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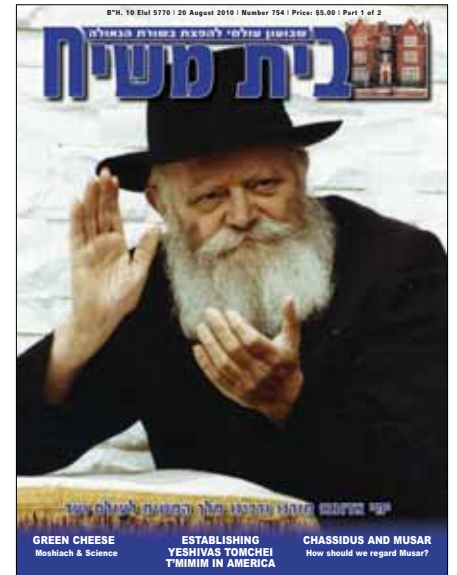
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ON THE HOME FRONT OF TOMCHEI T'MIMIM

Feature | Dafna Chaim



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V'DIBARTA BAM: KI TEITZEI

Sichos In English

“When you will go out to war against your enemies, and G-d, your G-d, will deliver them into your hand.” (21:10)

QUESTION: Instead of “*ki teitzei lamilchamah*” — “when you will go out to war” — it should have said “*ki tilcham im oyevecha*” — “when you will be at war with your enemy”?

ANSWER: This *parshah* is read during the month of *Elul*, the optimal time for doing *teshuvah*; it is not only discussing a physical war, but is also alluding to man’s spiritual battle. Man has a *yeitzer tov* — good inclination — and a *yeitzer hara* — evil inclination. Each one fights to control man’s direction, and it is extremely difficult for man to overcome his powerful *yeitzer hara*. However, our sages (*Shabbat* 104a) have declared that “*haba letaheir mesai'im oto*” — “the one who wants to purify himself (improve his ways) is assisted from Heaven.” Similarly the *Midrash Rabbah* (Song of Songs 5:2) states that Hashem says to the Jewish people, “Make a small opening (of *teshuvah*) like the opening of a needle, and I will open for you entrances through which caravans can pass.”

In encouraging man to do *teshuvah*, the Torah is assuring us that “*ki teitzei lamilchamah*” — if you will only resolve to go out and wage war “*al oyevecha*” — “against the enemy” — i.e. the *yeitzer hara*

— you will surely be victorious because Hashem will hand him over to you.

Alternatively, the *Zohar* (*Bamidbar* 243:a), compares the inner struggle in man during prayer to a time of war. “Your enemy,” the *yeitzer hara* tries in every way to distract the person and disturb his *kavanah*, and man endeavors very hard to overcome him.

Therefore, Torah advises: The ideal solution is “*ki teitzei*” — to “go out” — i.e. one should leave his home and go to *shul* to *daven* with a *minyan*. There, one will eliminate many distractions one encounters while praying at home, and the battle with the *yeitzer hara* will be won easily.

“When you will go out to war against your enemies, and G-d, your G-d, will deliver them into your hand and you will capture its captivity.” (21:10)

QUESTION: The word “*shivyo*” — “its captivity” — literally means “his captive.” Should not the *pasuk* have said, “*shivyecha*” — “your captive” — or “*shevi*” — “a captive”?

ANSWER: In wartime generals try to determine the strategy of the enemy and plan their defense accordingly. Similarly, in the battle with the *yeitzer hara* — the evil inclination — a person should pay

careful attention to how he becomes “*shivyo*” — “his captive.” One should thus place great emphasis on capturing and taking control, i.e. eliminating the weaknesses upon which the *yeitzer hara* preys.

Alternatively, the *yeitzer hara* works with excitement and alacrity, never tiring or giving up. The moment a person is off guard, the “*yeitzer*” captures him and he falls into his net and becomes “*shivyo*” — “his captive.” The way to counter his attack is by using *his* methods (namely excitement and alacrity) in the performance of *mitzvot*, fulfilling Hashem’s will with dedication and zeal. Thus, “by capturing” — i.e. using for Hashem — the methods through which the *yeitzer hara* makes you “*shivyo*” — “his captive” — you will ultimately capture him and rule over him.

“And you will see among its captivity a woman who is of beautiful form, and you will desire her and you may take her for yourself for a wife.” (21:11)

QUESTION: Rashi writes, “*lo dibrah Torah ela keneged yeitzer hara*” — “The Torah spoke only in response to the evil inclination.” What does Rashi want to exclude, by using the word “*ela*” — “only”?

ANSWER: The *Gemara* (*Yevamot* 63a) states that although Rabbi Chiya’s wife mistreated him, he would bring her presents. In puzzlement, Rav asked, “But she causes agony to our teacher?” To which Rabbi Chiya replied, “It is sufficient that she raises our children and she saves us from sin” (“thoughts of immorality” — Rashi).

Regarding the “*yefat to'ar*” — “woman of beautiful form” — the Torah predicts that ultimately the child born from this marriage will end up being a “*ben sorer umoreh*” — “a wayward and rebellious son.” Thus, while all wives provide at least

two benefits to their husbands (raising the children and saving him from sin), in this case, however, the husband may be spared improper thoughts caused by the evil inclination, but he will not derive through her the benefit of having his children raised properly.

Hence, Rashi writes that the Torah permitted marrying her “*ela keneged yeitzer hara*” — **only** for the assistance she can offer in one’s battle with the *yeitzer hara*. The other benefit, however, which man expects to receive from a marriage, raising good children, does not apply in this case.

“But it shall be that if you do not desire her, then you shall send her on her own.” (21:14)

QUESTION: Rashi writes, “Scripture informs you that eventually you will hate her.” Where is the evidence for this in the *parshah*?

ANSWER: When a man marries a woman, he gives her a *ketubah* — a marriage contract. If he develops a hatred for her, he gives her a *get* — a divorce. In each document the date is essential. In a *ketubah* the wording is; “so many days *lechodesh* — to the month of...” In a *get* the wording is; “so many days *leyerach* — to the month of...” The reason for the different names for “month” is as follows: The word “*chodesh*” is related to the word “*chadash*” — “new,” and since when speaking of marriage the Torah says “*ki yikach ish ishah chadashah*” — “when a man marries a *new* wife” (23:5) Hence, in the marriage contract for his new wife, the month is called “*chodesh*.”

The process of releasing one’s self and his wife from their covenant of marriage is known as “*geirushin*.” Since in the Torah there is the expression “*geresh yerachim*” — which means “the yield of the moons” (*Devarim* 33:14), we assume that this is a hint that when

one is preparing a document of “*geirushin*” — “divorce” — the term used for month is “*yerech*.”

Although the Torah permits bringing home a captive woman, it is not happy about it and hopes that the captor’s desire will ultimately evaporate and he will send her away. Hence, the Torah prescribes that when he brings home his captive woman, she must make herself unattractive and sit in mourning for “*yerech yamim*” — a full month. The term “*yerech*,” which is commonly used in a divorce document, is used here as an indication that ultimately he will divorce himself from her and send her away.

“If a man will have two wives, one beloved and one hated, and they bear him sons, the beloved one and the hated one, and the firstborn son is the hated one’s — he cannot give the right of the firstborn to the son of the beloved one ahead of the son of the hated one, the firstborn.” (21:15, 16)

QUESTION: The word “*penei*” — “ahead of” (literally “the face of”) — seems superfluous. Could not the *pasuk* have said, “*al ben hasenuah habechor*” — “over the firstborn son of the hated one”?

ANSWER: The Rambam (*Nachalot* 2:2) rules that if one has two wives who are giving birth at the same time, and the forehead of one baby emerges but delays in coming out, and in the interim the second woman’s baby emerges entirely, the first one (whose forehead only emerged) is considered to be the firstborn and receives a double portion of inheritance.

It may be that the *pesukim* about the “beloved” and “hated” wives are alluding to this *halachah*. Thus, if one has two wives, a beloved one and a hated one, and the forehead of the child of the hated one emerges first and afterwards the other child is fully born, the father cannot give the right of the firstborn to the son of

the beloved “*al penei*” — “over the face of” — the hated one. Since the forehead (which is the part of the face above the eyes) of the son of the hated one emerged first, he is lawfully the firstborn and entitled to a double portion.

“Then it shall be that on the day that he causes his sons to inherit that which he possesses.” (21:16)

QUESTION:

1, The word “*vehayah*” indicates a *simchah* — joy (*Vayikra Rabbah* 11:7); what joy is the Torah alluding to?

2. The words “*et asher yiheyeh lo*” — “that which he possesses” — seem extra; obviously his children can inherit only that which he has?

ANSWER: There are many parents who pride themselves for having given their children much more than *they* had. They reminisce about their arrival in America, when they struggled to make a living, and they congratulate themselves for providing their children with a comfortable lifestyle and the higher education that they lacked.

While it is good to give our children things we did *not* have, it is crucial not to forget to give our children what we *did* have. Just as our parents inculcated in us a love for Torah and *mitzvot*, and inspired us to be *shomrei Torah u’mitzvot*, it is incumbent upon us to instill in our children the same dedication and devotion. Even when a parent helps his child to become a professional, he should impress upon him to be a *Torah-observing* professional.

The Torah therefore says “*vehayah*” — it is worthy to rejoice if one leaves as an inheritance to his children not only that which he never had in his youth, but also “*et asher yiheyeh lo*” — “that which he possesses” — i.e. the Torah upbringing which he received and the Torah lifestyle which he practices.

“Then it shall be that on the day that he causes his sons to inherit whatever will be his... To give him the double portion in all that is found with him.” (21:16, 17)

QUESTION: In the first *pasuk* is says, “*yiheye lo*” — “will be his” — and in the second *pasuk* it says “*yimatzei lo*” — “that is found with him.” Why is there an inconsistency?

ANSWER: According to *halachah*, a firstborn receives one portion more than his brothers. However, this applies only to what belonged to the father at the time of death and not to property acquired posthumously, such as lottery winnings. The first *pasuk*, which uses the term “*yiheye lo*” — “will be his” (in the future tense) — is referring to assets acquired posthumously, in which all brothers share equally. The second *pasuk* is discussing the law of giving a firstborn a double portion, and this applies only to that which is “*yimatzei lo*” — “found with him” — at the time of his death.

“He must recognize the firstborn... to give him the double portion in all that is found with him.” (21:17)

QUESTION: Why is a firstborn called a “*bechor*” in Hebrew?

ANSWER: According to the Torah, when a person dies his estate is divided into equal parts with the firstborn son receiving two parts while each of the other sons receive one. For example, if a man has three sons, the eldest receives half and the other two each receive a fourth. The *halachah* of a firstborn receiving an additional portion applies only to “*muchzak*” — an estate that is present at the time of the father’s death. If the father had bought a lottery ticket and after his death his ticket wins, the entire prize is divided equally among the three brothers.

This is all alluded to in the word

“*bechor*”:

1. The letter *beit* is numerically equivalent to two times the *alef* that precedes it, the letter *kaf* is double the letter *yud* preceding it, and the letter *reish*, which has the numerical value of 200, is double that of *kuf* which precedes it. These are the only letters in the *alef-beit* whose numerical values are double the letters they follow. Thus, the title of the firstborn is composed of these three letters, hinting to the fact that he receives a double portion.

2. The *beit*, *kaf*, and *reish* are double the numbered value of the letter which precedes it. This is a hint that the *bechor* only receives a double portion of that which is already “before” the sons when the inheritance takes place, but not of that which only becomes available afterwards.

“If a man will have a wayward and rebellious son, who does not hearken to the voice of his father and the voice of his mother.” (21:18)

QUESTION: Why is the word “*bekol*” — “to the voice” — repeated? It could have simply said, “He does not hearken to the voice of his father and mother”?

ANSWER: When a man and woman enter into marriage, it is extremely important that they have similar views and mutual goals for the family they hope to raise. Unfortunately, the husband and wife sometimes do not see eye to eye in their aspirations for their children. The Torah is telling us that when a child is exposed to a “*kol aviv*” — “a father’s voice” — and a “*kol imo*” — “a mother’s voice” — each one telling the child different things, it is possible that the child, receiving mixed signals, may end up being wayward and rebellious.

When the parents bring their child to the elders of the city, they say to them, “This son of ours is

wayward and rebellious ‘*einenu shomei’a bekoleinu*’ — ‘he does not hearken to our voice.’” Since in the household the mother’s opinion and the father’s opinion were two separate voices, the father should have complained to the elders, “He does not hearken to *my* voice,” and the mother should have said, “He does not hearken to *my* voice.” Why do they say “*einenu shomei’a bekoleinu*” — “he does not hearken to *our* voice” — which suggests that there was one unified voice in the home?

Often parents attempt to deny the lack of absolute domestic unity between them and blame their problems on someone else. They are actually saying to the elders, “We cannot comprehend why in our home where there exists ‘*koleinu*’ — ‘a unified voice between us’ — our son turned out stubborn and rebellious.”

Undoubtedly, after careful analysis, the elders will reprove the parents and tell them, “While you may have deceived us for a short while, you cannot fool your child who lives with you in your home. He detected the lack of unity between you, and this brought him to his current situation.”

“If a man will have a wayward and rebellious son.” (21:18)

QUESTION: The *Gemara* (*Sanhedrin* 71a) mentions an opinion that there never was a “*ben sorer umoreh*” nor will there ever be one. The *Gemara* asks, “If so, why was this portion written in the Torah?” and answers, “*derosh vekabeil sechar*” — “study it and receive the reward for studying Torah.”

One is rewarded for studying *any* part of the Torah. Why did the Torah include a totally hypothetical subject for the purpose of reward?

ANSWER: Regarding the “*ben sorer umoreh*” referred to in the Torah, there are many conditions to

be met which make it virtually impossible for one to fall into that category. Nevertheless, in our society there are, unfortunately, many children who in a sense are wayward and rebellious. The *Gemara* is telling us that by carefully studying the portion of “*ben sorer umoreh*” and learning its lessons, one will acquire valuable insights into raising children. This will, in turn, lead to a “great reward,” namely children who will grow up in the proper way and bring *nachas* to their parents.

“All the men of his city shall pelt him with stones and he shall die and you shall remove the evil from your midst.” (21:21)

QUESTION: Rashi writes that the “*ben sorer umoreh*” — “wayward and rebellious son” — is put to death “*al sheim sofo*” — “because of his end.” The Torah has determined his final intentions: Eventually he will consume his father’s wealth, and when he cannot maintain his extravagant habits, he will rob people. Consequently, the Torah said, ‘Let him die innocent and not die guilty.’ “

The matriarch Sarah was displeased with Yishmael’s behavior and demanded that Avraham chase him out together with his mother, Hagar. While she was wandering in the wilderness of Beer-Sheva, an angel appeared and told her, “Fear not, for G-d has heeded the cry of the youth ‘*ba’asher hu sham*’ — *in his present state*” (*Bereishit* 21:17). Rashi explains, “Though the angels pleaded with Hashem not to perform a miracle for Yishmael because his descendants would persecute and murder Jews, Hashem refused to listen and judged Yishmael ‘according to his present state (deeds)’ — and not according to what he would do in the future.”

Why is the *ben sorer umoreh* treated harsher than Yishmael?

