to the Knesset, to anyone and everywhere – on trains, mivtzaim, billboards, and in Chabad Houses, on Shabbos and during the week.

And if someone says: "Chabad has no place doing this", so our

answer to this person is: "When someone is about to get run over by a car, does one ask the Rav: "Should I have mesiras nefesh or not?" A Lubavitcher needs to ask such a thing...?"

The talks must be stopped and Lands given away must be taken back. *This* is "True Peace."

This is the Rebbe's non-stop message and it is our message as well or we are not Chabadniks worthy of the name.

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# FALTERING FAITH AND FIRM FORGIVENESS

By Rabbi Yosef Karasik  
District Rav Bat Chefer – Emek Chefer

*Sin, snakes, and sorry – a lesson in forgiveness. How do we learn about the importance of forgiving from the story of the sin and the snakes? What are the two types of forgiveness? Why did Hashem have them gaze upon the snake rather than forgive them immediately? \* A fascinating look at the parsha from the perspective of Chazal, Kabbala and Chabad Chassidus.*

In the final days and weeks of galus in the “desert of the nations,” in the fortieth year of their sojourn in the desert, when the Jewish people were about to enter the land, doubts and fears about Hashem’s promise to Moshe Rabbeinu, the Nasi HaDor, surfaced. After 38 years which for

the most part were filled with hope and faith as they wandered through the desert, here, at the end of the road, they lost their faith and spoke harshly (BaMidbar 28:5), “And the nation spoke against G-d and Moshe, why did you take us up out of Egypt to die in the desert etc.” The nation was

afraid that the Besuras HaGeula of Moshe would not materialize.

The question is why? What suddenly shook their faith that had been mostly firm for decades? Chazal say that this followed the deaths of Miriam and Aharon which took place at the end of the forty years. With the passing of Miriam, the well that supplied them with water, slaking their thirst and healing their ailments, went away. Although it ended up returning and continued to provide them with water in Moshe’s merit, their sense of security was shaken. What would happen if the well disappeared again? There were no other sources of water for the millions of people.

With the death of Aharon the clouds that protected them departed and they were exposed to the elements as well as the snakes and scorpions. Traveling would be much more difficult since the clouds would no longer smooth the path for them. This laid the groundwork to shake their faith and hope in the Geula.

The fact is, there was some lack of faith all along. Perhaps if they had focused on all the events of the previous forty years, there would have been no room for doubts. It had been forty years in which their leader had done nonstop miracles. Whatever he said took place. But in the final moments of galus Hashem tested them with a final test, a difficult test in order to see how strong their emuna was. A Jew needs to continue to believe and trust in Hashem and the Besuras HaGeula and cannot get despondent – the Geula is imminent!

If the Jewish people had contemplated Hashem’s promise, there would have been nothing that could have shaken their confidence in the fact that they were entering Eretz Yisroel.

## TO FORGIVE

The people rebelled and were punished with poisonous snakes. They immediately repented and asked Moshe and Hashem for forgiveness. Moshe saw that their t'shuva was sincere and he prayed to Hashem to forgive them. Chazal say, "From here [we learn] that when someone asks forgiveness not to be cruel but to forgive."

In Likkutei Sichos the Rebbe asks why Chazal learn this point from this story. Is this the only source for forgiveness? There are other Torah sources in which we see forgiveness for sinners that are even more significant than this instance, so why do we learn about forgiveness from here?

When Avrohom went down to Grar and Avimelech took his wife Sarah, the sin Avimelech perpetrated was far greater than the sin of the Jewish people. He took a woman, our matriarch, against her will and only miracles saved her from his clutches, and yet Avrohom forgave him and prayed that the plagues on Avimelech and his household go away. On the other hand, by the incident with the spies, the Jewish people only spoke lashon ha'ra about Moshe but didn't perform any action against him.

Avimelech did not even apologize to Avrohom, he rationalized and claimed innocence. He even demanded that Avrohom heal him even though he did not ask for forgiveness (which is why Chazal say that from here we learn that someone who harms his fellow even if he did not ask for forgiveness, he should be forgiven). The Jewish people, on the other hand, asked Moshe to forgive them.

Furthermore, Avrohom prayed that Hashem remove all the plagues immediately and with no

conditions or limitations while Moshe did not daven for the immediate removal of the punishment of the snakes but made it conditional, "all those who are bitten will see it [the copper snake] and live." In other words, the sinner first had to acknowledge Hashem, "when Yisroel gazed up above and subjugated their hearts to their Father in Heaven, they were healed and if not, they were not healed."

So why do we learn about forgiveness from the story of Moshe and not that of Avrohom?

## COMPLETE FORGIVENESS

There are two kinds of forgiveness for someone who did something wrong. There is absolute forgiveness in which you completely forget the sin and you become friends and love him as much as before, and there is forgiveness which comes merely because the person can't stand to have someone punished because of him. He only forgives so that the other person won't suffer but his sentiments for the other person are no longer as positive.

This is like two colleagues who work together and one insults the other. He feels bad about it and asks forgiveness. There can be two types of forgiveness here: 1) complete forgiveness in which they become as close as they were before, 2) incomplete forgiveness where their friendship is not restored but the offended one knows that if he tells the boss what happened, he will fire the other fellow. Rather than having the man and his family become impoverished over the incident, he prefers to look away.

Avrohom did not love Avimelech and his household but he did not want them to be

punished because of him and so he prayed to Hashem to heal them. But he did not actually forgive this degenerate man.

In the story with Moshe, the people sincerely asked for forgiveness and he wholeheartedly forgave them. Moshe truly loved his nation, so he did not merely ask Hashem not to punish them. This is why it is from here that Chazal learn that if someone asks you for forgiveness, to forgive them. Because between Jews, when one asks the other for forgiveness there ought to be complete pardon and love restored.

Moshe did not ask Hashem to heal the sinners from the snakes; rather, he made a copper snake and put it high on a pole in order to teach them to subjugate their hearts to Hashem. This higher form of forgiveness is evident here because the love motivated Moshe to teach them t'shuva to provide the Jews with the ability to heal themselves from this and any future affliction.

## HASHEM'S FORGIVENESS

Hashem loves Yisroel. "I love you, says Hashem." When the Geula comes we will see how Hashem loves His people, how He truly forgives us for all our sins that we committed in galus under the thumb of the Evil Inclination.

The true and complete Geula entails our raising our eyes to Heaven "and subjugating our hearts to our Father in heaven." Our Moshe Rabbeinu has devised various healing methods, the mitzvaim and other horaos, so that we raise our eyes, hearts and thoughts to our Father in Heaven so we can realize the imminent Geula.

*Source: Likkutei Sichos vol. 28 p. 158*

# A LAWYER'S SOUL

By Dr. Aryeh Gotfryd, PhD

**“Chassidus reveals the essence of the soul.”**

—*The Rebbe, HaYom Yom, 13 Kislev.*

*Hi Dr. Gotfryd,*

*I subscribe to your newsletter and enjoy it immensely.*

*Recently, I got into a discussion with a lawyer about the soul. (My bad). He says there is no such thing because there is no scientific evidence that there is one. I said that there is and asked if I forwarded it to him and he was satisfied, would he stop eating non-kosher food. He said yes.*

*Now, I'm searching the internet and I can't seem to find anything that is "scientific enough" to send to him. Could you possibly point me in the right direction?*

*Thanks,  
Chaya G \_\_\_\_\_  
Brooklyn, NY*

Dear Chaya,

As a lawyer, your colleague understands the concept of expert testimony. In court, issues requiring authoritative opinion are addressed exclusively by acknowledged experts in the field.

S/he may be personally skeptical about the existence of the soul, but the authority to confirm or deny its existence in the name of science lies exclusively with the scientist, not the lawyer. I have

had the privilege on numerous occasions to testify in courtroom settings on matters of environmental impact, for example. In every case far more time was spent verifying my expertise and authority to address the questions at hand than probing the reasons for my professional opinion.

To say that there is no soul is equivalent to maintaining that what we really come down to at the end of the day is the chemical soup of which our bodies are comprised. But what does chemistry itself have to say about this?

On p.7 of Vol.64, No.4 of SCIENCE which is the prestigious journal of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the recipient of the American Chemical Society Medal, Prof. William Blum says a few things of spiritual relevance, one of which is that science has never disproved the existence of the soul.

It's something obvious, but something to remember nonetheless. Absence of evidence is not evidence of absence.

Furthermore, what evidence in principle could be brought to bear on the question of whether or not a soul exists? For if one assumes that only material phenomena and causes exist, then there is no conceivable observation one could make that would compel a conclusion that spiritual entities

and forces are real.

On the other hand, if one begins with the premise of an open-minded perspective, i.e., that maybe there is such a thing as a soul and maybe not, then the balance of evidence will indeed prove relevant, and in the view of many, compelling.

To quote Ilya Prigogine, the recipient of not one but two Nobel Prizes in chemistry, "The statistical probability that organic structures, and the most precisely harmonized reactions that typify living organisms would be generated by accident, is zero." (Physics Today, Vol. 25, p.23-28)

The whole debate brings to mind the old Chassidic tale. Two friends walking home from synagogue late one night pass by the home of a third, who they happen to notice through the window pacing back and forth with a lit candle, calling out his own name, "Berel, Berel, where are you, Berel?"

