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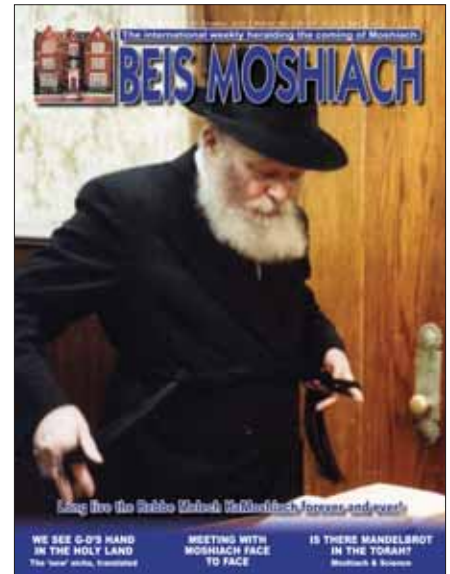
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WE SEE G-D'S HAND IN THE HOLY LAND

Translated by Boruch Merkur

Recently a sicha, reviewed and edited by the Rebbe MH"M, was discovered and published – a “new” sicha, which provides fresh insight into the preciousness of the Holy Land. * From the address of Thursday, 21 Sivan 5730, Parshas Shlach.

1. As usual, we shall begin with a Torah discussion, in particular on the weekly Torah portion.

This week's portion speaks about the spies, to the extent that the entire portion is entitled “*shlach* (send [spies]).” The meaning of this term, as related in the beginning of the portion, is that G-d permitted Moshe to send spies to scout out Eretz Yisroel.

As we shall demonstrate, this topic is especially relevant to and provides lessons [as with all matters of Torah, for “Torah” means “teaching”] to women, of all ages.

In a later portion [Parshas Pinchas], Rashi mentions – in connection with the conduct of the spies and their adherents, described in our portion – that the women of that generation were distinguished by the fact that not only did they not follow the advice of the spies and did not allow

themselves to succumb to their persuasion, but they had the opposite response, they displayed “love” for the land.

The fondness the women had for the land was irrespective of the fact that they had never been there before; they had just heard about Eretz Yisroel from Moshe Rabbeinu, who had simply related what G-d had said about it. But that alone sufficed for them to avoid being confounded by the spies' frightening report. Indeed, they desired and loved the land despite the challenges this entailed.

As pointed out on many occasions, this description of the Jewish women's love for the land, the love for Eretz Yisroel, is also part of the Torah. Indeed, it is a lesson, illustrating the special spiritual qualities of the soul, the Jewish soul, certain qualities that are especially pronounced in

women, more than in men.

2. What is unique about Eretz Yisroel in comparison with other lands? It is related in Chumash that Eretz Yisroel is “the land which the eyes of G-d are upon it from the beginning of the year until the end of the year,” meaning that it is uniquely discernible that G-d watches and oversees the Holy Land. That is the main thrust of the matter. The continuation of the verse teaches that G-d's interest and oversight for everything connected with Eretz Yisroel is not limited to particular periods of time but extends all the way “from the beginning of the year until the end of the year.”

It is this quality, the special attention G-d devotes to the Holy Land, that was so beloved to the women of that generation, and it provides a lesson for the women of all generations in connection to the matter.

3. It is self-understood that G-d oversees all details with Divine providence, in all times and in all places, especially in light of the teaching of the Baal Shem Tov, which he repeated many times. Namely, the teaching that everything that exists in the world is dependent upon Divine providence, by the oversight and concern of G-d Himself. In more recent times, the Rebbe Rayatz developed the Baal Shem Tov's

teaching in his own style, including in public talks that were transcribed in Yiddish, making them accessible to everyone.

Being that this is so – that there is universal oversight from G-d – what is unique about the Divine providence granted to Eretz Yisroel?

This issue is addressed in published works on the Torah, as follows. Every country has its own *sar*, a ministering angel that resides with G-d in heaven. Now, although it is true that everything comes from G-d – as discussed in the teaching of the Baal Shem Tov on the matter – at times this Divine providence manifests itself in a concealed manner. And this is the significance in saying that each country has its own *sar*, or ministering angel, insofar as “angel” means an emissary or messenger. That is, when a messenger delivers something, it is not his own property that he delivers; he is just an agent for delivering it. However, the one who receives the parcel from the messenger doesn’t see the one who sent the item to him but just the agent. Therefore he is prone to be mistaken and delude himself – or a third party could be thus mistaken – that the agent has some real connection with the item he delivered, and that the agent sent the item of his own accord, according to his will and from his personal resources.