ANSWER: In general, Hashem

judges a person in accordance with his present state and thus spared Yishmael’s life. An exception to the rule is the case of the wayward and rebellious child, to whom Torah gives two descriptions “*sorer*” and “*moreh*.” The word “*moreh*” can also mean “a teacher.” Not only does he conduct himself badly, but he is also teaching and influencing others to follow suit. If he kept his actions to himself, the Torah would not take such a harsh stance toward him. However, he is being judged “*al sheim sofo*” — “by the *end* part of his *name*.” Since, in addition to being a “*sorer*” — one who turns away from Hashem — he is also a “*moreh*” — teaching others and having a bad influence — and so he must be stopped immediately.

“If a man shall have committed a sin whose judgment is death, and he be put to death, and you shall hang him on a gallows.” (21:22)

QUESTION: The words “*cheit*” — “sin” — and “*vehumat*” — “and he be put to death” — are superfluous. It could have said, “If a man shall have a judgment of death, and you shall hang him on a gallows”?

ANSWER: When the great Kabbalist Rabbi Moshe Cordevero passed away, the Arizal delivered a eulogy based on this *pasuk*. He explained that the word “*cheit*” does not only mean “sin” but also means “lack, miss” as in the *pasuk*, “Men, all of whom could sling a stone at a hair ‘*velo yachti*’ — and not miss” (*Judges* 20:16). Another example is Batsheva’s statement to King David, “*Vehayiti ani ubeni Shlomo chata’im*” — “I and my son Shlomo will be lacking (denied any prominence)” (*I Kings* 1:21, Rashi).

Man was originally created immortal. But when the serpent persuaded Chava to eat the fruit of the forbidden *Eitz Hada’at* — Tree of Knowledge — she brought death to the world; man would die for his

sins. The *Gemara* (*Bava Batra* 17a), however, says that there were four *tzaddikim* who never committed any sins, and who only died because of “*itiyo shel nachash*” — the advice of the serpent to Chava, which is the source of death for humans.

The Arizal explained the *pasuk* to mean, “If there will be ‘*ish*’ — a prominent person who is ‘*cheit mishpat mavet*’ — ‘*lacking any reason to deserve the judgment of death*’ — i.e. totally innocent of any sins, and yet ‘*vehumat*’ — he was put to death by the Angel of Death, ‘*vetalita oto al eitz*’ — you should hang i.e. attribute his passing on the ‘*eitz*’ — the serpent’s advice to Chava to eat the fruit of the forbidden tree.”

“If you build a new house, you shall make a fence for your roof, so that you will not place blood in your house if a faller falls from it.” (22:8)

QUESTION: The word “*mimenu*” — “from it” — is superfluous?

ANSWER: The word “*bayit*” — “house” — has the numerical value of four hundred and twelve. The words “*ma’akeh gagecha*” — “fence of your roof” — have the numerical value of two hundred and forty-one. By subtracting the numerical value of “*ma’akeh gagecha*” (two hundred and forty-one) from the word “*bayit*” (four hundred and twelve) one hundred and seventy-one remains, which is the numerical value of the word “*hanofeil*” — “a faller.”

The Torah is cautioning us that one who builds a new house should put a fence on the roof; otherwise, if he subtracts it from the house, i.e. does not put a fence on the roof, there will, G-d forbid, be “*hanofeil*” a “faller,” and this is evident “*mimenu*” — “from it” — from the numerical value of the word “*bayit*” less “*ma’akeh gagecha*.”

VACATION TIME: WHAT PARENTS NEED TO KNOW... AND DO

By Sholom Ber Crombie

Translated By Michoel Leib Dobry

As the holidays draw to a close and the school year begins, we turned to Rabbi Dr. Ori Marton – lecturer in academics, guidance counselor, and skilled educator. He analyzes the potential and the pitfalls of holiday time, skillfully guiding that most key figure who shapes the child’s behavior and values – the parent.

During the decades he served as a teacher in Tzfas’ Ohr Menachem Talmud Torah, Rabbi Dr. Ori Marton was privileged to educate hundreds of students, many of whom have gone on to become shlichim and educators themselves. In his role as an educator, Rabbi Marton was known for his unique approach and the original system that he developed to capture the hearts of his students and instill them with an original brand of Chabad education. Alongside the Chabad authenticity, Rabbi Marton developed various unique methods

in education, such as “Shmerele Bomba” – an imaginary descriptive character who accompanies the class study throughout the year, or the exemplary “Mitzvah Store” in operation in his classroom.

In recent years, Rabbi Marton has served as an educational advisor, providing direction to parents and teachers alike in the holy field of Jewish education. In his characteristically distinctive manner, he knows how to place an emphasis in the right places, stressing simplicity, feeling, and love, together with a clear and orderly style in

education that sets clear-cut boundaries.

The interview with Rabbi Marton was conducted during the summer *bein ha’z’manim*, when he sums up the previous scholastic year and gives educational direction in preparation for the new one.

As we began the interview, Rabbi Marton asked to say as a preface that from his point of view, davening is the most important thing for a child’s education: “Before all the advice, opinions, tips, and ‘words of wisdom’ – the first thing is simply to pray to G-d, and to ask the Rebbe every day for a bracha for success in educating one’s children. We must plead and request from the depths of our souls that they should go in the path of chassidus, and if possible, we should even do so three times a day. While this is essentially a spiritual manner, there’s also a very practical aspect here. When children see that their father and mother really daven for this and that it touches their heart and soul, and when they notice how the volumes of Igros Kodesh at home are filled with letters asking for success with their chinuch – it leaves a strong impression upon the child, and he



feels that his chassidic education is extremely important to his parents.”

MANAGING FOOD, FUNDS AND FRUSTRATION

What can parents do to achieve success in their children’s education during the holidays?

There are children and even parents who think that the *bein ha’z’manim* is really a vacation – a time when it’s possible to relax a little. This is a time to let the child go a bit, a little less supervision, and not as much scrutiny of his actions – or so they think. Such parents conclude that since this time is designed for invigoration, they can loosen the reins a little...

They couldn’t be more wrong. It is during the *bein ha’z’manim*, when the child’s world doesn’t revolved around school, his teachers and his principal, that he has the time and opportunity to contemplate on his parents, to see exactly where they are and what interests them. During this period of time, every detail carries even greater importance. Over the regular course of the year, the child spends the majority of his

day at school, while his father is learning, working, or involved in other pursuits.

Bein ha’z’manim affords him an opportunity to know more about his father, for the benefit of both. Throughout such a period, the child gets a renewed picture of his father and he is surprised to learn things about him that he may not have had opportunity to observe before. For example, the child notices if his father sets aside time for Torah study, whether or not he davens in a minyan, and the stringency with which he adheres to these practices.

The period of *bein ha’z’manim* brings various opportunities. For example, families often take advantage of the children being out of school to go on family outings. When they’re out on a trip and it comes time to daven Mincha, just as everyone is swimming in the Sea of Galilee or crossing the river in a canoe – what does the father do? Does he wait until the last minute, and daven near the car, or is he already under pressure an hour before sundown? Where will we daven Mincha? Where can we find a minyan? The father considers where they are going and where they will

be at Mincha time, in order that he can daven as he should. If the father makes certain not to miss davening Mincha in a minyan, even in the middle on a trip to northern Israel, this leaves an indelible impression in the child’s mind.

The child discovers his father primarily during *bein ha’z’manim*, and this point is very important for parents to consider.

Children view *bein ha’z’manim* as a vacation from school and studies – how much can the parent really demand of them during this time?

There’s also another side – parents who think that *bein ha’z’manim* is an appropriate time to educate their children and teach them to fulfill mitzvos with greater stringency, for example. They see their role as strictly criticizing and controlling the child’s behavior much as would be done in school.

Criticism can build a person, if you know how to present it constructively. However, in most cases that I have seen, it serves no purpose and the damage caused can be considerable. For example, if the child sleeps until a late hour, and the father “nudges” him to get up and daven – the child usually will feel as if he’s living under “a totalitarian regime”. Even if he eventually does get up and daven, the whole pleasant experience associated with the avoda of davening has been lost.

In such a case, we have to know to take “the golden path”, and this is a doctrine unto itself. What is extremely important is to be a *lebedike baishpiel* (a living example), and it gives things a chance to penetrate. If the child sees that Tatty gets up early in the morning and goes to the minyan even on his days off, and if he sees that Tatty is stringent about saying brachos out loud – this will have a far greater effect upon the child than anything

else possibly could.

How can the parent transmit to the child the great value of Torah study, Chassidishkait, and yiras Shamayim?

Our Sages, of blessed memory, have said that a person is known by his *kos*, his *kis*, and his *kaas* (literally – his cup, his pocket, and his anger). We see this clearly in the field of education. The children learn to recognize us through the little things.

A child notices and sees what really interests his father. Tatty can talk all day about how very important it is to learn Torah and to utilize the days of *bein ha'z'manim* effectively. He even tells his son, "Zalmy, go to shul and learn Gemara." But the boy picks up on what really arouses his father's interest. Does he get all excited when he can hear the sound of his son's learning, or when he reads the upsetting news in the papers at breakfast?

When the father comes home from shul and tells the mother "how nicely Zalmy davened in shul", yet immediately afterwards, he moves on to far more "important" matters, he realizes that his father's enthusiasm with his davening was just an act. The child sees clearly what his father's interests are – what his "*kos*" is.

Similarly, we find regarding his "*kis*". The child discovers what things his father is really prepared to pay for. For example, when the child asks for a new toy, his father tells him, "We have no money, because we're saving for more important and appropriate things: Mendy has to go to camp, Yitzzy has to travel to the Rebbe this year – that's what's really important right now." However, he finds out afterwards that Tatty bought a new screen for his home computer or a new-generation mobile phone... The child notices what his father is really saving his

money for and what really arouses his interest.

Then, there's the concept of his "*kaas*". How does Mommy or Tatty make comments on certain things? What really annoys them? You have a mother who will admonish her child with a tone of puzzlement, "You didn't daven Mincha?", and then just a minute later, she screams, "And you also didn't clean up your room!!" The child clearly understands what's important to his mother. Davening is secondary to organizing the room, as failure to do the latter is really what gets her upset.

The child picks up on all these little nuances and details that appear quite trivial to us. Some matters get nothing more than a token response, whereas others are deemed more critical and take up a lot more time and attention. The child learns from us far more than we think he does, and therefore, a parent must give considerable attention to conducting him/herself as a *lebedike baishpiel*, showing concern over truly important matters.

PROPER CONDUCT DURING VACATION TIME

How do we get through *bein ha'z'manim* properly, without any educational problems that can emerge during this time?

When a parent comes to ask me at the start of *bein ha'z'manim* how it's possible to make it through the vacation in peace, I tell him that he's coming a bit late. A parent who wants to know how to get through the vacation in peace thinks he can "pull one over" on his child...

If the father is a real chassid, occupied in the Rebbe's affairs both before and after *bein ha'z'manim*, then the child will see that Tatty is really a soldier of the Rebbe even on vacation, customarily going out on *mivtzaim* out of a sense of true interest and concern. He sees that

it's not a game or an act – when his parents tell him that *mivtzaim* is an important matter, it's because they really live it and mean it.

The apple doesn't fall far from the tree.

What is the best and most effective way to combine Torah study with "vacation" time?

Bein ha'z'manim is a time for learning Torah. I have heard educators complaining that from the time they part from their students at the start of Menachem Av, to when they meet them again at the start of Elul, they seem totally different. Let the truth be said: There are children who don't even open a seifer for the whole month of *bein ha'z'manim*. Other children, who do manage to learn something, don't do so in an orderly manner. Their father said that they have to learn something, so they opened a seifer and did him a favor. Once they did the daily Chitas, once they learned some Mishna, and on another occasion, they looked in Igros Kodesh. Most children don't have an organized program of learning during this period of time, and as a result, their study schedule goes into a total decline.

It is the parents' responsibility to make certain that the child's Torah study doesn't deteriorate completely, even during the days of *bein ha'z'manim*. It's meant to be a time for invigoration, not disintegration. How much did the Rebbe cry out on the concept of vacation? While vacation is a fact of life, it shouldn't be totally hefker.

The first thing is the time of waking up in the morning. It's true that during *bein ha'z'manim*, the child doesn't have to wake up at six or seven o'clock, but he has to know that there is a set time for getting up and he can't just sleep until the afternoon. When the child gets up in an orderly manner, he is much more likely to daven in a minyan. From there it's easier for his day to be well

organized and not characterized by casting off the yoke of Torah and mitzvos.

Secondly, there must be an organized schedule of Torah study. In our home, for example, after Tisha B'Av, we hang a note on the refrigerator with the words Yeshivas Bein HaZ'manim, where we list each of the children's Torah study schedules. One hour in the morning after breakfast, they learn something by heart and are tested by their parents. Then, there are two set hours during the afternoon (breaks included), when they learn specific material each day of *bein ha'z'manim*: the older boys primarily learn a section of Gemara, while the girls learn Seifer HaMitzvos and the like.

The children must know that even during this period, there are regular set times for Torah study that should be kept without exception. Thus, even if it doesn't always work out to learn at exactly the same time, it's possible to take a break and continue the learning later. However, the children remember that during these hours every day, they are in a framework of Torah study. Even when they on a trip or visiting their cousins, they realize that this time is set aside for learning.

As a result, such children appear totally different when the month of Elul rolls around, as they were not cut off from their studies. We can see in their eyes at the end of the vacation how they had been spending their time.

"I'M BORED"

Another subject is how free time is spent during *bein ha'z'manim*. Rabbi Marton has a set of guidelines regarding this time as well, which in no ways diminishes the importance of positive occupation even during the time not devoted to Torah study.

"The general principle here is



Suddenly, the child starts coming home with bad reports from the melamed in Talmud Torah, and the parents simply don't understand where all this nonsense got into his head. For us and our children, inactivity is Public Enemy #1.

that there must not be any vacuum. The Torah teaches us that if the pit is empty and contains no water – it thereby must contain snakes and scorpions. During *bein ha'z'manim*, to our great regret, despite all the stringencies, there is still plenty of free time for children and we first have to sit down and plan this free time out. We must think about what to do with the children so that even this time off will be organized, and not have an "empty pit", a vacuum into which they can fall.

It's possible to prepare appropriate books, games, and activities to fill the leisure time. Today, there's a wide selection of

very appropriate educational booklets and crafts, plus games designed for several to play together. It's a time to exercise creativity and imagination while channeling it in a positive way. I can give my own personal example: Just before the Nine Days, I drove to a carpentry shop in Tzfas' industrial zone, and I bought a large wooden surface, which we cut into a thousand little pieces. Thus, for a very small price, we prepared a thousand wooden toy blocks, and the younger children sat with the blocks for hours and built and built... Their free time was filled, not wasted.

When a mother sees that his child is bored with no organized activities to occupy his time, she tells him, “Take two shekels and go buy yourself a popsicle.” The main thing is that he should “get off her back” and not nudge her that he’s bored. But not enough thought is given to what happens next. All too often he goes and buys his popsicle, and then he wanders around for hours with nothing to do – and who knows whom he meets or where he’s spending hours on end! This can be a gateway to disaster.

Quite often, we don’t immediately see the destructive results, but some time later, this poison has developed in the child’s brain. Then, at the end of Elul, the parents wring their hands helpless as they learn about all types of incidents that happened to their darling angel. Suddenly, the child starts coming home with bad reports from the melamed in Talmud Torah, and the parents simply don’t understand where all this nonsense got into his head. For us and our children, inactivity is Public Enemy #1.