Concerned that the poor fellow had lost his marbles, they barged in and demanded, "Hello! What's the matter with you? You are Berel! What kind of nonsense is this?"

Without missing a beat, Berel answered, "My dear friends, if I were to die right now, you would cry out, "Berel is gone!" But let me ask you, what would be gone exactly? Every organ, muscle, every drop of blood, every cell will be in place. And yet you would maintain without any doubt whatsoever, that Berel is gone. That 'Berel' that you'll be looking for then, I'm looking for now."

That *je ne sais quois*, the *ver vaist vos*, the "I don't know what it is but it is" factor plays an immense role in neurology and medicine these days. The placebo effect for example is very real. It is physical healing caused by the belief that a fake treatment is real



medicine. What part of my anatomy is doing the believing? What is a thought for that matter? And what is consciousness? If we assume that there is a non-physical “I” that experiences, believes and decides, many physical phenomena are explained but if not, we are left with unsupportable assumptions about matter that have no basis in observation.

There are other issues as well. How does one explain the shared experiences of physically isolated twins, the US military’s research into remote viewing, or the linked brain waves of remotely separated meditating monks? How does one explain the 10% better recovery rate of patients who were prayed for in a controlled, randomized, triple-blind study of 990 heart patients reported in the Archives of Internal Medicine of the American Medical Association?

I am not a very spiritual person. If I didn’t have reliable information to the contrary, I would not know that I had a soul. I’d be like every other skeptic in the absence of expert testimony. My natural reaction is to say that if I don’t see it, hear it, feel it, taste it or smell it, it doesn’t exist. That would suffice for me except for two apparently independent sources of information that seem to agree on the matter: science and faith.

Science cannot point to the soul and say voila! any more than it can point to love or loyalty or joy. These qualities are abstract, yet we know that they exist, and even can study them scientifically. Intelligence for example is measurable but is it physical? It is reminiscent of the little boy in Communist Russia who was being indoctrinated into the official faith of the motherland: Atheism. The teacher said, “Do you see G-d? Of course not. So obviously He does not exist. Right, class?” to which the child answered, “And can we

see the teacher’s intelligence?”

I know from experience that making a commitment to eating only kosher food is a very big step. If your lawyer contact finds it difficult because of the bother and the expense, maybe this story will encourage him/her.

A poor fellow came to the Apter Rav in a quandary. He needed to marry off his daughter and he was pretty much destitute. The Rav gave him a ruble and told him to invest in the first opportunity that presents itself. The man set out and eventually came to an inn where he saw some co-religionists gambling. One of them asked what he was doing there and he said he was looking for a business to invest in.

“Business? Look at you. You don’t look like a businessman. What kind of business can a guy like you be looking for?” the gambler sneered.

“Whatever comes up,” the Chassid answered.

“Oh yeah? How much do you have to invest?” the gambler taunted.

“One ruble.”

At this the whole cadre of card players fairly collapsed in paroxysms of laughter. “One ruble! Business! The guy’s going to do business with one ruble! That’s hysterical.”

Finally one of them pipes up, “Hey. I’ve got an idea for you. A superb investment really. How about I sell you my portion in the world to come... for just one ruble. You can’t go wrong.”

“Okay,” the Chassid replied remembering the Rav’s directive to take the first opportunity that comes up. “But I want the deal in writing.”

The two parties documented the transaction, the paper and the coin changed hands, and the gambler headed home with his newfound earnings. “Honey, I’m

home.”

“You drunk skunk, what are you so cheery about? You never take care of us, you just drink and gamble the whole day away. You...”

“Hold it! That’s not fair. I actually did business today.”

“Business! What do you know about business? You mean you made some kopeks gambling?”

“Kopeks? I made a whole ruble, and it wasn’t from gambling,” he said tossing the coin on the table with flourish. “I sold this new guy in town my portion in the World to Come. We even made a contract.”

“What?! You sold your *Olam HaBa*? What am I supposed to do after 120 years? Go up there by myself? All my friends will be there with their husbands and I’ll have to spend forever alone? Not a chance buster. You go right back there and get that paper back from him, whatever it costs, you hear? You’re not setting foot in this house without that paper, and that’s final!”

He set out in a hurry, searched here and there and finally found his customer at the local inn.

“Look, there’s been some mistake. I need to get that paper back. It was just a joke but now it’s over, okay? Look here’s your ruble back. Just give me the paper.”

“Sorry sir, but it’s going to cost you.”

“Fine, I understand. Here’s five rubles for your trouble.”

“Nothing doing. I need three hundred.”

“Three hundred! Are you kidding?! That’s blackmail! Where am I going to find three hundred rubles?”

“I don’t know but I’m not giving you back this paper for anything less. I’ve got a kid to marry off.”

The gambler scrambled from friend to friend, begging on

grounds of mercy, explaining how his wife won't have him back without it. Finally he scraped it together and the deal was revoked.

The Chassid returned to the Apter Rav who asked him how he had fared. After telling him the whole story the Chassid confided how badly he felt for demanding such a high price to sell the man back his portion in the World to Come.

To this the Rav replied, "Don't worry. When you bought his

portion it wasn't even worth the ruble you paid for it. But by the time you sold it back to him, he had done t'shuva (repented) and by now it's worth far more than the 300 rubles he paid you."

Chaya, with this email, I think you fulfilled your part of the 'contract' with the lawyer. For the sake of his soul, if he keeps his side, he will definitely be getting the better deal.

Sincerely,  
AG

PS, for a more formal and detailed information about all this, see online at [chabad.org](http://chabad.org) and search "Neurology, Medicine and the Soul."

*Dr. Aryeh (Arnie) Gotfryd, PhD is a chassid, environmental scientist, author and educator living near Toronto, Canada. To contact, read more or to book him for a talk, visit [www.arniegotfryd.com](http://www.arniegotfryd.com) or call 416-858-9868.*

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# A SEIFER TORAH WITH A SIGNATURE...

By Zeev Yisroel Crombie

Translated By Michoel Leib Dobry

On the 28<sup>th</sup> of Iyar, I had the privilege of participating in the ceremony dedicating a new Torah scroll to the Chabad House of Sri Lanka, under the administration of our son, Rabbi Menachem Mendel and his family. I have participated in numerous Seifer Torah dedications, and most of them were quite exciting, but this ceremony was most unique.

One of the things that touched me the most was the amazing assortment of different people who came to celebrate the event. Usually, the participants in such an event share at least some similarity, so that it is apparent to the bystander that they have some connection to each other and have cause to rejoice together. At the event in Sri Lanka, however, Jews who were seemingly very far from one another united as one in joyful celebration.

It was impossible not to feel that Jewish spark flashing within each and every one of us, connecting Jews across the most extreme diversities. The participants ranged from the Rebbe's shluchim, whose entire lives are devoted to the spreading of Judaism, to our friend Moshe, who had spent the last several decades as the head of a Buddhist monastery somewhere in the deepest jungles of Sri Lanka. He

had made a tremendous effort to come to the event, accompanied by his servant, inspired by his vague memories of his youth as a Jewish child.

Between these extremes were a most fascinating and varied collection of Jews, whom Divine Providence had brought together in order to rejoice on this very emotional evening.

## ROMAN FROM CHOLON

One of the Jews who danced with everyone that night was "Roman – from Cholon." When you are in such a place, you don't ask anyone why he is there and what he's been doing. It can be safely assumed that some of them aren't all that interested in revealing what had brought them to this distant country and what type of business they engage in. We are only interested in whether the guests are Jewish.

Even under normal circumstances, Roman properly fulfills the adage of "Great is drinking together that draws the hearts closer!" That night, he stringently observed this rite, above and beyond the call of duty. As a result, the scribe was concerned that he might not be fit to write a letter in the Torah scroll.

When the writing had been completed, Roman realized that

they weren't going to let him write a letter, and he was terribly insulted. "I, Roman from Cholon, won't be allowed to write a letter in the seifer Torah?" he asked in anguish. It was quite evident that the matter touched him to the depths of his soul. Roman wanted to participate in the writing of the Torah scroll just like any other Jew.

It was Erev Shabbos Parshas BaMidbar, and we remembered that G-d gave the Torah to the Jewish People only because of, "And Israel encamped there against the mountain – as one man with one heart." We also remembered that the wholeness of the Jewish People, similar to the wholeness of a Torah scroll, is when not even one is missing.

The scribe seated Roman near the seifer Torah, presented him ceremoniously with the feather quill, and showed him the letter that he was to write. Roman carefully checked the parchment, looked for an appropriate place, and then – with great flourish – he signed his signature!

