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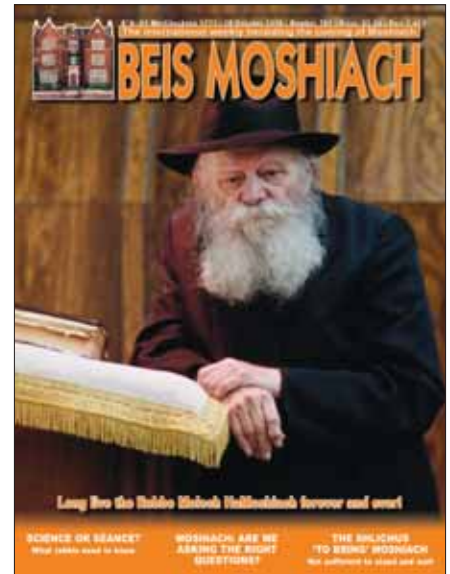
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Beis Moshiah (USPS 012-542) ISSN 1082-0272 is published weekly, except Jewish holidays (only once in April and October) for \$160.00 in Crown Heights, Brooklyn and in all other places for \$180.00 per year (45 issues), by Beis Moshiah, 744 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, NY 11213-3409. Periodicals postage paid at Brooklyn, NY and additional offices. Postmaster: send address changes to Beis Moshiah 744 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, NY 11213-3409. Copyright 2010 by Beis Moshiah, Inc.

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# THE SHLICHUS TO BRING MOSHIACH

Translated by Rabbi Heschel Greenberg and Rabbi Yisroel Ber Kaufman, Ph.D.  
Reprinted from *Besuras HaGeulo*, pg. 143-150

*It is not sufficient “to increase” (as stated in many places),” or that he (the shliach) should stand and wait until Moshiach will come ... Rather he is “to bring.” He does all that depends on him to bring “the days of Moshiach.”*

The most recent innovation in the work of shlichus\* is: **to receive our righteous Moshiach in the true and complete Redemption.** Indeed, the preparation for the coming of our righteous Moshiach is the most all encompassing aspect of Judaism and includes all the other points and details of the work of shlichus.

As has already been said many times, according to the declaration of our Sages of blessed memory “all the appointed times have passed.” According to my sainted father-in-law, the leader of our generation, teshuvah has already been done, to the extent that all aspects of Divine service have already been completed (even “polishing the buttons”<sup>2</sup>), and we therefore stand ready to greet our righteous Moshiach. The work of shlichus must be to prepare to **actually** greet our righteous Moshiach.

Thus the goal of today’s international convention of shluchim<sup>3</sup> is: to produce good

resolutions of how to accomplish the special shlichus of these times: greeting our righteous Moshiach.

...It was mentioned earlier that my sainted father-in-law, the leader of our generation, had declared that all aspects of Divine service have already ended and we stand ready (“stand all of you prepared”) to greet our righteous Moshiach.

We also see (as mentioned many times) that many of the signs of the Redemption have been fulfilled in the events of the world, beginning with the sign (in *Yalkut Shimoni*<sup>4</sup>) that “the time for your Redemption has arrived” when “the nations incite one another.”<sup>5</sup> This has taken place particularly in the Arab countries.

...And we see in reality how it was and will be that “he will fight the wars of G-d”<sup>6</sup> and be victorious in various situations, and specifically through a war of peace. And “victory” is also an expression of “eternity,”<sup>8</sup> connected with the revelation of “Endurance.” Nun -

revelation of the 50th gate<sup>10</sup>; Tzaddik - the ninetieth year (as Jewish people have designated the year)<sup>11</sup>; and Ches - the revelation of our righteous Moshiach, who is connected with the number eight (“eight princes of man”).

The shluchim have already begun long ago to fulfill the work of shlichus in spreading the Torah, Judaism and the Wellsprings of the inner teachings of Torah outward, and for a long time have even reached **completion** in the work of shlichus, according to the announcement of my sainted father-in-law mentioned above. Nevertheless, the true and complete Redemption has not yet actually come. It must be said, then, that there must be something that remains to be done that will bring the Redemption into reality.

What is needed is the following: It is known that “in every generation an individual, descended from Yehuda, is born who is qualified to be the Moshiach for Israel,”<sup>15</sup> “one who qualifies because of his righteousness to be the Redeemer, and when the time arrives, G-d will be revealed to him and send him, etc.”<sup>14</sup> And according to the announcement of my sainted father-in-law, the leader of our generation, the singular shliach of our generation, the singular Moshiach of our generation, that everything has already concluded, it is understood

that there has begun to be fulfilled,<sup>15</sup> “send now the one You will send,” the shlichus of my sainted father-in-law. And therefore it is obvious that the only thing that now remains in the work of *shlichus* is **to greet our righteous Moshiach in actual reality**, in order that he should be able to fulfill his *shlichus* in actuality and bring all the Jews out of exile!

...This then must be the practical lesson that results as we gather now at the opening and commencement of the “International Convention of *Shluchim*.”

We must come out with a resolution and an announcement to all *shluchim* that the work of *shlichus* now and for every Jew is to their capacity to lead to the greeting of our righteous Moshiach.

This means that all the details of the work of *shlichus* in spreading the Torah and Judaism and spreading the Wellsprings of the inner teachings of Torah outward must be permeated with greeting our righteous Moshiach.

As emphasized in the program of the convention - “all the days of your life **to bring** the days of Moshiach,”<sup>16</sup> all aspects of Divine service (every day of your life, and in every day itself - in every detail and hour of the day) must be permeated with “to bring the days of Moshiach.” It is not sufficient “to increase”<sup>17</sup> (as stated in many places),<sup>17</sup> or that he (the *shliach*) should stand and wait until Moshiach will come, at which point he will take part and have the satisfaction. Rather he is “**to bring.**” He does all that depends on him to **bring** “the days of Moshiach.” [The word “days” is] in the plural, [meaning] not only the beginning of one day but the days of Moshiach (and not only when Moshiach is “presumed to be Moshiach,”<sup>18</sup> but all the days of Moshiach - also the completion of “absolutely Moshiach”<sup>19</sup> etc.)

The international convention

must result in resolutions such that every *shliach* must prepare himself and prepare all Jews in his place and city, etc., to greet our righteous Moshiach. This should be done through his explanation of the concept of Moshiach, as explained in the Written Torah and the Oral Torah, in a way that **it will be received** by everyone, according to his intellect and understanding. This includes in particular learning the subject of Moshiach and Redemption, and specifically in a manner of Wisdom, Understanding, and Knowledge.

And since this is the Divine service of the time, it is understood that this applies to every Jew without any exception whatsoever.

...Further and fundamental: Since the work of *shlichus* has already ended, every *shliach* needs to approach the true *M’shaleiach*<sup>20</sup> - G-d - and declare: I have done my *shlichus* and now the time has come that You, as it were, should do Your *shlichus* (for G-d is also a *shliach* - “He tells His **words** to Yaakov, etc.”<sup>21</sup> - and together with the **ten** S’firos, G-d Himself, His essence and being, as it were,<sup>22</sup> is our righteous Moshiach<sup>22</sup>). “Send now the one You will send” - send us our righteous Moshiach in actual reality!

And even if there is only a doubt that G-d will restrain the Jews in exile even a minute for the great pleasure and satisfaction that the Divine service in exile creates for Him, a Jew cries: “all that the master of the house tells you, do, except to leave.”<sup>23</sup> All that the master of the house - this is G-d - says, one must do “except to leave.” One must not remain even a minute, G-d forbid, in a situation of “leaving,” the table of their father. One begs and demands, as it were, of G-d: “send now the one You will send” - in the beginning of the year<sup>24</sup> “by whom You will send”<sup>24</sup> and bring **already** the true and complete Redemption!

And together with the completion

of the work of *shlichus* (at the conclusion of *Likkutei Torah*, Parshas Bracha<sup>25</sup>) one immediately reaches the completion of the wedding - the Song of Songs - of Israel and G-d (specifically through an actualization of the good resolution to learn all of *Torah Or* and *Likkutei Torah*, all their chapters until the end. For learning Torah contained within them hastens the actual Redemptive process.)

(From the talk of Shabbos Parshas Chayei Sara, 25 MarCheshvan. Blessing of the month of Kislev, 5752)

#### NOTES:

\*[“Shlichus” comes from the word “to send.” Thus a “Shliach” is an emissary or messenger and “shlichus” is the mission or purpose for which he is sent. The term “shlichus” here refers to the goal of Chassidism in general, and Chabad in particular, to spread the wellsprings of Torah, increase observance of mitzvos and be a resource for one’s fellow Jew, material(v and spiritually. Translator’s note.]

1. Sanhedrin 97b.

2. See the talk of Simchas Torah 5689.

3. [“Shluchim” is the plural of “Shliach,” hence it means “emissaries.” Translator’s note.]

4. Yeshayah, remez 499.

5. Midrash Lekach Tav. Lech Lecha 14: I. See also B’Reishis Rabba, chapter 42, 4.

6. Rambam, Laws of Kings, chapter II, halacha 4.

7. [“Fighting the wars of G-d” is one of the qualifications an individual must meet before being presumed to be Moshiach. There is no necessity, however; for the war to involve bloodshed or even be on a physical level (as the fight for spirituality and observance of mitzvos may also properly be described as a “war of G-d.”) Hence the expression “a war of peace.” Translator’s note.]

8. [The word for “victory” in Hebrew - nitzachon - is etymologically related to the Hebrew word for “eternity” - nitzchius. Translator’s note.)

9. [“Endurance” - Netzach, in Hebrew - is one the ten S’firos, or Divine Attributes through which the universe is created. It is etymologically related to nitzachon and nitzchius (victory and eternity, respectively)

Its three Hebrew letters - nun, tzaddik and gimmel- are here used not just as the letters of a word but as an acronym revealing a deeper meaning of the word. Translator’s note.]

10. [A reference to the fiftieth and final gate of

[Continued on page 25]

# MOSHIACH: ARE WE ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS?

By Rabbi Zvi Homnick

## TOUGH QUESTIONS

Early on in my Chassidic journey of discovery (and so it goes even today) I often found me asking/challenging myself in incredulity, “*Tzu den bist du ah Chassid* (so, are you really a Chassid)?” “*Mit vos bist du ah Chassid* (what qualifies you to consider yourself a Chassid)?,” along with many other internal contentious ruminations in that vein. Knowing myself as well as I do, I am well aware of just how far away I am from the ideal of what a Chassid is supposed to be. As such, the purpose of these inner musings and dialogues were not simply for the purpose of self-flagellation (as important as that is in the appropriate times and doses). They also were meant to serve as a means of achieving personal clarity, forcing me to monitor my progress in transitioning from where I had been to where I was trying to reach.

One of the defining epiphanies that solidified my Chassidic identity, forcing me to confront my own *de facto* conversion for better or for worse, took place when I got together in 1992 with

a group of friends at a small sheva brachos celebration for one of our buddies. After the party was over, the bride and groom went on their merry way, and we all sat around catching up. Unsurprisingly, my involvement in Chabad Chassidus soon became the focal point of the conversation. The group was made up of fellows that had learned in Lithuanian style yeshivos but who identified as Polish style Chassidim, or at least had strong leanings in that direction. Only one person in the group proudly identified as a dyed-in-the-wool Misnaged, but even he had an admitted love for studying Chassidic teachings and lore.

Rather quickly, I found myself on the receiving end of a variety of vituperative verbal volleys being fired at me from all sides. Although they raised many questions and criticisms regarding Chabad and its beliefs, it was obvious to me that the main point of contention was their conviction that Lubavitchers believe that Chabad Chassidus is the only way and everybody else is missing the boat. As proof of this they cited the fact that the leaders of every

other strain of Judaism got together with one another to consult on matters of public policy, and the only ones to act unilaterally without any consultation with others, and often contrary to the considered consensus of all other Jewish greats, was the Lubavitcher Rebbe and his followers. This was something that they all agreed was so utterly offensive, to the point that one of my closest friends in the group made the argument that for this alone they deserved to be marginalized and considered to be outside the main camp of Judaism. Except for me, everyone else in the room seemed to concur, some more effusively than others.

When I was finally able to get the floor and offer a response, I tried to explain that Chabad was not simply another approach with a slightly different take on any number of issues, but represented an entirely different experience of reality based on a radical divine revelation within Torah, which not only does not stand in contradiction to traditional Torah values and ideals but enhances them immeasurably. Thus, the



Rebbe who is the divine conduit of that higher reality, neither consults nor debates other leaders whose worldview and positions are inherently limited by their finite minds, as great as they may be, even as he has and shows the greatest respect and appreciation for all of their good works and accomplishments.

This of course raised protests as to what about other great Rebbes and Tzaddikim who were known to have displayed open *Ruach HaKodesh* (prophetic divine sight) and performed great miracles, and so on and so forth. It became clear to me that all the explanations in the world weren't going to help, and I told them just that. I explained that the reason is because in the end Chassidus isn't simply an intellectual theory or a belief system developed for the purpose of engendering warm and fuzzy feelings amongst its adherents, but an internal experiential reality shift. To illustrate this point, I noted that since almost everyone in the room identified as Chassidic to some degree or another, they clearly were accepting of the idea that the Vilna Gaon was wrong and that the Baal Shem Tov and his disciples were right, even if they didn't feel comfortable framing it in those black and white terms.

All present had to affirm that assertion albeit with some reluctance, to which I followed up with the following hypothetical question: If someone put a gun to your head and threatened to kill you unless you say that you believe that the view of the Vilna Gaon is correct and that G-d literally contracted Himself out of the space within which He created all the worlds including ours, and He is not present in the world except insofar as it is under His providence, what would you do? If you truly believe that Chassidus

***It is a disturbing twist of irony, that there are those amongst us who can even entertain the notion that the Rebbe's teachings on this of all topics are and should remain outside the realm of rational analysis and comprehension. And this, after hundreds of years of unimaginable self-sacrifice for the express purpose of bringing the loftiest divine realities into the realm of human intellect...***

is a divine Torah truth handed down to us through the Baal Shem Tov, then the view that there is any existence "outside of" and "separate from" G-d is not only incorrect, it is to be considered a direct corollary of the idolatrous belief in "two domains" or "collaborative creative forces," and as such would require you to give up your life to avoid proclaiming acceptance of such a belief.

Not very shockingly, they all looked at me as if I had fallen from a planet a great deal further away from this one than the moon. Their incredulity only grew when I stated passionately and unequivocally that not only would I not think twice about giving up my life under those circumstances (may Hashem protect us from any such tests), it is hard for me to imagine any Lubavitcher Chassid (versed enough to understand the implications of the ultimatum) who would do otherwise. I went on to explain that the difference is that they see it in terms of divergent but legitimate views, and they happen to choose to

adhere to the view that they perceive as more authentic for one reason or another, whereas when one immerses oneself in trying to apprehend G-d and G-dliness as He is revealed through Chabad Chassidus while working to develop a deep connection with the Rebbe, it becomes so real that there is "nothing else but Him" and there can be no other way.

Throughout all this, even as my mind was registering their shock, not only about what I was saying but also over what had happened to their friend to make him embrace such extremist views, I couldn't help but be shocked myself. It was a huge psychic jolt to suddenly find myself fully implanted on the other side of a huge ideology/reality/identity divide from where I had been my entire life.

## **TO QUESTION OR NOT TO QUESTION, THAT IS THE QUESTION**

One of the core differences cited by the Zohar between the

esoteric orally transmitted teachings of Kabbala and the exoteric oral tradition of the Talmud is that when it comes to the study of Kabbala there is no room for questions. The types of questions that he negates are those which challenge a basic premise (*kashya*), or attempt to find textual contradictions (*teyuvta*) and the like, as opposed to a direct query in search of greater insight and understanding. This is unlike Talmudic exegesis and exploration which is based almost entirely on resolving these types of questions and challenges, each need for resolution leading to greater clarity and understanding.

The reason for this as explained by the Alter Rebbe in Tanya (see Igeres HaKodesh ch. 26) is that the revealed portion of the Torah descended from G-d's Will and Wisdom into the lower worlds in such a manner that it is in exile within the "husks" of the forces of concealment, and it is through the process of clarifying the law by way of resolving the challenges and contradictions that we break through the concealment and "redeem" the wisdom that is hidden within. The ability to do this is exclusively the domain of Jewish souls invested in physical bodies, who have the ability to struggle with and overcome the forces of "the other side," and that is why even the angels come to hear novel Torah ideas from the inhabitants of the lower world. Kabbala, on the other hand, remains above the reality of the lower worlds, and so, even when it is revealed down here, it leaves no room for questions except for those questions that express the need for more information and deeper understanding.