The same applies regarding the subject of computers. This device exists already in countless homes, enticing the children with games and other attractions. I’m not coming here to preach and declare if something is “kosher” or “pasul”, but certainly this pursuit must be restricted to certain set and limited programs and hours.

It is simply unacceptable for the computer to be within ready access at all hours of the day (and night...), where any child can sit in front of it for hours and hours. But the job is not over once all the computers are under strict supervision with safe Internet, and every disk that enters the house passes careful inspection. As a result of the child’s addiction to the computer, all those things that are truly dear and holy to us will already have lost their worth in his

eyes. They will seem empty of substance, lacking all the colorful audio-visual content found in the computer.

When a child sits for hours every day on computer games – how will he be drawn afterwards to a blat Gemara or a chassidic maamer!? Thus, the child’s learning takes on a less favored status. Even when a parent manages to enliven his child’s appreciation of Torah study, the Gemara still finds itself in competition with the computer.

But what do we do when the outside world is filled with such fascinating attractions? Can we simply close the child into his Dalet Amos?

That’s just the point. Once people thought that they could be smart and just hide the computer. “We’ll hide the computer,” they said, “and we’ll have a little quiet.” Today, we know that simply doesn’t work, and the child knows where he can get access to such things. If you don’t give it to him at home, he can obtain it elsewhere, and there it will be much worse.

We have to know how to convey this message to the child. It’s not enough just to pack away the computer; we really have to instill within him the idea that he has plenty of other things to occupy his time in a constructive manner, and to understand him and what he feels he’s missing. This is the difference between talking **to** the child and talking **with** him. You have to talk **with** your child and get him to take part so that he will feel that it pertains to him as well, just as it does to his parents.

There are parents who try to give over to their child what they grew up with, but they manage only to impose the strict regulations that their parents had imposed, without any vitality or feeling that they have relevance to him. However, if you succeed in conveying a sense of **care**

and concern to your child, explaining how the matter is of primary importance and pertains to him as much as it does to you, then the child not only accepts the restrictions, he also receives the soul of education.

Let’s take the example of a home where the father goes to kollel and learns Torah, based on the ideal of conducting a Torah lifestyle. When one of the children in this family asks for new shoes for Yom Tov, just like all his friends got, the parents tell the child, “Have you forgotten that Tatty sits and learns Torah!? We don’t have any money to buy new shoes!” This leaves the child with the impression that if he wants to buy shoes for his own children, he shouldn’t go out and learn Torah... He says to himself: “For now, I have no choice. I have to accept the fact that my father doesn’t work. But when I grow up, I’ll enter the business world and earn money.”

In contrast, if we share the tremendous experience of Torah study with the child, if Tatty shows how earnest he is and thereby infects his son with enthusiasm for holiness, if the child becomes part of the whole idea – there is a far greater chance that the child will be properly educated and follow his father in the study of Torah. The main rule is: Talk *with* your child, not just *to* him.

Even in our own ranks within the Chabad communities, there exists the ideal of shlichus and self-sacrifice for the Rebbe, and we must instill our vitality and enthusiasm into our children. We must tell them that we are the Rebbe’s chassidim in such a way that they’ll also buy into the idea. It’s not only that he’ll know that in our house we don’t buy new shoes or this is the way we do things around here and that’s it; he’ll get a message about something more pleasant and not something we do because we have no choice in the matter.

Regarding things that require a degree of sacrifice, we must meet the child halfway and understand him and the personal sacrifice that he is prepared to make. We must show this proper recognition by giving him a word of encouragement and explaining to him how much his parents appreciate his efforts.

Another point: You have to find a replacement for the impossible. Our Sages, of blessed memory, tell us that for everything that Torah forbids, it permits us something similar in its place. If we're constantly telling our child what's forbidden, he'll fail to realize the good aspect to everything.

I see children (usually the children of shluchim) getting candies in shul, and they immediately run to their father to ask if they're allowed to eat it – if it has a “good hechsher”. In contrast, we sometimes see children who hear “no” or “not allowed” far too often, and when they get a candy, they eat it right away before anyone can tell them that they can't. This is what happens when they don't get a replacement for the “no”.

It's important to recognize the difficulty a child faces and harness it. Identify with the child and lead him in the right direction. This is also connected to the concept of *bein ha'z'manim*. Here too, we can tell our children, “Come, let's see how we can spend the vacation together.” In this fashion, the child gets a picture that vacation is not just a time when people tell him “No”; they also make an effort and show him how to see things in a more proper light.

Above all, we must give our children the feeling that this is not the time to break the yoke and run wild. *Bein ha'z'manim* is the time to refresh ourselves and gather our strength. There is no vacation *ch"v* from yiras Shamayim and chassidic conduct. We can tell our children that the Rebbe never took a



Vacation is not just a time when people tell him “No”; they also make an effort and show him how to see things in a more proper light.

vacation, bringing chassidic stories to emphasize the point. In this manner, the child internalizes the fact that vacation is not a time for disorder. Even if it seems that he doesn't like to hear it, he will remember afterwards that the matter is very important to his mother and father, and eventually what is important to the parents passes on to the children. While it may not appear so at first, the child does get the message.

Would you care to sum it up?

We need to daven a lot. We must pray to G-d that He should give us success in the holy avoda of educating our children.

When I started teaching in the

Chabad Talmud Torah in Tzfas, the mashpia Rabbi Moshe Mordechai Ehrenstein said to me: “You enter the classroom and think that you're an outstanding teacher, and what would the Rebbe possibly do without you?...For you are enlisting in the Rebbe's army and taking your place on the field of education... However, the truth is that the Rebbe manages to bypass you and reach the children, **despite the fact** that you're standing there.”

We know that in the end, everything depends on the Rebbe's bracha. We say: “Rebbe, these are your children!” Thus, there's a chance that we will merit to receive a bracha.

There are so many “experts”, so much advice, and so many people offering it – yet so many problems... Once, we thought that we could know why this child is lazy and why this child doesn't like to learn... We ascribed such things to a variety of reasons. Today, it's quite clear to everyone that these analyses simply don't apply. We see children coming from wonderful homes, and from good and flourishing communities – and then suddenly, without any apparent reason, they drop out.

On the other hand, there are also instances with opposite results, i.e., children who come from not-so-chassidic homes, yet they turn out to be tremendously chassidishe bachurim with a passion for learning. Naturally, we have an obligation to do our utmost – but what formula do we have for success in our children's education? We only have to ask and plead in our prayers for the help of Heaven in matters of education, and G-d will surely come to our aid.

This article is dedicated in the name of countless parents whose sons were privileged to receive their education from Rabbi Marton during his tenure at Ohr Menachem Talmud Torah in Tzfas.

CHASSIDUS AND MUSAR

By Yisroel Yehuda

*In the month of Elul students of Musar focus on the fear of judgment before Hashem on the high holy days. How does Chassidus regard Musar? What differences are there between the two approaches? Where and when did the Musar movement begin? How did the Rebbeim relate to the study of Musar? **
Part 1 of 2

SLAP ON THE BACK IN THE MIKVA

The gaon R' Chanoch Henoch Schick – Rosh Av Beis Din in Shklov and leader of this bastion of opposition to Chassidus – once asked his son, the gaon and Chassid R' Pinchas Reizes when the latter returned from Liadi: “What did Chassidus innovate?”

His son replied, “Chassidus innovated bittul ha’yeshus.”

“By learning Musar you can also attain humility and bittul!” his father countered.

His son asked, “Father, where are you up to in your study of *Reishis Chochma* (a classic Musar work) now?”

His father answered, “Shaar HaAnava (the Gate of Humility).”

R' Pinchas remained silent and the discussion came to an end. On Friday, while R' Schick was bathing at the bath house, one of the simple folk slapped him on the back like an old friend. R' Schick instantly realized that his son was involved and when he returned home and asked him about it, his son admitted that yes, he had set it up. “How did you feel Father, at that moment?” he questioned.

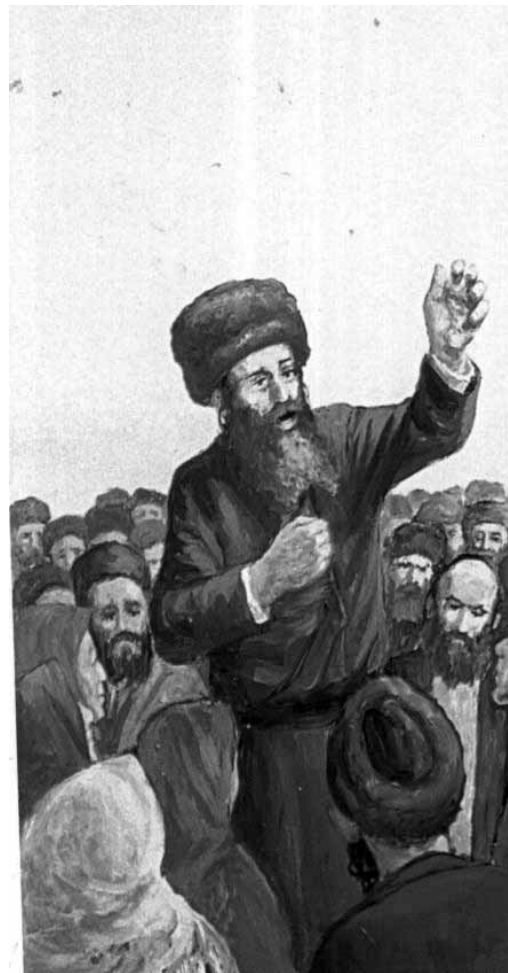
His father said, “In my heart I minded but because I had studied the Shaar HaAnava I didn’t say a word.”

Replied R' Pinchas triumphantly, “Now you know the difference between Musar and Chassidus. If you would learn Chassidus, you wouldn’t have minded, either, because Chassidus

negates that emotion.”

In order to understand the Rebbeim’s attitude towards Musar, we must begin with some background. Musar has existed for centuries. “Genuine baalei Musar” as they are referred to in various places, wrote fundamental sifrei Musar such as *Chovos HaLevavos* (written approximately in 1040), *Reishis Chochma* (1518-1592), and *Mesillas Yesharim* (1707-1746). Maharal (1520-1609) also wrote s’farim in the style of Musar and the holy Shla (1565-1630), author of *Shnei Luchos HaBris* also incorporated Musar to some degree.

These s’farim were not a *shita* (approach) or a movement, but Torah. Whoever sought G-d, especially Torah scholars who were





The Chassidic movement – painting by Chassidic artist Zalman Kleiman

experts in Shas and poskim, learned sifrei Musar. We know that the Alter Rebbe, before he bonded with the Maggid of Mezritch, was a “Shla Yid,” and he conducted himself according to the holy Shla’s teachings.

We find that Chassidim would study sifrei Musar in order to refine their middos. For example, one of the mashpiim in Tomchei T’mimim in Lubavitch, R’ Chanoch Hendel, who was known for his refined middos, once told the Rebbe Rayatz how he achieved this. “For ten years I studied *Shaarei T’shuva* of Rabbeinu Yona (d. 1263), *Chareidim* (1533-1600), *Reishis Chochma*, *Pikeiach Ivrim* [the latter is a Chabad work], and I learned Igeres

HaT’shuva twenty times and certain chapters in *Derech Chaim* [1]

HOW DID THE MUSAR MOVEMENT BEGIN?

The Musar movement began in approximately 5600/1840. Rabbi Yisroel Lipkin of Salant, who was the student of Rabbi Yosef Zundel of Salant, began disseminating his new approach. Until then, the Litvish-Misnagdic world only considered the study of Shas and poskim as important, but as the winds of *haskala* which blew from Berlin swept away many of the finest Torah scholars, it became apparent that something more was needed. R’ Yisroel himself was

burnt. Due to pressure from the government he sent two of his greatest students to study medicine. He assumed that since they were knowledgeable in Shas and poskim, they would remain unharmed. Unfortunately, however, the two students were caught in the web. As the Rebbe Rashab writes in a letter, “R’ Yisroel Salanter z”l already experimented in the early years, by giving two of his greatest students to study medicine. One converted and the other (whom I knew) did not convert but was like a gentile in all respects ...”[2]

The Litvishe world began to realize that *yiras Shamayim* is not the automatic acquisition of a ben Torah who spends all his time learning. They began to understand that in order to bolster the *yiras Shamayim* of a ben Torah, what was needed was a consistent and fundamental study of those things which lead to it. That is how the Musar movement began.

R’ Yisroel Salanter developed an entire approach to the matter. He was a charismatic speaker and his sermons drew large crowds. He set up “battei Musar” so nobody would be ashamed to divulge his inner failings and where they could be inspired by *divrei Musar* without worrying lest someone mock them. The *beis ha’musar* was open all the time for anyone who wanted to pour out his heart to Hashem.

He composed a moving *niggun* with which sifrei Musar were learned. This *niggun* is different than the one used to learn Gemara. It was a sad tune that aroused the heart while the person learning Musar pictured the harsh punishments that were prepared for a sinner, even for minor sins and it aroused fear in the hearts of all those in the *beis Musar*. [3]

R’ Salanter did not write any

The voice of R' Yechezkel could be heard above the voices of the hundreds of bachurim as he wordlessly hummed, "Ai yai ai..." Voices rose and tears were shed until a hand banged on the bima and the numerous voices switched to a 'V'Hu rachum' which froze the blood in one's veins.

sifrei Musar. He encouraged the learning of the earlier Musar works and reprinted some of them. He also publicized articles that were published later on by his talmidim in a work called *Ohr Yisroel*.

The following is a brief description of how Musar was learned in the Mirrer yeshiva with the mashgiach R' Yerucham Levovitz, a second generation student of Rabbi Yisroel Salanter and one of his successors:[4]

"We opened the door about ten minutes before the end of Maariv, while the bachurim were learning Musar. About 500 bachurim had their voices raised in the mournful Musar niggun. R' Yerucham stood there, hands in his sleeves as he surveyed the scene."

It goes on to say:

"After the bachurim ate the (Shabbos) third meal in their private apartments they returned to the beis midrash, which was dark, without light and without s'farim. Each one chose a line that had special meaning to him, a quote from Mesillas Yesharim, Pirkei Avos or a maamer Chazal. He would say it over and over without shame and without fear – after all, it was dark. The voice of R' Yechezkel Levenstein (who was the mashgiach after R' Yerucham) could be heard above the voices of

the hundreds of bachurim as he wordlessly hummed, "Ai yai ai ..." Voices rose and tears were shed until a hand banged on the bima and the numerous voices switched to a 'V'Hu rachum' which froze the blood in one's veins."

The Musar movement split into various approaches: Slobodka – by Rabbi Nosson Tzvi Finkel, emphasized the elevation of man since he is the ultimate creation. Consequently, his students shaved and dressed in European fashions ... There was Novardok, which was the opposite of Slobodka in that it emphasized self-denigration. There was also the Talmud Torah of Kelm which was founded by R' Simcha Zissel Ziv Broida, the Alter of Kelm.

As the Musar approach spread, new Musar works were written starting with the *Ohr Yisroel* of R' Yisroel Salanter and many more down to our time.

Now that we've taken this brief survey, we can distinguish between the ancient Toras HaMusar which served as a foundation of Chassidus, and the Musar Movement which was a behavioral code that brought the study of Musar to the yeshivos. This resulted in new sifrei Musar and produced famous baalei Musar such as Rabbi Eliyahu Lopian, Rabbi Sholom Schwadron and

Rabbi Shlomo Wolbe.