Everyone became quite alarmed, and only Roman, who was fulfilling the edict of, "It is a great mitzvah always to be joyous," paid no attention at all to what he had done. The scribe was forced to

[Continued on page 37]

# MIVTZA MOSHIACH FOR MOSDOS

Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok Wilschansky  
Shliach, rosh yeshivos Chabad in Tzfas and Chaifa,  
member of the hanhala of Aguch

***Some people think their responsibility is limited to their mosdos while the inyan of being mekabel p'nei Moshiach is for the shliach to do. The truth is that since running the mosdos is a shlichus of the Rebbe, therefore the Rebbe's horaa at the Kinus HaShluchim, 5752, that shlichus must be permeated with the point of "kabbalas p'nei Moshiach," applies to those who run the mosdos too.***  
\* ***From a speech said at the first session of the convention of menahalim of Chabad mosdos organized by Aguch in Eretz Yisroel.***

This gathering is taking place in Yemos HaMoshiach, at a time of "hinei zeh Moshiach ba," at the *hechste tzait* of Geula, on the very threshold of Geula. A gathering like this at this time is

highly significant. In the brief period of time at our disposal we will not be able to delve into the topic in depth but we can certainly share some inspiration.

I have just returned from the

Rebbe MH"M and I had occasion to meet with fellow shluchim, menahalim and friends. I attended a family simcha and as we were sitting at the Sheva Brachos I heard my brother's mechutan speak about his shlichus. I'd like to share some stories with you.

One of the stories is from R' Mottel (Mordechai) Kanelsky, shliach in New Jersey who works with Russian immigrants. His organization Bris Avrohom is famous and thousands of Yidden have entered the covenant thanks to him.

One day, one of his mekuravim and main supporters said to him: "I hear you talk a lot about Moshiach and about the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach. I also hear that some say otherwise. I looked into it and it seems to me that you are going overboard and your approach is not appropriate after Gimmel Tammuz."

Mottel realized that the man was expecting him to accept what he said and had no interest in listening to anything else. So he replied: "That is our view, our belief, our Rebbe, and that is what he taught us. This is our job now and everything we do needs to be permeated with this point: how to be mekabel Moshiach!"

The man responded: "If that's the case, I'm no longer involved."

Well, some Lubavitchers claim that inyanei Moshiach hurts you in your pocket ...

Two years later this mekurav called Mottel. He apologized for having closed the door on him like that, and asked whether Mottel could stop by for a visit. When Mottel said sure he would come, the man asked him whether he could bring along an English Tanya. Of course Mottel said he would and he went to the mekurav's house. The man lived



on the tenth floor of a huge building on a busy street near the George Washington Bridge.

The mekurav told him that he had been experiencing problems lately, mainly in business. He went to the Ohel and left a note in which he wrote about the situation and apologized for dropping the shliach in Elizabeth. He asked for guidance in how to proceed.

Then he went home with a good feeling and sat down next to his young son who was playing with Lego. While playing, the child took a Lego piece and threw it out the window and then immediately began to cry, "My Lego, I need it! Let's go downstairs and find it."

On such a busy street he had no hopes of finding the little piece but at the child's insistence, they went downstairs. To his surprise, they found the Lego piece and strangely enough, under it was the title page of Tanya in English with the Rebbe's introduction. He saw this as a clear answer from the Rebbe that he should learn Tanya and knew that this was the guidance he'd asked for.

That same morning a business deal he had arranged worked out to the tune of several million dollars and he earned a tidy sum. Following these clear signs he decided he had to return. He asked to be listed as a member again, requested that R' Kanelsky bring him a Tanya and he began to prepare for the coming of the Rebbe MH" M!

I think this story says a lot. But before I focus on the details I will tell you another story that I heard from R' Danny Kahana, one of R' Kanelsky's main supporters. After several years of outreach it was time to expand. They found out that the Shomrei Torah shul of an irreligious



community was up for sale. They met with the president of the k'hilla to buy the building. He asked them for a large sum and they were unsure if it was worth the price he was asking.

At this same time there was yechidus with the Rebbe for members of Machne Israel. After the sicha, the wealthy donors met with the Rebbe and when it was their turn they told the Rebbe about the building for sale and that they were hesitating over the price. The Rebbe told them, "Do it today, do not delay." After the yechidus there was a full program with a meal but after such an explicit instruction from the Rebbe, Danny decided he couldn't wait around. He told R' Kanelsky, "Stay here for the program and I'm going to take care of it."

After a 45 minute drive from Crown Heights, he called the president of the k'hilla to arrange an urgent meeting. When they met, he told the president that he had decided to purchase the building. He put a blank check on

the table and said, "Let us sign on the deal and then you will fill in the check."

Just two hours later, some distinguished rabbanim from the area visited the president and asked to buy the building. When he told them that he had already signed an agreement with Chabad one of the rabbis asked, "How much did he agree to pay? I will pay more!" The president smiled and said, "I have a blank check so whatever you say he can beat it." Hearing this, the rabbi said, "If you have a check from Danny then the matter is closed. The building belongs to Chabad."

The lesson we need to learn from this story is clear. When the Rebbe says to do something today, we cannot delay for a moment.

## **DIRECTORS OF MOSDOS ARE SHLUCHIM OF THE REBBE!**

At the Kinus HaShluchim, 5752, the Rebbe said that the

***Shlichus is about conveying the Rebbe's message. Since, in mosdos Chabad, you convey the Rebbe's message, and in the chinuch of children you teach them about hiskashrus and listening to the Rebbe's horaos, this is definitely shlichus.***

only remaining avoda in shlichus is kabbalas p'nei Moshiach Tzidkeinu. This horaa pertains especially to us, directors of Chabad mosdos, since every menahel of a mosad is a shliach of the Rebbe in running the mosad. Our job is to carry out the Rebbe's shlichus within our work in the mosdos.

Some say that the title of shliach is only for someone who is far away from home while someone who runs a mosad in his own town is not a shliach. There is no question that there's something special about those shluchim who went out to distant places to spread the Rebbe's teachings but shlichus is about conveying the Rebbe's message. Since, in mosdos Chabad, you convey the Rebbe's message, and in the chinuch of children you teach them about hiskashrus and listening to the Rebbe's horaos, this is definitely shlichus.

It's important to emphasize this, especially now, when on the one hand we are getting ever closer to Yemos HaMoshiach while on the other hand the darkness is frightening and we don't see the Rebbe. This is the time to strengthen our hiskashrus to the Rebbe and to stress that we are all the Rebbe's shluchim, with all the privileges and obligations this holy work entails.

The more we strengthen the

avoda of shlichus and dedicate ourselves to the Rebbe's horaos in the inyan of shlichus, the greater and more miraculous our success will be, as we see already now.

### **KABBOLAS PNEI MOSHIACH – IN MOSDOS TOO**

One of the shluchim who was sent by the Rebbe to Tzfas to start mosdos, Rabbi Leib Kaplan a"h, told me that the Rebbe once told him in yechidus (not in these exact words): Your shlichus is not to be involved in outreach activities which people call mitvzaim. Your shlichus is to build the community, the mosdos.

Some people understood this to mean that he did not need to be involved in mitvzaim but the truth is that this is not so. Just as the director of a mosad would never consider that he is exempt from t'fillin and davening, so too it is obvious that the Rebbe's mitvzaim are for all of us to do, even a director of a mosad.

What the Rebbe told R' Kaplan pertained only to the **running** of things, that he needed to **run** the mosdos and not **run** mitvzaim.

Some people think their appointment is limited to matters concerning the mosdos and that the inyan of "kabbalas p'nei Moshiach" is the inyan of the shliach, the director of a Chabad

house, the one who runs mitvzaim. The truth is that the Rebbe's horaa at the Kinus HaShluchim 5752 that shlichus needs to be permeated with the point of kabbalas p'nei Moshiach applies to the running of mosdos too.

How can we combine the work of running a mosad, which is primarily technical in nature, with kabbalas p'nei Moshiach?

First, we need to really feel that all the mosdos we build, the entire staff, the students, the buildings, the furniture and even the supporters – are all to prepare the world to greet Moshiach! When you feel this way and you know we are in a time of "hinei zeh Moshiach ba," the Besuras HaGeula becomes part of our reality. Whomever we meet, even government officials or wealthy people for fundraising purposes, we convey the message of Geula. This itself brings us success.

Even if sometimes it seems that chayus in inyanei Moshiach interferes with our work and that we sometimes lose supporters of our mosdos because of it, as believing Jews we know it is not possible for us to lose out as a result of listening to the Rebbe. For those who still have a hard time believing this, let's go back to the story I started with. This story teaches us that the Rebbe takes care of all the funds that seemed to have been lost because of conveying his message of Geula.

As for the second story I told, when we focus on the knowledge and belief that we are in the *hechtste tzait* for the coming of Moshiach and *aht aht* the Rebbe will be revealed and see our accomplishments, this motivates us to work on expanding our mosdos. The Rebbe's words, "Do it today, do not delay" should ring in our ears. The sooner we

do our part, the sooner we will see the Rebbe. When the Rebbe spoke about the avoda of shlichus being permeated with inyanei Moshiach he said it is the gateway through which all aspects of shlichus pass. This refers not only to spiritual avoda but also to material matters. When you go through that gate, you see tremendous success. We see that when those who direct mosdos are permeated with kabbalas p'nei Moshiach, they are successful in all areas – from fundraising to administration and even, in the case of a school, academic achievement. As the Rebbe constantly emphasized in his letters, ruchnius and gashmius go together and when you add in ruchnius you get more in gashmius.