However, regarding Eretz Yisroel it is apparent that “the eyes of G-d are upon it.” There is no ministering angel; it is directed by G-d Himself. Thus, there is no room for making this error. That is, unless the Evil Inclination dominates the person to that extent, or someone comes from outside and distorts one’s view. In those circumstances, one is still liable to be mistaken, for even in

the Holy Land there is free choice between life and goodness and their counterparts.

Thus, the difference between Eretz Yisroel and the Diaspora is not limited to matters of Torah and Mitzvos, where there is a clear distinction between the regions. For there are Mitzvos incumbent in Eretz Yisroel which are not obligatory in the Diaspora, Mitzvos associated with the land, regarding plowing, sowing, and germination. But there is also a difference with regard to the land itself, to that which sprouts forth from the earth. The Holy Land is unique in the literal [material] sense. That is, even the physical phenomena of Eretz Yisroel demonstrate a difference when compared to other lands.

This concept is illuminated by the story in the Gemara [Gittin 57a], where we learn that even the physical substance of the Holy Land – the superficial and material aspect of the earth in Eretz Yisroel, palpable to the touch – is dependent upon the number of Jews living there. Namely, when the Jewish population increases, the land expands and broadens in order to contain a further increase of Jews in the region.

And as explicitly noted in the Gemara, this is not meant in a spiritual sense. True, it begins as a spiritual phenomenon but thereafter it becomes manifest in physical reality. When more Jews come, Jews who want to be in Eretz Yisroel – “the land which the eyes of G-d are upon it from the beginning of the year until the end of the year” – then the physical territory of Eretz Yisroel actually expands and broadens in order to accommodate them.

[To be continued be”H]



It is this quality, the special attention G-d devotes to the Holy Land, that was so beloved to the women of that generation. And this provides a lesson for the women of all generations in connection to the matter.

MEETING WITH MOSHIACH FACE TO FACE

By Rabbi Zvi Homnick

The point is not to strike fear in the hearts of the Chassidim over a future day of reckoning, but to emphasize the Rebbe's concern over each person's "state and condition" and the degree to which that "state and condition" is in line with and ready for the imminent divine revelations associated with the arrival of Moshiach.

SHAMEFACED

It was winter towards the end of 1991 in Eretz Yisroel, and I had been learning Chassidus intensively for only a few weeks, when the month of Kislev rolled around. In honor of 19-20 Kislev, the young men studying in the afternoon Chassidus Kollel led by Rabbi Y. Y. Offen, which had moved to the shul where I had been learning, held a farbrengen in the home of one of the young men in the Kollel. They had graciously invited me to participate, and since I was beginning to feel a strong

connection with what I was discovering in my studies, I was glad to join them.

I don't recall too much as to main theme of the farbrengen, but a number of stories that Rabbi Offen recounted, which I was hearing for the very first time, had a profound impact on me. One of those stories was about the great Chassid of the Alter Rebbe, Reb Pinchos Roiza's, whose father Reb Henoach Shick was a leading light of the Misnagdic world of that time, serving as the rabbi of the city of Shklov, known for its

disproportionately large contingent of Torah scholars and its intense opposition to the fledgling Chassidic movement. When it was first discovered that Reb Pinchos had defected to the Chassidic camp, his illustrious father, as was the custom of the time, completely disowned his son and observed the customary week of mourning over his "spiritually deceased" progeny.

Over the years, his ardent antagonism abated somewhat, as he saw that many of the disciples of the Liozna Maggid (as the Alter Rebbe was known) were G-d fearing Jews and even great Torah scholars. In that spirit, he opened a correspondence with the Alter Rebbe in which he requested that his son return home for an extended visit, after having been cut off from his mother and father for so many years. The Alter Rebbe agreed, albeit with a number of provisions, amongst which were that he guarantee his son's safety, that he set aside a portion of his home for Reb Pinchos to be able to pursue his brand of divine service undisturbed, and that he promise not to engage his son in any debate. Reb Henoach agreed to the terms and conditions, and Reb

Pinchos set off to his hometown of Shklov.