As mentioned in previous installments, Chabad Chassidus as developed by the Alter Rebbe and

his successors represents a revolutionary leap forward in the process of revelation of the deeper dimensions of Torah (to be fully realized with the coming of Moshiach) by drawing down that which inherently transcends human intellect into the realm of human understanding. As the Rebbe explains (see Likkutei Sichos vol. 27, p. 24-28), one of the major steps forward in this process was brought down to us by the Rebbe Rashab, whose 150<sup>th</sup> birthday we celebrate this 20 Cheshvan, to the point that now one can understand the concepts of the inner dimension of Torah **to the same degree as the revealed portion of Torah.**

The Rebbe concludes there with the following lesson/directive:

"There are those who do actually study the inner dimension of Torah, but they are afraid to ask a question when they don't understand the topic being studied. How can one ask a *kashya* on a matter in the inner dimension of Torah? The rule is that 'in that place there is no *kashya* etc'! Ai, he doesn't understand – it is sufficient that he believes with perfect faith that everything that it says in the inner teachings of Torah is true.

"To such an approach there is the response, that the Rebbe Rashab opened the pathway, that words of Chassidus should be possible to grasp through human intellect in the same manner as the revealed Torah. That is to say, through analytical study in a way of give and take etc. And when one doesn't understand a given matter – the rule is that 'the bashful one does not learn' and one is required to ask etc.

"Certainly, when one does **not** understand any matter in Torah (even in the revealed Torah) there needs to be and must be 'we will

do' before 'we will hear.' There can be no doubt ch"v in the veracity of the matter. However, conversely, one cannot fulfill the obligation of Torah **comprehension** with 'acceptance of the **yoke**.' **Understanding** something properly means – that he understands in **his own** intellect how the question is resolved (even in matters of the inner dimension of Torah)."

On the words "There can be no doubt in the veracity of the matter," the Rebbe adds a footnote: "And it is apparent in the manner and tone of his question, in that there is no hint of brazenness ch"v, because he recognizes that the flaw is only **on his part**, 'if it (the Torah and its commandments) seems vacuous – **it is from you.**'"

Although my early study of Chassidus clearly included the entertaining of many doubts and the raising of argumentative questions (even as my neshama knew and was searching for the truth), for which I hope to fully repent someday, ironically there was one side benefit. As the Rebbe Rashab himself explains (Sefer HaMaamarim 5669 p. 151) the difference between someone whose understanding is predicated on belief and one who comes to the identical understanding from a position of non-belief, is that his intellectual grasp will be deeper than that of the believer: "Because for the believer, the main thing remains the faith that he senses in his soul even as he is engaged in the intellectual component."

## QUESTIONS IN SEARCH OF ANSWERS

Time and again, the Rebbe instructed us in various forms and contexts that a major aspect of our final efforts and preparations for the coming of Moshiach is the

in-depth study of the topics of Moshiach and Geula in the way of Chabad - wisdom, understanding and knowledge. The Rebbe also made it a point to emphasize the importance of including the most recent talks (from the years 5751 and 5752) in those studies, as well as promoting these studies to all those that we can possibly reach, from our inner circle to the communal and global spheres.

Oddly enough, one of the arguments that has been used to dampen the enthusiasm of people waiting thousands of years to finally hear the good news that we are down to the wire and only need to carry out these last preparations, is that those of us who accept everything the Rebbe

tells us on faith cannot expect the larger public to accept these same ideas as they transcend rational understanding. It is a disturbing twist of irony, that there are those amongst us who can even entertain the notion that the Rebbe's teachings on this of all topics are and should remain outside the realm of rational analysis and comprehension. And this, after hundreds of years of unimaginable self-sacrifice for the express purpose of bringing the loftiest divine realities into the realm of human intellect, so that even those that are not "fully refined" can grasp and comprehend what in earlier generations was exclusively the domain of uniquely spiritual

individuals. Beyond the irony, it is the ultimate brazenness to suggest that if it rings hollow from the vantage point of my intellect, then the problem is anywhere else but within me, myself and I.

As we come from the birthday of the Rebbe Rashab, who "opened the pathway" enabling us to ask questions (faithfully and respectfully), and yes to find the answers, we must strengthen our commitment to fulfilling all of the Rebbe's instruction for these final moments in exile, in preparation for the real answer to all our questions, namely the True and Complete Redemption, immediately, NOW!

Zvi Homnick can be contacted at rabbizvi@aol.com



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# THE SHLEIMUS HA'ARETZ SOLDIER

By Nosson Avraham

Translated By Michael Leib Dobry

*Headlines blared throughout Eretz Yisroel when R' Shabtai Bloch was suddenly arrested on charges that he wanted to harm Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu. All who knew him were stunned by this baseless accusation, and he was released five days later after the charges had been dropped. Now for the first time, R' Shabtai reveals the inside story, describes his activities for shleimus ha'Aretz, and recreates his long and winding road leading to the Rebbe's door.*

During the past month, Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu flew together with his entourage to the United States, where he announced the opening of negotiations with the terrorists of the "Palestinian

Authority". This announcement came after almost a nearly year-long freeze on settlement construction throughout Yehuda and Shomron, which surprisingly passed without much protest. When

we met last week in Tzfas with Rabbi **Shabtai Bloch**, one of the leading figures in the fight for shleimus ha'Aretz, he knew all too well how to explain the silence. "If a left-wing Israeli government had made these decrees, there would have been an outcry. But since we're talking about people from the 'right-wing' parties, people are quiet."

Rabbi Bloch has been active in the battle for shleimus ha'Aretz for over thirty years. He keeps the informational material he has produced in thick binders, highlighted by his crowning achievement – two recently published booklets that clearly explain the position of the Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach, on this subject. Rabbi Bloch is a resolute chassid – head held high, standing upright, and crying out – sometimes by himself – for the cause of Eretz Yisroel. During Netanyahu's previous term in the Israeli premiership, he even had the privilege of being arrested for his activities, but as soon as he was released, he continued his acts of protest.

Rabbi Bloch is well-known. He speaks at conferences on the subject of shleimus ha'Aretz, puts out informational brochures, and prints up position papers and protest signs. However, few are familiar with his life story and the process that brought him to the teachings of chassidus and the great luminary – the Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach. R' Shabtai showed us an envelope containing dozens of letters he was privileged to receive from the Rebbe over the years, in addition to numerous answers via telephone. "There was no question that remained unanswered," he stated. "I can't reveal the content of many of these replies due to their personal nature, but I felt that the Rebbe was accompanying me throughout my entire journey, as if



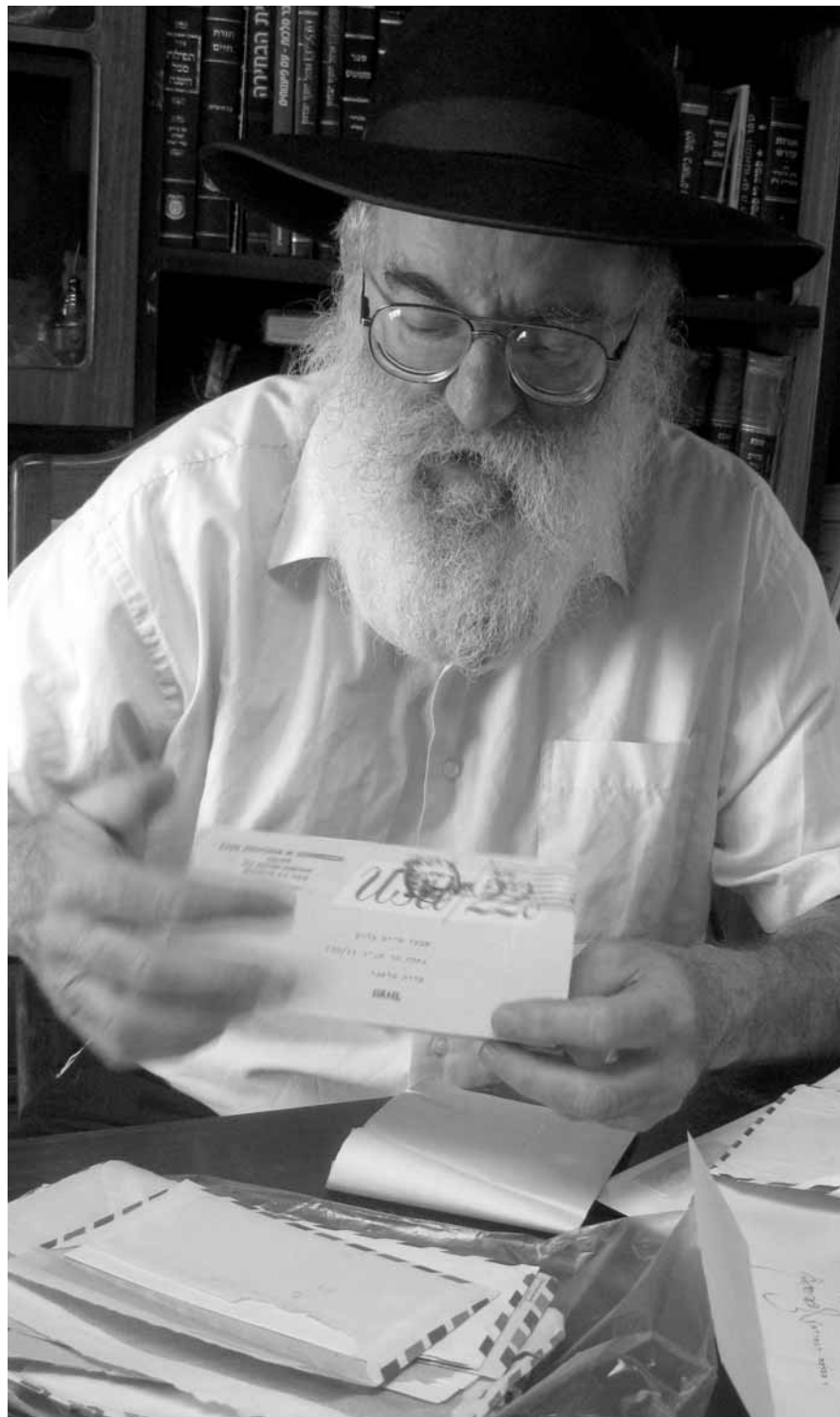
I was his own son.”

Rabbi Shabtai Chaim Bloch was born and raised in a traditional Jewish home in the Holy City of Teveria. The one who really brought tradition to the family was his mother, who was raised in an ultra-Orthodox home. According to the tradition brought down from her parents, she is among the descendants of Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev. R' Shabtai's father came to Eretz Yisroel from Poland prior to the outbreak of the World War II, and as the years passed, he abandoned the path of his forefathers. “My parents were married during the War of Independence, and the pioneer spirit of those days was consuming the young people of Eretz Yisroel. Yet, it also confused them in large numbers, leading to neglect of the values of Torah and mitzvos upon which most of that founding generation had been educated.

“My mother was responsible for our education, and she sent me to learn in ‘Tachkemoni’ – the only religious school in Teveria in those years. The Torah studied there was largely symbolic, not as a way of life. The atmosphere was secular. Many local ultra-Orthodox residents had abandoned the city for other locations. During my youth, there were only a few adults left in town who stubbornly and stringently observed Jewish traditions. The most powerful experience I had as a young man was during the Six Day War, when our entire family joined forces to dig trenches in our courtyard.

“The atmosphere was most difficult. The adults were pessimistic, talking about a second Holocaust. On numerous occasions during the conflict, Syrian jets circled and rained bombs on Teveria. Every explosion shook the entire city, and the sense of fear was truly great.

“Immediately after the war, I



joined the Golani Brigade. During my three years in the army, the remaining crumbs of religious tradition that had clung to me since my youth came loose. All of my friends had broken the yoke of

Torah and mitzvos, or what little they still had left, and I followed in their footsteps.”

During his military service, R' Shabtai fought on every front: Mt. Hermon, the Jordan Valley, and the

Suez Canal. “I remember well how we would lay in wait at Suez, with the bullets and missiles whistling over us. We engaged in face-to-face combat in Lebanon and the Jordan Valley with terrorist cells trying to penetrate Israeli territory. These were very difficult times, and many of my friends lost their lives. In a raid that we made on a terrorist target in Lebanon, several soldiers from the IDF’s Egoz reconnaissance patrol were killed. We also lost several soldiers during training exercises. The sense of bereavement hit out unit time after time.”

After his military discharge, R’ Shabtai found himself confused and bewildered, not knowing where to turn or what to do. He tried to learn a profession and even to open a business, but his efforts proved unsuccessful. He was overcome by a powerful feeling of emptiness. “I walked around for days and days feeling totally lost, as if I was wandering in a barren desert with no end in sight – no essence, no depth, just me alone. I felt a tremendous thirst, but I didn’t know where to find the water to quench it.”

Then one day, a friend told him that members of their former army unit were building a new settlement on the Golan Heights: Neve Ativ. The idea was to found a new settlement close to Mt. Hermon. The project was initiated by those who served in the Egoz reconnaissance patrol and engaged the enemy in the battle for the Golan during the fighting. Shabtai joined them, and worked over a period of two years to establish the foundation for the new settlement. “We were involved in agriculture and infrastructure, and we also built the Hermon site. I felt a sense of great satisfaction. I was part of a developing idealistic group, filled with energy and pioneer spirit – just the way I liked it.”

The fall came when they reached the stage of setting up permanent housing units. As one of the veterans, Bloch was given a house, but suddenly he decided to abandon the project and leave the settlement. “To this day, I don’t know how to explain what moved me so suddenly to get up and leave. My friends were absolutely stunned. I had been the group’s living spirit. I had walked with them hand-in-hand for two years, and just as the objective was on the horizon, I decided to give it up without any logical reason. I had a strong inner feeling that ‘this still wasn’t it’.

“Around this same time, I started having my first thoughts of t’shuva. G-d, Who had planted within me that feeling of emptiness, He was the One Who now planted the seeds of t’shuva. I felt a strong pull towards Torah and mitzvos without understanding why.

“Today, I know what name to call it: *‘Isarusa d’l’eila’* (an arousal from Above). This was the stage when G-d decided to lift me onto the king’s highway, and so it was. After a relatively lengthy period of time, I sat in my parents’ home, broken and in despair, until I decided to get up and take action. I recalled that I had some religious cousins on my mother’s side, one of whom was a Gerer chassid named Leibush Rosenberg, then living in Netanya’s Kiryat Sanz community. One day, I got up the nerve and picked up the telephone to call him, and said that I wanted – no more, no less – to do t’shuva...”

A few days later, R’ Shabtai went to his cousin’s house, where he stayed for a month, learning what little he had managed to forget and many other things that were totally new to him. “This cousin was close to Chabad. He knew several chapters of Tanya by heart, and it was from him that I first heard about Lubavitch. During this period, he connected me with

another Sanzer chassid, a most affable Jew named Yankel Glick, from whom I learned a great deal. He taught me the basics. For his part, he understood the process I was going through and he didn’t pressure.

“After one month, my cousin asked if he could send me to his brother in Lod – none other than the well-known mashpia, Rabbi Beirish Rosenberg.

“This was still before the establishment of Lod’s Shikun Chabad community, and he hosted me in a small shack where he lived with his wife. Over a period of several weeks, I stayed in his home and I saw an exceptional Jew, a truly pious chassid who had devoted his entire life to the ideals in which he believed. He connected me with his friend, Rabbi Nossan Berechan, who also had a great influence upon me. Together, they brought me closer to Torah tradition with a heartfelt and caring approach.

“Despite the fact that I perceived them to be honored rabbanim of great stature, I was very moved to see them every Erev Shabbos taking mops and buckets to clean the floor of the synagogue. As a young baal t’shuva still exploring the path he had taken, this mode of conduct made a great impression upon me. These were Jews who possessed a boundless sense of warmth. It’s difficult to find Jews of this caliber today.”

With the outbreak of the Yom Kippur War, Bloch asked to enlist, but the military authorities denied his request and simply told him to wait at home until they called him – something that never happened. After waiting for a few weeks, he decided to take the advice of R’ Beirish and Rabbi Berechan, and he went to learn in the Kfar Chabad yeshiva. While in yeshiva, his chassidic qualities were developed, and for the first time in his life, he learned about the character of the

Rebbeim of Chabad and the teachings of chassidus.

As the feeling of euphoria dissipated, there also came conflict. What will his friends and family say about this drastic change in his life? You have to remember that this took place at the start of the seventies, when the whole concept of baalei t'shuva was not as widespread as it is today. "One day, I thought about the spiritual journey I had taken since my army discharge. I put all the pieces together and I was fascinated by how G-d had directed my steps in order to bring me to the path of truth – from the crisis in Neve Ativ, to meeting Rabbi Beirish Rosenberg, and the IDF's surprising refusal to call me up, leading me through the doors of Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim. Who knows where I would be today if I had been enlisted with all my other army buddies?"