CHASSIDUS AND MUSAR

"One G-d said Toras HaChassidus and Toras HaMusar and they were given by one Shepherd. And yet, there is a great difference between them" – the Rebbe Rayatz wrote in a letter. In the writings of the Rebbeim, Toras HaMusar is defined and the difference between it and Toras HaChassidus are noted.

In one of his letters, the Rebbe MH"M describes the difference between them in their effect on the person who learns it:

One of the differences between learning Toras HaMusar and learning Toras HaChassidus ... the study of Musar in general lowers, and consequently shrinks, the one who learns it; the study of Chassidus uplifts a person and expands him (even though, obviously there are inyanim in Musar that lead to simcha and expansion and there are inyanim in Chassidus that lead to submission and diminishment).[5]

The Rebbe Rayatz writes similarly:

Toras HaMusar and Toras HaChassidus – both explain that the physical world is vanity and the main things are Torah and mitzvos. However, the difference between them is: Musar explains how the body and the world are secondary and Chassidus explains how the soul and G-dly energy are primary, thus explaining the Divine intention in the creation of physical things, to make them tools for G-dliness.[6]

Elsewhere, the Rebbe compares it to bitter and sweet medication:

We see in the field of healing that it may come either through bitter or sweet medication and the difference is obvious,

especially when the treatment is not a one-time matter. In general, the derech of Musar is different in this than the derech of Chassidus, for what Musar is about is, as its name implies, rebuke. I.e. the emphasis is on those things and traits which are not good etc., whereas Chassidus emphasizes the preciousness and elevation of the soul, (though this requires negating all those things which impede elevation of the soul).[7]

In another letter, the Rebbe presents two ways to keep a thief at bay:

This is, somewhat, the advantage of Chassidus over Musar. As we know in the analogy of the Baal Shem Tov that there are two ways to guard against a thief: by crying out “there is a thief!” and chasing him away, in which case, after some time the thief returns, or by apprehending him so that he no longer has the ability (or the desire) to steal again. That is the difference between Musar and Chassidus.[8]

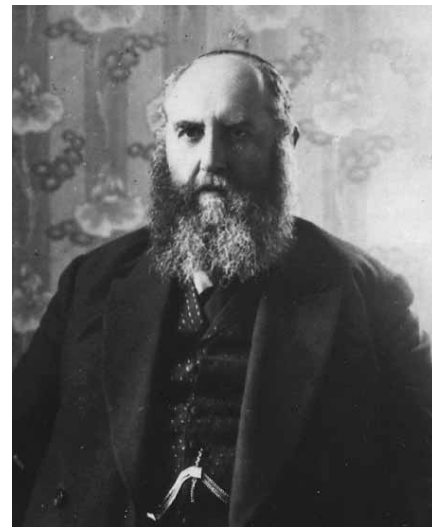
In kuntres *Toras HaChassidus* the Rebbe Rayatz explains at length the three shitos (methods, systems) in Judaism: **shitas ha’musar**, **shitas ha’chakira** (philosophy), and **Toras HaChassidus**. The Rebbe explains the advantage in each one and its place in avodas Hashem and shows how Chassidus incorporates the other two shitos and elevates them.

CHASSIDUS VERSUS MUSAR

The Musar Movement and the learning of Musar in yeshivos began in the time of the Rebbe Rashab. It spread through large segments of the Litvishe world and in the period following the Holocaust, it reached some of the Chassidishe yeshivos too. Some



The Rebbe Rashab



The Rebbe Rayatz

There are two ways to guard against a thief: by crying out “there is a thief!” and chasing him away, in which case, after some time the thief returns, or by apprehending him so that he no longer has the ability (or the desire) to steal again. That is the difference between Musar and Chassidus.

people asked the Rebbe Rayatz and the Rebbe MH”M whether they should learn Musar.

If we examine the following letters, we will see that the general approach to **Toras HaMusar** (and not so much to the more recently developed approach by that name) is positive, though clearly Chassidus supersedes it. Therefore, someone who is able to learn Chassidus is gently guided to do so but someone who isn’t ready for it is encouraged to learn Musar.

In a letter from 5714, the Rebbe expresses surprise that he doesn’t mention that Chovos HaLevavos is learned in yeshiva ... **“Therefore the end of your letter**

was surprising to me in which you write that the men learn Gemara, Chumash, Dinim and you don’t mention Chovos HaLevavos ...”[9]. The Rebbe goes on to say that today it is better to learn Chassidus than Musar.

The Rebbe Rayatz writes more explicitly to yeshivas Torah Vodaas:

It is extremely necessary for the hanhala ruchnis to pay attention to strengthening Musar, through someone who is expert in this, and to strengthen the supervision in matters of yiras Shamayim.[10]

For those who were more receptive, the Rebbe explains the advantage of *Toras HaChassidus*.

THE REBBE FEEDS THE TALMIDIM WHO LEARNED MUSAR

In a long letter, the Rebbe Rayatz explains the advantage of Tomchei T'mimim and a Chassidish education. He tells a fascinating story about bachurim from other yeshivos who came and asked for his help.

1926. Terror reigned. The communist sword confounded the world, scholars and simple folk alike. Chassidim and non-Chassidim alike were bewildered in the face of the brutality with which the new regime took over every aspect of the personal lives of the Russian people.

Only one voice could be heard from one end of Russia to the other, the voice of the Rebbe Rayatz who waged open warfare against the mightiest propaganda and death machine in the world.

Three men, obviously b'nei Torah who were proud of who they were, visited the Rebbe. The Rebbe received them graciously. Their leader said, "We are from Slutzk and in our city there is a yeshiva with 25 talmidim who learn assiduously, are proficient in Rishonim and Acharonim, and are great innovators with brilliant logic. Unfortunately, the hand of the communists has fallen upon us and we have no money to uphold the yeshiva and we will starve or have to close the yeshiva. So we came here with an offer. If you can support us every month, in exchange for your assistance we will study Chassidus with whoever you send to us. We see that the talmidim of your yeshiva play a major role in the spiritual life of the Jews of this country."

The Rebbe asked them to wait a day or two for a response.

"I knew that within their talmidim, notwithstanding their knowledge of Torah, a worm ate at them. Aside from that, I did not want the study of Chassidus to be sold for a slice of bread, i.e. that in exchange for my support they would learn Chassidus."

The bachurim returned at the appointed time to hear the Rebbe's response. The Rebbe praised their desire to continue learning despite the circumstances and said he was willing to allot 120

rubles every month for them even though his own financial situation was poor, but he refused to take them under his auspices!

The men looked at one another in surprise – the Rebbe was willing to support them but wasn't interested in their learning Chassidus?!

"I explained to them that there are two approaches to learning and guidance, the approach of the Ashkenazim and the approach of the Chassidim. Both approaches, when done for the sake of Heaven, are divrei Elokim chayim. Each of these approaches had their leaders. However, when the 'chaos of the demon' comes along, it is the obligation of every G-d fearing person to help all those who learn Torah without getting into what their approaches are and I will fulfill this obligation with all my strength."

The Rebbe committed, in the first stage, to support them for the next four months. The Rebbe did set some rules:

"Nevertheless, I do not forget the old-time boundaries established in days of yore and the spiritual integrity of those approaches remains in force as they always were. Just as I will not forego even a moment from the time designated for the study of Chassidus in the yeshivos that are Chassidish, so too I will not require even a moment of studying Chassidus in those yeshivos that follow the approach of the Ashkenazim." The Rebbe also spoke of the need to learn diligently until the last minute of the study periods.

Down the road, that yeshiva closed because of a dispute between the leaders of the yeshiva and the Litvishe leaders. Only three months after the Rebbe began funding their yeshiva, they told the Rebbe that they were leaving the city.

What the Rebbe envisioned came to pass. Five talmidim went to Minsk. Another eight went to learn in Tomchei T'mimim, and the remaining twelve turned Left in orientation.

The Rebbe concluded, "I wrote about this at length in order to add flavor to the meaning of the words, "and separated us from those who err and gave us the Torah of truth ..."

(Excerpted from a letter of the Rebbe Rayatz, vol. 2 p. 101)

In continuation of one of the letters quoted above, the difference between Chassidus and Musar is explained. The Rebbe writes about those involved in Musar: "**How did he spend his time? By**

thinking and contemplating evil or at least that which is not good. This is unlike Chassidus which emphasizes gazing upon and contemplating the "glory of the King" ... for then, even if he

did not derive the appropriate conclusion, i.e. he was unsuccessful in actually correcting himself, at least he spent his time on knowledge of the G-d of his father, in gazing

upon that which is good, holiness etc.[11]

The Rebbe Rayatz responded to someone that Musar is a good introduction to learning Chassidus:

Learning Musar is very necessary because learning Musar and Chassidus is like plowing and sowing. Musar softens the heart and peels away its fattiness and Chassidus is good planting, and from both together comes the growth of good middos and yiras Shamayim

and knowledge of G-dliness. But the learning of Musar does not require crying and a sad mood, nor necessarily the ideas of death and punishment, Gehinom and the like.[12]

[To be continued G-d willing]

NOTES:

- 1-Likutei Dibburim vol. 2
- 2- Igros Kodesh Rebbe Rashab vol. 5 p. 14
- 3-from a description of Rabbi Yisroel Salanter

- 4-HaPardes shana 64, choveres 2
- 5-Igros Kodesh vol. 5 p. 177
- 6-Igros Kodesh Rebbe Rayatz vol. 3 p. 548
- 7-vol. 17 p. 56
- 8- vol. 17 p. 215
- 9- vol. 9 p. 82
- 10-Igros Kodesh Rebbe Rayatz vol. 5 p. 264
- 11-Igros Kodesh vol. 5 p. 177
- 12-Igros Kodesh Rebbe Rayatz vol. 7 p. 135



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ESTABLISHING YESHIVAS TOMCHEI T'MIMIM IN AMERICA

By Shneur Zalman Berger



*The work the Rebbe Rayatz did when he arrived in America as a refugee – in poor health and with no financial resources – is simply astounding. In just ten years he founded a network of yeshivos across America! * Presented for 15 Elul, the 113th anniversary of the founding of Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim by the Rebbe Rashab.*

NOBODY IMAGINED

The Drottingholm blew a long blast of its whistle and slowly entered pier 97 on West 57 in New York on 9 Adar, 5700/1940. A gangplank was soon placed and the Rebbe Rayatz debarked along with his family, all survivors of the Holocaust.

The Rebbe and those with him were exhausted and broken. They had escaped with not much more than the clothes on their backs. Most of their valuable belongings and the huge library, pride of Lubavitch, had been left behind in Eastern Europe.

After a festive reception attended by thousands, the Rebbe arrived at the Greystone hotel. At a smaller



Talmidim of Achei T'mimim in the 1930's. From right to left: Dovber Baumgarten, Avrohom Dov Hecht, Yitzchok Ebert, Yitzchok Greenberg, Yitzchok Dovid Groner, Aryeh Leib Ebert, Berel Levy

reception at the hotel the Rebbe surprised those present when he dropped this bombshell: **I have the pleasure of announcing a decision that was made at a special meeting of unique individuals of Anash a few hours ago, that at the Oneg Shabbos shul, yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim Lubavitch of America will open tomorrow!**

The Rebbe made it clear that he wasn't operating under any illusions. Though he had come to modern America where nearly everybody removed their beard, he had brought with him the authentic image of Eastern European Jewry. The Rebbe did not suffice with this pronouncement but asked people for their assistance:

I hope to Hashem that the rabbanim, geonim, mosdos Torah and supporters of Torah with fear of Heaven, together with my friends Anash at their head, will come to my aid in perpetuating my work in spreading Torah and fear of Heaven and in communal work.

Apparently the Rebbe's devotees did not feel the same determination and courage as he did. They did not want him to live under the illusion that his dreams were realistic and they did not want him to be made a fool of, and so they tried to cool his enthusiasm as the Rebbe himself described in his diary (printed in Likkutei

Dibburim):

Two distinguished people came to me, long-time American citizens, from the best of my devoted and loyal friends and they said to me, "We heard what you said at the reception and we attended the founding meeting of yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim Lubavitch in America, but unfortunately we must tell you about the pathetic spiritual state of America. We are saddened to tell you that your great hopes of spreading Torah and fear of Heaven and kosher Jewish education as you imagine it from the Jewish home in Europe is not at all realistic in America, despite the greatest efforts.

"We must save you from a catastrophic state and embarrassing failure and protect the honor of your great ancestors, the holy Rebbeim, may their merit protect us."

The two of them explained the American mentality:

"America is a land that consumes the great and worthy; it consumes the greatest of the great who just arrived here and within a short time turns him, without any mercy, into the smallest of the small. America is a land of fleeting fanatical enthusiasm which ends in coldness and indifference. It has happened dozens of times before that a very

enthusiastic reception in which g'dolei Yisroel were honored, immediately sank into the American coldness and those honorable g'dolei Yisroel were forgotten and abandoned as though they were outside the camp.

"... We are telling you only a small portion of what we need to say. We want you to have a clear picture of the situation so you will know how to deal with your mission - the work of askanus in America."

The Rebbe was single-minded in his ideas but that doesn't mean that he was indifferent to these warnings. On the contrary, they shook him up.

It is unnecessary to describe how I felt when I heard this from my most loyal and beloved followers and the tears that fell from my eyes when I recited my first Shma in America ...

One week after the Rebbe set foot in America, the first Chassidic yeshiva was founded. On 15 Adar II, Shushan Purim, about twenty bachurim gathered in the Oneg Shabbos shul in East Flatbush in Brooklyn and started yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim Lubavitch in America.

The combination of those words "Tomchei T'mimim" and "America" was absolutely incongruous, but the Rebbe but

THE NETWORK OF YESHIVOS FOUNDED IN FIVE YEARS!

The rate at which yeshivos were founded in America is astonishing:

15 Adar II, 5700 – New York – the Rebbe Rayatz, upon his arrival in New York, opened yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim

3 Cheshvan, 5702 – Montreal – Nine talmidim from Tomchei T'mimim in Otvotsk, who escaped to Shanghai and arrived in Canada, opened yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim

Kislev, 5702 – Pittsburgh – the yeshiva was started by Rabbi Mordechai Altein. He arrived there on shlichus in Kislev and after much effort, the yeshiva was opened before Pesach. Already in the first few months, 60 talmidim learned there in three classes. Other T'mimim were sent to help him in his work and at the end of the summer of 1943, Rabbi Sholom Posner was appointed the menahel of the yeshiva which he ran, devotedly, for decades.

Sivan, 5702 – Newark – Rabbi Sholom Dovber Gordon ran the yeshiva. Rabbi Dovid Stockhammer and his sons-in-law, Rabbi Mordechai Mentlick and Rabbi Moshe Pinchas Katz helped found the yeshiva. Two months after the yeshiva was started the Rebbe Rayatz wrote to R' Katz that they had to triple, at least, the number of talmidim in the yeshiva. The Rebbe suggested that the local women's auxiliary organize a campaign amongst the women of the city to send their children to Achei T'mimim.

Then Rabbi Gordon went to start a yeshiva in Springfield and Rabbi Yeshaya Tarshish, Rabbi Kadish Romanov and others, took his place.