Despite his great scholarship and stature at a time when Lithuanian scholarship was at its peak, there is almost nothing in writing from Reb Henoch Shick. The reason given for this is his phenomenal diligence in Torah study, with every minute of his day accounted for within his set times for reviewing the vast range of his Torah knowledge, which left him no time to devote to writing. As part of his tentative reconciliation with his son, he made some time in his busy schedule to meet with him on occasion. At one of those meetings, he told his son that since he had agreed to not engage him in debate he would honor that commitment, but he was inquiring as to whether he would mind if he asked a question.

Reb Pinchos readily agreed, and his father went on to say that from the few times he glanced at the writings of the discourses of the Liozna Maggid he could see that “bittul” was a constantly recurring theme. Similarly, the few times that he overheard Chassidim talking amongst themselves, this topic seemed to come up repeatedly. His question was, why is it necessary to study Chassidus in order to sublimate the ego and root out the trait of arrogance, why isn’t the study of the section on *anava* (humility) in the Reishis Chochma, which is also based on Kabbalistic ideas, sufficient? Reb Pinchos, instead of answering directly, suggested that his father rearrange his tightly packed learning schedule, in order to set aside some time to study that very section in Reishis Chochma, every day for the next thirty days, and then he would give him a response.

Reb Henoch agreed to do so, and over the following days during the agreed upon period, he set

aside some time to study the trait of humility as presented in Reishis Chochma. As the thirty days drew to an end it was a Friday morning, and Reb Pinchos approached his father’s personal assistant with a proposition. He explained to the simple Jew that his father, due to his great prestige and the esteem in which he was held, felt that he did not have sufficient opportunities to do simple kindnesses to his fellow Jews, and as such was being denied this very great mitzva. Therefore, that afternoon when he would accompany the great rabbi to the bathhouse as part of his preparations for Shabbos, and it came time during his steam bath to beat and scratch his back, he should say very loudly in public that it has been many decades that every week he beats and scratches the Rov, it is about time that the Rov beat and scratch him.

The assistant, having been raised in the Lithuanian tradition of great respect and honor for Torah scholars, was mortified by the suggestion, but Reb Pinchos reassured him that not only would Reb Henoch not hold it against him, this is what he wanted. The poor simple Jew felt that he had no choice, and as difficult as it was for him to do so, he carried out Reb Pinchos’ instructions to the letter. In the bathhouse, when he said what he was instructed to say, the entire room fell silent as everyone waited with bated breath to see how the great rabbi would react. Reb Henoch quietly took the proffered branch and began to beat and scratch the back of his lowly assistant, and the entire city was in an uproar. There were some who were amazed at his tremendous humility, whereas there were others who argued that it was not his place to overlook the honor of the Torah that he represented and he should have taken the assistant to

task in the harshest terms.

Later, when father and son had some alone time, Reb Pinchos admitted to the obvious fact that learning and meditating upon the trait of humility as illuminated in Reishis Chochma had made a tremendous impact on his father, and he said that he had merely one question. What he wanted to know was, what was his father feeling inside even as he kept his external composure in the face of public humiliation. The father responded that he immediately realized that his son had put the man up to it as a test, and that is how he was able to rise to the challenge, but internally he felt that his innards were turning over, and “would that I had a sword in my hand, I would kill you this instant” (citing the verse of Bilaam speaking to his donkey). Reb Pinchos began to laugh and said that for a Chassid it would not even rise to the level of a test, and not only wouldn’t he consider it a big deal, he would be glad for the opportunity to help another Jew.

The story hit me hard at the time and I remember thinking then that either this was the biggest load of baloney I had ever heard, or else Chassidus really was as amazing as advertised. The problem was that even if the story and its premise were true, maybe I would just end up being strung along with excuses, such as the spiritual decline of the generations, which would lead to the same result as if it were phony. In the end, there is no difference to the costumer if the advertisement is fraudulent or if he comes into the store and they say that they no longer have the sale item in stock. It didn’t make sense to commit myself to immersing more fully into Chassidic study and life, only to find out that the Misnagdim were wrong and there really was this amazing boat once

upon a time, but I had missed it due to being born too late.

LOSING FACE OR SAVING FACE?