"The individuals who had tremendous influence upon me in yeshiva were Rabbi Moshe Naparstek and R' Mendel Futerfas. I'll never forget R' Moshe's farbrengens – such vitality, such fiery enthusiasm. I remember a meeting that I had with R' Mendel on my first day after arriving in yeshiva. He saw that I was a new student, and he wanted to hear about my past and what brought me to the yeshiva. I told what had occurred in my life; I spoke uninterrupted and he listened. When I finished my story, he uttered just one sentence: "Avraham Avinu was three years old when he recognized his Creator."

"Despite all the encouragement and support, the reality was not so simple. It wasn't easy to change all my habits and customs in every aspect of my life. I had seen the path of truth and I understood that I wanted to follow it, but walking along this path was not trouble-free. One of my friends in yeshiva



suggested that I write to the Rebbe, and this is what I did. I composed a letter about everything that had happened in my life, and I received an answer within a few days.

**27 MarCheshvan 5734**

**Mr. Shabtai Chaim, *sh'yichyeh*  
Shalom u'v'racha!**

**I hereby confirm receipt of his letter from the 21<sup>st</sup> of MarCheshvan including a request for a bracha (*pidyon nefesh*).**

**It will be read at the Tzion of my revered and holy father-in-law, the Rebbe, of righteous and blessed memory for life in the World to Come, his soul rests in the hidden treasures of Heaven, may his merit protect us.**

**May he be blessed to go joyously from strength to strength in all matters of Yiddishkait.**

"This answer saved me. From that moment on, I became connected to the Rebbe. In these few brief words, I felt the Rebbe's personal concern for me. All the doubts vanished as if they had never been. It's impossible to explain this logically, but I felt that the Rebbe was spreading his wings out for me.

"Upon receiving the Rebbe's

letter, I invested much effort in my study of the teachings and ways of chassidus, and this is what transformed me into a chassid. I maintained close contact with R' Mendel Futerfas and learned a great deal from him. He was a deeply 'inner' chassid on the one hand, and filled with chassidic vitality and feeling on the other. He also gave me a lot of love.

"After a year and a half in the yeshiva, I already appeared like a Chabad bachur in all respects – beard, tzitzis out, hat, and suit. R' Notke Berechan determined that all what's missing is a trip to the Rebbe. This is what I did. I traveled to the Rebbe that year, and this represented the 'final leg' of my journey to Lubavitch. Just looking at the Rebbe's appearance was enough to give me a sense of intense bittul. I felt that I was in the presence of the king.

"I had the privilege that year of going in for my first 'yechidus'. I spent several days making the necessary preparations. The Rebbe blessed me in Yiddish for several minutes. I didn't understand a word, but I felt the Rebbe's warmth



## KNOWING HOW TO REACH OUT

“A most interesting episode is engraved in my memory from the time I was coming closer to Yiddishkait, when I came to learn in Yeshivas Tomchei T’mimim – Kfar Chabad.

“During those years, groups of guests would come from all over the country to spend Shabbos in Kfar Chabad. Many of them would also come to the yeshiva to get a good impression.

“On one such Shabbos, a group of children arrived with their guide, a typical Israeli wearing a ‘tembel hat’ on his head and short pants. He seemed to be tremendously cynical about anything connected with Torah and mitzvos. At a certain point during the visit, he was introduced to R’ Mendel, ‘the image of a chassid’, in order that he could speak with him.

“I’ll never forget that sight: R’ Mendel apparently identified with him right away, and without saying a word to him, he put his hand on his shoulder and started dancing with him for ten minutes straight. The entire yeshiva ‘zal’ was on its feet... After parting from this Jew with a big hug, you could see quite easily how deeply moved he really was.

“This incident taught me that you don’t always have to speak. There are other ways to bring Jews closer to the path of their forefathers...”

and love towards me.

“When I was a chassan, I traveled to the Rebbe again. In the middle of a farbrengen, I went up to the Rebbe to take a bottle of ‘mashke’ that I had brought into the mazkirus before Shabbos. I started to take the bottle with my left hand, and the Rebbe told me to take it with my right hand. The Rebbe’s every word has a message, and I have tried ever since to look at everything with the right eye, on the positive side.”

After his wedding, R’ Shabtai Bloch went to live in Nachlat Har Chabad and received a job with the local Bucharian yeshiva, run by R’ Mottel Kozliner. R’ Shabtai later learned that R’ Mendel Futerfas had warmly recommended him for the position.

Not long afterwards, a course in bookkeeping opened and R’ Shabtai considered leaving his work in education to devote himself to learning a new trade. When he wrote about this to the Rebbe, he received the following answer:

**“Continue and complete the**

**forementioned course, and also continue to progress in the field of education. I will mention it at the Tzion.”**

“During the more than thirty years since then, I have been involved in education. I now work as a teacher for young children in Kiryat Shmona, as part of the Chabad House program run by the local shliach, Rabbi Yigal Tzipori. Over the years, I was privileged to receive more letters from the Rebbe encouraging me in my work.”

Anyone acquainted with R’ Shabtai knows that the Rebbe’s mitzvah campaigns are something that burns deep inside him. From the day he came to Lubavitch, he invested most of his time bringing Jews closer to the Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach. There are those who say quietly that this is connected to the fact that he was born on the 12<sup>th</sup> of Menachem Av, the day that Agudas Chassidei Chabad purchased 770, not to mention the fact that *Shabtai Bloch* has the numerical value of 770...

R’ Shabtai finds himself each

day on T’fillin Campaign activities and distributing chassidic material in the local retirement home and Tzfas’ Rebecca Sieff Hospital. In all things connected with mitzvaim, he’s first in line.

“Even during the first year of my marriage, the Rebbe gave me encouragement in almost every reply about the importance of going out and taking action. In virtually every letter, the Rebbe added the following line: **He surely participates (and will participate with greater fortitude) in the mitzvaim. And G-d will grant him success.**” This started with the outreach activities on the transport base near his place of residence in Kiryat Malachi. He would visit this base each Shabbos along with other chassidim, in addition to the mitzvaim he did on other fronts.

After living for a decade in Nachlat Har Chabad, he moved with his family to Tzfas, where he has been living now for over twenty years.

“On Erev Pesach 5748, the Rebbe spoke with a tremendous ‘koch’ about the establishment of more Chabad Houses. Numerous Chabad Houses were created as a result, and we also decided to accept the challenge. Together with Rabbi Gavriel Marzel, we rented an apartment in Tzfas’ Canaan neighborhood and started activities with local young people. Later, we organized a round of house visits in neighborhood homes. These activities continue to this very day, despite the fact that the neighborhood has since taken on a far more religious nature. Every Shabbos, I would go to all the local synagogues and distribute Chabad brochures and the Rebbe’s sichos. I periodically meet people who remember me from back then as youngsters who took part in these activities.”

One of the things that characterizes R’ Shabtai is how he



has connected Jews to the Rebbe, both before Gimmel Tammuz and especially ever since. He writes letters to the Rebbe with Jews in need of a bracha and advice. “There are endless stories, and we have seen the *ruach ha’kodesh* on numerous occasions.”

As mentioned above, R’ Shabtai spreads Judaism in Tzfas’ Rebecca Sieff Hospital and the local geriatric center, which he visits on a daily basis immediately after finishing his work in Kiryat Shmona. He can’t allow himself to rest from the day’s labor, and after more than half a day of work, he draws renewed strength for the Rebbe’s mitzvaim – and very few people can turn him down. With a chassidic smile filled with expression, he passes from bed to bed, from room to room, puts on t’fillin with the sick and dejected, lifts their spirits, writes letters to the Rebbe with them, and cries out with them in a call for the True and Complete Redemption. His knapsack always contains “Geula” pamphlets and copies of the “Beis Moshiach” Magazine, along with candies and sweets that make his offer hard to refuse.

“During mitzvaim at the hospital, I have encountered many Jews who put on t’fillin for the first time in their lives. One day in one of the medical wards, I met a patient with an Arab accent from the nearby village of Akbara, an engineer by trade. When he saw me, he asked if he could...put on t’fillin and even write a letter to the Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach. I was quite amazed that he knew about all this, and then he whispered into my ear that he’s really a 100% kosher Jew, born to a Jewish mother and an Arab father. His mother revealed the truth to him, but not one of his friends knows a thing about it...”

Such amazing stories happen quite often. On more than one occasion, he’s seen actual miracles. “Once I met a soldier lying in one



**One of the kuntreisim on shleimus ha’Aretz produced by Rabbi Bloch**

of the hospital wards, suffering from excruciating back pains. He said that the doctors had diagnosed him with a slipped disc. After much effort, he agreed to put on t’fillin, as every movement of his body made him groan in agony. After I removed the t’fillin from his arm, I continued my rounds to other hospital rooms. When I passed by his room again, I saw a group of soldiers coming to visit him, and he got up to greet him in a demonstration of absolute joy. When he saw me, he ran to hug me and then he said that he doesn’t know what happened, but right after he finished putting on t’fillin, the pains started to lessen and have almost completely disappeared...”

The added value to his activities is the fact that they are saturated with the concept of Moshiach and the Redemption. Over the years, R’ Shabtai has issued several booklets and pamphlets on this subject, presented in a most organized and orderly fashion. Even those that arouse many questions elicit more than satisfactory answers. “One day I came to the hospital and

discovered several people talking in the hallway. I found the appropriate situation to join their conversation, and I naturally told them about the Rebbe and his prophecy of the Redemption. When I finished, a woman who had been waiting there got up and started to speak harshly against the whole subject. Her tone of voice was very loud and her words were most demeaning, but I chose not to respond.

“Suddenly, an elderly Jew got up and asked if he could say something. He introduced himself as a lieutenant colonel in the Israeli air force, and he said that prior to the Yom Kippur War, he was a member of a delegation of military officers sent by their commander, Ran Pakar, for a meeting with the Rebbe. At the time, there was great concern over the security situation, and they asked if they could come and spread out maps to receive advice. To their great astonishment, the Rebbe resolved all their doubts and even made a few undeniably prophetic statements, the precision of which only became clear after the conflict. After hearing what the senior officer had to say, this woman had difficulty hiding the expression of humiliation on her face, and she apologized to everyone present for her outburst.”

Among the wide range of activities in which he is involved, R’ Shabtai is particularly identified with the Rebbe MH”M’s struggle on the subject of shleimus ha’Aretz. For more than two decades, he has fought for the territorial integrity of all Eretz Yisroel, putting out brochures and opinion papers, discussing the Rebbe’s positions, printing protest signs, and going out into the streets. At the end of 5756, he founded an organized staff headquarters for “shleimus ha’Aretz”, together with Rabbi Avraham Chaim Silber and Rabbi Gavriel Marzel. It organized rallies all over the country, held

## “AND I WILL GIVE YOU GOOD LEKACH”

R' Shabtai Bloch: “One year when I spent Tishrei in Beis Chayeinu, I participated in one of the Rebbe’s farbrengens. Between sichos, I would raise my cup to say ‘L’chaim’, and I waited for the Rebbe to look at me and say ‘L’chaim’ in response. However, time after time, the Rebbe would ‘scan’ the chassidim around me, but I didn’t merit to attract the Rebbe’s attention. It was as if the Rebbe was passing me by. I was immediately consumed with thoughts of where I had failed in my conduct. Then, I heard Rabbi Yisroel Halperin from Herzliya tell one of his mekuravim that in order to elicit a response from the Rebbe, it would be appropriate to make a good resolution, and I decided to adopt this approach. During that year, the Rebbe spoke much about letters in the Seifer Torah, and I made the decision to become an active participant in this campaign. When I looked up again, I saw the Rebbe giving me a penetrating look directly into my eyes and my soul. I didn’t know where to hide. The Rebbe nodded his head with a ‘L’chaim’, and I felt that the Rebbe had actually read my mind.”

When R' Shabtai speaks about the expressions of closeness that he was privileged to receive from the Rebbe, you can see his eyes glistening. Indeed, the Rebbe is his whole world. “Once after Gimmel Tammuz, I was standing near the Rebbe’s sukkah, and I felt a deep longing for days past. I stood there somehow and in a quiet voice, I offered a prayer of request: ‘Rebbe, it’s been so many years without any actual revelations or expressions of closeness. I want lekach!’ While I said these words quietly, I felt myself literally overcome with emotion.

“At the end of the day, as I returned to his place of lodging, my host’s wife asked me if I had received ‘lekach’. When I saw that she was serious, I asked her why she was asking. She said that in her first yechidus together with her husband after their wedding, the Rebbe had made them shluchim to give brachos to other Jews, and she wanted to give me a piece of the honey cake she had just made... I almost fainted from the meaning of her words, and I proceeded to tell her what I asked from the Rebbe...”

demonstrations and protest watches, and received constant guidance from the senior member of the Chabad Rabbinical Court in Eretz HaKodesh, Rabbi Dovid Chanzin, of blessed memory.

The massive activities and public opinion engendered by the wave of protests flooding the country had seemingly disturbed many of Israel’s decision-makers, and one fine day, R' Shabtai was arrested for no apparent reason. “In the fall of 5759, Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, then in his first term of office, was scheduled to come to Tzfas for a campaign appearance on behalf of Likud Party candidates in

the upcoming municipal elections. As a result, we prepared to hold a demonstration against him and had even obtained all the necessary permits for that purpose. Then, just a few hours before the planned event, police detectives came to my home. In the presence of my terrified daughter, they showed that they had a warrant and placed me under arrest. I was escorted to the regional police headquarters without knowing why I had been privileged to receive this dubious honor. In the investigation room, they asked me a series of vague and disarming questions, and I soon realized that the whole arrest was

merely designed to make a mountain out of a molehill. When I was finally released five days later, I was shown the newspaper headlines blaring, ‘Chabad Chassid Planned To Harm the Prime Minister’ – a statement of sheer nonsense that I have no idea where it could have gotten started.”

When I asked R' Shabtai when he started his public activities, he immediately cited figures, dates, and data: “In 5751, the Rebbe spoke for the first time about how the year of ‘I will show you wonders’ alludes to the Redemption, and there will be miracles and wonders for all to see. The Rebbe noted various events that took place in the world and connected them to the Redemption. I decided that we must publicize them and bring them to the awareness of every Jew. I prepared a selection of quotes and brought them to Rabbi Aryeh Leib Kaplan *a”h* and Rabbi Alter Eliyahu HaKohen Friedman for editing, and we wanted to print and distribute them all over the country.

“Together we called Rabbi Chanoch Glitzenstein, and he quickly printed up ten thousand copies for distribution in the Western Wall Square during Birkas Kohanim on Chol HaMoed Sukkos. When the time came, literal miracles and wonders took place. The Arab terrorists swarming on Har HaBayis gathered together and threw rocks and iron bars on the heads of those praying at the Kotel. Despite the element of surprise and the fact that the square was filled with people, no one was injured – not even a scratch. Even the secular media called it a tremendous miracle. I looked at the flyer we gave out there, and I saw the headline ‘Simchas Beis HaShoeiva in Yerushalayim’ above the following words of the Rebbe: **Simchas Beis HaShoeiva should be prepared with the greatest**

possible joy, and they should enter the place of the Mikdash – in those places that are permissible – and arrange Simchas Beis HaShoeiva there in the fullest sense. We should thereby merit to dance in Yerushalayim, may it be re-built and re-established, in the Third Beis HaMikdash with the coming of Moshiach Tzidkeinu, speedily *mamash*. We looked at this sentence in stunned disbelief. A few days after this incident, tens of thousands of Jews gathered together at the Kotel for a massive prayer of thanksgiving.”

In recent years, Rabbi Bloch has produced kuntreisim discussing the Rebbe’s approach on the subject of shleimus ha’Aretz, receiving the blessing and consent of numerous Chabad rabbanim. He has spent years working on a comprehensive study to determine the Rebbe’s position. In his words, he saw the prevailing need for this project due to the confusion reigning in Chabad on this matter. “In general, according to the Rebbe’s approach, it is forbidden for Chabad to engage in any form of politics,” Rabbi Bloch said with great vigor. “There were instances when the Rebbe gave his consent for such involvement, such as his instructions to campaign actively (and successfully) on behalf of Agudat Yisrael prior to the Knesset elections in 5749, but when

there were no such instructions from the Rebbe – we saw no success.

“Today, an attitude has developed within Chabad that we belong to the right wing of the political map. The Rebbe’s approach is that there is neither ‘right’ nor ‘left’, and there is only one relevant factor: Does a given objective pose a danger to the lives of Jews? We know now that the right is worse than the left. We see this approach when the Rebbe said during Operation ‘Peace for the Galilee’ that Golda Meir admitted to her mistakes in the Yom Kippur War, whereas the Likud Party has made no such admission, and as a result, it is forbidden to vote for them or those who follow in their footsteps. When the right carries out the left’s ideology, our hands are tied and we are unable to protest. This is not a case of ‘the lesser of two evils’, for they are far worse.