## A BALANCE OF FIRMNESS AND FLEXIBILITY

The Rebbe has told us that our avodas Hashem needs to combine flexibility and firmness. A stick can have both characteristics, as

is referenced in the two Hebrew words in Torah for stick: a matteh and a shevet. A shevet is a flexible branch and a matteh is a solid stick. A Jew's avoda calls for both.

For example, when it comes to vows, a Jew has the ability to make a vow and obligate himself, and he also has the ability to absolve a vow when necessary.

Vows have an additional significance. They enable ruchnius to penetrate gashmius and represent the importance of each word we utter.

These two points are important for menahalim to remember in their work. We need to know the importance of a word and to remember that even when occupied with gashmius matters, these are intrinsically connected with ruchnius matters, and each influences the other.

At the same time we need to remember to combine flexibility with firmness.

This should be our guiding principle in our work with our staff. There will always be differences of opinion among employees and the job of

menahalim is to bridge the differences and to foster an atmosphere of harmony and cooperation.

This pleasant atmosphere is achieved when the menahel is firm yet accommodating. Especially when we know and feel that the Rebbe is watching us, and will be coming at any moment, it is vital that there be a pleasant atmosphere among the staff members. They all ought to feel that they are working towards the same goal, kabbalas p'nei Moshiach. In an atmosphere like this, each one is willing to hear the other's view and when something good happens we include the other employees in our joy. That is the best recipe for success.

We must repeat to ourselves that since Moshiach is coming and every deed we do hastens the Rebbe's hisgalus, we must act with alacrity. This is also what we ask of the Rebbe, that he hasten the hisgalus and come right now!

*Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu  
V'Rabbeinu Melech HaMoshiach  
L'olam Va'ed!*

[Continued from page 33]

exert much toil and effort until he managed to scrape Roman's flowing signature off the scroll's parchment.

I couldn't help but mentally compare Roman's signature at the bottom of the seifer Torah to the famous "*Cock-a-doodle-doo*" by the child in the story about the holy Baal Shem Tov.

## A TRUE SENSE OF PERFECTION

At the festive meal that took place after the Hakafos, the following story was told:

**Once, the residents of a city found a Torah scroll without any signs of identification. They struggled to determine whether it was kosher or if it had been written by a heretic, thereby making it necessary to burn it.**

**They asked the rav, and the rav replied: "The Jewish custom is – the dedication of a seifer Torah." The local residents were baffled, until the rav explained: "When a heretic writes a Torah scroll, he beautifully completes all the letters himself and places it in the Aron Kodesh.**

**In contrast, the Jewish People properly make a completion**

**ceremony, and they give other Jews the privilege of writing the final letters. However, not all the Jews write the same way."**

**The rav concluded: "If you see that the last letters of the seifer Torah are full and complete, you know that a heretic wrote them. But if you see that they're not the nicest looking letters in the world, then you know for certain that it's a kosher Torah scroll!"**

Thus, it was specifically Roman's flowery signature on the seifer Torah that represented its true perfection, and this was the seal of truth at the Torah scroll dedication in Sri Lanka!

# AMONG THE REFUGEES

Memoirs of Rabbi Shneur Zalman Chanan

## A SURPRISE APPOINTMENT

In his letter, Rabbi Schneerson describes the difficulties he encountered during the early period in Paris:

“Not one Shul agreed to give me a rabbinic position, despite the fact that I agreed to work without pay. (The miracle was that I had a significant sum of money that I had taken with me from Russia.) Six months passed and I began to feel a degree of weakness. Consequently, I decided to attempt to establish my own Jewish religious congregation independently of the established Shuls. That same day, a group of orthodox Jews arrived at my hotel (Hotel Moderne) and honorably presented me with a rabbinical contract which stated ‘Grand Rabbin de l’Association des Israelites Pratiquants de Paris’ – Chief Rabbi of the Association of Orthodox Jews of Paris. This was an appointment to fill the position which had been recently vacated by the passing of Rabbi Yoel Herzog, father of the Chief Rabbi of Eretz Yisroel, Rabbi Yitzchok Aizik Halevy Herzog.”

After signing the rabbinical

contract, the community leaders desired to celebrate the event with a bottle of vodka and some refreshments. They were about to collect a few coins from each one of the participants when the new Rabbi said that he would sponsor the vodka. Accustomed to distributing funds for the poor in Russia, Rabbi Schneerson thought that it would not be appropriate to collect money for such a purpose. The participants exchanged surprised looks. Not only was their Rabbi learned, G-d fearing and a brilliant speaker, but he also gives and does not take. Rabbi Schneerson writes in his letter:

“That bottle of vodka cost me a fortune. Over the course of the next five years, I did not receive a salary. Similarly, I funded all of my various communal activities.”

Unfortunately, due to Rabbi Schneerson’s energetic pace of communal activities, he quickly ran out of funds.

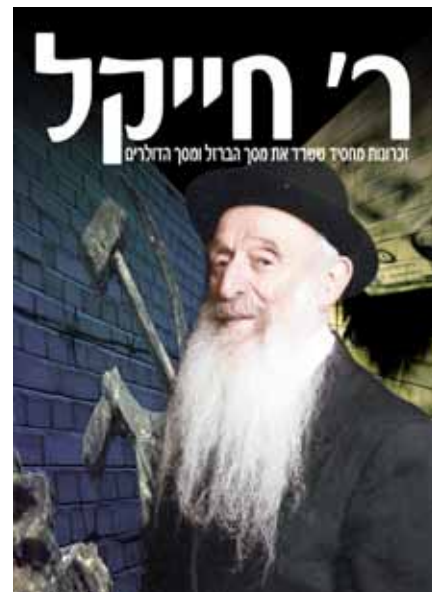
“With great *mazal*, I was able to rent a large comfortable house, located at Rue Dieu 10, near Le Republique (a known square). It is interesting to note that at that time the large city of Paris did not have

even one Talmud Torah or Jewish school. I requested that the *s’farim* that I had taken with me out of Russia be sent to Paris. The *s’farim* were held at the train station because I did not have the funds to pay for the shipping and storage. I was very pained and afraid that perhaps they would be sold. In the end, those *s’farim* were the only treasure that I ever had and still have. Diamonds weren’t for me.”

## THE PHONE CALL

“To my *mazal*, I receive a phone call during this period from the secretary of Mr. Markovichi-Kleze. The secretary stated that Mr. Markovichi-Kleze wanted to know if he could help in any way. His words were music to my ears. I suggested that he come to visit me and he agreed. In the meantime, I contacted the editor of a newspaper to find out who Mr. Markovichi-Kleze was. I was told that he is an apostate Jew from Romania, extremely wealthy - a millionaire, in fact - and that it is definitely worth making his acquaintance.”

“Mr. Markovichi-Kleze’s secretary paid me a visit and I





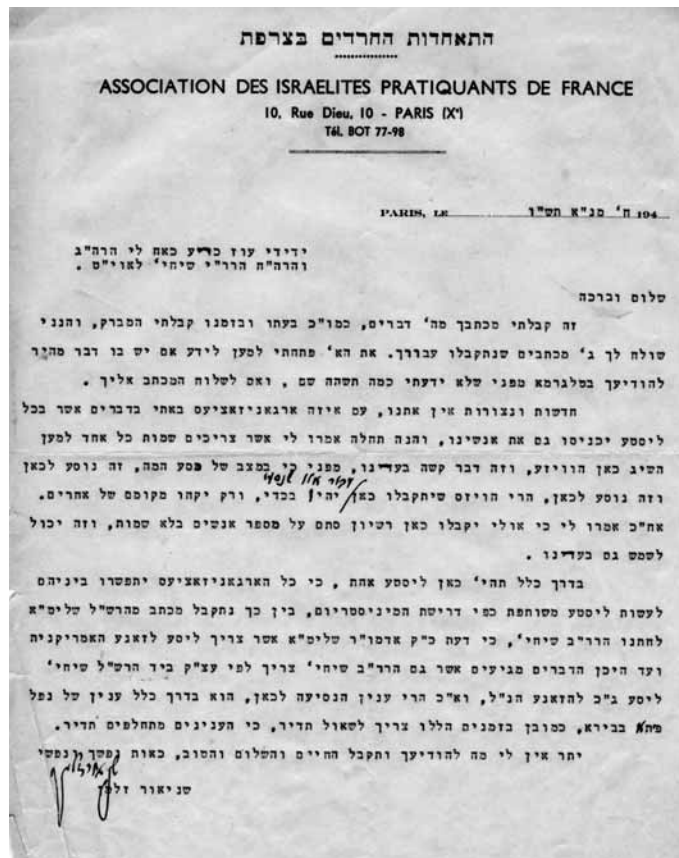
described my financial situation. He asked me how much money I currently needed. I responded by specifying a moderate sum, adding that I hope my request was not too large. The secretary replied that the sum seemed reasonable. I receive the requested sum that week."

"Mr. Markovichi-Kleze became my good friend and he would visit me quite often. Once he arrived in *shul* on Yom Kippur afternoon for *Mincha* and *N'ila*.. I handed him my *siddur* and we *davened* together. We also said the '*Al Chet*'- confession together. I can assure you that our united '*Al Chet*' had a tremendous impact."