In the end, I did make the commitment, and over the years this story (and another story he told that night about “Luzha the lame”) became one of my favorites. About five years later, I was visiting with my father one Shabbos, and somewhat mischievously decided to share this story, knowing it would not be very appreciated. Although my father was clearly annoyed by the story (in which the Chassid comes out looking better than the great Torah scholar), he was a good sport about it, and instead of walking away feeling virtuous and vindicated I felt a wee (and only a wee) bit guilty.

A little over a week later, I was walking on 16th Avenue in Boro Park, heading towards my car, when I was stopped by a fellow who I had seen collecting in and around the shuls of Boro Park since I was young child. This man walked with a cane as he had one wooden leg, and I remember from when I was a little kid that he would tell people that he lost it in the Korean War. Additionally, he suffered from mental health problems, which manifested also in the form of less than optimal hygiene as evidenced by the attendant pungently odoriferous miasma that wafted from his person. When I instinctively began reaching for my pocket for some spare change, he explained that he wasn’t asking for money, but rather he needed my help. The lace on the shoe of his good foot had opened and this presented a serious danger of falling, and since he couldn’t bend down or raise his foot, due to his wooden leg, he needed me to tie his shoe for him.

In one brief instant, my mind

processed every detail of the scene, the smell and dishevelment of my petitioner, the crowds of other Jews that were exiting the shul I had just walked out of, along with plenty of other foot traffic on the busy avenue, including people I knew – it felt like my brain was in hyper-drive. I also noted that in order to tie a shoe that is on the floor I was not in good enough condition to do it from a squatting position but would have to actually get down on the filthy sidewalk. As a million or more objections rose to my mind and I began to consider whether to voice them or accede to his request, the fellow began chiding me loudly over my dallying while he was stuck and helpless. So, realizing that I had no choice but to help a fellow Jew in need, I got down on the floor and began to tie his shoe.

One of the little known facts that I discovered from the experience is that tying a shoe on another person’s foot from an almost prone position, with the blood rushing to your brain and your peripheral vision picking up the wide-eyed stares of openly gawking passersby, causes all manual dexterity to flee and turns all of one’s fingers into thumbs, thus prolonging the delightful experience. Even as I began to bend down, and the thought passed through my mind as to how humiliating and publicly degrading this was going to be, I immediately flashed on telling my father the story of Reb Pinchos Roiza’s, and the less than noble intentions I had when telling that story with such verve and gusto, and I couldn’t help but marvel at the divine workings in a way of “measure for measure.”

And as I practically lay on the floor fumbling and flailing in my attempts to execute what should be a relatively simple exercise for anyone in the advanced post-

toddler stage of life, I was filled with tremendous joy and feelings of love for this Jew who was giving me this amazing opportunity to realize what it means to be a Chassid. I thought of how the Rebbe himself said when someone apologized for slipping an emergency note under his door, causing the Rebbe to have to bend to the floor, “My inyan is to bend down in order to help other Jews.” As the crowd passed, most of them dressed in Polish Chassidic garb (did I mention gawking), I couldn’t help but feel sorry for them that they never had the good fortune to learn Chabad Chassidus.

When I got up, I literally felt like breaking into song and dance, but I restrained myself until I got into my car, where I burst into excited laughter. I laughed and laughed until tears were rolling down my cheeks, my heart bursting with gratitude to Hashem for letting me experience in a most tangible way that despite my countless flaws and imperfections, Chassidus had indeed placed me (as advertised) on an entirely different plane, at least as far as feeling for another Jew and not being hung up on one’s personal dignity.

Being that the mind likes to play its little tricks, over time the excitement began to fade, and I began to question as to whether I was reading too much into the order of events, and how could I be sure that Divine Providence sent this person in response to my telling that exact story. And so, only a few short weeks later, I was taking a shower in the mikva on a Friday afternoon, when a fellow in a neck brace approached me with his soap and asked me if I would soap and wash his back for him (the only time on my life that ever happened). I hope he didn’t think I was too weird when I gave him a huge smile and said “Sure!”

When I got up, I literally felt like breaking into song and dance, but I restrained myself until I got into my car, where I burst into excited laughter. I laughed and laughed until tears were rolling down my cheeks...