As the interview came to a close, Rabbi Bloch wanted to emphasize that the Rebbe’s stated position of shleimus ha’Aretz is indeed lengthy, including hundreds of sichos discussing the various effects of protest or manners of conduct. “The Rebbe’s approach on the subject of shleimus ha’Aretz is quite broad, and since we have orders to protest against the government’s

actions, it is literally incumbent upon all of us to do just that. Therefore, we must know all the details of the Rebbe’s opinions and instructions on the matter, and the time has come for someone to take on the challenge and write an orderly and comprehensive book on this very subject. A seifer of this type is most essential, as *pikuach nefesh* supersedes the whole Torah, and here we’re talking about *pikuach nefesh* of millions of Jews.

“There are many questions that must be discussed: In what type of demonstrations are we permitted to participate? What types of investigative commissions should be established? The Rebbe supported the establishment of the Agranat Commission investigating the Yom Kippur War, but he opposed the establishment of the Commission of Inquiry into the Events at the Refugee Camps in Beirut after the Sabra-Shatilla massacre. Is it permissible to do all things that will have an effect of protest or are there limits and clear paths by which we must abide?”

Rabbi Bloch concluded our interview with a personal saying and a personal example. “A chassid is a soldier. A chassid must devote himself to fulfilling the Rebbe’s instructions and carrying out his shlichus in the most faithful and precise manner possible.”

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# A TORAH SCROLL AND A GOOD SON

By Menachem Ziegelboim

*On Monday of the week of Parshas Chayei Sara, on 20 Cheshvan 5621/1860, at nine in the morning, another son was born to the Rebbe Maharash and Rebbetzin Rivka. The town of Lubavitch rejoiced. \* The amazing story of the birth of the Rebbe Rashab, presented for his birthday.*

## PART I

Yom HaGeula, 10 Kislev, 5620/1859

Chassidim sat in the zal in Lubavitch and farbrenged in honor of the day, the Chag HaGeula of the Mitteler Rebbe. It was a day of Geula and *segula*, a day of salvation. Moving niggunim were sung. A cold winter wind blew among the wooden homes. Trees were bare and it was bitter cold at that late hour of the night.

While the Chassidim farbrenged amongst themselves, Rebbetzin Rivka, the wife of R' Shmuel – the youngest son of the Tzemach Tzedek – slept. And in her sleep she

saw her mother, Rebbetzin Sara (daughter of the Mitteler Rebbe) and her grandfather, the Mitteler Rebbe whose face was shining. The two of them, father and daughter, gazed upon their daughter/granddaughter with eyes that conveyed tenderness.

“Rivka,” said Rebbetzin Sara quietly, “you and your husband should write a Torah scroll.”

The Mitteler Rebbe repeated her instructions and added, “And you will have a good son and don’t forget to name him for me.”

Rebbetzin Sara nodded and said, “Rivka, my daughter, do you hear what my father is telling you?”

Within a moment, the two vanished.

Rebbetzin Rivka awoke with a start. She knew it wasn’t a meaningless dream. Throughout the following day she was preoccupied with the dream as she mulled it over and over. For reasons of her own, she chose to bide her time before sharing the dream with her husband and told nobody about it.

## PART II

Ten years had passed since the marriage of the Maharash, the Tzemach Tzedek’s youngest son and Rebbetzin Rivka, the granddaughter of the Mitteler Rebbe. Their wedding took place on Thursday, 11 Nissan, 5610/1850. They were very young – R’ Shmuel was 16 and Rebbetzin Rivka was 15.

Rebbetzin Rivka had suffered greatly as a child, being an orphan.







Her grandson, the Rebbe Rayatz, said, “Her countenance was darkened and in the lashes of her eyes you could see her travails.”

All this disappeared with her marriage, as light and happiness filled her life. She had merited to become daughter-in-law of the king, wife of a Torah scholar, and would later be wife of the king, the Rebbe Maharash. She lived within the kingdom in Lubavitch and did all she could to give nachas to her in-laws, the Rebbe and Rebbetzin, as well as to her husband.

She did everything with a pure heart, in a refined way, and with no other intention than to do what needed to be done.

The Rebbe, the Tzemach Tzedek and his wife, the Rebbetzin, responded in kind and drew her

close in various ways.

She treated her husband with great respect and utter *bittul* (subservience). Her grandson, the Rebbe Rayatz, wrote, “This fine woman, all her attention was focused to do the will of the tzaddik and from the day she bonded with him, she devoted all her heart and soul to improve her deeds.” She never called him by his name, out of respect for him, but said “he” (third person) or when she was speaking to her children referred to him as “father.” She herself said that she never doubted him.

As for her husband, he trusted her fully and showered her materially and spiritually and allowed her to raise her orphaned younger sister and brothers in their house. He included her “in inside

matters pertaining to the public welfare and that of private individuals...and greatly drew her close.”

We can learn of the sincere respect they felt for one another from the following fact – she never sat down before he did and when he entered her room she stood up until he sat near her. One time, when she suffered greatly with one of her feet and found it hard to stand, he reprimanded her, telling her to sit and she still refused.

### PART III

Two or three days after the momentous dream of the night of 10 Kislev, Rebbetzin Rivka’s mother-in-law, Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka, became sick with a high fever. Rebbetzin Rivka nursed her devotedly throughout the night, feeding her and trying to bring down the fever with various medications. Her ministrations were successful and by the next morning, the fever had departed and she was much better.

After davening Shacharis, the Tzemach Tzedek went to his wife’s room to visit her and see how she was feeling. The Rebbetzin told her husband a dream she had had that night. When she was finished, the Rebbe smiled and quoted the Gemara, “it is a positive dream for an ill person” and added, “Regarding dreams there are two views - one that believes in them, and the other, which does not believe in them.”

He suddenly turned to his daughter-in-law and said loudly, “And a good dream certainly should be fulfilled.”

After the Tzemach Tzedek left the room, Rebbetzin Rivka thought over what he had said. The dream she’d had three nights earlier came to mind clearly. She sensed that it was not happenstance that her father-in-law had said those words

to her. She decided that when she returned home, she would tell her husband about her dream.

When she arrived home, however, such thoughts slipped from her mind. Her daughter Devorah Leah was sick with a high temperature, her throat red and sore. For the next three days Rebbetzin Rivka dedicated herself completely to taking care of her daughter, and the dream was completely forgotten.

It was the next Chag HaGeula, 19 Kislev. On this special date she had the dream once again. Her mother came with her grandfather, but this time there was another, older man too. Her mother said to her: "Rivka, my daughter, you and your husband should write a Torah scroll."

The Mittler Rebbe said, "And you will have a good son." The old man bent over a bit and said, "Amen, may Hashem say that it be so."

Her mother turned to the old man and entreated, "Grandfather, bless her," and he blessed her. Both of them, the Mittler Rebbe and his daughter, answered amen and Rebbetzin Rivka said amen loudly too.

As the figures vanished, she woke up and noticed her husband already preparing for a new day.

"I heard you say amen," said the Maharash.

The Rebbetzin rose from bed and washed her hands. She said, "Yes, I had a dream and in a little while I will come to your room and tell you about it."

Some minutes later she told her husband the first dream she had the night of 10 Kislev and the dream she had that night. Her husband listened closely and paced the room. Then he stopped and said, "You had a good dream. Why didn't you tell me right away when you dreamt on 10 Kislev? Dreams like these are very lofty matters."

He began to think out loud about the Torah they were told to write. He

said he wanted it to be written on parchment from kosher animals that had been properly slaughtered, but procuring such a thing wasn't such a simple matter in those days. Five weeks passed until they acquired this parchment.

His father, the Tzemach Tzedek, told his son to begin the work of having the Torah written secretly, only in the presence of his brothers, and it would be begun in his holy room.

On the New Year for Trees, 15 Shevat, they began to write the Torah in the Tzemach Tzedek's room.

The Maharash urged the scribe to make haste and seven months later, in the month of mercy and forgiveness, the work was nearly complete. The Maharash planned on marking the conclusion of the writing on the day after Yom Kippur, a Thursday, the day after Moshe Rabbeinu returned with the second Luchos, and his father agreed. Maharash also planned a seudas mitzva to mark the occasion.

Rebbetzin Rivka was pregnant and was unable to prepare the special meal so they took one of the house staff to arrange it all. During Rosh HaShana and the Aseres Yemei T'shuva the news spread among the large crowd that had gathered in Lubavitch that the day after Yom Kippur there would be a festive siyum and the conclusion of the writing of a Torah scroll. Many of the guests who had come for Yom Kippur stayed on.

The following day, early in the morning, the Tzemach Tzedek told his youngest son, "Make a big seuda today and I will come and say Chassidus, but do not make the actual siyum today." He did not explain.

Later that day a celebratory meal was served in honor of the Torah, which was attended by many of the Chassidim in Lubavitch.

It was not until Monday, 13

Cheshvan, that the Tzemach Tzedek asked that the scribe come that night to write the final letters in his holy room. This was to be done privately, without the public knowing about it.

Rebbetzin Rivka, through whom this Torah was being written, sewed the *mantel* (covering) for the Torah. When she brought it to her father-in-law he said, with shining face, "Mazal tov, may Hashem fulfill the blessing of my father-in-law (the Mittler Rebbe) and my grandfather (the Alter Rebbe)."

## PART IV

On Monday of Parshas Chayei Sara, on 20 Cheshvan, 5621/1861, at nine in the morning, another son was born to R' Shmuel and Rebbetzin Rivka and the town of Lubavitch rejoiced.

The bris was supposed to take place eight days later, on 27 Cheshvan. Many guests from neighboring towns came to Lubavitch for the occasion, and a grand feast was prepared.

On Friday night of Parshas Chayei Sara there was a *ben zachor* (what we now call a *shalom zachor*) and on Shabbos day there was a *shalom ben zachor*. It was a spiritually uplifting Shabbos. The Tzemach Tzedek said two maamarim. Unlike his usual practice, the Rebbe came to the Friday night *ben zachor* farbrengen as well as to the *shalom ben zachor* gathering that took place the next day. On each occasion he sat a long time and his face radiated great simcha.

By Sunday night, Lubavitch was humming with numerous guests, including a number of relatives of Rebbetzin Rivka. They stayed up all night reciting T'hilim and learning those chapters of Zohar which it is customary to say the night before a bris. This is known as the *vach nacht*.

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Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka felt very weak. Her daughter Devorah Leah slept with her. The Rebbetzin's room was near the Rebbe's room.

It was three in the morning when loud voices could be heard in the Rebbe's room. The Rebbetzin woke up at once. She and her daughter heard the Tzemach Tzedek talking with his loyal attendant, R' Chaim Dov. The Rebbe hardly ever called for his attendant at this hour. The Rebbetzin sent her daughter to find out what had happened and to see whether everything was all right.

Devorah Leah approached the room and could hear her father telling the attendant to go to his son, Maharash and to tell him that the bris would not take place the following day as expected.

Devorah Leah silently returned to her mother's room and told her what she heard. The Rebbetzin was very upset by this news. She wondered why the bris was postponed when the baby had been examined and pronounced ready for a bris. She sent her daughter to ask her father not to send the attendant to relay this message because this would upset the new mother and being weak after the birth this could adversely affect her health.

The Rebbe heard her out but sent the attendant on his mission nevertheless. Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka sent her daughter to the Rebbe again, pleading with him not to postpone the bris. "Many guests have come and the meal has been prepared and this will cause a great loss not to mention the honor of the Chassidim and how this will aggravate them."

The Rebbe replied that for certain reasons the bris would not take place on time.

Seeing that her husband would not give in, the Rebbetzin sent her daughter a third time to beg him not to send his attendant with the bad news. She added that since she was the daughter of a Torah scholar, she

had the power, the power of Torah, to demand this of him.

The Rebbe thought for a while and then said to his daughter: "What can I do? Your mother's demand is justifiable, that since she is a daughter of a Torah scholar, I must abide by her will. But this is how it needs to be – and he alluded to the connection between this incident and the sudden postponement of the completion of the writing of the Torah. It had been done at just the right time, for everything was done by divine providence as Hashem willed it.

The Rebbe emphasized that the baby's bris would also take place at the right time, the time established by Heaven, and not a moment earlier or a moment later.

## PART V

A wintry sun broke through the black clouds of a frosty Russian winter. It was Monday, 27 Cheshvan, not an ordinary day but a day of simcha; this was to be the day of the bris of the Rebbe's grandson. Many people gathered early in the morning in the shul for Shacharis. Numerous candles were lit and the chazan did not say Tachanun.

After Shacharis the Tzemach Tzedek entered the big shul. The chair for Eliyahu HaNavi was set up and the Rebbe prepared for *sandakaus* (holding the infant during the bris). The *kvatter* (the one who brings in the baby) brought the baby in and the Maharash prepared to circumcise the baby himself. However, he noticed that the baby was jaundiced. Other mohalim who were present examined the baby and determined that the bris could not take place. The Tzemach Tzedek, who was already wrapped in his tallis, agreed and the bris was postponed.

Nevertheless, the Rebbe remained in shul and asked that bottles of mashke and cake, which

had been prepared for the bris, be brought in. He drank l'chaim and said a maamer Chassidus at a joyous gathering that lasted until Mincha. After the davening the Rebbe asked for the seudas mitzva to be brought out. This time, too, he said a maamer Chassidus with great joy, as though the bris had taken place on time.

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A month passed and the baby was still not ready for a bris. The father, Maharash, realized that there was more to this than met the eye and he waited for instructions from his father.

The second night of Chanuka, the Tzemach Tzedek called for his son and said: "You will make the bris tomorrow and it will take place in my prayer room (which the Chassidim called "the Rebbe's small minyan") privately with only your brothers and closest relatives; there shouldn't be more than twenty people present."

The Rebbe alluded to the second Luchos which were given modestly, unlike the first Luchos which were broken.

After the bris was done, as the baby cried, he was named Sholom Dovber – Sholom for the father of the Tzemach Tzedek and Dovber for the Mittlerer Rebbe as he had requested in both dreams.

During the festive meal, the Tzemach Tzedek referred to the baby's name and said: "RaShaB are the letters of *basar* (flesh) and the letters of *shever* (break) – we need to break the flesh of the body."

As for the date of his birth he said: "The baby was born on 20 Cheshvan, 5621, which has two letter *chafs* which alludes to *kisra ilaa* (the supernal crown)."

Years later, some saw this as a hint to the crown of the nesius, for this baby grew up to become the Rebbe Rashab, the fifth Lubavitcher Rebbe.

# UNDERSTANDING G-DLINESS AND SEEING G-DLINESS

Edited by Y. Ben Boruch

*In honor of Chaf MarCheshvan, the birthday of the Rebbe Rashab, we present stories about the Rebbe Rashab from the notes of R' Avrohom Weingarten a"h, l'ilui nishmas his son, R' Matisyahu Aryeh Leib, Hy'd*

## WHEN TEARS ARE IN ORDER

R' Leib Moneson was the son of the Chassid R' Menachem Manish Moneson and the grandson or relative of Maharil (R' Yehuda Leib) of Kopust.

One Yom Kippur, the Rebbe Rashab saw R' Leib smiling during the recitation of the *Asara Harugei Malchus* (the Ten Martyrs) and afterwards he asked him: Why did you smile during the *Asara Harugei Malchus* when it ought to make you cry?

R' Leib answered: Someone did something funny in shul in the middle of the davening and so I smiled.

R' Leib took the opportunity to ask the Rebbe why the recitation of

the *Asara Harugei Malchus* ought to bring us to tears and the Rebbe replied: For two reasons – one, because of their great mesirus nefesh, and two, because *klipe* (negative forces) held sway over tzaddikim.

## SEEING WITH RUACH HA'KODESH

R' Leib related that once, during the recitation of the *Asara Harugei Malchus*, he noticed how the Rebbe Rashab gazed upon R' Menachem Mendel Chein, Hy'd, as the latter sobbed.

A number of years later, in 5679/1919, R' Chein was murdered al Kiddush Hashem by marauders (i.e. It seems that the Rebbe Rashab saw what would happen to him years

later).

(R' Shmuel Levitin)

## THERE IS NO COMPARISON BETWEEN HEARING FROM THE REBBE TO READING IN A BOOK

When R' Shmuel Levitin was in the yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim in Lubavitch he would learn with R' Leib Moneson. One time, R' Leib had yechidus with the Rebbe Rashab and spoke about learning the maamarim that the Rebbe Rashab was saying at the time.

The Rebbe told him: Review the maamer as **you** remember hearing it from me and not as you heard it in *chazara* (when it was reviewed by others).