12 Tammuz, 5702 – Worcester – the yeshiva was founded on the Chag Ha'Geula, 12 Tammuz, 1942. Before it opened, the designated menahel, Rabbi Avrohom Dov Hecht arrived accompanied by Rabbi Avrohom Pariz. After working there for a number of days, the Rebbe Rayatz told his gabbai, Rabbi Eliyahu Yochil Simpson to call R' Pariz and to tell him to remain there until 12 Tammuz so that in the course of the farbrengen he would inspire the participants to take part in supporting the yeshiva.

R' Avrohom Dov Hecht ran the yeshiva until the end of the summer of 1942, when his brother, Rabbi Moshe Yitzchok came to replace him. Then Rabbi Yehuda Tzvi Fogelman (from the talmidim of Tomchei T'mimim 770 in those days) was there briefly to help him.

In the early years, R' Moshe Yitzchok Hecht ran the yeshiva and at the end of the summer of 1946, he

went to the yeshiva in New Haven while R' Fogelman, who had been in Worcester for a short while, returned and from then until today, for over 60 years, he is the shliach and menahel of the yeshiva in Worcester.

23 Av, 1943 – Buffalo – R' Fogelman mentioned above founded and ran this yeshiva at first. On 23 Av there was a founders meeting. A few months went by and the number of talmidim grew and the yeshiva moved into a new building. In the next stage the yeshiva expanded and the rabbanim and members of the board of the yeshiva asked the Rebbe to send an assistant.

Rabbi Lifschitz, a rav in Buffalo, was taken on as an assistant to R' Fogelman. At the end of the summer 1946, R' Fogelman left to run the yeshiva in Worcester as mentioned above.

Cheshvan, 5704 – Rochester – the directorship was given over to Rabbi Tzvi Shusterman who got married at this time and because of the wedding Rabbi Yitzchok Dovid Groner was sent to run the yeshiva in the meanwhile. After a short time R' Shusterman arrived to run the yeshiva.

13 Shevat, 5704 – Boston – In Adar, 1943, an attempt was made to start a yeshiva in Boston but due to the paucity of students it soon closed. On 13 Shevat, 1944, the yeshiva re-opened and was run by R' Avrohom Dov Hecht. By the winter of 5705 the yeshiva already had 80 students.

2 Iyar, 1944 – Philadelphia – On 2 Iyar, 1944, the yeshiva Achei T'mimim was founded in Philadelphia under the hanhala of R' Yosef Menachem Mendel Tenenbaum and R' Yitzchok Dovid Groner. R' Sholom Tzvi Schneiderman, a distinguished Lubavitcher rav and menahel of yeshivas Ohel Moshe there, asked that his yeshiva be under the auspices of Tomchei T'mimim and his request was granted. So there were two yeshivos under Tomchei T'mimim, one called Achei T'mimim and one called Ohel Moshe Achei T'mimim.

Rosh Chodesh Tammuz, 1944 – New Haven – R' Mordechai Dov Altein and his two helpers, R' Berel Levy and R' Zev Schildkraut started the yeshiva in New Haven on Rosh Chodesh Tammuz, 1944. The learning began with dozens of children in the Beis Yisroel shul.

A "Kiddush Sheim Chabad" was made on the following Shabbasos as most of the students came to daven at shul wearing yarmulkes with the name of the new yeshiva printed on them. They attended Mesibos Shabbos and formed a parade through the streets of New Haven which called upon Jews to keep Shabbos.

Changes were made in the hanhala and in the

summer of 1946, R' Moshe Yitzchok Hecht was sent to run the yeshiva which he did for decades.

14 Tammuz, 1944 – Bridgeport – On 14 Tammuz, the yeshiva was opened by Rabbi Elozor Pinchas Weiler and a short time later the permanent menahel, Rabbi Dovid Eidelman, arrived together with Rabbi Tzvi Feffer.

In the *Koveitz Lubavitch*, issue 4, it reported that a committee to help the yeshiva was formed, which consisted of all the distinguished rabbis of Bridgeport. After a while, Rabbi Aharon Popack was sent to run the yeshiva. After a brief while R' Popack left and was replaced by Rabbi Yisroel Stock, who ran the yeshiva for decades.

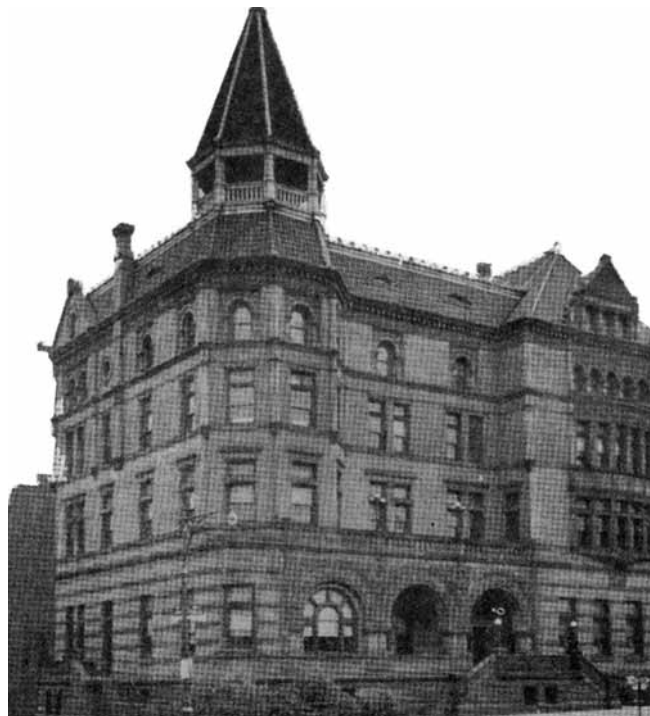
Elul, 5704 – Chicago – After much effort, yeshivas Achei T'mimim opened in Chicago in the summer of 1944, led by Rabbi Yosef Wineberg, one of the talmidim in yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim in Otvotsk who later learned in Montreal. A group of talmidim from Tomchei T'mimim in New York arrived with him.

The rosh yeshiva was Rabbi Avrohom Mordechai Hershberg, rav of the B'nei Reuven shul, Nusach Ari. There were three divisions in the yeshiva, with the rosh yeshiva giving shiurim to the top division, which consisted of the T'mimim from New York as well as T'mimim from Chicago who were on a high enough level. Rabbi Wineberg gave shiurim to the second level and Rabbi Mordechai Fisher, who had learned in Lubavitch yeshivos, taught the third level. Another group of bachurim came from New York for the new school year 5706 in order to strengthen the yeshiva.

18 Shevat, 5705 – Bronx – the yeshiva opened in the Nusach Ari shul on 1243 Washington Avenue. The menahel of the yeshiva was Rabbi Altein and the teacher for the oldest group of students was Rabbi Nosson Teomim. A committee of distinguished balabatim helped found and maintain the yeshiva.

Winter, 5705 – Springfield – Rabbi Sholom Dovber Gordon opened the yeshiva with ten talmidim in the home of a supporter of the yeshiva. The school operates to this very day under the able and devoted leadership of Rabbi Dovid Eidelman for more than half a century.

23 Av, 1945 – Providence – the final yeshiva founded in this period of time. The yeshiva opened on 23 Av and was led by Rabbi Yitzchok Dovid Groner with the devoted assistance of the rabbanim and brothers, Rabbi Yehoshua Werner and Rabbi Dovid Werner.



Former site of Tomchei T'mimim in New York
(Bedford and Dean)

them together, both in word and in deed.

On that same historic day when the yeshiva opened, the Rebbe addressed the bachurim and set forth the principle policy rules:

Not only will the talmidim of Tomchei T'mimim raise up, with Hashem's help, the glory of Torah in the United States and Canada but it will also set the tone for the religious yeshivos that already exist ...

My children, you ought to be happy that you have merited the great z'chus to be talmidim in the holy yeshiva of Tomchei T'mimim Lubavitch. May Hashem bless you, and the friends who will join you in the future, that it should be fulfilled in all of you the wishes of our holy leader that all who see them will recognize them as blessed seed of G-d (Seifer HaSichos 5700).

"THEY WILL LEARN IN MY YESHIVOS"

If you want to understand how impossible founding Chassidic yeshivos in the spirit of Lubavitch was in America of those days, read the following:

When the Rebbe Rayatz visited the United States in 1930, the idea had already been proposed to start a Chabad yeshiva in New York, where a few Lubavitcher Chassidim lived at that time. However,

“With Hashem’s kindness the talmidim ha’T’mimim were able to build a tower of Torah and light on the garbage heaps of Montreal.”

the spiritual climate at the time was such that even the Rebbe Rayatz concluded that the time was not right for a yeshiva that required its students to attain spiritual heights of holiness and purity. But the Rebbe knew that the day would yet come ...

When the Rebbe returned to Europe, R’ Yochanan Gordon had yechidus with him, around Rosh HaShana 5691/1930. The Rebbe told him that he heard from R’ Gordon’s brothers who lived in the US that they wanted their brother to come to America too, but he refused. R’ Yochanan affirmed this and said, “I am apprehensive because of the children. My brothers’ children were corrupted and left the derech and I don’t want my children to be corrupted.”

The Rebbe said, “Go to America and I promise you that your children will remain *erliche Yidden*.” R’ Yochanan was still not convinced and he said that he wanted them to learn in the Rebbe’s yeshivos. The Rebbe said prophetically, “I promise you that they will learn in my yeshivos.”

R’ Yochanan’s son, R’ Sholom Dovber, later said that when his father returned home he was shaken up by the Rebbe’s promise. “To promise that they will remain *erliche Yidden* is one thing; that is unusual, but even in America there can be an exception to the rule. But what does it mean that they will learn in the Rebbe’s yeshivos? How can we dream about something like that in America?”

R’ Yochanan waited years for the fulfillment of his big dream.

When the Rebbe Rayatz arrived in America and his children began learning in the newly founded American branch of yeshivas Tomchei T’mimim, the Rebbe’s prophecy was fulfilled.

THE YESHIVA WILL BE A BASTION OF TORAH

In the years prior to the Rebbe’s arrival, Achei T’mimim had been founded and was being run by Rabbi Yisroel Jacobson. It offered shiurim for a group of yeshiva bachurim a few times a week. In Elul, 1939, six of these bachurim left America to go and learn in the presence of the Rebbe Rayatz. The advent of World War II curtailed their stay, and they returned home not long after they had come.

At the beginning of Shevat, 5700, the Rebbe suggested that Achei T’mimim be transformed into yeshivas Tomchei T’mimim but this plan was not implemented.

When the Rebbe arrived in the US, his first mission was to found Tomchei T’mimim in New York. His health was poor, as was his financial state, but this did not deter him from going on the offensive where many g’dolim before him had failed.

The Rebbe had a hard time walking and he regularly suffered from physical ailments. He also had numerous debts (as a result of his work in helping the Jews of the Soviet Union). Another person in his shoes, would seek peace and quiet after all he endured, but the Rebbe was not just another penniless refugee and he devoted himself to his work. He did not even allow himself one day of rest.

The yeshiva officially opened a week after he arrived. His son-in-law, Rabbi Shmaryahu Gurary (Rashag), was appointed the acting director of the yeshiva. Rabbi Shmuel Levitin and Rabbi Yisroel Jacobson were appointed menahalim and mashpiim, and Rabbi Mordechai Mentlick the rosh yeshiva. Rabbi Shneur Zalman Gurary was appointed in charge of the Achei T’mimim division for youth.

The 770 building was purchased at the end of 5700 and with the encouragement of the Rebbe, the yeshiva moved (at the end of Cheshvan 5701) into the building.

Yeshivas Tomchei T’mimim and its divisions were under the supervision of the Rebbe Rayatz, at first as “director of operations” and then as president. The Rebbe made no concessions and wanted the authentic spirit of Lubavitch to permeate the American yeshiva just as it did in Otvotsk, Rostov and Lubavitch. He invested great efforts to preserve the spirit of Lubavitch and the spirit of learning in the yeshiva. He constantly guided the hanhala of the yeshiva on topics of chinuch and wanted to be informed in detail about the conduct of each talmid, not only when they learned but in their free time as well. He wrote many letters on these topics, some of which are printed in his Igros Kodesh.

In the months to come, additional students joined the yeshiva, which had acquired a good reputation. In *HaPardes* dated Shevat, 1941, there was an article about the yeshiva’s successes:

This mosad immediately struck roots and began to grow and thrive, with Hashem’s help, and attracted excellent talmidim, g’dolei Torah and yira who diligently study Torah. The number of talmidim is growing, thank G-d, and in the future this mosad will be, with Hashem’s help,

a magnificent edifice, a bastion of Torah for pride and glory, with which we can be consoled for the famous yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim Lubavitch which, due to our many sins, collapsed in the storm of war in Europe.

HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS START A YESHIVA

On 2 Cheshvan, 5702/1941, nine bachurim from yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim in Otvotsk set foot on Canadian soil. They had spent a period of time in Shanghai and after much effort on the part of the Rebbe Rayatz, they managed to make it to Canada. The Rebbe did not allow them to rest from their ordeals but immediately told them to open Tomchei T'mimim. The very next day, the new yeshiva opened in the Nusach Ari shul. Rabbi Yitzchok Hendel a"h was appointed menahel.

The Rebbe Rayatz didn't delay and a week later he sent them a long letter with instructions about how to interact with the townspeople, as well as specific instructions regarding the talmidim of the new yeshiva: to review maamarei Chassidus on Shabbos in the two Chabad shuls in Montreal, for the T'mimim to eat the Shabbos meals together, during the meal to sing Chabad niggunim after the bachurim review Chassidus, and to tell Chassidishe stories.

The T'mimim enthusiastically went about fulfilling the Rebbe's instructions. They made much publicity amongst the townspeople and recruited a number of talmidim in the shuls. In the weeks to come, the mashpia R' Shmuel Levitin was sent to help establish the new yeshiva. In less than a month, the nine bachurim had enrolled 24 young talmidim, for whom they set up two classes of a yeshiva called Achei T'mimim.



The yeshiva in Montreal when it was starting out. In the front row are sitting the T'mimim from Otvotsk-Shanghai, from right to left: Zev Gringlas, Moshe Gerlitzky, Yitzchok Hendel, Yosef Wineberg, Yosef Menachem Mendel Tenenbaum, Shmuel Stein, Yosef Rodal, Tzvi Yosef Kotlarsky

The Rebbe Rayatz was not satisfied with this, and about a week later he sent a letter to R' Levitin in which he complained about only having 24 talmidim. He gave practical ideas on how to recruit more students. Even after R' Levitin returned to New York they continued expanding the yeshiva on their own.

The yeshiva grew and, for lack of other options, it was located in the local orphanage where they were given a few rooms. The Rebbe simultaneously began asking Anash and askanim in Montreal to buy a building for the yeshiva. The Rebbe sent letters to askanim who helped the yeshiva a lot and told them not to be concerned about their money but to see to it that the yeshiva got a suitable building and Hashem would repay them.

In the middle of the summer of that year they were able to buy a big building for the yeshiva. In honor of the Chanukas HaBayis that took place on 15 Kislev, 5704, the Rebbe sent a letter to the

talmidim of the yeshiva in which he blessed them and the k'hilla at large, led by the rabbanim, on the occasion of purchasing the building with blessings of mazal tov.

A very formal celebration took place with the participation of the rabbanim of the city and guest rabbis led by Rashag, the Rebbe's son-in-law and acting menahel, who traveled to Montreal for the occasion.