FACE THE MUSIC

One of the lessons that the Rebbe often repeated that could be learned from the Mittlerer Rebbe's life, in that he was born and ascended on high the same day, 9 Kislev, is the idea of perfect harmony and synthesis between body and soul, and between the teachings of Chassidus and the actualization of those teachings in everyday life. The way to achieve that harmony and synthesis is through complete immersion in the study of Chassidus and in spreading those teachings to others less fortunate than yourself. The life story of the Mittlerer Rebbe personifies total immersion in the study of Chassidus and in the teaching of Chassidus, and as the Tzemach Tzedek framed it, "If you were to cut the finger of my father-in-law, blood would not run out, but Chassidus."

Any person who has invested time and energy in these pursuits can readily identify and testify to areas of their spiritual lives in which Chassidus *hot zei aveckgeshtelt oif gohr an ander ort* (placed them on an entirely different plane), even as they may feel that there are other areas where they suffer from "he who is greater, his Evil Inclination is greater." And yet, for some reason, when we hit a certain plateau, we delude ourselves into thinking that Chassidus has taken us so far and it can't take us any farther.

The fact of the matter is that we

have no clue as to the power of Chassidus on our own, and we need the Rebbeim, particularly the Rebbe of that generation to tell us what is expected of us and what transformational energies Chassidus can provide. It is up to us to jump in, not as some would suggest "blindly," but with "open eyes," utilizing our faculty of **Bina**/comprehension to its fullest as exemplified in the Chassidus of the Mittlerer Rebbe, with the desire to be transformed and transplanted to an entirely different spiritual dimension of oneness with the Torah, and ultimately oneness with G-d. This is all alluded to in the fact that the Mittlerer Rebbe's day of redemption from his imprisonment is celebrated on 10 Kislev, the day immediately following his passing (see Pada B'Shalom 5746 – Maamarim Meluket vol. 5, p. 83-90).

In the middle of the talks of 5752, after the Rebbe had spent weeks emphasizing the need for study and spiritual preparation for the coming of Moshiach, including in the week of VaYitzei 5752 talking about the need to immerse oneself in the lengthy and complex teachings of the Mittlerer Rebbe, as well as total devotion to the shlichus of preparing for Moshiach and bringing Moshiach, the Rebbe raised the issue of being held to account. "Additionally, the knowledge that immediately, the Rebbe, my father-in-law, the leader of our generation, will enter (since

'they will arise and sing, those who dwell in the earth') and gaze upon each and every one of the Chassidim and Mekusharim to assess his state and condition...this inspires and causes one to complete and perfect all of our deeds and service."

The point is not to strike fear in the hearts of the Chassidim over a future day of reckoning, but to emphasize the Rebbe's concern over each person's "state and condition" and the degree to which that "state and condition" is in line with and ready for the imminent divine revelations associated with the arrival of Moshiach. Although there is a lot to do in the realm of action, Chassidus is and always has been ultimately about one's internal reality being completely aligned with one's external persona (not external humility accompanied by internal seething).

Similarly, when it comes to Moshiach and the preparations for Moshiach, it is not enough *tzu vayzen ah panim* (lit. to present a face) of being involved in Moshiach and Geula. It has to become our internal reality through the immersion in Chassidus and these topics in particular. In this case, not only is there no cause for concern that we missed the boat relative to previous generations, we need to know that the boat only just arrived in our time and is meant specifically for each and every one of us. The knowledge that we will soon be face to face with the Rebbe, "and he will gaze upon each and every one," is the awareness that he will be looking to assess our internal "state and condition." This in turn inspires us "to complete and perfect our deeds and service," in anticipation of that face to face meeting, with the coming of Moshiach, immediately, NOW!

AN ARTIST'S JOURNEY

By Nosson Avrohom

Maoz Toledo is an artist, his living room filled with his Chassidic paintings. He shares his story, the long road he traversed from the world he was born and raised in, to where he is now, living the life of a Chassid.



In a modest little home in B'nei Brak lives Maoz Toledo, Chassidic artist. Whoever enters his house feels like he has entered an art gallery full of Chassidic figures, farbrengens, and likenesses of the Chabad Rebbeim.

"I have no room, so I hang them up on the walls," Maoz explains in the soft voice of those who are used to expressing themselves in art.

A corner of his living room has been transformed into his studio. On the table are strewn tubes of paint in a wide range of colors, paintbrushes with sheaves of fibers, canvases and special paper, colored pencils and other tools that he uses in his work. On the side of the room are a number of paintings in varying stages of completion. Maoz doesn't wait for someone to order a painting; his paintings have welled up from his heart.