R' Leib asked: We can learn the maamer as it is written, i.e. as the Rebbe himself wrote the maamer?

The Rebbe said: What a person hears **himself** is *mer upgeleigt* (more settled in the mind) and what he heard himself gives the person a greater *chayus* (enthusiasm). As for what you learn from a book, the light in the s'farim is **hidden** (see the introduction of the Alter Rebbe to Tanya where he says that hearing



musar is not like seeing and reading it in books for the reader reads according to his approach and way of thinking ... it is with difficulty that he can see the light which is good which is hidden in books) as the Sages say that the light which was created on the first day was hidden away by G-d and where was it hidden? In Torah (and therefore, one who learns from a book - it is not so settled for him and he is not as enthusiastic as someone who hears it).

(R' Shmuel Levitin)

## WRITE HANACHOS OF THE MAAMARIM

R' Yisroel Jacobson related:

This is also the reason that the Rebbe Rashab greatly desired that the talmidim write notes of the maamarim that he said, even though he himself would be writing the maamer. He wanted them to take notes and only **afterwards** would he write the maamer.

R' Jacobson explained that this is because of the advantage in writing. By writing things down one's own thinking becomes clearer.

R' Shmuel Levitin said that he heard from the Rebbe Rayatz: This is why our Sages said, "*u'k'nei lecha chaver*" (lit. acquire a friend) with the word "k'nei" also referring to a quill (see HaYom 14 Av). The point of learning with a chaver (friend) is to clarify matters and that is what writing accomplishes too.

## A HANACHA EDITED BY THE REBBE

In 5679/1919, R' Yisroel Jacobson arranged the Rebbe Rashab's library in Rostov. Among the maamarim of the Rebbe, he saw a *hanacha* of a maamer that had been written by R' Eliyahu Yochil Simpson with notes of the Rebbe in his holy handwriting. From this we see the preciousness of hanachos.

(R' Yisroel Jacobson)

## MAAMARIM THAT WERE NOT WRITTEN

The maamarim said by the Rebbe Rashab on Pesach of the years 5674-5676 were not written by the Rebbe Rashab. (Nor were they on the list of maamarim said by the Rebbe Rashab).

(ibid)

## ONE WHO SITS IN THE TENT OF TORAH UNDERSTANDS; A BUSINESSMAN SEES!

On Shabbos Chol HaMoed Sukkos 5675/1915, the Rebbe Rashab said a maamer on the verse, "so that the nations of the land know that G-d is Elokim, there is no other." This maamer was part of a large series of maamarim called "B'Shaa sh'Hikdimu – 5672."

In this maamer, the Rebbe explains at length how even "**all the nations of the land**" can apprehend, through intellect, how the activating force in the world is not separate, G-d forbid, from G-dliness, but "Havaya (transcendent G-d) is Elokim (immanent G-d), there is no

other," nature is G-dliness.

On Chol HaMoed Sukkos there was a Simchas Beis HaShoeiva farbrengen in the home of the Rebbe Rayatz. R' Michoel Dvorkin argued with the chozer, R' Shilem Disner. R' Michoel said that he did not understand this point, that nature is G-dliness, intellectually and he maintained that it was beyond our intellectual grasp. R' Shilem said that he understood it and he maintained that everybody could understand it.

R' Shilem was a young man at the time and R' Michoel, who was older, was amazed that a young man could understand this when he could not.

R' Michoel had drunk mashke and he ran to the Rebbe Rashab's house and found the Rebbe sitting there, wearing his glasses and learning Likkutei Torah. R' Michoel said: Rebbe! Shilem said that he understands this inyan (while he did not).

The Rebbe said, "*A Ben-Torah* (another version: a *yosheiv ohel* – one whose occupation is Torah study) understands; a *baal eisek* (businessman) sees!" (R' Michoel

## SPEND A LOT OF MONEY

In the article it says when R' Shmuel Levitin was in the army he was very particular about observing Torah prohibitions, especially shatnez. R' Mordechai Perlow, in his book *Likkutei Sippurim* p. 231 gives details and tells of the Rebbe Rashab's instructions and advice (as he heard it from R' Shmuel):

When R' Shmuel had to go to the army he went to the Rebbe Rashab and the Rebbe advised him to spend a lot of money on everything (so he could keep mitzvos while he was there).

This advice helped him and he was able to avoid wearing shatnez (a prohibited mixture of wool and linen), for the army uniform was made of shatnez, even the hat and R' Shmuel would not wear it but he had a difficult time obtaining a hat without shatnez that was similar to the army hat since he was a new recruit and he was not allowed to leave the base for the nearby city.

Until he obtained a hat, he would walk about with his head uncovered. Other Jews there were taken aback by this, but R' Shmuel was correct since shatnez is a Biblical prohibition. He continued this way until he got a shatnez-free hat.

## THE REBBE'S GOOD ADVICE

In the body of the article it mentions that R' Shmuel was miraculously released from the army, but it does not give details. R' Mordechai Perlow says the following in his *Likkutei Sippurim* p. 230, as he heard it from R' Shmuel:

R' Zev Wolf, father of R' Shmuel, asked the Rebbe how to help his son gain his dismissal from the army. The Rebbe told him to ask for his dismissal from the army which was called *legata* (because at first, he had been exempt since he had younger brothers, but after they took that right from him since they had to fill their quota, the Rebbe advised him to ask again that the exemption apply).

R' Zev Wolf asked: But he lost his exemption?

The Rebbe said: See R' Chaim Eliezer Bichavsky; surely he can find a way to release him from the army (R' Chaim Eliezer was a highly intelligent person of great wealth and he had many acquaintances in government circles).

The Rebbe Rashab told R' Shmuel (who was on furlough) to go to Liadi for Shavuot and there, apparently, he would meet with R' Chaim Eliezer (who was a Chassid of Liadi) and speak to him.

R' Shmuel went to Liadi and discussed the matter with R' Chaim Eliezer who tried mightily to help him but to no avail. Whatever he attempted did not work out. Finally, having no recourse, they did what the Rebbe Rashab said to do from the beginning and they submitted a request to the *Gubernator* who replied immediately, asking why they were requesting an exemption when he had lost it.

As he responded his secretary entered the room and the Gubernator asked him whether there was such a law that even someone who had lost his exemption, if he was found to be weak and was given a vacation, could regain his exemption.

The secretary said he thought there was such a law and he brought the law book and showed him that there was such a law. The Gubernator immediately signed his release and this was incredible. Nobody could understand how they found such a law and why there would be such a law, but since the Rebbe told them to do this, it was successful.

was a businessman and it is known that businessmen see-experience G-dliness tangibly).

### I COULD NOT THINK ABOUT ELOKUS

When R' Shmuel Levitin was 20 (around 5664/1904) he was drafted. According to Russian law there were three exemption categories: 1) an only child 2) twin brothers – only one was taken to the army 3) those who still had young brothers at home. These were exempt only when those who were supposed to show

up, did so. If draftees fled or hid, they would fill in with those who were exempt (except for the twins).

R' Shmuel was not an only child but he had younger brothers and was exempt. However, since many avoided going to the army, they began to draft those who were exempt to make up the shortfall and R' Shmuel was called up. R' Shmuel immediately obtained a note from a doctor that testified that he was sick and could not serve in the army but this did not help him since someone informed on him, saying he bribed

the doctor. He had to go to the army.

R' Shmuel thought that it would be a good idea to take along deep Chassidic works with him to the army because he could delve into them and forget about his situation. So he took along *Imrei Bina* of the Mitteler Rebbe, one of the deepest works of Chassidus, as well as the *maamer HaShiflus v'ha'Simcha* of R' Yitzchok Isaac of Homil, because it has deep intellectual ideas.

But being in the army, among the artillery and the horses, was not conducive to learning anything; he couldn't even think Chassidus.

The army base he was sent to was near Lomza (which is close to the German border). He was very careful about the Torah prohibitions and was extremely careful not to wear *shatnez*. Once he was drafted, the Rebbe Rashab sent R' Shmuel's father R' Zev Wolf (who was the *mashgiach* in yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim in Lubavitch) to Lomza so he could be near his son.

R' Shmuel was released from the army a year later in a miraculous manner. After his release, when he met his father, he described the hard situation he had been in and said sorrowfully: They didn't even let me think or meditate upon G-dliness there.

R' Zev Wolf immediately sent a telegram to the Rebbe Rashab to inform him about the good news of his son's release and then he returned to Lubavitch. Upon his arrival there he told the Rebbe what his son had said, that he couldn't even think Chassidus and meditate upon G-dliness.

The following Shabbos the Rebbe said a *maamer* and in the middle he said: A *neshama* is in exile to the point that it cannot even think about G-dliness!

(R' Shmuel Levitin)

[Continued from pg. 5]

Wisdom. Translator's note.]

11. [The numerical value of the letter Tzaddik is 90. This discourse was delivered in the Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach's 90th yew: Translator's note.]

12. Sukka 52:b. [The numerical value of the letter ches is 8. The passage in the Talmud referenced in note 6 discusses a verse in the prophetic book of Micah that mentions seven shepherds and eight princes. In the Talmudic discussion, each of the shepherds and princes is identified. One of the eight princes is Moshiach. Translator's note.]

13. The commentary of the Bartenura on Megillas Rus.

14. See Shaalos v'T'shuvos Chasam Sofer Choshen Mishpat (vol. 6) at the end (section 98). And see S'dei Chemed, Peas HaSadeh, entry Aleph, klal 70, If.

15. Shmos 4:13. [In the passage from Exodus referenced in note 9, Moses demurs from the shlichus, or mission, of redeeming the Jewish people. His last protest before accepting the shlichus are the words quoted. This phrase, "send now the one You will send" is classically

seen as a reference to Moshiach. Thus, Moses asked G-d to send Moshiach immediately. This - the immediate sending of Moshiach - was also the shlichus of the Previous Rebbe. Translator's note.]

16. Brachos chapter I, Mishneh 5. [The expression "All the days of your life to bring the days of Moshiach" is the Mishneh's interpretation of the Biblical commandment to "Remember the Exodus from Egypt all the days of your life. " The Mishneh deduces that the added emphasis of the word "all" is "to bring (i.e., include) the days of Moshiach." This means simply that we will have to remember the exodus even in the Messianic Age. The Previous Rebbe in his sicha cited by the Rebbe combines the Biblical phrase and the Mishneh's interpretation to produce a novel idea, namely, that "All the days of your life [you must endeavor] to bring the days of Moshiach." Translator's note.]

17. [See previous note. In most places where a Biblical word implies the inclusion of other points, the Talmudic term employed is "to include rather than "to bring. " This the Rebbe interprets as a lesson for us to be proactive in bringing the days of Moshiach. Translator's note!]

18. Rambam, Laws of Kings, chapter 11 , halacha 4.

19. ibid.

20. [M'shaleiach - literally the one who causes to be sent. As a "shliach" is an emissary, the m'shaleiach" is the one who sends him on his task. Translator's note.]

21. T'hillim 147: 19. See also Shmos Rabba chapter 30, 9.

22. [In the sicha the Rebbe refers to the fact that the word "shliach" (numerically 348) plus ten (the Ten S'firos) equals "Moshiach" (numerically 358). Translator's note.]

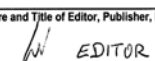
23. P'sachim 86:b.

24. [The Hebrew words numerically add up to (5)752, the year in which the sicha was said. Translator's note.]

25. [Torah Or and Likkutei Torah, comprise the Alter Rebbe's Chassidic discourses on the five books of the Torah and the Song of Songs. The concluding words on Deuteronomy deal with Shlichus and the commencement of the next section on Song of Songs deals with the wedding of Israel and G-d. Translator's note.]

**PS Form 3526**  
**Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation**  
**(All Periodicals Publications Except Requester Publications)**

1. Publication Title BEIS MOSHIACH	2. Publication Number 12542	ISSN 10620272	3. Filing Date 10/04/2010
4. Issue Frequency W	5. Number of Issues Published Annually 45	6. Annual Subscription Price \$ 180.00	
7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication 744 EASTERN PKWY BROOKLYN, KINGS, NY 11213-3409			Contact Person MENDEL BORUCH Telephone (718) 604-9313 Ext. 240
8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher 744 EASTERN PKWY BROOKLYN, NY 11213-3409			
9. Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor			
Publisher (Name and complete mailing address) BEIS MOSHIACH 744 EASTERN PKWY BROOKLYN, NY 11213-3409			
Editor (Name and complete mailing address) MENDEL HENDEL 744 EASTERN PKWY BROOKLYN, NY 11213-3409			
Managing Editor (Name and complete mailing address) MENDEL HENDEL 744 EASTERN PKWY BROOKLYN, NY 11213-3409			
10. Owner (Do not leave blank. If the publication is owned by a corporation, give the name and address of the corporation immediately followed by the names and addresses of all stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of the total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, give names and addresses of the individual owners. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, give its name and address as well as those of each individual owner. If the publication is published by a nonprofit organization, give its name and address.)			
Full Name	Complete Mailing Address		
BEIS MOSHIACH	744 EASTERN PKWY, BROOKLYN, NY 11213-3409		
11. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities. If none, check box <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None			
Full Name	Complete Mailing Address		
12. Tax Status (For completion by nonprofit organizations authorized to mail at nonprofit rates) The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for federal income tax purposes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months <input type="checkbox"/> Has Changed During Preceding 12 Months (Publisher must submit explanation of change with this statement)			

13. Publication Title BEIS MOSHIACH		14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below 09/22/2010	
15. Extend and Nature of Circulation		Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Total Numbers of Copies (Net press run)		12354	12313
b. Paid Circulation (By Mail and Outside the Mail)	(1) Mailed Outside County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)	339	315
	(2) Mailed In-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)	10	26
	(3) Paid Distribution Outside the Mails Including Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Outside USPS	11949	11931
	(4) Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS (e.g. First-Class Mail)	10	10
c. Total Paid Distribution (Sum of 15b (1), (2), (3), (4))		12308	12282
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# THE REBBE'S INSTRUCTIONS

By Menachem Ziegelboim

***A wondrous story about the Rebbe Rashab's advice. \* Presented for Chaf Cheshvan, the birthday of the Rebbe Rashab.***

The Chassid, R' Shmuel Leib Pruss of Kfar Chabad related:

When I learned in the yeshiva in Nevel, I followed the custom of eating “*teg*” in the homes of various Chassidim in the town. This meant that every night I, like the other bachurim in the yeshiva, ate in the home of a generous person who had agreed to host a yeshiva bachur. That's how it worked for me and the other bachurim.

One day a week I ate at the home of R' Mendel Leib Chazanov. He was a working man, not a Chassid and not a scholar but a bighearted person. He was very wealthy. He made his money by manufacturing *volikes* (warm shoes made of lambs' wool). In the autumn he dealt in cranberries. These were available all over the forest but in the winter were buried under mounds of snow. He would buy them in large quantities and send them to Leningrad and Moscow.

I remember anticipating the day of the week that I ate in his house almost like a yom tov. While

most of the householders gave us simple food in limited quantities, he served us with great abundance. He always had a warm greeting for the bachurim who ate in his home and left us with a good feeling. He would dispel any embarrassment by encouraging me, “*Yingele, yingele, kum aher*” (little boy, little boy, come here).

One day, he told me a story that happened to him with the Rebbe Rashab.

R' Mendel Leib Chazanov would travel on business to various towns in Russia. Wherever he went he met with local merchants and did business with them. On one trip he suddenly took ill. He was experiencing terrible stomach pains. Since he did not lack for money, he didn't stint on expenses and traveled to Vitebsk, a large city whose modern hospital was known for its top doctors. After numerous tests they told him that his situation was critical and he had to undergo an operation. But, they warned him, they could not guarantee that he would wake up from this

operation.

He was acquainted with a number of Chassidim in Vitebsk, who knew him to be a soulful Jew as well as a philanthropist. When they heard of his trouble they suggested that he go to the Rebbe Rashab in Lubavitch to ask his advice and get his bracha.

He was not a Chassid and he hesitated to do as they said. He wasn't used to acting in this way. The Chassidim urged him to go, especially since Lubavitch was not far from Vitebsk, only sixty kilometers. Their pleading finally paid off, and he agreed to go.

When he had yechidus, he told the Rebbe what the doctors had said and asked whether to do the operation. The Rebbe, instead of answering his question, began inquiring about his activities in Vitebsk. The man did not understand what connection this had to his question, but he replied that he had come to close accounts in the city and to collect debts owed him by various merchants. As they spoke, he bitterly noted that this way his wife and children would not be left in debt if he did not survive the operation.

The Rebbe thought for a moment and then said he needed to expand his business dealings and that when he went home now, he should be sure to buy a first class train ticket. As for the operation, the Rebbe did not reply.