"After Yom Kippur, certain Orthodox circles circulated harsh criticism against me. How did I have the audacity to allow an apostate Jew married to a gentile woman enter the Shul? I did not lose my calm. I openly responded to my critics in the Jewish media. 'Why do you turn to me? You should turn to the representatives of the non-Jewish faith using these very words. You should request *them* not to let him into the church! His place is not there! However, when he arrives at Shul, obviously I won't throw him out, 'for there is his house' ; he is returning home because his natural place is here together with us.'"

In his letter, Rabbi Schneerson relates additional details of his fundraising efforts for the Association of Orthodox Jews of Paris and of his relations with the Joint Distribution Committee in the City of Lights.

"During that period, my friend



Letter of Rabbi Shneur Zalman Schneerson to Rabbi Yisroel Jacobson

Dr. Joseph Rosen arrived in Paris. In Paris, there was a branch of the American Jewish Joint distribution committee, otherwise known by its abbreviated name, the "Joint." I clearly remembered that I owed the Joint six hundred dollars from my activities on behalf of Russian Jews while still in Russia. In general, when I owe someone money, I do not avoid meeting my creditor. Consequently, when Dr. Rosen contacted me and requested to meet, I responded that I was ready to go and visit him. However, he preferred to come to my home, which was obviously an honor for me.

During that period, our organization occupied the entire building and it was furnished in a most beautiful manner. A head of state would have been proud of that home."

"I had a brief pleasant

conversation with Dr. Rosen. He inquired regarding my financial situation, and I responded that I hoped matters would improve. He replied, 'Yes I heard that matters did not turn out that well for you.' He then requested that I visit him at his office on the following day. The thought of the six hundred dollars I owed pained me. However, when I arrived at his office, I was in for a surprise. Dr Rosen presented me with a check of five thousand dollars! I was extremely moved. At a loss for words, I was unable to express my gratitude. However, when he escorted me to the door, I turned to him and said, 'Do you have any idea what you have done for me?' He responded with a smile, 'I can imagine.'"

On a side-note, my father, R' Chaikel Chanin of blessed memory, was personally acquainted with Dr. Rosen. Dr. Rosen helped my father acquire sewing machines for *anash* in Russia so that they could work from home, enabling them to observe Shabbos. Once, during the 1920's, after the Rebbe Rayatz departed from Russia, my father and Dr. Rosen sat and conversed. Dr. Rosen related that despite the fact that he is not a religious person, when he met the Rebbe Rayatz for the first time, his soul was at peace. The Rebbe's eyes radiated light and completely captivated him to the extent that he would do everything possible on behalf of the Rebbe, even to the point of literal self sacrifice.

Rabbi Schneerson lived alone in Paris for a year and a half until he was able to bring his family. The



House of Rabbi Schneerson

organizations which he headed were housed in a beautifully furnished home. Rabbi Schneerson himself, however, continued to fulfill the teaching of Pirkei Avos which states, "This is the way [to acquire] the Torah: eat bread with salt, drink water in small measure, and sleep on the ground."

As evidenced by his stationery, Rabbi Schneerson succeeded in establishing the Association of Orthodox Jews of Paris. He established a network of schools, a shelter for children, yeshivos, a soup kitchen, and a rabbinical school called "T'mimim." He maintained a very close connection with the Rebbe M"HM, and he had the merit of frequent visits of the Rebbe to his home.

## ESCAPE TO THE FREE ZONE

At the outbreak of World War Two, before the divisions of the German Army reached the borders of France, a wave of Jewish immigrants arrived in Paris from Belgium. The Jewish community was overwhelmed by the task of providing for them. The Joint took matters into its hands and set up a committee to coordinate between all

the Jewish organizations. This committee helped Rabbi Schneerson open two shelters for refugees during this period.

In Iyar of 5740/1940, the Germans conquered France and the country was divided into two zones. The conquered zone, which included Paris, was under complete German rule. The "free" zone was called "Vichy France" (its government was based in the resort town of Vichy) and was led by Henri Philippe Petain. The free zone was independent, yet simultaneously subservient to Nazi rule and influence. Immediately following the division of France, approximately one hundred thousand Jews fled from the conquered zone to the free zone. Among them were Rabbi Schneerson, his family, his students and his staff of workers. The Jews hoped that conditions would be better there; however it quickly became clear that the Vichy government was a puppet government of the Nazis. They worked together with the Nazis and they adopted the Nazi anti-Semitism.

On November 10<sup>th</sup>, 1942, the Nazis formally invaded the "free" zone of France, and the arrests and deportations to death camps began.

The number of French Jews who perished in the death camps is estimated at 76,000 (may G-d avenge their blood.)

When compared to other countries, this is a relatively small percentage of the total population. The French Jews, unlike their counterparts in much of the rest of Europe, were dispersed throughout the large country, and thus were less vulnerable than their brethren in densely populated communities.

## THE REBBE RAYATZ INQUIRES ABOUT HIS SAFETY

After R' Zalman fled Paris, communication between him and the Rebbe Rayatz ceased. The Rebbe's interest and concern for R' Zalman is illustrated in a letter that he wrote to Mr. Yitzchok Schneerson. The letter was written on November 29, 1942, just a few days before the German incursion.

**20 Kislev, 5703**

**To the Honorable, esteemed,  
G-d fearing Moreinu HaRav  
Yitzchok,**

**...I urgently request that you write. If possible send a telegram. According to my reckoning, it is possible that my cousin, Mr. Schneerson is among the refugees. Also perhaps Rabbi Schneerson about whom Mr. Schneerson writes is also among the refugees.**

**May G-d have mercy on His nation and on His inheritance wherever they may be. May He watch them, protect them and feed them...**

To clarify, the letter is written to Mr. Yitzchok Schneerson. In the letter, the Rebbe inquires regarding two different people with the last name of Schneerson. One of those two is Rabbi Schneur Zalman Schneerson.

The story of Rabbi Schneerson's holocaust years and his post-holocaust rescue activities will be

# HOME SWEET HOME

By Itty Chazan

*I seek a new location for my majestic regal abode,*

*I peek through distant lands to share my splendor and my Hod,*

*My former home lies in shambles, thus I must search each road,*

*The Sh'china is on a journey - It's up to us to unlock her Galus secret code.*

*I seek a new location to crown my Sh'china's presence and glow,*

*True, all battei k'nesiyos u'battei midrashos sh'b'babel reveal, though; - I know,*

*That a unique address is required, for my Divine Presence to flow,*

*Nasa mikdash ve'yashav sham – thus I relocate; there's only one place I want to go.*

*I journey to my new home, where Melech HaMoshiach is in full command,*

*His p'nimius ha'Torah and Halacha permeate, to instruct the entire land.*

*Moshiach is building my mikdash*

*m'at – his “wares” in full demand,*

*And I, the Sh'china, reveal myself completely, for Chassidus takes the stand.*

*My joy's complete in beis rabbeinu sh'b'babel – 770, by number and occupation,*

*My homeless status disappeared, for here's my ikar revelation,*

*Building Shuls and using them, is the ultimate preparation,*

*Then I, the Sh'china, and Moshiach can travel to our perfect destination.*

*What personalized message does kuntres beis rabbeinu sh'b'babel share,*

*In this momentous and awesome Geula 5770 year,*

*To daven in 770 and donate with mamon is the path to prepare*

*For it is specifically in 770 where the sh'chinah will first appear.*

*Then wonders - all the Shuls throughout the ages join and connect*

*To 770 – whose wall is attached to the Beis HaMikdash direct.*

*Each mini mikdash home, where the geulas ha'sh'china is in effect,*

*Will usher in nachon yehiye har beis Hashem' - a world perfect and correct.*

*Then the Mikdash, from Shamayim, will travel and descend,*

*First stop, to 770, his chosen loyal mikdash m'at ha'ikari friend.*

*The journey of the Sh'china in Galus has thankfully reached the end,*

*For our Nasi ha'dor - The Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach has accomplished the final mend.*

*Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu V'Rabbeinu Melech HaMoshiach L'olam Va'ed!*

*This poem is based on kuntres beis rabeinu sh'b'babel, where the Rebbe explains 770 so expansively.*

*It is an amazing inspiration to understand, and then actually to visit, 770.*

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# LIKE A SON TO THE REBBE

By Nosson Avrohom

***Rabbi Moshe Dickstein went from a religious-Zionist high school to the yeshiva in Kfar Chabad, and became a mushpa of R' Mendel Futerfas a"h. His connection to the Rebbe manifested itself in an amazing dream, remarkable yechidusin, and tremendous kiruvim.***

It's impossible to define the persona of Rabbi Moshe Dickstein of Beer Sheva, a Chassid of many hats, even if this was a much longer and more detailed article. In his many roles, R' Dickstein carries out his duties fearlessly and with great love. A typical day finds him kashering a kitchen, giving a lecture about the Rebbe's attitude towards the State, or taking care of a deceased person. That's a partial list; he prefers not publicizing his other activities so as not to give ammunition to those who fight the implanting of the values of our tradition in the next generation.