He paints most hours of the day, drawing his inspiration from pictures of Chassidim or from

Chassidic scenes that he has seen himself. His paintings often incorporate additions that express Chassidic concepts, a form of commentary, in addition to the realistic scene.

"Often, I will express in a painting the thoughts of a Chassid, the mood, that which the camera lens or fleeting imagination does not capture."

The interview was a wonderful experience. Seeing the paintings was a delight and it brought me back to days gone by, more simple times. So much sincerity radiates from them, as well as truth and innocence, that there are some paintings where it is hard to believe they are the work of an artist and not a photograph.

"I try to be as precise as possible. When I draw a Chassid or Chassidic place, they are not images and places that I have imagined. They are all meticulous reproductions."

A WARM HOME

Maoz's Chassidic appearance belies a very different past. Maoz, like many young people his age, especially those with artistic talents flowing in their veins, searched for the truth. He was raised in a home with morals and values, with love and endless giving, but this did not satisfy him. He looked for meaning, depth. He tried to make up for what he felt was lacking with his art but was unsuccessful.

He soon realized that art is one stop on the road that leads to the goal. Today, after having gone on the journey and discovered the truth, he can look back and remember – half nostalgically and half regretfully - those days of confusion. Once trained in the ways of Chassidus, he took his talent for art, which had blossomed over the years, and harnessed it to spread the beauty of Chassidus to broader audiences.

He spent most of his childhood



and youth in Kiryat Yam. Like most Israeli children he attended public school near his home. He drew his first portrait at age four. Many childhood memories are of him with pen in hand, scribbling people or scenes.

“My father would sit with me and my brothers for hours and teach us the principles of drawing. He himself is a respected artist and it was important to him that we know how to draw.”

As a young child in school he would bring paintings that he drew at home in the afternoon and the teachers would be amazed by his talent. They would show his drawings to the other children so they could copy them.

“In school, the Toledo brothers were known for their artistic abilities. Teachers would ask us to draw things that would decorate their classrooms. Under our father’s influence we drew all the time. At 16, I began to immerse

myself in study and I felt I had moved up a notch.”

Although his education in school did not include Torah and mitzvos, his parents were traditional. His father would put t’fillin on every day and would fast on Yom Kippur.

“My father is a giving person by nature. He has a good heart. I remember from my childhood that during a trip we passed beggars collecting money and my father saw that I had noticed them and he said, ‘You should know that the world stands on them.’ This made quite an impression on me. On the outside we saw materialism and selfishness, but at home we experienced compassion and love.”

LOOKING THROUGH THE WINDOW

The dream of every Israeli student is to go to the land of opportunity – the United States. This dream was realized for Maoz

at a young age. His grandparents live in New York and the family spent every summer there.

“We spoke about the future being in the US, where it is possible to develop in any field, make a good living, and live comfortably. We would go there and work and save the money we earned so we could invest it sensibly when we finished high school and our army service.

“Our connection to Judaism back then included a few minutes a day in which we put on t’fillin, but this was only because my father wanted us to do so, without our knowing why we were doing it. Sometimes my father took us to shul on Friday evenings, though after the davening life would go on as though it wasn’t Shabbos.

“One summer there was a longer than usual vacation and we stayed with one of our uncles in Maryland. This uncle was very close with the shliach there, Rabbi Noam Cohen.”

Maoz met the shliach during Kabbalas Shabbos but did not want to stay on after the davening. Many others remained for the Shabbos meal in the shliach’s home. Sometime after he left, he realized that he had forgotten his Siddur in the shliach’s house. It was precious to him and he wanted to retrieve it.

“I stood for a while near the door but didn’t have the courage to knock and go in. From the outside I could see the Shabbos table and it captivated me. R’ Cohen sat at the head of the table and there were many guests listening to him. This scene is engraved in my mind, and I will never forget the overpowering feeling, ‘This is what I have been looking for all my life. How beautiful this is; how sweet; I can touch with my hand that which is in the realm of dreams.’ When I returned to my uncle’s house I realized that the entire trip far away and the desire to find and

In the morning I went over to the place where I had left my passport in order to send it to the immigration office and couldn't believe it – the passport wasn't there! I turned the house upside-down looking for it but the passport had vanished.

meet new people was actually a search, to find myself.