He left very perplexed by the Rebbe's answer. He had come to ask about a vital matter and the Rebbe had responded about something else entirely! The Chassidim that were nearby approached and asked him what the Rebbe had said. He recounted the conversation and admitted that he was hesitant. The Chassidim adamantly informed him that he shouldn't doubt the Rebbe's advice, and practically dragged



him to the train station and put him in first class.

The train pulled out and he opened a T'hilim and began reciting from it as tears ran down his face. He felt his end was near.

There was a knock on the door of his compartment. Whoever it was waited a moment and then, without waiting for a reply, opened the door. He was a tall gentle, impressively dressed. His hair was carefully combed and he had a small trimmed beard. The man paused a moment and then asked why he was crying. R' Mendel Leib shrugged and said, "Why should I tell you?"

The man pressed him. "I won't leave until you tell me."

When R' Mendel Leib saw that he couldn't get rid of him, he told him of his critical condition and about the operation which they weren't sure he would survive. "Now I am going home, knowing that my condition is critical and my days are numbered." And he burst into tears.

The man looked him over from

***R' Mendel Leib told him of his critical condition and about the operation which they weren't sure he would survive. "Now I am going home, knowing that my condition is critical and my days are numbered." And he burst into tears.***

head to toe and then ordered him to remove the clothes of his upper body. R' Mendel Leib had by that time resigned himself to submitting to this man and, without asking questions, he did as he was told. The man examined the sore spot, pressed it, palpated it, tapped it lightly with his finger and without saying a word he left the compartment and returned a moment later with a cream which he generously smeared on the area.

Within half an hour R' Mendel Leib began to feel the pain dissipate. He felt he was starting

to live again.

The man returned to visit him in his compartment to ask how he felt and R' Mendel Leib told him about the enormous improvement. The two got to talking and R' Mendel Leib discovered that this man was none other than the greatest doctor in the world in this specific field. He was on his way to Berlin after being urgently called to the Kaiser's palace.

"I heard this story from him himself," concluded R' Shmuel Leib Pruss, "one evening when I ate in his home and he was in a good mood."

[Continued from pg. 29]

#### NOTES:

[1] <http://www.simpletoremember.com/faqs/Kaplan-SimpleToRemember.com.pdf>

[2] [http://www.chabad.org/parshah/article\\_cdo/aid/276467/jewish/Spiritual-vs-Holy.htm](http://www.chabad.org/parshah/article_cdo/aid/276467/jewish/Spiritual-vs-Holy.htm)

[3] <http://www.torah.org/learning/parsha-insights/5757/shoftim.html>

[4] <http://www.mesora.org/saulandthewitch.htm>

[5] [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/magazine/4185356.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/magazine/4185356.stm)

[6] [http://www.chabad.org/library/article\\_cdo/aid/](http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/)

113106/jewish/Appendix-5-Neurology-Medicine-and-the-Soul.htm

[7] <http://www.sciencemag.org/cgi/content/abstract/189/4201/478>

[8] <http://www.masternursery.com/PrintItem.cfm?itemid=49>

[9] <http://www.chem1.com/CQ/gallery.html>

[10] [http://www.chabad.org/library/article\\_cdo/aid/912370/jewish/Chapter-Eleven.htm](http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/912370/jewish/Chapter-Eleven.htm)

[11] <http://chasidus.com/general/daily-rambam/016.htm>

[12] [http://www.chabad.org/library/article\\_cdo/aid/111581/jewish/Mind-Over-Matter.htm](http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/111581/jewish/Mind-Over-Matter.htm)

[13] <http://www.simpletoremember.com/articles/a/creatorofworld/>

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# SCIENCE OR SÉANCE?

## WHAT RABBIS NEED TO KNOW.

By Yonatan Hyland  
Edited by Aryeh Gotfryd

I love science, and it was partially through science that I came to Torah, with material such as the essays by Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan you can find online at [simpletoremember.com](http://simpletoremember.com). [1]

In fact, whenever I see material about science and Torah, I try to acquire and read it. So, when one of my Rabbi friends showed me the book, *The Coming Revolution - Science Discovers the Truths of the Bible* by Zamir Cohen, I eagerly jumped right in.

What I discovered was, to put it mildly, a disappointment. It's not that it's written for non-scientists. That would be fine, and I think we need more of that. The problem is that a lot of what he's calling science just isn't, and some of it appears to be sanctioning topics that I was taught weren't Kosher.

Here are a few examples.

In the chapter entitled "The Human Silver 'Spiritual' Cord," R' Cohen cites examples of early twentieth century spiritualists (also sometimes called "spiritists") as proof that the soul exists. That is problematic on two levels.

First, although there are plenty of people, scientists among them, who believe that there is a reality to life

after death, no science of things beyond the grave yet exists. Hence it is totally inappropriate to claim that science verifies spiritist claims.

Second, Torah enjoins us only to be familiar enough with that sort of thing in order to avoid it.

**"...in Deuteronomy the Torah proscribes ... practices such as consulting the dead. ... Sorcery, dabbling in the occult and "crossing over" are serious infractions to be strenuously avoided."** [2]

**"When you come to the land... don't learn to do as the nations there... using sorcery or omens or contacting the dead. Hashem despises all who do that... Tamim tihyeh im Hashem Elokecha - be complete (trusting) with Hashem. (18: 9-13)."** [3]

In short, necromancy is not "modern," nor is it "science," nor is it Kosher. It doesn't belong in this book, at least not as it has been presented. But...

...interestingly there are Sages of antiquity who say it's all just an illusion anyway.

**"Saadia Gaon states that the Egyptians – and anyone for that matter – possess no power, other than what each man's muscles**

**can manipulate. In Egypt, the astrologers and magicians were no different than today's sleight of hand performers. Ibn Ezra – another great Rabbi – commented that the Torah does not prohibit that which is real and true, rather, only that which is lies is prohibited."** [4]

Add to their words that in the past century some of the very best scientists had a profound belief in, and commitment to, spiritualism, but nevertheless, **"Despite years of research, no scientist has proved séances were anything more than an elaborate con trick."** [5] Their personal beliefs notwithstanding, none of them could ever demonstrate its validity.

And so, if Zamir Cohen wanted to illustrate just how far ahead of their time the ancient Jewish Sages really were, I would have been much happier if he had said something like: **'At a time when the world was rife with superstition, with no modern science to guide them, Sages like Saadia Gaon, Ibn Ezra and the Rambam [see below] clearly saw contacting the dead for the fraud that modern science says it probably is, because that's what they learned from their study of Torah.'**

For a taste of some scientifically legitimate, not to mention Kosher, questions that are being asked about spiritual matters, please see Dr. Arnie Gotfryd's essay entitled *Neurology, Medicine and the Soul* in his book *Mind Over Matter: The Rebbe on Science, Technology and Medicine*, which you can also read online at [chabad.org](http://chabad.org). [6],

In another chapter, "The Secret Life of Plants," we find the claim that not only are plants alleged to have human-like feelings, but that they are even supposed to be able to read our thoughts. Again, that's not science. In order to be called "science," experiments must be independently reproducible. But,

when scientists at Cornell University tried to repeat Cleve Baxter's "experiments," (*ostensibly measuring the "response" of a plant to boiling brine shrimp*) they were unable to do so, despite confirming with him that they had the experimental details correct.[7]

But, seriously, how could anyone believe that plants get emotionally upset at the death of millions of microscopic fish, when dead fish are, as any avid gardener can tell you, a very excellent plant food?[8]

Finally, another egregious example of misrepresenting science is found in the chapter entitled "The Effects of Sound Waves on Matter." Not only is the featured "scientist," Masaro Emoto, not a real scientist (*even by his own admission*), but he clearly states on his website that what he does derives from his idolatry (*he admits that he prays to "the water god"*). The fact that many people believe he is a scientist, taking his unscientific claims seriously and referring to him as "Dr.," when his "degree" was from an un-accredited diploma-mill, and not even in a scientific discipline, is very disturbing. In fact Mr. Emoto's name is featured on a mainstream science website in a list of those making unverifiable and even fraudulent claims.[9]

The following quote from Rambam applies, I think, not just to the belief that Mr. Emoto's method can influence the shape of ice crystals with words, music, thoughts, etc., but also to the idea that plants can read our thoughts or that a medium can contact the dead. Like Saadia Gaon and Ibn Ezra above, Rambam also asserts the falsehood of such ideas, and he doesn't mince his words...

(CH 11, Halacha 16) -

***"Whoever believes in [occult arts] of this nature and, in his heart, thinks that they are true and words of wisdom, but are forbidden by the Torah, is foolish***

***and feebleminded. . . .***

***The masters of wisdom and those of perfect knowledge know with clear proof that all these crafts which the Torah forbade are not reflections of wisdom, but rather, emptiness and vanity which attracted the feebleminded and caused them to abandon all the paths of truth."***[10]

...and also...

***"Negative Mitzvah 35: You shall not use incantations***

***Deuteronomy 18:10-11 'There shall not be found among you... a charmer'***

***A 'charmer' is someone who recites chants that can, supposedly, control different situations. We are forbidden to recite these chants."***[11]

If anyone objects, saying that Mr. Emoto's work is OK because he doesn't "chant," I can only reply that if a chant is ineffective, how could any other expression be, whether verbal, musical or mental?

There's more, but the above should be sufficient to illustrate the problem, which is that when calling something science, it really ought to be. And when saying something agrees with Torah, it really should.

I have no doubt that Rabbi Cohen means well, and I have no doubt that his book was written to inspire his readers to come closer to Torah and Hashem. But I fear his apparent lack of scientific knowledge has caused him to err, and may also lead his readers astray. I.e., paraphrasing the Rambam's warning, when those he's drawn close to Torah find out he's so mistaken about the science, they may then think he's wrong about the Torah as well, G-d forbid!

NOTE - I'm not dismissing all alternative ways of knowing because some do have validity. But they are still, by definition, not science. One cannot use them as examples of scientific wisdom. One may, for example, study and believe in

miraculous and supernatural stories such as those in the Torah, Midrash, and Chassidic tales, even though they may seem similar. Such stories are believed because the source is authoritative according to Judaism. I will choose Moses, a Talmudic sage, or the Lubavitcher Rebbe over the likes of Mr. Emoto any day of the week because such individuals are of known integrity and reliability. However if a dubious claim is made by source which is unverifiable and/or non-Kosher, why would an Orthodox rabbi want to promote that as true?

If one wants to know about the connection between Science and Torah, there are some excellent sources of material. My personal "gold standard" is Mind Over Matter by Rabbi Joseph Ginsburg and Professor Herman Branover; translated, edited and supplemented with extensive new material by Dr. Arnie Gotfryd.[12]

Another short but very nice compilation of interesting information can be found at the "simpletoremember.com" website.[13]

Finally, from the Aryeh Kaplan reference above,[1] a quote which deals with science errors made by prominent Rabbis:

***"Very often people tend to paint themselves into an intellectual corner. Then, once they find themselves painted in, they have no way out."***

If what I've written can help those of us who, like Rabbi Cohen, have painted themselves into intellectual corners by neglecting important principles of knowledge both according to science and Torah, then this exercise will have been well worth it.

*Yonaton Hyland is a Lubavitcher whose only regret is not coming to Yiddishkai sooner. He has degrees in Chemistry and Biophysics and has worked many years as a Genetic Toxicologist.*

[Continued on pg. 27]

# LIFE OF A CHASSID

By Shneur Zalman Berger

*Rabbi Menachem Mendel Raskin of Kfar Chabad passed away one year ago, Parshas Chayei Sara. His life as a child and young man was one of mesirus nefesh for Torah and mitzvos. \* He had the privilege of serving Rabbi Levi Yitzchok Schneersohn, the Rebbe's father and then made aliya where he was a prominent figure in Kfar Chabad from when it was founded. \* We interviewed him over a decade ago but the interview is being published now for the first time. \* Part 2 of 2*

[Continued from last week.]

## WITH BEARD AND TZITZIS IN THE DRAFT OFFICE

Before Pesach 1941, I left Kutais and we went to Leningrad to take care of my draft notice. Obtaining an exemption from the Red Army was no small thing but my father knew an eye doctor who, as per my father's request, granted exemptions from the army and other medical certificates. My father told me the following about this eye doctor:

"They once sent me for an eye

exam. I asked the doctor in a whisper whether she had butter in her house. She said it had been years since she tasted butter and she had already forgotten what it looked like! I told her that I had butter and if she wanted it, I could supply her with as much as she wanted.

"That day I sent her two kilograms of butter (I would usually exchange piecework for butter and I had plenty of it). Starting from then, I would supply her with butter, a very desirable commodity which was

almost impossible to obtain, and I would use her when the need arose. I received the necessary documents not only for my own children but many others were saved from serving in the army thanks to the medical certificates that she supplied."

I went to her and thanks to her I was exempt from army service but I still had not received my exemption certificate. In Tamuz 1941 the Germans invaded the Soviet Union despite their treaty. With the outbreak of hostilities a general draft was announced throughout the country. Since I did not have the form, I had to go to the draft office to be examined once again. I had been given instructions from the hanhala of yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim to travel to a yeshiva that had opened in Samarkand but I couldn't leave Leningrad until I arranged this matter with the army.

I arrived at the draft office with a prayer that I would be quickly released. I was asked to see a number of doctors in different fields: skin, eyes, etc. When I went to see the doctor of internal medicine, there were two doctors, male and female, who were obviously Jewish. When I raised my shirt so they could examine me, they noticed the wool tzitzis I was wearing.

"Are you from Leningrad?" they asked.

When I said that I was, they expressed their surprise that I dared to grow a beard and wear tzitzis. They spoke to one another in Yiddish. Then they said that until recently they had lived in Latvia, which had been an independent country until a few years earlier when the Soviets took it over, and so they knew a lot about Jewish life.

"They exiled us here from Latvia. We are doctors here in Leningrad against our will."

I explained to them that I did not want to serve in the army because I would not be able to do mitzvos and



one soldier less in an army of eight million wouldn't hurt anyone. They agreed and wrote up a serious medical problem in my medical file and that is how I received my exemption from the army.

## BAGS OF RUSKS

After the Germans invaded the Soviet Union they marched until the edge of Leningrad. German warplanes bombed the city and the situation was dire. They besieged the city so that no food could be brought in. Starvation was rampant throughout the huge city. People dropped like flies. Due to the daily massive shelling, many houses collapsed and thousands were killed. Corpses were everywhere and the government had them buried in huge pits that were dug for this purpose.

Only Jewish families, mainly religious ones, would bring the bodies of their loved ones to the courtyard of the big shul and from there they were taken for Jewish burial.

As soon as the bombing of Leningrad began, there was massive flight from the city. The authorities themselves helped people leave. They even provided citizens with special trains with which to leave the city before it was too late via the many bridges which connected the city to points beyond the various rivers.

But the German planes bombed the bridges in order to disengage the city from its supply sources and force it to capitulate. Within a relatively short period of time the Germans were able to completely destroy ten bridges and only one bridge remained. When the city authorities saw how bad the situation was, they urged citizens to leave as quickly as possible as long as the one bridge remained intact. Soviet planes defended the bridge at great risk so that the last life preserver wouldn't be destroyed by



With his family. Standing from right to left, the Raskin brothers: R' Yehuda Leib, R' Dovid, R' Sholom Ber, R' Mendel



Childhood friends: R' Menachem Mendel Raskin and R' Yechezkel Brod

the Germans.

The city authorities announced that free tickets would be given for trains leaving Leningrad and enough trains were provided. Days and nights, people stood in line to receive a ticket and hundreds of thousands of people converged on the municipal offices and the pressure was intense.

Tuesday, 3 Elul, 1941 was the last day one could leave Leningrad on the one remaining bridge. My parents had despaired of getting

tickets and the mood at home was despondent. We hoped for the best. Suddenly, a neighbor walked in and said to my father: I got tickets for the train at my place of work but my son is fighting on the front lines in Leningrad and I don't want to go. Take our tickets and you go.

There was a hullabaloo and joy. People had waited for days to get a ticket and here the tickets had come to us from Hashem in this wondrous way.

Together with my brothers I

## GOING BACK

R' Mendel Raskin relates:

In 5760 I went with my wife Sara to visit the CIS. We visited our granddaughter who is a shlucha in Saratov and of course we visited Leningrad. Many memories surfaced. It was amazing how we could walk about in Chassidic garb and a beard without fear. We visited the shluchim who founded beautiful *mosdos* (institutions, schools) and felt that we were victorious, we the Chassidim and the Rebbe who won over the evil communists.