I met R' Dickstein over a decade ago when I learned in high school in Rechovot. He came to farbreng at

one of our weekly get-togethers. What grabbed me as a young kid was hearing about the unusual kiruvim he got from the Rebbe in private audiences and responses, even when he was a boy and was attending a modern yeshiva high school in Nechalim.

R' Dickstein is not the type who normally gives interviews. He is a man of action and is constantly coming up with new ideas. This interview took place in three installments and each time I tried extracting more details we found him on his way to another activity of kiruv and hafatza. For forty consecutive years he has been devoting day after day and hour after hour to the Rebbe's mitzvaim.

## HE WON ME OVER

R' Dickstein was born in Tel Aviv to traditional parents who identified with Mizrachi. Both were Holocaust survivors. His father returned to his hometown after the war was over, was suspected by the Russians of being a German spy, and was sent to a labor camp in Siberia for two years. The memory of the Holocaust was very powerful in the Dickstein home, and they raised their children with the ideology of the resurrection of Eretz Yisroel and Zionism.

When he finished elementary school in Tel Aviv, he was sent to the flagship religious-Zionist high school of the time, the yeshiva high school in Nechalim.

"I got involved with Chassidus and the Rebbe MH"M in yeshiva. One of our madrichim in yeshiva was R' Zimroni Tzik, who later became a shliach in Bat Yam. This was in 5731/1971. He came into our classroom as a substitute teacher and began lecturing about fundamental questions in our lives.

"He raised deep questions about Torah and Judaism and when none of us raised a hand to respond, he presented us with answers that amazed us. Previously, when we had these questions, we preferred (or were told) to dismiss them, and here we were getting wonderful answers! At the end of the class he said that whoever was interested in more questions and answers could walk him home. I jumped at the opportunity, as did some other students.

"That shiur was the first taste. You can say that he won me over. I quickly moved on to the world of Chassidus. Next a Tanya shiur was started which attracted a number of us. I felt revived by the teachings of Chassidus. It was a whole new world to me. The only exposure I'd had to Chabad Chassidim until then was when I was in second grade and



our class went to Kfar Chabad to watch the matza baking.

“I started making some changes in my life but my parents did not look kindly upon my new interest. When I learned of the importance in growing a beard and I wanted to grow one, I met up with a wall of opposition. When I began wearing a hat to yeshiva, I would take it off and hide it in the fuse box before walking into the house. They gave me a hard time about the way I conducted myself on Pesach, following the standards that I had learned were mandatory according to the Rebbe and Chabad custom. Nor were they happy with my insistence on buying Chabad t’fillin. My mother bemoaned the black yarmulke I began wearing. ‘What’s wrong with a knitted kippa?’ she wanted to know.

“My parents and my immediate community weren’t trying to pick on me. They were sincerely concerned about my well being and thought I was heading in the wrong direction. My mother would fret about what the neighbors and relatives would say about my wearing my tzitzis out of my pants. It wasn’t at all easy to change into a Chabad Chassid. It was only later, when they were exposed to the power of the Rebbe and the power of Chabad that they changed their minds.

“Years later, my father told me why he had been so opposed to the ways of Chassidim and Chassidus. The reason had to do with his experiences during World War II.”

## DIFFICULTIES ON THE WAY TO LUBAVITCH

R’ Dickstein is a person who goes with the truth wherever it leads. He had a lot to contend with from his family and friends but that didn’t stop him from pursuing his interest in the Rebbe and Chassidus. When he heard that R’ Tzik was flying to the Rebbe, he asked him to give the



Rebbe a letter from him.

“It was my first letter to the Rebbe. I was so naïve and my questions reflected that. I had three questions. The first was whether, after I had gotten a taste of Chassidus, I could continue going to the B’nei Akiva Zionist youth group. The second question was whether I should wear my tzitzis out despite my parents’ constant harassment. The third question was whether I could continue going to the beach and the movies. I was a young kid in tenth grade and these were the questions on my mind.

“To my great excitement, R’ Tzik brought back an answer for me from the Rebbe. The Rebbe said that what is forbidden according to Shulchan Aruch is forbidden. As for

the tzitzis, when I was in school I could wear them out and when I got home I should respect my parents and tuck them in. I’ll never forget the joy I felt when I got this response and guidance from the Rebbe. From then on, I constantly received special kiruvim and clear answers to everything I asked.

“Another stage in my getting involved with Chabad took place on Yud Shevat when all of us mekuravim in the yeshiva in Nechalim went to the farbrengen in Kfar Chabad. R’ Tzik collected money from each of us to participate in the Torah of Moshiach and he got permission from the principal for us to go to Kfar Chabad.

“It was my first Chassidishe farbrengen. From then on, we

***I was a naïve kid in tenth grade and these were the questions on my mind when I wrote the Rebbe the first time... Could I continue going to the B'nei Akiva Zionist youth group... Should I wear my tzitzis out despite my parents' constant harassment... Could I continue going to the beach and the movies?***

attended many farbrengens in Kfar Chabad for special days in the calendar and we always returned on a high. Among the talmidim were Tzvi Weissman a"h, Boaz Segal, Avshalom Kiel, Yankele Sonnenfeld, and many others whose names I don't remember. We all owe our involvement with Chabad to R' Zimroni Tzik.

### **AMAZING DREAM OF THE REBBE**

"Around that time I had a heart-stopping experience. One night I had a dream that the pay phone in yeshiva rang and one of the boys went to answer it. After he hung it back up he hurried over to wake me and tell me that a Lubavitcher Chassid just told him that the Rebbe was on his way to Eretz Yisroel and they were asking that talmidim from Nechalim be there to welcome the Rebbe at the airport.

"In my dream we were all excited about the Rebbe's coming. The door of the plane opened and there stood the Rebbe, whom I recognized from the pictures. Next to him was Rabbi Chadakov and on his other side was another person I did not know. The Rebbe said something to R' Chadakov and then he went to the other man and whispered something to him. The latter went

down to the waiting people and asked whether there were any bachurim from the yeshiva in Nechalim. It was only when we said yes that the official event began in which the president of Israel, as well as other dignitaries, spoke.

"When the speeches were over, the Rebbe wanted to rest in the yeshiva in Nechalim. A long convoy left the airport for Nechalim and I was the one who offered my bed to the Rebbe.

"At this point I woke up, covered in a cold sweat. I'm not a big dreamer and yet this dream was so real; it seemed like a vision, and I found myself lying on the floor of my room.

"Some time later I told the dream to Rabbi Meir Bostomsky, who also worked a lot with the talmidim in the yeshiva in Nechalim, and he urged me to write it all to the Rebbe. I wasn't readily convinced but I finally decided to write. A few weeks later I received a letter from the Rebbe with a picture of the Rebbe enclosed that was sent by the secretaries, apparently by the Rebbe's instructions. I still have that picture. Once again I felt that the Rebbe was there for me like a father, taking care of all my needs.

"When I felt that I was deeply immersed in Chabad, I asked the Rebbe whether I could leave the

yeshiva in Nechalim and transfer to the yeshiva in Kfar Chabad. The Rebbe said I should first finish all my finals and then switch. As soon as I completed the matriculation exams, I transferred to yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim in Kfar Chabad.

"When I got to the yeshiva in Kfar Chabad I felt a big letdown. I was sure that all Chassidim were elevated people, considering that they learned Chassidus, but I discovered that Chassidim also have a yetzer ha'ra and they are human ... That broke me. I couldn't wrap my mind around it.

"R' Mendel had two main characteristics: truth and cleverness. Both of them melded together as he told me, 'I am just like you. I also don't understand those bachurim who behave that way.'

"That year six bachurim came to Eretz Yisroel from 770 in order to be shluchim to the yeshiva. Among them was Rabbi Moshe Rosenfeld. R' Mendel Futerfas made a shidduch between us to learn together and he also told me he would learn Tanya with me every morning for fifteen minutes at precisely 6:45, and that I should learn the first twelve chapters of Tanya by heart within a short period. This learning arrangement of ours lasted a long time and was an absolute delight.

"It was R' Mendel who tipped the scale in turning me into a Chassid"

### **LIKE A FATHER**

One day, R' Dickstein witnessed an incident in which R' Mendel behaved with outstanding forgiveness towards someone who greatly insulted him. R' Moshe was amazed by this and consequently became one of the bachurim who eagerly learned Chassidus and the ways of Chassidus from the legendary mashpia.

R' Moshe's Chassidic identity was shaped during the two years that he learned in Kfar Chabad, but

his family continued to badger him.

“My parents, who had experienced the horrors of the Holocaust, dreamed of a son who wouldn’t be like the old-fashioned Jew of a Chassidic shtetl but would study a profession and go to work. At my wits end, I shared my woes with R’ Mendel, who told me that I belonged in 770. That same day I bought a one way ticket to New York. I happily got into the atmosphere of 770 and got involved in mitvtzaim.

My first encounter with the Rebbe was when he gave out *lekach* on Erev Yom Kippur. Naturally, I was very excited. As the line moved and I inched closer to the Rebbe, my legs shook. I was given a piece of cake and I continued quickly outside so as not to waste the Rebbe’s time, but I was called back by R’ Meir Harlig.