"I didn't dare enter the house. I turned around. But this scene changed my life. Ever since I was a child I sought to draw fascinating places. In every drawing I tried to add a detail or dimension that wasn't in the previous picture. The subjects of the drawings constantly changed for I was always searching. That Shabbos meal led me to the awareness that this is what I wanted; it is what I was searching for, and where I wanted to be. I wanted to feel that feeling in the deepest way."

CLOSING A CIRCLE AT THE HOSPITAL

Around this time, another event took place which strengthened Maoz's connection to Chassidim.

"On my way to New York I felt terrible pains in my stomach and I was hospitalized in Beth Israel hospital in Manhattan. The doctors who examined me diagnosed appendicitis, which is the most common cause of abdominal surgery in the US and is not particularly complicated. But I had arrived too late. The appendix had ruptured and infection had spread. I had to remain under observation in the hospital for two weeks, not fun for a young man.

"It was a trying time for me, and I was desperately in need of encouragement. My father was

with me and tried to reassure me but it wasn't enough. The ones who helped were a pair of Lubavitchers who came to the hospital to visit patients and visited me. They listened to my story and cheered me up. After meeting with them, I was a different person. They warmed my heart and gave me hope. When I was released from the hospital I left with the strong feeling that the Chabadnikim had special powers ..."

When Maoz visited 770 two years ago, this time as a Chassid, he decided to go back to the hospital on a visit, in order to give hope to other sick people as those Chassidim had done for him.

"I remembered how much the smiles and encouragement of the Chassidim had helped me and I decided to adopt the same approach and help others. A bachur joined me and I went back to the room I had been in. To my surprise, I found a Jew there who was suffering from the identical problem. We put t'fillin on with him and he was thrilled."

WHY DID THE PASSPORT DISAPPEAR?

"I began going to the Chabad house regularly, with my brother. The decision not to work anymore on Shabbos followed soon after. I left my job and quickly found another one where the gentile boss

understood me and excused me from working on Saturdays. The ease with which he agreed to my conditions strengthened my resolve, and my relationship with R' Cohen continued to develop.

"Every Shabbos I would go to shul at the Chabad house with my brother and I gradually became the shliach's right hand man. One weekday, when I arrived at the Chabad house and the shliach wasn't there, I turned on the video player and spent a long time watching a video of the Rebbe. I was moved to tears. I felt that this was the truth, our future, and that this was what I had been searching for all along and what I belonged to. It's hard to explain this analytically but that is what I thought. I returned to Eretz Yisroel deeply involved in the t'shuva process.

"In Kiryat Yam I met the shliach, Rabbi Moshe Oirechman and he helped me along. I attended yeshivas Tomchei Tmimim in Migdal HaEmek and every summer I went back to Maryland, where I would help R' Cohen.

"Last summer something amazing happened. Since I love interacting with people and the work with R' Cohen was so enjoyable, I wanted to stay on in shlichus. When I asked my mashpia though, he said my place was in yeshiva. For some reason, the Chassidic Evil Inclination convinced me to remain in Maryland anyway and help R' Cohen.

"I had to present my passport to the American immigration authorities and ask for an extension. That night I had a disturbing dream. I was in 770 among many Chassidim and the Rebbe sat on a bench in the center of the crowd. I went over to sit down next to the Rebbe and I saw that the Rebbetzin was sitting there too. I quickly moved away but then

I remembered that I had left my passport on the table. I was thinking about how to go back to retrieve it when I suddenly noticed the Rebbe putting the passport into his siddur and going up to the platform to say a sicha.

“I woke up in utter confusion. I didn’t know how to interpret the dream. In the morning I went over to the place where I had left my passport in order to send it to the immigration office and couldn’t believe it – the passport wasn’t there! I turned the house upside-down looking for it but the passport had vanished. The only choice I had was to ask the Israeli consulate for a temporary visa and to return as soon as possible to Israel. I had gotten the hint and went back to yeshiva.”

NATURE – A WAY TO KNOW THE CREATOR

After he married, Maoz looked for a shlichus. He wasn’t convinced that his mission in life involved his talent for painting. At some point, he wrote to the Rebbe. He had some serious offers and he wrote them down and then put his letter into a volume of Igros Kodesh. The answer he opened to bowled him over. He had not expected such a clear and personal answer:

If it does not interfere with your work in painting ... since you are gifted by Hashem with the talent of drawing, you should use it also for spreading true Judaism and its matters.