To conclude this chapter, let us look at a letter the Rebbe wrote in which he showers unusual praise on the talmidim who started the yeshiva in Montreal:

With Hashem's help, with your mesirus nefesh, with enormous effort and sweat, you have established, thank G-d, the yeshiva in Montreal which was – like other cities – dry of all moisture of Torah and without etc. etc. and with Hashem's kindness the talmidim ha'T'mimim were able to build a tower of Torah and light on the garbage heaps of Montreal. (Igros

RAMASH AND THE T'MIMIM

In the summer of 1941, when the Rebbe MH"M arrived in the United States, the talmidim in the yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim in New York enjoyed special kiruvim from him. The first farbrengen that the Rebbe held after his arrival in the US was with the T'mimim. The Rebbe spoke for six hours on the topic of "four need to give thanks." He cried copiously. At that farbrengen the Rebbe demanded that the bachurim be well-versed in *Likkutei Dibburim* of the Rebbe Rayatz and every so often he asked one of the bachurim where it said a certain inyan or another.

The T'mimim also attended the farbrengens that "Ramash" held on every Shabbos Mevarchim and special dates in the calendar.

Kodesh Admur Rayatz, vol. 7, p 383)

In the years that followed, the yeshiva grew and it exists till today. It is considered one of the flagship Tomchei T'mimim yeshivos, a yeshiva that began with nine bachurim who escaped Europe and arrived with little besides the clothes on their backs.

A NETWORK OF YESHIVOS

It's amazing to see how over the course of a few years the Rebbe managed, in his poor health and with little resources, to create "something out of nothing," a network of Chassidic yeshivos throughout the United States.

Ask any menahel with modern means to make connections and reach donors and he will tell you that it is still hard to establish and run just one yeshiva. Yet, the Rebbe, with the meager means at his disposal, attained spectacular achievements during the one decade he lived in America.

From 5702 until 5705 (see box), a network of yeshivos was formed for older boys, younger boys and children. They were under the administration of the Central Yeshivos Tomchei T'mimim, with the expenses for founding and maintaining these yeshivos coming from the central

organization overseen by the Rebbe Rayatz.

The list of cities with yeshivos Achei T'mimim is staggering: **Pittsburgh, Newark, Worcester, Buffalo, Rochester, Boston, Philadelphia, New Haven, Bridgeport, Chicago, Bronx, Springfield and Providence.**

The Agudas HaRabbanim of the United States and Canada wrote the following in Kislev, 5704:

"... It is unbelievable and yet a happy fact, that in such a short time, so many yeshivos have been made in the following cities: Yeshiva G'dola in Montreal, Pittsburgh, Newark, Worcester, and Buffalo. Likewise, chadrei Torah were founded in various locations in Brooklyn. In all these mosdos Torah over 1000 Jewish children imbibe from the source of Torah under the influence of Torah and yiras Shamayim.

"The number of talmidim is so large that the present building of the central yeshiva in Brooklyn is too small to contain them all."

The Rebbe Rayatz wasn't satisfied with what he had accomplished and while taking care of the yeshivos he had founded he also sought to start additional yeshivos in other cities. Even when there were failures, the Rebbe did not give up. He sent letters and emissaries, contacted local askanim

and rabbanim, until he successfully established a broad network of yeshivos.

The Rebbe did not only take care of obtaining funds but was involved with every single detail and toiled mightily to best serve the talmidim. He kept tabs on every talmid's spiritual state in avodas Hashem, Chassidus and Nigleh, as well as gashmuis matters. Throughout the years, the Rebbe encouraged those who founded each yeshiva and urged wealthy people to contribute and the askanim to do their work.

Many of the menahalim of the yeshivos were talmidim of the central yeshiva in New York. For various reasons it became necessary, from time to time, to change menahalim; some of them had to return to yeshiva, others married, and some had become experienced and were assigned the task of opening a new yeshiva while their less experienced peers filled their place. This was all done by the Rebbe's instruction.

Rashag worked extremely hard alongside the Rebbe in the role of "Menahel Merkaz Yeshivos Tomchei T'mimim." Rabbi Chaim Mordechai Isaac Chadakov, the Rebbe's secretary, was an outstanding educator and he kept in touch with a number of the menahalim and guided them in chinuch and other areas.

From time to time, emissaries of the Rebbe went on long trips in order to strengthen the yeshivos. Notable among them were Rabbi Shmuel Levitin and Rabbi Eliyahu Yochil Simpson.

ATTENDING EVENTS DESPITE THE HARDSHIP THIS ENTAILED

The Rebbe did not only send letters. Despite his very poor health



Talmidei Tomchei T'mimim in 770 in the early years

and being unable to walk, he attended events and dinners in honor of the yeshiva. At every event he delivered a long address in which he asked the participants to take part in the heavy burden of financing the yeshiva.

(Remember that at the same time, the Rebbe was also fundraising to save Jews in Eastern Europe and to establish mosdos Chabad in other parts of the world. His debt load was enormous.)

AMERICAN RABBONIM GET INVOLVED

While Chabad yeshivos were founded outside of New York, the central yeshiva in New York continued to flourish. Hundreds of bachurim learned there and the yeshiva was reminiscent of the glory days of the yeshiva in Lubavitch. It became necessary to purchase a building for the large number of students. The Rebbe Rayatz was involved in all the discussions concerning buying a building and wrote a number of

letters on the subject to Anash and askanim.

The efforts towards this end that began at the beginning of 5702 continued until 5704, when a large building was purchased on Bedford, a twenty minute walk from 770.

Agudas HaRabbanim of the United States and Canada and other distinguished rabbanim raised money for Tomchei T'mimim and in *HaPardes* it said:

... Good news for all of American Jewry – boruch Hashem a large, magnificent building was purchased in the center of Brooklyn which will allow place for additional hundreds of talmidim, may they increase. Obviously, for all these massive activities, enormous sums of money are needed. It is the obligation of every Jew, no matter what party, to help as much as possible in this holy work in the most important field in Jewish life on which depends the future of American Jewry – the education of the young generation.

The same issue included a

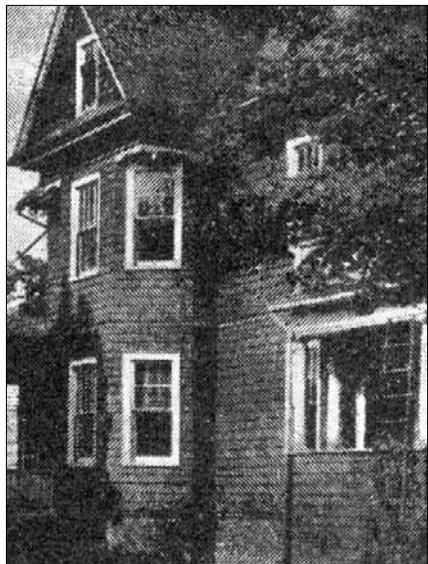
public call by Rabbi Yisroel Rosenberg and Rabbi Eliezer Silver. R' Silver said that he spoke in learning with talmidim in yeshivos Tomchei T'mimim and derived much pleasure from them:

"We have merited, since the arrival here of the gaon and tzaddik the Admur of Lubavitch, who founded, with Hashem's help, in towns and cities, yeshivos large and small that are truly a glorious achievement, and will grow into mighty oaks. I got to know and talk with in learning some of the g'dolei ha'talmidim and found them to be full of Torah and talent, full of yiras Shamayim, learning diligently, baalei middos who are filled with blessing."

In the winter of 5706, the yeshiva with all its divisions completed its move to the new building. A number of festive events were held in honor of the chanukas ha'bayis.

INTERIM ACCOUNT

On 16 Adar, 1945, a festive



The yeshiva building in Springfield



Rabbi Moshe Yitzchok Hecht with a group of talmidim of the yeshiva in Worcester



Talmidim of the yeshiva in Pittsburgh



The yeshiva building in Buffalo

event was held to mark five years since the founding of Tomchei T'mimim in New York. The Rebbe Rayatz personally attended and he told about the founding of the yeshiva and those who tried to discourage him. Then he explained the dramatic changes that took place that led to the breaking of the ice of American Jewry. He said you can see a sort of "interim account" from the results of his work in the first five years:

Over the course of three years, boruch Hashem, the American spiritual sea of ice broke and my earlier proclamations about spreading Torah with yiras Shamayim and proper chinuch, t'shuva and Geula, which over the years were attacked and mocked by the left, center and the right, are now being heard from time to time from a few of those who have ambitions as leaders of the generation.

Another year goes by and in the newspapers articles are published and events are planned to start special funds to spread Torah and for chinuch ...

Another year passes and boruch Hashem, my assistants in the field of spreading Torah and yiras Shamayim, led by my son-in-law Rabbi Gurary, have already founded dozens of mosdos Torah and yiras Shamayim, and my assistants in the field of proper chinuch and Machne Israel led by my son-in-law, Rabbi Schneersohn [the Rebbe MH"m who ran Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch and Machne Israel] started schools for girls and over half a million copies of publications have already appeared...

American Jewry! In five years the work of Merkaz "Tomchei T'mimim Lubavitch" in America has established Jewish respect in this country and clearly proved that American children can be

b'nei Torah like in the *alte heim*.

American Jewry! Our call – of the Central Tomchei T'mimim Lubavitch in America – is to make America, with Hashem's help, be a place of Torah so that on a Jewish street in America the sound of Torah will be heard from young children as it was heard in Lubavitch and in other cities in Lithuania and Poland.

Five years later, marking ten years since the founding of yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim in New York, was reason for another gala event. The hanhala of the yeshiva planned a resplendent event for this significant milestone. The Rebbe wrote a special letter for the dinner with a call to attend it and with the goal of doubling and tripling the donations for the yeshiva.

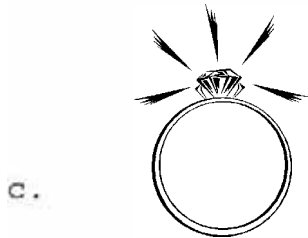
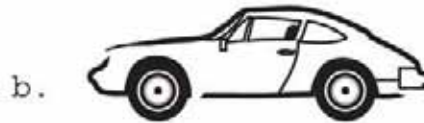
Erev Shabbos, 9 Shevat afternoon, the Rebbe signed the letter and the next day he passed away. This was the last letter the Rebbe signed.

After the histalkus the question was whether to hold the dinner on the designated date. It was finally decided not to postpone it since the Rebbe himself had told people to attend the dinner. However, the dinner was held without music and the great simcha originally planned, but a large crowd attended it as well as the talmidim of the yeshiva. The speakers made a powerful impression on the donors, who responded more generously than usual.

Thus the Rebbe Rayatz completed his earthly mission as an integral part of yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim, for which he worked for nearly 53 years – from his marriage in 5657/1897 when he was 17, until his final day.

Sources: Likkutei Dibburim, Sifrei HaSichos of the Rebbe Rayatz, Igros Kodesh of the Rebbe Rayatz, Toldos Chabad in America, Zikaron L'B'nei Yisroel, Yemei B'Reishis, Beis Moshiah, HaTamim (a Beis Moshiah supplement), the website – "Shalom iz mainer"

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Which of these is currently uninsured? —

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TRANSITIONING FROM ELEMENTARY TO HIGH SCHOOL

By Sholom Ber Crombie

*Hundreds of bachurim are starting yeshiva for the first time, transitioning from childhood to adolescence, from children to T'mimim and Chayolei Beis Dovid. What role do parents play in this change? What should be emphasized as our children reach this milestone? Three experienced roshei yeshivos told us their thoughts about this critical stage in life and how to deal with it properly. * Presented for the start of the new z'man.*

THERE MUST BE COOPERATION BETWEEN PARENTS AND THE HANHALA

RABBI YIGAL PIZEM: ROSH YESHIVAS CHABAD AND RAV OF THE K'HILLA IN KIRYAT SHMUEL

R' Yigal Pizem is a veteran mechanech. For decades he taught in the yeshiva high school in Kiryat Shmuel and over a decade ago he started a high school in Krayot which has earned a fine reputation.

Although going to yeshiva is a process of spiritual development there are still enticements that lie in wait for the boy who leaves his home for the big world. How can we ensure that a child will absorb only the positive things and not get swept up in the nonsense?

Preparations are needed for when a child moves on to shiur alef; parents should ensure that the child who

finished elementary school is, in fact, ready for shiur alef mesivta. This is vital since the bachur's identity begins to be formed in shiur alef and to a great extent is established then. The boy is still malleable and he has to learn how to protect himself from the world. At this time he needs to know how to filter what he doesn't need and to select all those good practices that he learns about in yeshiva and all those Chassidishe habits that he acquires through the transition to yeshiva.

The bachur acquires his Chassidishe derech in shiur alef. From there he moves on to shiur beis when there is another critical stage – the maturation from child to young adult. In order to effectively navigate this stage, the talmid needs to come psychologically prepared. This will enable him to pass through all the stages successfully and in a constructive fashion, with every transition from stage to stage accomplished properly.

A child who goes to mesivta has to be prepared for unfamiliar territory. When you go to a new place you

can't just stride through; you have to keep looking around. When a child leaves home for life in yeshiva he gets a taste of life on the outside. He suddenly encounter all kinds of things, viewpoints and practices of other boys that are different than his own. The home is a supportive place; being out of the home suddenly exposes the child to the big world.

That is why he needs to know that he is going to yeshiva in order to grow, to learn only the good things from other people, and that in yeshiva there are many good things to learn from the teachers, peers, and the general system. Going to yeshiva for spiritual growth means you have to have a discerning eye to learn from the positive and ignore the distractions.

What can parents do to help?

When their boys return home from yeshiva, parents should see that there is continuity to their son's chinuch. When he goes home he is tested regarding everything he learned in yeshiva and it's at home where they need to examine whether he is heading in the right direction.

Parents need to be alert and in touch with the hanhala. They should find out whether their son has mastered the material learned in yeshiva, see whether he reviews a sicha at the Shabbos table and notice what sort of atmosphere he brings home with him. Sometimes a child does well on a test in yeshiva but at home he is not interested in what is being learned in yeshiva. Parents should find out why.

Unfortunately, some parents consider themselves supervisors over the hanhala, thinking that they are the ones who will make decisions about how things are run in yeshiva instead of cooperating with those in charge. A parent definitely has the right to find out what is going with their son and this is their responsibility, but they should go about it in the way the Rebbe set out; in a way that the parent is truly concerned about his son and wants to see him advance spiritually. The basic assumption should be that the hanhala has the know-how and experience to give the bachurim what they need. When the bachurim go home, parents should be careful to acknowledge the role of the hanhala.

Sometimes, boys go home and parents notice that they are not behaving as they should, as one would



A bachur's identity begins to be formed in shiur alef and to a great extent is established then.

expect from a bachur returning from yeshiva. They get all nervous but the problem is that often they are not in touch with the hanhala or that they come to the hanhala with complaints instead of reporting to them about the change and trying to resolve the situation **together**.

Some parents allow their children to find their own way. A child who just left home might experiment with negative behavior so what the parents need to do is keep tabs on him and find out whether he is making progress. **Parents must be in constant contact with the yeshiva**, reporting what they observe and ensuring there is full cooperation so that they are on the same page.

This point is very important because the moment parents don't give the hanhala its due, they are jeopardizing the yeshiva's ability to be mechanech their child. If the parents coordinate their cooperation with the staff, this can ensure that the talmid is constantly under supervision which, in turn, will

ensure that the level of chinuch and achievement will be high. Obviously this demands effort on the part of the hanhala and staff. It is their obligation to be in touch with parents. From the moment the child leaves home, there must be full cooperation.