While visiting Leningrad we met a baalas t'shuva who said that her husband was a writer in Stalin's day. He wrote against the government and was interrogated a lot in Spalarka in the center of Leningrad. With tears in her eyes she said, "You don't know what used to go on there. My husband told me that although from above ground we see a building with several floors, underground there were many more floors with machine guns built in with which they eliminated many citizens. Then they burned their bodies and threw the ashes into the Neva River. That place is the KGB's cemetery.

helped my parents pack their few belongings and we rushed to the train station where hundreds of thousands of people were waiting to leave the city. Each train had eighty compartments and as soon as we left another train arrived that took on thousands more passengers.

In Leningrad there were four female relatives with us: my aunt Tzivya – the widow of R' Yitzchok Raskin, Hy'd; her mother Faiga, and two daughters of uncle Yitzchok, Rochel and Sara (my future wife). When we arrived at the train station they continued looking for a way to obtain tickets and they miraculously found four tickets and were jammed together with us into the train.

We had no idea how long the journey would take and we had taken bags of rusks that we had managed to prepare before leaving. On the train were many Jews and some Lubavitchers. The doors of the train closed and within a short time the train began to move and we left the danger zone.

As soon as we had crossed the bridge the Germans bombed it and this left Leningrad completely cut off from the world.

R' Yosef Nimotin, who was



**Rabbi Raskin next to a picture of Rabbi Levi Yitzchok Schneersohn z"l**

unable to leave Leningrad, said that one time, when he passed our house, he saw that it was split in two after a German bomb had landed on it. From the outside you could see the bookcase hanging in the air along with the books still in it.

## UNDER THE OPEN SKY

After fifteen days of travel the train arrived in Omsk, Siberia. In normal times, a trip like this would take only a few days but under the conditions of war the trip was much longer. We arrived a few days before Rosh HaShana and we stayed there

over two weeks.

Omsk was full of refugees and the city government could not provide shelter for the people who poured into the city nonstop. We lived under the open skies and thanked Hashem for even though we had no home, those who remained in Leningrad were suffering more.

On Chol HaMoed Sukkos we went by train from Omsk to Novosibirsk and from there my parents decided to travel to Alma Ata the capitol of Kazakhstan. Many Jews, especially Anash, went to Tashkent and Samarkand in Uzbekistan. My father hoped that in Alma Ata it would be easier to find a place to live and a way to support the family.

After a difficult trip the train stopped in Alma Ata. When we disembarked we were surprised to see that the station was closed with nobody going in and out. We were told that the authorities did not want masses of refugees and they had assigned policemen to the train station, which was eight kilometers from the city, to prevent refugees from leaving. My brother, parents, aunt's family and I had to remain at the train station in the bitter cold that penetrated our bones and we slept on the cold and wet floor.

After a few weeks we found a way of gaining entry into the city and we went to the Tastag district on the outskirts. My father found a house for us near the home of a local gentile. It served as a barn and he allowed us to use it. After a brief period we moved to an apartment in the city where we met several Lubavitchers, Wilschansky, Rabinowitz and others.

News of occupied Europe reached us and we began hearing details of the massacre of European Jewry, Hy'd.

We tried returning to a normal routine. Once again we began organizing minyanim in homes. My father *sheched* (slaughtered) when

necessary and did brissin (circumcision) on newborns as well as older children.

In Alma Ata my parents obtained knitting and weaving machines again and worked at home which enabled them to support us and keep Shabbos. Shortly after we arrived my parents were arrested but my mother was released after two weeks and my father was incarcerated for a month and a half. Two weeks after they arrested him they forcibly shaved his beard. It was hard to look at him this way.

## R' LEVIK SAVED ME FROM CONSCRIPTION

When we arrived in Alma Ata, we knew that the gaon Rabbi Levi Yitzchok Schneersohn zt"l was in exile in Chili in Kazakhstan. My father was part of the group of Chassidim who did all they could to obtain his release and bring him to Alma Ata.

On 16 Nissan 5700/1940, Rabbi Levi Yitzchok arrived in Alma Ata, sick and weak. My father and his brothers obtained an apartment for him and his wife, as well as doctors to treat him.

My father knew R' Levik from back in 5678/1918 when they met at a meeting of rabbanim in Moscow.

In the final weeks of his life we put t'fillin on him since he did not have the strength to do it on his own and we brothers took turns helping him.

On Shabbos Tisha B'Av 1944 (the fast was postponed to Sunday) I fed R' Levik in his sickbed and R' Levik told many Chassidic stories until it was time for the *seuda mafsekes* (the final meal before the fast). Rebbetzin Chana told her husband, "He needs to eat before the fast," but he did not respond and made as though he didn't hear her. He continued telling me stories. When it was dark outside I returned



R' Menachem Mendel Raskin with the Rebbe

## THE REBBE KNOCKED AND CAME IN

R' Raskin related: I visited 770 in 5721/1961 and I was told that Rebbetzin Chana, the Rebbe's mother, wanted me to visit her. Together with my brother Dovid we went to Rebbetzin Chana who was grateful to my family for helping her and her husband in Alma Ata. She asked that our family name their sons, grandsons and descendants for her husband, and that is what we did.

We were reminiscing when suddenly there were knocks at the door and the Rebbe came in. My brother and I were very rattled by this and tried to hide. Rebbetzin immediately told her son "I have an important guest who helped Father a great deal, R' Mendel Raskin," and she went on to describe how I devotedly cared for him and helped him put on t'fillin.

The Rebbe blessed me with good health and long life (which was fulfilled; he passed away on the Shabbos when we read in the sidra, "and he [Avrohom] expired and died in a good old age, an old man and content").

home, greatly puzzled as to why R' Levik did not want me to eat before the fast.

It was only when I got home that I figured it out. I saw that my family was very happy and they explained why. In those terrible days of war in which many soldiers were killed, the government looked for young people who had avoided being drafted. Policemen and soldiers would descend upon a neighborhood and would check all the young people they found to see why they weren't in the army. They usually drafted

everyone without taking exemptions into consideration. While I was at R' Levik one of these searches was conducted in the area where we lived. That is how R' Levik saved me from conscription.

R' Levi Yitzchok passed away shortly thereafter, on 20 Av, and my father took care of the funeral and burial.

## THE SHABBOS GUEST

One day, we had a special guest, someone who came to our house on Shabbos and from then on he



## THE IMAGE OF A CHASSID

Throughout his life, R' Mendel Raskin remained greatly devoted to the ways of Chassidus and was mekushar to the Rebbeim.

For many years he and his friend R' Yechezkel Springer ran a gemach called Sholom U'v'racha which gave loans and secret donations to many families in Kfar Chabad. He and his wife Sara were very involved in acts of kindness and it was all done with a smile and secretly.

The family notes that despite being the gabbai of the main shul for decades, you never heard him say a bad word about anyone. During the Shiva they said that R' Mendel loved Chassidic niggunim and while he lay sick he wanted the grandchildren who visited him to sing for him and he tried to join them in the singing.

A resident of Kfar Chabad relates:

"I remember how he would sit on Shabbos afternoon near the doorway of his home, holding a Likkutei Torah, and he would read a few lines to his son and me and then explain it. It was important to him that the children absorb the Chassidic atmosphere in this book."

One of his grandsons said that he was particular that tzitzis be made as was customary in his family according to a tradition that was passed on in the name of R' Zalman Zezmer, one of the great Chassidim of the Alter Rebbe. He was also very particular when he wore a tallis and until his final days, despite the difficulty, he would don a tallis with all the stringencies that he did all his life.



The three Raskin brothers. From the right: R' Menachem Mendel, R' Dovid, R' Yehuda Leib

showed up every Shabbos, entered without permission, sat next to the knitting machines that did not operate on Shabbos, and did not say

a word. He would sit there for a while and then leave. Since he came every Shabbos, we nicknamed him *Subotni Gost*, our Shabbos guest.

After a while, my father was arrested on his way to do a bris. The KGB interrogated him for hours about his Shabbos observance. Among the interrogators was our Shabbos guest. However, the focus of the interrogation was his connection with R' Levik.

The KGB agents knew that my father had helped R' Levi Yitzchok but were unsuccessful in getting him to say anything. Next, they arrested our cousin Rochel (now Pinson). They demanded that she tell all she knew about her aunt, my father's sister.

"If you do not reveal everything you know about your aunt, you will stay here for the rest of your life with underworld criminals," they threatened. She wasn't afraid and she answered them impudently. In the end they did not know what to do with her and they told her to wait in the hall. She fearlessly fled the KGB offices and returned to us to warn us. From that point on the ground began to burn under our feet.

The surveillance was unbearable. My father realized that if he did not leave the city he would be arrested. In the middle of Elul 1944 he obtained two train tickets for Moscow. He and my sister Tzivya went to Moscow. The plan was for my mother, me and my brothers to join them soon, but since it was very hard to obtain train tickets in wartime, we only made it to Moscow a few months later at which point our family was reunited. In the meantime, my father had found an apartment in the town of Bukova near Moscow.

During the months that my father was alone, he was able to get knitting machines and was able to keep Shabbos and support his family.

While we lived in Bukova my father taught me sh'chita (ritual slaughter), the holy work in which I was engaged for decades.



## MARRYING MY COUSIN

I married my wife Sara, the daughter of my uncle Yitzchok Raskin, in 1946. The wedding took place in the home of the Bravman family (parents of my brother-in-law Dovid) in Malachovka. The officiating rabbi was Rabbi Shmuel Leib Levin z"l who was a chozer in the time of the Rebbe Rashab. Some of Anash in Malachovka attended the wedding which was conducted modestly and secretly, of course.

After the war, many Lubavitcher Chassidim escaped from Russia as Polish citizens. Among the organizers of this large scale smuggling operation were the mashpia R' Mendel Futerfas z"l, R' Leib Mochkin, and my aunt Mumme Sara and her children who indefatigably devoted themselves to this work.

Since the situation was serious, with constant government surveillance and renewed persecution, we decided to leave Russia as quickly as possible. My wife's sister, Rochel Pinson and her husband obtained forged documents for us and that is how, three weeks after we married, we left the Soviet Union. We arrived in Cracow and after difficult travels we arrived, on Shabbos Mevarchim Elul 5706 in Kletzk in Poland where we met the rest of the family who arrived later on.

From there we smuggled across the border to Czechoslovakia and Austria until we arrived in Poking, Germany. There was a huge army camp belonging to the American



From the right: R' Yaakov Yosef Raskin, his son R' Menachem Mendel, his grandson R' Levi Yitzchok

army called Waldstat and in Hebrew it was called Kiryas Ye'arim. About 8000 refugees were housed here, among them many Lubavitchers. The camp was built in very organized fashion with streets and barracks on every street. Every barrack had a number written on it. Each barrack consisted of sixteen apartments.

Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim in Poking was started by R' Nissan Nemenov z"l. There were classes according to age and level. My brothers Sholom Dovber, Dovid and Leibel learned in the yeshiva. I, and some other young men, sat in the yeshiva and learned according to set s'darim. In Poking there was a beis midrash for rabbanim and shoachim where my father taught sh'chita.

In 1949 we made aliya. Since I already had two children, who had been born in Poking, I paid a lot of money and together with my wife and children we flew to Eretz

Yisroel.

We lived in Kfar Chabad where I live till this day.

After a few years I found work as a shochet and I became a member of the Agudas Shoachim in Tel Aviv. The goal of the organization is to supply shoachim to slaughterhouses throughout Eretz Yisroel and to help shoachim in their holy work.

I am a member from 1976 until today (2001). I worked for decades as a shochet and now I am the secretary of the organization.

\*\*\*

R' Mendel passed away on Shabbos Parshas Chayei Sara one year ago. He is survived by his wife Sara, his sister Tziyva Bravman and his children who are also dedicated to communal work: R' Benzion – gabbai of the Nachum Yitzchok shul; R' Levi Yitzchok – a communal activist in Kfar Chabad, Tziyva Kurtz.

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# CROSSROADS: IF LIARS CAN DO IT, WHY CAN'T WE?

By Sholom Ber Crombie

Translated by Michael Leib Dobry

The freeze is over. The talks have broken off. But nothing is final. The Jewish settlement of Yehuda and Shomron was “dried up” for ten whole months in order to pave the way for the “direct talks” with the Palestinians, and on the day that Bibi announced that he would stand by his commitments and not re-apply the choke hold on the territories, all the international pressure quickly commenced for an extension of the settlement freeze for at least “only” two more months.

The Americans, the Europeans, and the rest of the world made a polite bow, stood on the side in a most gentlemanly fashion with a pleasant smile on their lips, and told the government of Israel, “Lower your head a little more”, and then they said, “A little more”. Be flexible on the ten month choke-hold, stop building in Yerushalayim – all for the sake of brotherly love and civility. For its part, the State of Israel, or more correctly, its government leaders – bought the whole act out of a desire to look good in the eyes of the world. The payment will all be

worth it. The whole world engaged in one big lie, and everyone playing the game as if it's all true.

In the famous story of the emperor's new clothes, there was at least one child who stood up and said that there's nothing to discuss – because “the king is without clothes”. In our situation, everyone is playing the same game, as if there really is some partner who will agree to come to the negotiating table and talk peace, and as if we haven't already been down this road before and are now making history for the very first time. It literally seems like we're all just innocent little children who don't know anything.

## WHEN YOU WANT AND BELIEVE – IT'S EVEN POSSIBLE TO SELL LIES

The whole world is talking about this lie, as if it was the absolute truth. They have long since already made a most professional “delegitimization” of the word “settlement”. Just say the word “settlement” in London and you'll be

barred right on the spot. In general, all of Eretz Yisroel in recent years has been turned into one big settlement – even in the moshavim of the Negev, the Galilee, the Sharon, and the lowlands. Israeli products are being boycotted, and all of Yerushalayim is “East Jerusalem” – it's not just Jerusalem. Ask the Vice President of the United States, Joe Biden.

All this didn't happen just like that. Responsibility lies with a carefully laid-out campaign, conducted primarily by “good Jews” – those in whom we have thus far failed to reveal the Jewish spark. They operate most systematically and market their lies on the Jewish-Arab conflict in the Middle East throughout the world. They're the ones who established that the Ramat Shlomo neighborhood is East Jerusalem and the moshavim of the Negev are “settlements”.

Their operation today is worldwide, working on whole continents. They function like an efficient organization with soldiers and commanders, organizing petitions and meetings with directorates and corporations. They plead and apply pressure, boycott products from the “settlements” – since the “settlements” are a “moral crime”, and no one denies it.

They have a few more “clear and hard facts” that they manage to publicize all over the world, e.g., the Israel Defense Forces are an “army of occupation”, Israel “rules over the Palestinian people”, the mere fact that there is a “*Palestinian people*” – and only the government of Israel is to blame for the difficult state of poverty among the Arabs in the territories, as if the situation is totally different in the other twenty-one Arab countries.

## EVEN HERE PEOPLE ARE BEING SWEEP UP...

Most of the world today reasons

that Arab terrorism started with the Six Day War in 1967 or the War of Independence in 1948. No one bothers to tell them about the pogroms of 1929 (Tarpot), the Jews who were murdered in cold blood long before any discussions of a “Jewish state”, the Jews who were subject to Moslem persecution in the Arab countries during all of Jewish history, or the simple fact that “Eisav hates Yaakov” from generation to generation.

This truth is simply not heard in the face of the falsehoods sold cheaply throughout the world by the campaigns of lies and demagoguery. Even the heads of the State of Israel are being swept up by this boldfaced deceit. Even they believe what everyone is saying. And even if they don’t believe it when they’re in Eretz HaKodesh, they still talk about it during official summit meetings in Washington. No one dares to tell the truth there, as everyone plays the same game – as if the long-awaited era of peace is about to begin and all the region’s problems will be solved.

There’s only one explanation for this phenomenon: “Lies that are repeated again and again turn into half the truth”. Thus, now everyone believes that Israel is an occupier that must make concessions, the settlements are the source of the entire conflict and all the trouble, and all of Yerushalayim is in “occupied territory”. When all this passes quietly, no one can tell the truth, and we just have to close our eyes and believe without allowing facts to confuse us.

## WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THIS LIE?

This is one side of the picture. But there must also be another side, and we must look at it. To see the good and the G-dly intention in everything, and even this lie can come and teach us something. It provides a fascinating lesson on how

to make a worldwide campaign and get the whole world swept up by an idea, even if it appears totally absurd. How can a small group of people succeed in doing the unbelievable in a negative sense by taking the State of Israel, beloved and respected among the United States and its allies, and turn it into a pariah state?

The contrasting concept is clear and quite simple: Moshiach. We have the greatest, truest, and most powerful of ideas. The message and announcement that is incumbent upon us to bring to all mankind. The Rebbe gave us a clear order: “So says the Torah of Truth, the Torah of Life: Ker a velt haint!” We must reach all people throughout the world without exception and encourage them to take part in the process of the Redemption.