“My heart pounded. I returned and stood before the Rebbe. He asked me in Yiddish about the bachurim in Nechalim. While speaking to me, he gave me some pieces of cake for them. Then the Rebbe asked me what was happening with my parents. I transferred the cake I had gotten for the talmidim in Nechalim to my left hand so I could receive cake for my parents with my right. I held out my right hand and received three pieces. I was somewhat taken aback by the Rebbe’s obvious ruach ha’kodesh, through which he knew that in addition to my parents, my sister was living at home.

“I was very moved by this great kiruv. When I arranged the pieces of cake again so as not to mix them up, the Rebbe said with a smile, ‘Send it as it is.’ That same day I sent the cake by express mail and I was later told that they received it before Sukkos. From then on I saw how the Rebbe regarded me with special fondness. Whenever I had yechidus I was given detailed answers in addition to the letters I



Rabbi Moshe Dickstein passing by the Rebbe

***R’ Mendel Futerfas a”h had come to serve as the head mashpia, by the Rebbe’s instructions, and I told him what I was feeling. ‘The Rebbe appointed you as mashpia of the yeshiva,’ I concluded. ‘You have to help me and guide me. What’s the solution?’***

received.

“During Tishrei I sent a letter into the Rebbe which described everything I had been through and why I had come to New York. I asked the Rebbe what I should do next. One possibility I mentioned was to learn in Chovevei Torah in Crown Heights. Another possibility was to learn in a yeshiva in a distant part of the United States and a third possibility was to return to Eretz Yisroel. The Rebbe’s answer was I should inquire about Morristown. I didn’t know anything about that yeshiva but after I looked into it I went to Rabbi Kalmanson’s house, where I heard that his son-in-law,

Rabbi Shmuel Heber, who was the mashgiach, was visiting.

“It was between Yom Kippur and Sukkos and though he heard me out, he said that the horaa was for me and not for him and he wasn’t obligated to accept me. I returned to 770 and wrote to the Rebbe about what the mashgiach told me. I said I had nobody in the United States and I felt that the Rebbe was like a father to me. After a few minutes, R’ Chadakov urgently summoned me to his office so he could hear what happened. Rabbi Shmuel Heber came in too and both of them agreed, after a brief discussion, that I should to be tested like any other



***I took the test and had to wait a day for the results. I put my suitcase in a corner and waited. A day later I called him and he said I had been accepted. When he heard that I had not gone back to New York but was still in Morristown, he said I was the first bachur to do that. For the next two years I learned in the yeshiva. That was a wonderful time in my life.***

bachur and I couldn't automatically be disqualified.

"He arranged an appointment for me to be tested in Morristown. I took the test and had to wait a day for the results. I put my suitcase in a corner and waited. A day later I called him and he said I had been accepted. When he heard that I had not gone back to New York but was still in Morristown, he said I was the first bachur to do that. For the next two years I learned in the yeshiva. That was a wonderful time in my life, and during that time I enjoyed a very special relationship with the Rebbe."

## **AMAZING YECHIDUYOS**

"I'll tell you one of many stories:

"On Monday, 20 Cheshvan, I was in Crown Heights. My glasses had broken and in those days Rabbi Mentlick would pay for glasses for the T'mimim, so I came in to Crown Heights to replace them. At the Torah reading in the Rebbe's minyan I wore Rabbi Yitzchok Blizinsky's glasses and they must have looked funny on me. When the davening was over, the secretary R' Binyamin Klein came over to me and asked me what I was doing there. I found this question surprising and asked him

why he wanted to know. He said it wasn't he who was asking. I realized it was coming from the Rebbe and I told him that my glasses would be ready at one o'clock and when I got them, I would return to Morristown.

"Then I thought – one minute! If the Rebbe was asking about me, it was very possible that there would be a farbrengen that day. Why was I rushing to leave? I quickly submitted a question for the Rebbe asking whether I could stay. R' Klein called me some time later and asked me to go to R' Chadakov's office, where I was told that the Rebbe asked me to stay but nobody should know."

In the afternoon, R' Dickstein went to 770 and a few minutes later the Rebbe returned from the Ohel and went to daven Mincha. When the davening was over, the Rebbe announced that a farbrengen would take place that evening. R' Dickstein was the only one from the yeshiva in Morristown who took part in that farbrengen - by direct instruction from the Rebbe.

That's not all of the unusual kiruvim he received. At his first yechidus, something interesting took place. He had written a long letter relating everything he had experienced from the day he was

born until coming to the Rebbe. At the end of the letter, which was written according to all the Chassidishe customs and rules, he wrote that he had heard at farbrengens from mashpiim that the first yechidus is like Maamad Har Sinai, and the way things are established there is how it will play out for the rest of one's life.

"Therefore, I added that I am asking the Rebbe to reveal to me the source of my soul and my mission in this world. I gave the letter to the secretaries before the yechidus and waited for my turn to be called in.

"When it was my turn, I went in trembling. The Rebbe put his hand over the big pile of letters that were on his desk and without looking, pulled out my letter. I was amazed to see how the Rebbe found my letter so effortlessly and I waited expectantly for what he would say. The Rebbe began answering my personal questions that I had written and at the conclusion he said I should come again before my wedding, 'and we will continue this yechidus,' he said.

"When I was about to have yechidus again years later, before my wedding, I mentioned in my letter that this yechidus was a continuation to the first. When I entered the Rebbe's room, the Rebbe read the paper and smiled broadly. But that's not the only interesting thing about that yechidus.

"I really wanted to bring in a tape recorder so I could record what the Rebbe said and play it for my kalla. In my letter I mentioned this too and added that in this way my kalla participated in the yechidus and I asked permission to record.

"I gave the Rebbe the letter and waited for his consent. The Rebbe read the letter and when he read the lines about the tape recorder he smiled and waved his hand dismissively as though to say, 'Okay, fine.'

"As I stood near the doorway on



my way out, the Rebbe gave me a dollar and said to give it to the kalla in a way permissible according to Shulchan Aruch and added that I should tell her to put it between the stones of the Kosel on the day of the wedding.

“When I left the room, R’ Groner saw me holding two dollars and he asked me about them. I told him about the Rebbe’s instruction in which he made me a shliach to my kalla. R’ Groner was beside himself and said this was the first time he was hearing that the Rebbe made a chassan a shliach to the kalla before the wedding.

## A COUGH IS A KITRUG

“A few months after the wedding I was back in 770 and I had another yechidus. I very much wanted to record the Rebbe again and I wrote in my letter that I had a tape with me. When the Rebbe read my request, he smilingly asked, ‘Why do you need a tape?’ and then he conceded, ‘Nu, fine.’

“At this yechidus something happened that was frightening. My wife was in Eretz Yisroel and pregnant, and the doctors were pessimistic about the birth. They had found a problem with her uterus and told us that she would have to undergo a Cesarean birth. In my letter I asked the Rebbe that the birth be easy and normal and without an operation or complications.

“The Rebbe waved his hand dismissively when he read the medical diagnosis and my wife gave birth to our first child without any problem in a normal birth. In this yechidus the Rebbe said, ‘may it be an easy birth and merit to raise him b’gashmius,’ and the Rebbe paused to cough and then finished the sentence, ‘and b’ruchnius.’

“When I left the room, I wrote a transcript of the yechidus based on the recording and between the words



Rabbi Moshe Dickstein holding the Rebbe’s Torah scroll



Rabbi Moshe Dickstein reaching out to Israeli soldiers

‘gashmius’ and ‘ruchnius’ I wrote, ‘the Rebbe coughed.’ In the margin I wrote that Chassidim say that when the Rebbe coughs there is something amiss and I asked whether I could know what happened.

“I gave my transcript to R’ Groner and received an answer a

while later. The Rebbe had circled the words, ‘and the Rebbe coughed’ and made an arrow on bottom where he wrote, ‘there were kitrugim’ (heavenly accusations).”

## OUTREACH WORK

After learning in Morristown for

***We have a house in Kfar Chabad but I understood that I couldn't live there anymore after this explicit instruction to go south. A few minutes after I left the yechidus, someone asked whether I was from Kfar Chabad. The day before, the Rebbe told him to move to Kfar Chabad and he was looking for an apartment. I was stunned by the hashgacha pratis. That evening we signed a contract...***

two years, Rabbi Dickstein returned to Eretz Yisroel. The rest of his class was going to Cincinnati to open a new yeshiva and he wrote to the Rebbe and asked whether he should join them. The Rebbe's answer was very surprising. The Rebbe wrote, "Go up to Eretz Yisroel to the Chabad house in Bat Yam." He had not even mentioned this as a possibility. His direction was clear; his shlichus in the United States was over and he was being directed to Israel.

"As soon as I arrived in Eretz Yisroel I began working for the Chabad house in Bat Yam. Outreach was then at peak intensity. The first mitzva tank in Eretz Yisroel was in Bat Yam, as was the first car that drove around and announced times for candle lighting. Spearheaded by R' Zimroni Tzik we did tremendous work that merited amazing responses from the Rebbe at every step. At a certain point I was asked to do work and lecture in the Bavli neighborhood of Tel Aviv and from that point on, I began to work in outreach on a regular basis.