What is most important is for the child to be mentally prepared for the yeshiva experience to be completely different, a new world. His home is now the yeshiva. He lives in yeshiva.

PARENTS' INVOLVEMENT AFFECTS THE CHINUCH

RABBI CHAIM AHARON: ROSH YESHIVAS CHABAD IN RECHOVOT

For dozens of years, R' Aharon taught eighth grade in B'nei Brak and over a decade ago he was appointed rosh yeshiva in Rechovot which then quickly acquired an even more excellent reputation than it had before.

What can you tell us about the transition from elementary school to mesivta?

The transition takes place on two planes, the physical and the spiritual, and for both of them it helps if the child is ready, knowing that a yeshiva bachur is

something completely different than what he knew up until then. By going away to yeshiva the child is fulfilling the pasuk of “lech lecha.”

On the physical plane, the child suddenly finds himself under completely circumstances. He now lives in a dormitory. He used to finish learning in the afternoon and go home but now yeshiva is home. He eats in yeshiva, sleeps in yeshiva gets up in yeshiva. He rooms with boys he doesn't know. He did not experience this previously for any length of time.

And yet, he did not go to yeshiva for the physical things. You need to emphasize that the main change he is experiencing is spiritual. Learning doesn't end in the afternoon. He learns at night too. There is learning between s'darim, farbrengens, mitvtzaim in yeshiva. He doesn't just move from one grade to the next as he did in elementary school. Going to mesivta is a completely different sort of change and the child is there to form his Chassidic identity. For this he needs to come prepared.

How can the child be helped?

The child needs to speak up, not keep things to himself. He can speak to his madrich, mashpia or any staff member, whoever he feels comfortable with. They are there to help him and he should know that things come up and this is normal and every boy goes through it in some form or another.

The parents need to know that their taking an interest is very important and has a great effect on their son's progress. Parents might think that if their son is in yeshiva and the hanhala sets the curriculum, they no longer have a role in their child's chinuch. They should know that their role at this stage is to continue to follow their child's progress and this plays a significant part in helping their child form his identity.

The child needs to feel that his chinuch is something his parents truly care about. Their interest and concern directly affect him because he sees that it's important to them. It's makes a difference to the staff too. That's the way it is ... It's easier to pay attention to a child when the parents are on top of things, when they keep in



The Rebbe writes in many letters that parents should try to be role models of the kind of behavior they want to see in their children. Parents should appreciate what an influence they have on their children!

touch and help with their child's chinuch. It is often the case that because parents are closely involved, many problems are avoided. They know who his friends are and who he goes with on mitvtzaim, for example, and these are details that parents should pay attention to.

Another point is personal example. Parents should be role models for all things expected of their child in yeshiva. Sometimes a yeshiva has certain demands while the home doesn't see it quite the same way. Parents must be aware that they can't have their child receiving mixed messages and they need to be examples of all those things which are demanded of their child.

The Rebbe writes in many letters that parents should try to be role models of the kind of behavior they want to see in their children. Children think it's enough if they do half of what their parents do, so parents need to do more in order that their children will also have greater ambitions. Parents should appreciate what an influence they have on their children!

In a letter (Igros Kodesh, vol. 4, p. 344) the Rebbe writes:

It should be emphasized that there are many parents who do not sufficiently value their influence on their children, who think that they labor in vain. Consequently, much of the influence that they could have had on their children is lost. This is their mistake because

parents can influence their children far more than they think. If they make efforts in this area they will certainly accomplish a lot and if not 100% then certainly a great deal.

I would also stress the following. When a child goes home for Shabbos after three weeks in yeshiva, parents should not pressure them too much. If the father can learn with his son when he comes home for Shabbos, wonderful, but if the child wants to rest from the pressure and intensity of yeshiva, the last thing he needs is pressure at home.

IN YESHIVA A CHILD INTERNALIZES THAT HE HAS TO BE A MATURE BACHUR WHO HAS TO MANAGE HIS OWN PROGRESS

RABBI SHOLOM BER HENDEL: ROSH YESHIVAS CHABAD IN OHR YEHUDA

The Chabad yeshiva in Ohr Yehuda was started seven years ago and is run by Rabbi Sholom Ber Hendel. The yeshiva grew surprisingly quickly, and three years ago R' Hendel added a yeshiva g'dola/zal.

How should parents regard their son's transition to mesivta?

At the start of the school year we have a meeting and we invite the parents of the talmidim in shiur alef so we can discuss the transition the boys will be making. Parents need to know that their sons will be making a drastic change in every way. The first area that I focus on is the emotional one, when the child leaves home and enters a dormitory. Until then, when he learned in elementary school even until late in the day, he still went home afterwards. Now he will be experiencing an enormous change. In elementary school he was able to play during recess while in mesivta there is no yard to play in and no breaks during the day when the boys can expend their energy. Scholastically, there are s'darim now and not just classroom lessons.

There are boys who handle these changes with ease and immediately transition into yeshiva life. However, many boys have a hard time with the change and the bachur's personality and spiritual level make no difference. There can be outstanding students who have a hard time leaving home and need a lot of support. So I speak to the talmidim on the first day and tell them they shouldn't be embarrassed to ask for help. There are boys who don't sleep the first night, some even the entire first week. We let the boys know that the dorm counselor is there for them and that if necessary, he will stay with them and keep them company even for an entire night.

The parents' support is needed too. If the child is calling home a lot, they should realize that he just needs some time to acclimatize to the new situation. Eventually he will mature.

The main thing is that the child is moving up to shiur alef and it takes a long time to digest that. You can see this immediately in the bachur's behavior. Upon entering yeshiva you can see an incredible change. After the month of Elul, just one month of learning in yeshiva, he returns home as a yeshiva bachur. I see the bachurim returning after the Yomim Tovim and they are completely different bachurim.

During shiur alef the child undergoes the greatest change of his life. The subsequent years merely continue the process.

As a rosh yeshiva I speak to the talmidim about the change in their outlook from a childish view to a bachur's view. As a child in elementary school, the students see the teachers as policemen to avoid. In yeshiva they start to understand the real role of a mechanech. They learn what it means to be a Tamim in Tomchei T'mimim and start understanding the real significance of "Rebbe" and hiskashrus. They learn that the hanhala is only telling them what the Rebbe wants and they need to start thinking what does the Rebbe want of them. This is what we talk about in farbrengens.

As time goes on, a talmid matures. He understands what is expected of him and starts being mechanech himself. He sets goals in hiskashrus and learning and strives to achieve them.

His understanding of Moshiach also undergoes a change. It used to be something that he never thought much about, but now it becomes serious. He understands what it means "to bring Moshiach." What does he need to think about when he makes a cheshbon ha'nefesh at night – did he do enough for kabbalas p'nei Moshiach, to hasten the Geula? He knows he has to make a real cheshbon ha'nefesh if he is really bringing Moshiach.

What can parents do to make this transition successful?

The yeshiva staff tries to be warm to the bachurim and to fill the vacuum of the absence of mother and father. It's the staff's job to see to it that a bachur feels comfortable and our rebbis put a lot of effort into this. But it isn't enough. **The parents have to be involved and know what's going on.** Usually, if a boy doesn't feel well he will call his mother, while the staff will be out of the picture.

When it comes to ruchnius the parents surely have to know what's going on. They must call the rebbeim and even be nudniks if necessary in order to ensure that their child is making progress. The children whose parents call more often get more attention. That's just the way it is.

Although the boys are in yeshiva all the time, the parents still have to show that they are involved. For example, we once had a mitvza in yeshiva in which on the Shabbos the bachur was home, his father was supposed to learn with him for half an hour. It transforms the going home into something serious, not just an off-Shabbos. It makes him into a Tamim who is going home for Shabbos.

Rabbi Mordechai Ashkenazi, Rav and Mora D'Asra of Kfar Chabad and member of the Beis Din Rabbanei Chabad in Eretz Yisroel:

OUR ASERES HA'DIBROS

The Rebbe's sichos are our "Aseres HaDibros," and just as the Aseres HaDibros are eternal, so too are the Rebbe's sichos.

There is a maamer Chazal which is very relevant to our times: "The conversation of the servants of the Patriarchs is better than the Torah of their children." This refers to the large amount of space in the Torah devoted to the story of Eliezer, the servant of Avrohom, which is in contrast to most mitzvos of the Torah which can sometimes be hinted at with one verse or less.

The Rebbe MH"M taught us to look at everything in Torah as a lesson in avodas Hashem and we can learn a lesson from this statement of Chazal as follows. Today in Chabad there are two views – not a dispute, G-d forbid, but an ideological debate. Some want to intensify the involvement of the Torah of the children while others want to increase the involvement in the conversation of the servants of the Patriarchs.

In Chassidus it explains at length the difference between a son and a servant, but the main difference is that a son is the inyan of emotion and intellect and a servant is the inyan of kabbalas ol.

Those who want the "Torah of



the children" maintain that today we need to strengthen the deep bond between us and the Rebbe which is like the deep bond between father and son. To achieve this we need to emphasize the study of Chassidus and go back in time to the derech of the Chassidim of the Alter Rebbe, to

the maamarim of the Mittler Rebbe, to the teachings of Chabad.

Those who say that the "conversation of the servants of the Patriarchs" is key, maintain that the main avoda today is simple faith in the Rebbe, like an eved whose inyan is kabbalas ol. The focus should be on instilling absolute kabbalas ol, to do whatever the Rebbe wants and encourages, even if we don't understand why. The main "koch" of the people with this perspective is in the inyan that the Rebbe encouraged so much and most recently – the proclamation of Yechi.

This proclamation contains a deep message and it's possible that among the thousands of Chassidim who proclaim it, there are those who are unaware of its significance, but that doesn't prevent them from saying it because they do it as a servant, with kabbalas ol. They saw that the Rebbe encouraged it and for them, there are no questions!

That is what we learn from the Chazal, "The conversation of the servants of the Patriarchs is better than the Torah of their children."

Indeed, in the final moments of galus, when the world seems to be going crazy, the only way to prevail and hold on until the hisgalus is to act according to the "conversations of the servants of the Patriarchs," i.e. with emuna p'shuta stemming from kabbalas ol.

Chabad Chassidus, from day one, was aiming for one goal – Yemos HaMoshiach. This was the case in the time of the Alter Rebbe but there was a radically new level achieved in the era of the Rebbe Rashab which started the three generations of the hisgalus of Moshiach which culminate in our generation.

The Rebbe Rashab, who instilled the belief in Moshiach in his talmidim, said that before Moshiach comes there will be tough times to the point that the fire that descended in the time of Eliyahu

HaNavi on the altar of Hashem, will descend on the other side, but still we will cry out “Hashem Hu HaElokim.”

The Rebbe Rashab was letting us know that a terrible time would come when they would try to uproot the simple faith of Chassidim; when they would try to undermine the bond of emuna between Chassid and Rebbe, that bond expressed in the proclamation of Yechi, and would even prove it with signs and wonders. The fire will descend on the other side.

But those who listen to the Rebbe, those connected to him, will continue to proclaim Yechi, in the spirit of the age-old cry of, “Hashem Hu HaElokim,” and to announce: I am connected specifically to the Rebbe now just as before. How? With emuna p’shuta.

In the winter of 5752, I was present by the Rebbe and till today I remember how in the middle of the farbrengen the Rebbe cried out, “Hashem Hu HaElokim!” He did so seven times and nobody knew why.

I often think of that time. The Rebbe saw into the future. He saw the terrible time we are now in and he invigorated us with his cry of, “Hashem Hu HaElokim.”

The Rebbe gave us the strength so that even while we are in this terrible state and the fire descends on the other side, we have the fortitude to continue to say, “Hashem Hu HaElokim.”

Today we proclaim: Hashem Hu HaElokim. You can prove with signs and wonders that you are right but you should know that you won’t budge us from our emuna and hiskashrus in the Rebbe MH”M.

When we look at the source from where we learn about the proclamation “Yechi HaMelech,” you see an amazing thing. The son of Dovid HaMelech tried to contest the malchus of Shlomo. He managed to get all the Who’s Who in the palace on his side and began

The Rebbe Rashab was letting us know that a terrible time would come when they would try to uproot the simple faith of Chassidim; when they would try to undermine the bond of emuna between Chassid and Rebbe, that bond expressed in the proclamation of Yechi...

celebrating his victory over Shlomo.

The situation seemed to bode well for him. Dovid was sick, “and the king Dovid was elderly,” and it was the opportune moment to take over the malchus. There was one woman who went to the king and asked him to keep his promise to give her son Shlomo the malchus. She was sure that if she got the king’s word, her son would rule. After hearing Dovid’s commitment to Shlomo being his heir, she parted with the words, “Yechi HaMelech Dovid L’olam.”

Now that seems to be a mockery of a king who is about to die. Why does she say he should live forever?

Once again we see the power of emuna p’shuta. To her it was clear, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that there would be no changes in the Malchus Beis Dovid, and every promise that was given would be fulfilled even if she was faced by opposition from the entire royal house, including the most important ministers.

With this emuna p’shuta she merited to see her son Shlomo on the throne, continuing the Malchus Beis Dovid.

We have to implement these ideas for ourselves, our family, our friends, our circles near and far. We have no other choice.

If we want to remain eternally bonded with the Rebbe MH”M, if we want make it through these

difficult times in peace, we must adhere to the “conversations of the servants of the Patriarchs,” and conduct ourselves with kabbalas ol like an eved.

If we start acting like a son and try to understand everything with our minds, we are liable to veer very far off. It is only with emuna p’shuta, with kabbalas ol, that we can successfully navigate this arduous stage before the hisgalus of the Rebbe MH”M.

Today, experience has shown what results from the “conversations of the servants of the Patriarchs.” Thousands of Anash and T’mimim who head for 770 for special dates, particularly the month of Tishrei, prove that this is the way to attain and express genuine hiskashrus.

Yehi ratzon that we all strengthen each other in emuna p’shuta in all the Rebbe’s sichos, without p’shetlach.

The Rebbe’s sichos are our Aseres HaDibros and just as the Aseres HaDibros have not changed since they were given, so too the Rebbe’s sichos are not susceptible to change and re-interpretation. With these Aseres HaDibros we will go out immediately to greet the Rebbe MH”M with the jubilant cry that expresses, above all else, our emuna p’shuta: Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu V’Rabbeinu, Melech HaMoshiach L’olam Va’ed.

Said at a Bruchim HaBaim gathering for those returning from 770 in Cheshvan 5758.

GREEN CHEESE

By Aryeh Gotfryd, PhD

To put it plainly, everyone has criteria for what can reliably be considered true. If an idea meets those standards, it is fit to be believed and acted upon.

—*The Rebbe, Mind Over Matter, p.8*

They say that America is a meritocracy. There is nothing to stop you from working your way up from rags to riches or from ignoble origins to the presidency itself. Even after you've earned your way up, staying there is no given, due to various checks and balances to fiscal and political clout. But once you have legitimately climbed the ranks and now rule the roost, your authority is great.

Judaism has something similar. For millennia, the best scholar became the Rabbi, and the most scholarly of those became renowned authorities and their rulings were obeyed. Yes, one could always question the basis of a rabbinic ruling, but generally speaking once rendered appropriately, the ruling of a Torah authority is binding.