Sixty years have passed since the Rebbe sat before a small group of chassidim in a Brooklyn shul and gave over the first maamer, laying out the path for bringing the revelation of G-d’s light to the world in our generation. Since then, this group of a few dozen chassidim has turned into a literal army of thousands of shluchim, tens of thousands of chassidim, hundreds of thousands of fellow Jews – all soldiers, links in the chain of tremendous illumination forged by the Rebbe en route to the realization of the ultimate objective in our generation – bringing the Sh’china down into this physical world.

Yet, even today, when we see in every corner that the world is ready, we sometimes ask the question: How can we turn over the whole world? What did the Rebbe demand when he spoke about preparing the “world” to greet Moshiach?

In the face of an aggressive worldwide campaign launched by those who hate Jews and Israel, we have one clear answer: If we would only want it, the whole world will be in the palm of our hand. All that we

must do is to work like soldiers and instill the message. If they have managed to lie to the whole world and turn the fabrication of peace with the Palestinians into truth, then the real truth of the announcement of the Redemption will surely be recognized and most proudly.

## THE REBBE’S APPROACH

We have what to learn from this campaign against Eretz HaKodesh. First of all, absolute faith makes anything possible. Those activists would not have set out on their mission if they didn’t believe that they would succeed. Their faith in their success was stronger than anything, despite the fact that when they started their journey, the State of Israel was enjoying very high percentages of support in America and Europe, support that has dwindled substantially since the success of their campaign.

They operate according to the “You and I will change the world” approach. They didn’t wait for a mass movement of ten of thousands of activists, rather they started with a small group of a few dozen people, and to our great regret, their supporters today number tens of thousands and more. These activists relate to their falsehoods as absolute truths. Now, go and explain to some Dutchman in Amsterdam that the IDF has already left Gaza and that Tel Aviv is not a settlement. He’s already been hearing other “facts” for the past ten years.

The Rebbe had applied this approach many years earlier, but sometimes it’s also appropriate to take a look at world events in order to learn the concept of “make me wise through my enemies” - *l’havdil* these activists. The Rebbe started his journey as a lonely Jewish leader talking about Moshiach in a confused and bewildered generation, after the Jewish People were still

[Continued on pg. 42]



# LIVING WITH CHEVRON

By Aliza Karp



Saadia with friends in Maon.

The Alter Rebbe teaches us to “live with the times” in relation to the current Parsha. This week is Parshas Chayei Sara, which opens with Avrohom’s purchase of Maaras HaMachpella in Chevron... \* A personal account of a recent visit to Chevron.

For their Cheshvan Farbrengen,

the Rosh Chodesh Committee of Crown Heights decided that since Rosh Chodesh was so soon after the holidays, that a few weeks later is when a Farbrengen would be more appropriate. They chose the eleventh of Cheshvan, Rochel Emeinu’s Yahrtzait. And they asked me to speak for a few minutes about my

recent trip to Eretz Yisroel, especially Chevron.

I was pleased to be able to share my experiences because I realize that not everyone is as fortunate as I am, to be able to visit every year. And naturally I am happy to share my experiences with *Beis Moshiach* readers. I hope my story will strengthen your connection to Eretz Yisroel and give you the feeling that you are “living with the times.”

The night before I spoke I had been at a Sheva Brachos in Flatbush. I sat by a woman who told me that every year she and her husband go to Yerushalayim and stay in the Kings Hotel. She feels she has the ultimate experience there because she can walk to Ben Yehuda or to the Old City and the Kotel. And she has all the Kosher restaurants. I was amazed at how each one of us sees Eretz Yisroel differently and we each relate in our own special way. I would feel trapped if I stayed in a hotel... even in Yerushalayim. But this woman was truly happy in the Kings Hotel and I was happy for her that she found her spot.

On my recent trip during Elul I found a new favorite spot. Chevron, Givot Olam, Mitzpeh Yitzhar and now Havat Maon. (My articles on these places can be found in back issues of *Beis Moshiach*: 548, 550, 572, 639, 673.)

Havat Maon is south of Chevron in what are known as the Southern Chevron Hills. The foliage on the hills clings to the land, so when you are driving, your view of the graceful hills in the distance is not obstructed by tall trees. It is a beautiful,



peaceful scene. The population is sparse. Some Jewish towns, some Arab homes. It gave me the feeling that this is how it was when the Avos lived here.

It took about twenty minutes to get to the town of Maon. We passed it and went further up the hill. The trees became tall and thick. We had arrived at Havat Maon, home to fourteen Jewish families. They build their own homes and they raise sheep and have other occupations.

I entered the tent they use as a Shul. I had heard of the exceptional Torah studying and Davening that goes on in Havat Maon. It seems to me that their tent was a place where one could really open his/her heart to Hashem... Did I warn you I found a new favorite spot? The magic of the place put me under a spell.

But I was there on a mission. I was preparing for the annual Chabad of Chevron newsletter and I

came for pictures. Chabad of Chevron helps support Havat Maon with things that put a strain on their budget, especially at Yom Tov time. The pictures I came to get were of the clearing in the woods that will soon be a playground for the children, sponsored by friends of Chabad of Chevron.

I was traveling with Saadia Hershkop and the photographer Levi Hertzfel of Crown Heights. Levi turned out to be an excellent photographer. We have a lot of his pictures in the newsletter. Levi and Saadia were in Chevron for the summer doing Mitzva'im with the soldiers.

On the drive back to Chevron, the view was spectacular as the sun was casting its late afternoon rays on the hills. The boys realized we would not be in Chevron on time for Mincha. We stopped by the side of the road. The two boys alternated. One would Daven and the other stood guard. I felt safe.

The next week I was already back in New York – and Prime Minister Netanyahu was in Washington – when I heard the news that Yitzchok Imes and his wife, parents of six children, were murdered along with two other Jews. They were on their way to Beit Haggai, also in the Southern Chevron Hills, not far from Maon. When I mentioned this at the Rosh Chodesh gathering, someone asked about the connection between Netanyahu's negotiations and the murderous terrorist attack. I answered that the only thing the Arabs have to offer at the negotiations is to stop terror. So they have to keep the terror happening so they have something to offer. It is my personal opinion. And we left the politics for another time. We all know that the Rebbe said it was dangerous to speak about concessions, even if there were no intention of implementation. How much more so when there is the



The eastern corner of the Maara.

intent of implementation!

A few hours before the terrorist attack, Imes had purchased flowers for the Kollel buildings near Rebbetzin Menucha Rochel. The grounds are not suitable for planting, but they needed some beautification suitable for a place of honor. Imes was the gardener who configured flower boxes and creatively filled them with flowers and cared for them.

Prior to our trip to Havat Maon, I was part of the ceremony inaugurating the gardens at the Seventh Step, also a project that Chabad of Chevron had hired Imes to do.

For (exactly!) seven hundred years, 1267 to 1967, Muslims occupied Eretz Yisroel, up until the time of the British Mandate, which was followed by the occupation of the Jordanian army. During those seven hundred years, Jews were not allowed to enter Maaras HaMachpella. There was an extension on the East side of the Maara leading to a side entrance. Jews were allowed as far as the Seventh Step that was part of the Eastern extension. When the Jewish army liberated the Maara, they felt the Seventh Step was a sign of humiliation and took down the extension, leaving the original walls and the grounds below unattended.

Since then, many Jews find that they want to Daven at the place of the Seventh Step. They feel that it was made holy by all the heartfelt prayers of seven hundred years, and there are opinions that the location of the Seventh Step is the closest to the actual burial sites.

But the area was never landscaped, there was nowhere to sit, no S'farim to use, and it looked neglected. A friend of Chabad of Chevron had noticed this and out of respect for the holiness of the place, he wanted to give it a more dignified appearance.

To give you an idea of what it

was like, I am quoting from Rabbi Shimon Neubort's blog, where he wrote about his experience last year on Parshas Chayei Sara. The entire report appears on the Chabad of Chevron website ([www.chabadhebron.com](http://www.chabadhebron.com)). The following is an excerpt about the Seventh Step:

"There were about a hundred people gathered at the eastern wall where the Seventh Step used to be, and when I got there someone offered me a chair. So I sat down to say T'hillim. After about 20 minutes the chair (which was unevenly perched on a rocky surface) gave way, and I went tumbling down along with the now broken chair, rolling over and over. People ran up to assist me, but I was completely unharmed, except for my silk Sirtuk, which was all dusty. A policeman brought a towel and a bottle of seltzer, and insisted I must let him clean me off."

This year the worshippers will find secure benches to sit on, an outdoor bookcase packed with Siddurim and T'hillim and beautiful landscaping done by Yitzchok Imes... May Hashem avenge his blood.

For the newsletter I wanted to report on the new Kollel at Menucha Rochel and went there one night to do an interview.

In addition to the afternoon Kollel, which was founded shortly after Chabad of Chevron was established eight years ago, there is now an evening Kollel. It takes place in the building that was built on ruins. Its members are Talmudei Chachomim and Roshei Yeshivos. They learn Nigleh and are being introduced to Chassidus. This Kollel has a mystique all of its own.

I got to the site before the Kollel members. The area was dark and quiet. As the Kollel filled, there was no exceptional commotion; all it is, is ten men studying... But the whole place seemed to come alive. I

interrupted one of the Kollel members whom I knew spoke English and I interviewed him outdoors for a few minutes. A soldier on guard was following our conversation and joined in. After the Kollel member went back inside, I stayed more than an hour answering the soldier's questions about Yiddishkeit. In particular he was interested in my relationship with my children who were about his age. That is something that Danny, Saadia, and Levy could not have answered. So you might say that he was on duty at Menucha Rochel that night so that he could get his answers.

When I am in Chevron I like to Daven at the Maara and then drive up to Menucha Rochel to say T'hillim for my family. I was there another time as well. I have written before (*Beis Moshiah* 635) about the woman's Kollel that takes place at Menucha Rochel. It is called Bubby Martha's Kollel and is run by Miriam Rhodes, under the auspices of her husband Meir's project – Kollel Eliezer Elimelech/Friends of Families of Chevron.

The week I was in Chevron, a woman had chosen to have her birthday party at Bubby Martha's Kollel. So there were new people in attendance, accentuating the unique blend of personalities and Neshamos. The women Davened outside by Menucha Rochel, while Rochel Frenzie of Bat Ayin played a large recorder. Saying T'hillim, overlooking Chevron, feeling the closeness of Rebbetzin Menucha Rochel and hearing the gentle notes - it's enough to make you forget you are in Galus.

As each woman finished her prayers, we went inside to pita, salad, soup and chocolate chip cookies, all homemade in Chevron. Miriam treated us to an excellent rendition of a class, originally given by YY Jacobson, based on a Sichah of the Rebbe. Rochel Frenzie switched

to keyboard. We sang, we danced, and we united.

I have to mention that Danny's attention to detail was well appreciated. That week the temperatures were topping one hundred degrees. Danny has an efficient air conditioner in the Kollel building. I don't see how we could have been there without it.

In addition to our trip to Maon, I witnessed firsthand how Saadia and Levy were doing the Rebbe's work. It is work. They put in a lot of effort. But they make it fun. The first time I went on an army base with them I saw how the soldiers knew them as they grasped hands for a firm handshake. We were there to put up a Mezuzah for one of the soldiers who wanted it on the caravan where he was sleeping. He knew the army was responsible for the Mezuzah, but he knew if he wanted it done, to ask the Chabad Bachurim.

How did the soldiers get to know Saadia and Levy so well? I learned their secret. Every night they make up a brew of hot chocolate or flavored coffee and they go to the various guard posts around Chevron. Not at Maariv time. They start at midnight. They are there for the soldiers when no one else is. If the soldiers are on duty, so are the Rebbe's soldiers. I went with them a few nights on their rounds and saw firsthand how they would spend time schmoozing with the soldiers. They could relate to the worldly topics but they were also able to steer the conversation to Jewish ideas and doing Mitzvos.

I spent my last few days in Yerushalayim. Not at the Kings Hotel, but also downtown, closer to Machne Yehuda.

The closest Shul that was open to women during the week was a short walk from where I was staying. I took Rehov Shomron away from Agripas. The road turns but you can still go straight on foot and pass the



**Stairs leading up to the women's gallery of the Munkatch Shul.**

Markolet. Then you come to another street. There is a parking lot on the right and then a path that turns away from the road and goes in front of a few buildings. The second building has a large sign Munkatch, in Hebrew. It is a stone building. The kind that looks ancient. Around the side there is an outdoor stairway to the second floor. I walked in and found a tiny room for women. There were glassless windows to look down, with curtains covering them.

I sat across from the other woman who was there. She was a generation older than me and we sat respectfully across from one another. I figured she did not speak English and we had nothing to speak about.

I had forgotten to bring a Siddur with me to Eretz Yisroel. I had been so excited about getting the Chayenu for the weeks I would be away that I

had forgotten to bring a Siddur. I always have a T'hillim, so that was not a problem. In Chevron the missing Siddur had not been a problem, but at this Shul I had no choice but to take what was available. I found the Davening very confusing and made up my mind to Daven Mincha that day, which I don't usually do, but I hoped it would correct any deviations or mistakes I may have made at Shacharis.

I am accustomed to saying Chitas when I finish Davening but my companion was ready to close the women's section as soon as the men were finished. So I went to a nearby park to finish Chitas and say T'hillim. It was very nice.

The next morning was my last one in Eretz Yisroel. I got to the Munkatch Shul and joined the same



woman. Same place, different Siddur. I realized I could use my mini-Segula L'Shmira if I use reading glasses. It was Thursday. I looked through the curtains to see the Seifer Torah being taken from the Aron. Then I turned away. But my Davening partner had also come to the curtains and she tapped my shoulder to look again. They were holding the Torah for Zos HaTorah. I was surprised she realized I would want to see it. I love watching the Torah be held high. I am very visual. And I love saying the words. "The tree of life to those who hold fast to it... its paths are peace... its ways are pleasant..." I would have been disappointed if I had missed seeing it in Yerushalayim, especially on my last day. I told the woman that at my Shul they hold the Torah up after they read it. She told me that at her Shul they also do it after the reading. I am not sure if she had noticed the picture of the Rebbe on

the little Siddur I was using, but we discovered both Chabad. Somehow – language barrier and all – we became best friends! As they say – Chassidim are one Mishpacha. It was a beautiful encounter... upstairs in the back of the Munkatch Shul at the seven a.m. Minyan.

But I had forgotten my glasses and as well as I know Shmoneh Esrei was unsure if I said it completely correctly. OK, another Mincha. Only with the rush to the airport, it got dark before I said Mincha. OK, Maariv. I was checked in and went to the Beit Chabad in the airport. They told me there was a Shul around the corner. I had never seen it. Nice Shul. A place for women and – although the Beit Chabad had warned me it would not be there – I found one Chabad Siddur.

Maariv said, I explored a little. There was another room with complimentary drinks. And a large

screen... showing videos of the Rebbe.

As I mentioned above, the event where I was speaking took place on Rochel Emeinu's Yahrzeit. I felt I wanted to say something about Rochel Our Mother so I shared a personal thought. For thousands of years Rochel has been separated from Yaakov, who rests in Chevron, and she has been weeping for her children. In Chevron we now have the granddaughter of the Alter Rebbe. She is the daughter of the Mittlerer Rebbe. Her resting place is on a hill in Chevron overlooking the rest of the city. Her name is Menucha Rochel. Rochel with Menucha – serenity of the soul. As we connect to Rebbetzin Menucha Rochel and her love of Chevron, surely the generation that is destined to usher in the era of Moshiach will find Menucha as we approach the imminent moment when we will greet Moshiach Now.

[Continued from pg. 37]

lying wounded from the grievous destruction they suffered during the Second World War. But the Rebbe didn't allow his environment to stop him from bringing the facts – the absolute truth – that Am Yisroel is an eternal people walking for two thousand years towards the Redemption, and according to all the signs from our Sages, of blessed memory, our generation is the generation that will be privileged to complete the Divine purpose.

## DON'T WAIT. TAKE ACTION!

The Rebbe didn't wait until he had millions of dollars or tens of thousands of volunteers at his disposal, rather he started his activities on bringing the Redemption with a handful of chassidim, who became a worldwide

organization that millions of dollars and tens of thousands of volunteers might not have been able to create.

Most importantly, the Rebbe didn't relax for one moment from his belief that the message of the Redemption must be brought to the whole world, even to the farthest corner, literally to the ends of the earth – to everyone, Jews and *l'havdil*, non-Jews. They must know that we are living in the wondrous era of the days of Moshiach and the

world is moving toward a state of Redemption.

All that remains now is for us to continue the revolution that the Rebbe has placed in our hands, spread the message of the Redemption, provide a powerful answer to the deceit and darkness in the world, and kindle the light of the announcement of the Redemption.

You and I will bring the Moshiach.