"What initially got me there was something that I am involved with till this day – bar mitzva lectures in

schools. One of our mekuravim from that period was Rami Antian a"h. His story is amazing. There was someone who did mitzva mezuzah and he showed up at an office in Tel Aviv and changed all the mezuzos. The office people asked him for receipts and he said he didn't have any and they were upset. 'Money without receipts?!' and they threatened to besmirch his name in the newspapers.

"They knew Rami, who was then a sports writer, and told him what happened. He jumped on the story as if it was a major scoop. The man realized he was in big trouble and he asked me for help. I arranged an appointment with Rami on Rechov HaRav Kook in Tel Aviv. First, I suggested that he put on t'fillin, but he declined. We spoke about this and that and I was surprised to hear that he had been to the Rebbe during his military service. He had been the editor of the Navy newsletter when a delegation from the Navy visited the Rebbe as part of a trip to the United States.

"He told me enthusiastically about his amazing encounter with the Rebbe and said he had a Siddur that he had gotten from the Rebbe.

Our conversation took off and he soon forgot all about his big journalistic scoop. We arranged to start learning Pirkei Avos together every week, and we soon became very good friends. He ended up going to the yeshiva in Tzfas.

"I can't leave out the grand Lag B'Omer parade that we organized together in Kikar Malchei Yisroel in 5740/1980. The terrific organization and the attractions we offered the kids drew a huge crowd. Unfortunately, not everyone looked positively on our parade. A rabbi in B'nei Brak was appalled that we had advertised that there would be magicians. He vehemently protested that this is against the halacha and other rabbis joined him. Their protest didn't have the power to stop the parade but unfortunately, Lubavitcher rabbanim joined in and said we had made a chilul Hashem and a chilul sheim Lubavitch. Lubavitchers in Eretz Yisroel were divided over the issue.

"After the parade my plan was to go to 770 but since I was afraid that I was guilty of causing the Rebbe anguish I ordered a return ticket that would leave a few hours after I landed in New York!

"When I arrived at Beis Chayeinu I wrote to the Rebbe about the successful parade which had thousands of children and I promised pictures. After a detailed description, I wrote that in Eretz Yisroel there was a commotion concerning the parade because of a magic show when our only desire had been to attract the children. In the end, a magician hadn't actually performed. I wrote that I didn't know if I was in the Rebbe's good graces and if I wasn't, then I had a return ticket for that day and I wouldn't come again until I had the Rebbe's permission. I wrote in the margin that in the meantime I was waiting in 770 for a reply.

"I stayed in the office with my suitcases and waited for an answer.

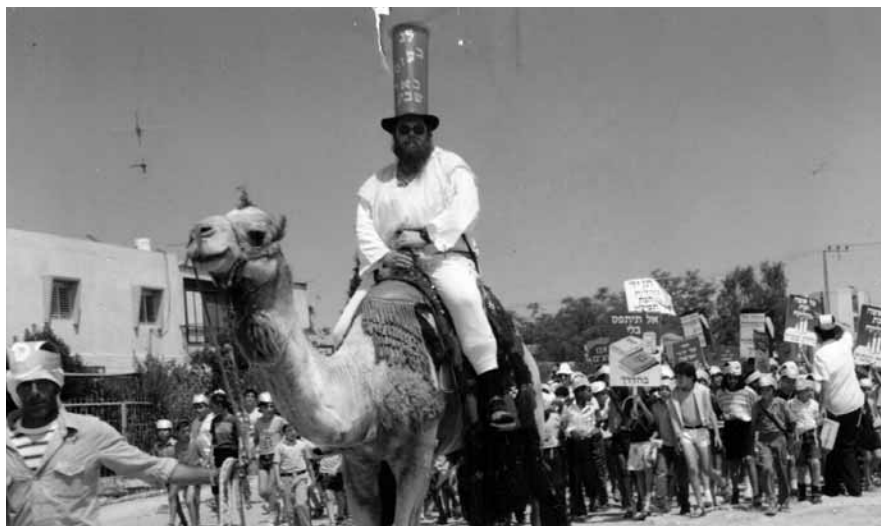
R' Klein had warned me to think it over before I submitted the letter but my mind was made up. The Rebbe was davening Mincha on the other side of the wall. I can't describe to you how I felt in those moments. I was confused and anxious. How would the Rebbe respond to my letter? R' Chadakov calmed me down by saying that the Rebbe is a good father and even if he didn't like the parade, he wouldn't be upset and he surely wouldn't tell me to go back to Israel that same night.

"When Mincha was over R' Klein took the letter to the Rebbe's room. I felt like a tightly coiled spring. He came out shortly with an answer. The Rebbe had underlined the words, 'if I am pleasing,' and wrote, 'he is pleasing and his deeds are pleasing,' and he gave a few dollars as a token of his participation in my trip to see him. I was overjoyed. I rushed to the entrance and waited for the Rebbe to come out. When he did, I was about to say the SheHechyanu bracha when to my surprise, the Rebbe stopped near me. In my excitement I started repeating every bracha I knew until I collected myself.

"When I finally uttered the bracha the Rebbe answered amen and continued on his way. I was thrilled. When I realized the Rebbe had had nachas from the parade, there was no limit to my joy. That Shabbos I enjoyed tremendous kiruvim from the Rebbe. The Rebbe told me to say l'chaim over a big cup and then spoke sharply about those who mock the spreading of the wellsprings and explained that the reason for this rabbi's unwarranted hatred was that he wore pasul t'fillin (the sicha is printed in Sichos Kodesh 5740 vol. 3)."

## THE REBBE SAID: BEER SHEVA`

In 5740, R' Dickstein presented various shlichus suggestions to the



**R' Moshe Dickstein leading the Lag B'Omer parade in Beer Sheva**

Rebbe. After a few weeks, he asked R' Groner why he had still not received a reply, and he suggested that he write again. Several more weeks passed, and he wrote to the Rebbe once again about possible places for shlichus and asked the Rebbe to direct him. The Rebbe's answer was, 'Precedence to Beer Sheva.'

"Before leaving 770 after Shavuot, I had yechidus and the Rebbe blessed me as soon as I walked in with 'Mazal tov Moshe.' When I left, R' Klein asked me what the mazal tov was for and I said I did not know. He asked me whether my wife was pregnant and I said she was but it was early on in the pregnancy. When I asked R' Mendel Futerfas about it, he said that since I was in the first year of my marriage, I was being wished mazal tov for the wedding.

"When the yechidus was over, the Rebbe once again blessed me with outstanding success in the shlichus in Beer Sheva.

"We have a house in Kfar Chabad but I understood that I couldn't live there anymore after this explicit instruction to go south. A few minutes after I left the yechidus, I met a Lubavitcher who asked me whether I was from Kfar Chabad. I



**Receiving a certificate of appreciation from the mayor of Beer Sheva**

was surprised by his out of the blue question and he explained that the day before, the Rebbe told him to move to Kfar Chabad and he was looking for an apartment. I was stunned by the hashgacha pratit. That evening we signed a contract and he rented our house for years."

The first thing R' Dickstein did in Beer Sheva was to become the official rabbi in various religious and irreligious schools. These positions were later phased out by the Minister of Education Yitzchok Navon, but he continued teaching Jewish classes in several schools. He also increased his involvement in spreading the wellsprings by koshering utensils etc., which he had already begun doing under the auspices of the Chabad house run by Rabbi Tanchum Boroshansky. Over



the years, they koshered thousands of kitchens.

He has some advice for beginners. "First, go to the house with a rav because there are many halachic complications. As the years pass, there are more and more technological innovations that require halachic answers like the Crockpot and the electric frying pan. Second, sit and learn the subject over and over. Third, be practical; learn about the various utensils so the koshering work will be done properly. Boruch Hashem, I have never broken anything. Fourth, be patient and think things through; don't rush and don't be hasty. When you're working with fire and boiling water, you can't afford thoughtlessness."

### THE SOUL SPEAKS

In addition to this work, R' Dickstein is also a regional director of Zaka (a volunteer rescue, life-saving and recovery organization in Israel that responds to incidents of terrorism, accidents or disasters) in the Beer Sheva area. The wall of his office is full of thank you letters and notices of appreciation. Wherever he goes he makes a point of displaying the fact that he is a Chassid and mekushar to the Rebbe and he says this is the secret to his success. He says that in all his activities he sees how the world is ready for Geula, begging for it to come. Today nobody believes in all the old false ideologies. Everybody understands that the only solution is Moshiach.

*"The quickest way to reveal Moshiach is by learning the Torah sources about Moshiach & redemption"* ש"פ תזריע ומצורע היתנש"א



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### APPROBATION

I strongly recommend the esteemed project of Radio Moshiach, which operates here in our neighborhood of Crown Heights, "Here has Hashem commanded His blessing," as well as in other surrounding neighborhoods. Radio Moshiach enables countless individuals to listen to the Rebbe's Farbrengens, to divrei Torah in the concepts of Geulah and Moshiach, to niggunei Chabad and more, which generates a holy, uplifted atmosphere in the homes of all listeners.

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Upon this statement I affix my signature, Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> Tamuz 5766



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