Now I'm no major league player in economics, politics or rabbinics, but in Applied Ecology, I've been up a few rungs and the view from there can be instructive. Let me share a story.

The City of Toronto once took a local homeowner to task over his plan to fell a clump of old red oak trees on his property. His yard, like those of his neighbors, backed on to a ravine slope leading to a long, winding City Park enjoyed by many. The City said leveling the oak trees

would disturb the park ecosystem and he therefore couldn't chop them down. He of course cried foul. The matter went to hearing before a Tribunal of the Ontario Municipal Board, a judicial court.

I was called in as an expert witness for the City, having specialized in urban forest ecosystems. The trial was set for the intermediate days of the holiday of Sukkos, and I attended in traditional Chassidic holiday garb. My double breasted, knee-length *kapote* (jacket), black fedora and untrimmed beard raised some eyebrows as I was called up to testify and to answer cross-examination.

But the vast majority of questions I got were not about nature. They were about credentials. What university did you attend? What degrees did you obtain? In what specialties? How many peer-reviewed articles have you published? How many environmental assessments have you conducted? For which clients?

By the time it was established that I was entitled to have an expert opinion, it became almost irrelevant what opinion I had. Of course I had to show drawings and data and speak to the issues, but the reliability of my statements was no longer in question. It felt like if I had told them the moon was made out of green cheese, they would have believed it.

* * *

Judaism has another role prequalified by merit and that is the status of a prophet. On the one

hand, since the Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed, prophecy has rested primarily on imbeciles and children, neither of whom can be relied on for the veracity of their statements.[1] So some silly kid might be telling you divine prophecies all day and you will just never know.

On the other hand, if someone is healthy and spirit, mind and body, disciplined in his lifestyle and dignified in his personality, focused on Torah's wisdom and committed to deeds of goodness and kindness, and after all this predicts future events accurately which could not be known in advance, and then repeats the performance on several occasions, then this person has the status of a prophet in Jewish law.

In biblical times there were prophetic schools where people would work on themselves to achieve a spiritual level where they would be worthy of prophecy. Many succeeded, probably thousands, but only 55 made it to the "major leagues" and got recorded in the Hebrew scriptures as prophets. Often they would meditate to get in the spirit of things or they would burn incense and listen to music, and that could catalyze a revelation.

In any case, when such a person tells you what to do or what not to do, there is a special commandment of listening to him or her, and a special transgression invoked for one who does not heed[2], as this week's Torah portion says, "Aylav tishmeun." [3] Of course there are limits. A kosher prophet can't tell

you to add a mitzvah to the Torah or to cancel one. But his merit has earned him authority so we have to listen up.

Lest one think this is some arcane fact with no practical relevance these days, we should note that among all the criteria of who can be a kosher prophet and what constitutes a false one, etc., there is no mention in Jewish law (halacha) of any time limitations. In fact someone could get up today with all the criteria and start batting 1000 on the next day's stock prices or election results and you'd have to listen to him just like you have to keep Shabbos or Kosher.

I've met one of those. In 1992 there was a NY Times weekend supplement entitled "The Oracle of Brooklyn," all about the Lubavitcher Rebbe and his uncanny ability to foresee outcomes of wars, business deals, marriages, medical treatments, etc., by the tens of thousands with incredibly precision and accuracy.

The Rebbe is/was incomparably saintly, wise, disciplined, dignified, good and kind. But was he a prophet? In the same category as those biblical giants? Like Moses? Maimonides, in his Code, goes on

to say that we didn't listen to Moses so much because of his wonders and miracles, but rather because the Torah says to do so. And the same applies here.

The Rebbe, nearly twenty years ago, said that these laws are relevant now, and relevant to Moshiach whose prophetic abilities are apparent even before the redemption occurs. He says that all mankind needs to know that the Almighty has chosen one individual to be the judge, advisor and prophet of the generation, and that his own personal prophecy is, "Immediately to redemption," "Behold (this) Moshiach coming." [4]

The Rebbe is/was an American and he is/was a Jew. It may sound like green cheese to you but however you slice it, the meritocracy applies. In all worldly and Torah matters he has been held in the highest esteem and meets all the criteria for a kosher prophet.

The expression goes, "If it looks like a duck, and walks like a duck and quacks like a duck," then you may as well assume that's what it is. The same applies here. We can't know directly if the Creator spoke to someone or didn't, but we *can*

know whether the Creator wants us to *believe* that He did. That's what the halacha is for.

The hard part about all this is the "Aylav tishmeun" part. We like to benefit from the foresight but we don't want to pay the price. Listening means giving up control and letting someone else run my agenda.

The good part about it is that we know we are truly in the home stretch and that any moment now, the dream will become the reality and we will celebrate renewed and universal communion with the Creator of the Universe and all mankind together as one with the coming of Moshiach NOW!

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 or call 416-858-9868

NOTES:

- [1] Bava Basra 12b
- [2] Rambam Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah, Chapters 7 – 10.
- [3] D'varim 18:5
- [4] Sicha of Parshas Shoftim 5751

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ON THE HOME FRONT OF TOMCHEI T'MIMIM

By Dafna Chaim

We spoke to an exemplary human being, Mrs. Chana Rosenberg, wife and mother of menahalim of Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim in B'nei Brak and Beit Shemesh, to hear about the contribution of women to the world of Chabad yeshivos. * Presented for 15 Elul, when the Rebbe Rashab founded Tomchei T'mimim in 5697/1897.

In recent years, branches of Tomchei T'mimim, including smicha programs, have opened up one after the other. By and large, these branches are started by shluchim in those areas, and thanks to these yeshivos their shlichus has grown. The Rebbe's wish for every city to have a branch of Tomchei T'mimim is becoming a reality.

On shlichus, the shlucha's work is generally acknowledged and

appreciated as being equally essential as their husbands', but when it comes to building yeshivos, their role is not that apparent other than sending their sons to learn there. The truth, though, is that behind every yeshiva is a woman who unassumingly devotes days and nights to its success.

First, tell us a little about yourself.

I was born and raised in a



Chassidishe home, albeit not Chabad. My father belongs to Tosh and is himself descended from Admurei Tosh. My mother's family are Kaliver Chassidim and she too is a descendent of distinguished rabbanim. My grandfather was the shochet in his town and a talmid chacham and a tremendous yerei Shamayim.

The chinuch my parents received was based on Ahavas Torah and Ahavas Yisroel. Respecting parents and family unity were the supreme values. They instilled all this in us, and had a profound impact on our lives.

I remember my father always with a Jewish book in hand, sitting and learning. He was an emotional *baal t'filla* and till today his sweet voice rings in my ears, the tune he used as he learned. As a *baal t'filla* he always tried to daven in shuls that were not ultra-Orthodox in order to merit the not-so-religious public.

My parents' home was always open, offering a helping hand at all times to those in need, and this was done graciously. While they



The yeshiva building in B'nei Brak

emphasized the value of sufficing with little, the house was always clean and pleasant, with a peaceful atmosphere.

My parents are Holocaust survivors who made aliya right after they married. They settled in yishuv HaZor'im of the HaPoel HaMizrachi movement. Later on, when their children were getting older and they were concerned about their chinuch, they moved to Netanya to Kiryat Tzanz. Our family was one of the first to settle there and my early chinuch was in Tzanz schools.

My connection to Chabad began following my marriage to my husband, R' Shlomo Rosenberg. He is also not from a Chabad home. When he was a boy he was attracted to Chabad and he switched to the Chabad yeshiva in Lud. When we married we set up a Lubavitcher home.

I'd had a firm education of "*kol k'vuda bas melech p'nima*" – the honor of the daughter of the King is within. My mother devoted her



**R' Shlomo Rosenberg with his son Levi
talking to the contractor on the roof of the yeshiva**

entire life to building her home and family and I followed in her footsteps. When I was a newlywed I still went out to work as a sheitel macher but as the family grew I stopped working outside the home and devoted myself to my family. I did this happily without feeling that I was missing out in any way. I think that in order to be successful in raising children you have to put in an enormous amount of time, effort and attention, and it is very hard to do this as a working woman. Boruch Hashem, today I am grateful that we have a large family and good children.

How did your connection with the yeshiva begin?

When we had nine children my husband was learning in kollel. He had spent several years working in business and he had simply had enough. That being the case, he decided to stop the normal course of life and to sit and learn. After two years in kollel, the Mara D'asra of

B'nei Brak, Rabbi Yehuda Leib Landau asked him to run the Chabad Talmud Torah (elementary school).

My husband wasn't at all interested in doing so since up until then he had never worked in chinuch. Furthermore, he knew it was a tough job. His brother runs a school for Chassidei Vizhnitz and he saw how demanding the job is. He knew that if you want to be successful you have to give it your all. Above all else, he felt that he wasn't fit for the job and so he said no. R' Landau pressed him to reconsider, and when that too failed, he urged him to ask the Rebbe.

My husband wrote to the Rebbe and explained his feelings about it and asked whether he should accept the offer. The Rebbe's answer was, "Look into the offer and it should be in a good and auspicious time." So he took on the job with all the requisite chayus.

To tell you the truth, I wasn't

thrilled with the idea because I knew it would come at the expense of the family and I wanted life to continue as it had until then. But after I saw the Rebbe's answer I gave him my blessing and unstinting support.

Later on, when a need arose for a high school in B'nei Brak, my husband started one, also receiving the Rebbe's encouragement for this move.

My husband put his days and nights into this yeshiva while I freed him completely from any household tasks so he could devote himself fully without distraction.

He often had to travel overseas in order to fundraise and I was left alone with the children. Although this was hard, I agreed to it happily and with the awareness of the importance of what he was doing. What keeps me going during hard moments are the brachos from the Rebbe.

How do you manage?

I realized that as the wife of the menahel, my job is to run the house so he can focus on the yeshiva. From a young age, each of our children has an age-appropriate household chore in order to train them and give them the feeling of mutual responsibility and cooperation. The older ones help the younger ones and each child appreciates what he has and is happy with his lot. Boruch Hashem, the house had and still has a good atmosphere. It's a quiet house where you hardly ever hear raised voices from the parents or the children.

Yet I tried not to overly burden my children. I knew that when the time came, each of them would be building their own home and have to give that all their energy.

My husband helps as much as he can. He wisely got the children to love their jobs and always came up with new ideas for improvements and changes. Although he was so busy he always found the time for each child, inquiring about them and

their learning. During vacations he found the time to play with each of them.

How much do you think his dedication to the yeshiva at the expense of the home affected the family?

Today, when I look back, I can say that thanks to the yeshiva our entire house looks different. The yeshiva is a life's work which the entire family participates in. Throughout the years, our children were involved in the work and everybody breathed and lived the yeshiva. Each of us is part of the spirit of the yeshiva and is ready to do our share when our help is needed. When the older boys were young, my husband got them involved in helping out during their vacations. Instead of going on outings or relaxing, they worked. They didn't balk at any job, whether it was painting the yeshiva, fixing up closets or mending broken chairs.

One of the staff members once said to me, "It's a rachmanus on the kids – they work harder than the Arab workers!" But he was mistaken because they always did it happily and proudly. It was their privilege to help out the yeshiva.

My sons built the sixth floor, brick by brick. Moishy took care of the electrical wiring. The children joked that they didn't want to be in the building when the protective scaffolding came off because who knew what might happen, but boruch Hashem, it worked without a hitch.

Levi and Shmulik, the older boys, help my husband run the yeshiva and with their indefatigable energy they've raised the yeshiva to new heights (literally as well) and it is flourishing.

The interesting thing is that they, in turn, rope in their younger brothers who are happy to donate every minute of their free time to the yeshiva. I must say that they do this happily and with chayus and not a

word of complaint. I am moved every time I see how devoted they are to the yeshiva. Learning Torah is a supreme value for me and I am happy to have the z'chus to support those who study Torah. If this sometimes entails hard work, this is done with joy and love.

At one point, the decision was made to take over the yeshiva in Beit Shemesh that was about to close. My boys gave up their summer vacation, when I usually pamper them with good food and shower them with lots of love, and went to Beit Shemesh to renovate the yeshiva and get it ready for the new school year. The labor was difficult and physically exhausting, the accommodations were uncomfortable, meals were grabbed on the run, and they did not get paid for what they did, but I have no doubt that their real reward is immeasurable.

My girls also contribute their share by doing office work, sometimes working until late at night or on Erev Shabbos and Yom Tov. Sometimes it's also at the expense of their maternity leave. They are the only ones my husband would dare to ask to work so hard and such unusual hours.

At first, the financial situation at the yeshiva was not rosy and I cooked the yeshiva food to save on expenses.

Over the years I saw how the yeshiva and home are one entity. Thanks to the yeshiva we have lots of Chassidishe nachas, boruch Hashem, and of course it's all from the Rebbe who does not remain in debt. We see how the yeshiva is the means through which we receive the brachos.

I noticed something very interesting. Each time I wrote to the Rebbe through the Igros Kodesh, whether about personal or general matters, the answers are always about mosdos.

How do you get the children to

have such love for the yeshiva which “steals” their father away and makes them lose out on things sometimes?

By including the children in everything pertaining to the yeshiva, whether the good news or the daily difficulties. Each one becomes connected to it and is happy with every bit of good news and wants to find solutions for the problems according to their level and understanding. We have family discussions and often terrific solutions emerge. This kind of cooperative leadership creates the motivation and anticipation of success. Each one feels privileged to be doing this work and views it as their personal shlichus and that is why they do it very happily. Put in other words, the responsibility of running the mosad falls on everybody! It sometimes reaches the point that we have to tell them, “enough! Go to sleep so you will have strength for tomorrow.”

As a mother who has already sent some sons away from home to learn in yeshiva, how do you nurture the relationship with those who spend most of their time away from home and often far away from one another?

My husband and I work to instill the value of family togetherness in our children and do this through caring and lots of love. For example, when one of the boys was on shlichus in Cyprus he got phone calls on his birthday from every member of the family, wherever they were at the time. He said to me, “Ima, I know you made it happen.”

Or, for example, another son of ours learned in Yerushalayim and we decided to surprise him on his birthday. My daughter lives in Yerushalayim and we found a way to get him to her house. When he opened the door he was amazed to see all his siblings, including the married ones with their spouses, who had come to celebrate his



The Chanukas HaBayis attended by Admurim, Rabbanim, Mashpiim and askanim

birthday. He was so shocked he almost fainted.

An event like that makes a strong impression and strengthens the ties between parents and children and between the siblings.

Another son is very sensitive and a homebody and going away to yeshiva far from home was hard for him. So I tried to speak to him every day on the phone and we went to visit him at least once a week to give him the support that he needed.

What is the secret to success in chinuch?

There is no recipe for success in chinuch. You have to daven a lot, all the time, wherever you are. You have to daven for success and constantly thank Hashem for all the good He bestows upon us. We need to ask Hashem to put the right words and reactions in our mouth for each child according to his temperament, to be able to understand each child and respond properly with the right tone and with a lot of patience and caring, and that we be able to speak pleasantly, without anger, without raising our voice, so the child feels understood and that we seek his welfare. We must ask Hashem that our children find grace and good understanding in the eyes of G-d



R' Shmuel Rosenberg examining blueprints with his brothers

and man; that they be loving to and loved by all. We daven that they be involved all their days in Torah and good deeds with yiras Shamayim, that they act respectfully and with love to others and that they have great success in their holy work, in the avoda of shlichus, with devotion and responsibility.

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