Improving one’s skills in art requires a tremendous investment of work. Maoz sits for hours and brings to life various incidents he took part in. Most of his paintings are done in oil on canvas, but you can also find his work adorning the walls of schools and Chabad houses.

“My style reflects reality. I only paint real situations and people. If



there is a tree in the painting, it will look like a tree. Realism in art always appealed to me.”

Maoz finds inspiration for his work from the farbrengens he attends or people that he admires as well as special events.

“Whatever speaks to me on a deep level – I rush to paint. When I see a nice picture of someone I admire, I rush to draw them. It can also be an event that affected me deeply that I hasten to convey on canvas. I always try to add my interpretation to the reality that I draw so as to make it unique. I use all the techniques I learned over

many years in my Chassidic paintings.”

When I asked for examples he had plenty:

“When I would visit the US, before I became a baal t’shuva, I would draw a lot of landscapes – blossoming fields or thick forests and a house in the middle somewhere or a farm. It always grabbed my imagination. I drew many paintings like these and it quieted, somewhat, my self-exploration. There were moments that I thought that this was the essence of truth which I sought and this is what I ought to do, cut

SIGNS FROM HEAVEN

In the days prior to my wedding I decided to give the Rebbe a gift and go on mitvza t'fillin in my hometown of Kiryat Yam. Many Jews put on t'fillin and committed to mitzvah observance. It was a terrific feeling.

Then I noticed a neighbor of mine approaching the stand. We used to have a special relationship but once I became a baal t'shuva - that was over. He made it clear that he wanted to keep his distance. And yet, here he was asking to put on t'fillin!

When he took them off he told me: "I know that you realize that something happened. I'll tell you what it is."

He began telling me that any time he asked G-d for a sign, he got one. One day, his son fell sick and the doctors said he was in critical condition. He asked G-d for a sign and that day, when he returned home from the hospital, a Lubavitcher knocked on the window of his car and gave him a picture of the Rebbe. He saw this as a sign that his son would recover.

He went on to tell me that his wife had been unemployed for a long time and was thrilled when she finally found a job. However, she was working in a meat factory that manufactured non-kosher meat and was open on Shabbos. When he heard about this he got her out of there, to her great disappointment. All her explanations about the big loss of income and their debts did not move him. We do not work on Shabbos, period!

"What about parnasa?" she asked. He asked for a sign once again and within the week she got a job in a kosher meat plant.

"Recently," he said, "I haven't been feeling well. I asked for a sign and I saw you with your smile and simcha and it made me feel good."

This made me think. Often we have certain ideas about people but don't really know them. Did I know that this person asked Hashem for signs? And just as this is true for him, it's true for many other people. We can never know the extent of their connection with Torah and mitzvos, even if outwardly they broadcast the exact opposite sentiment.

Of course, our relationship was restored to what it used to be and he was happy to hear about the Rebbe's leadership and other Jewish topics.

off from civilization and watch sunrises or sunsets and draw them.

"When I began learning about Judaism, especially the path of Chassidus, I realized that the scenery and nature cannot be the essence but are only the means to better recognize the Creator, to become aware of His might and greatness. I continued to love beauty, but in the right

proportions. I recently drew a painting that combines these incredible scenes with that which is truly the essence. I drew a beautiful scenic picture with a stunning colorful sunset and one lone cottage, but instead of drawing it like a typical American barn I turned it into a Talmud Torah with rays of light coming forth that illuminate the world.

"I heard many stories from R' Cohen from the Rebbe Rayatz's Memoirs. He really lived those glory days and instilled this in his mekuravim. Under his influence I drew a picture of Lubavitch with children playing and a picture of the mashpia, R' Itche Springer leaning over a thick volume and learning."

What does being a Chassid add to the work of an artist?

Maoz smiled broadly. Apparently, this question has come up before.

"After I became involved in Chassidus, I thought about this very point. A carpet seller who gets involved with Chabad can become a Chassidic businessman. The same applies to a photographer and every other profession. How can I, as an artist, transform this work into a shlichus? After I married I had a better understanding that with art I can reach places and people that I would otherwise not be able to talk to.

"You cannot always find a point in common with others. Art bridges many gaps. There was an older man on mitvzaim who did not want to hear anything about Judaism. When I drew my first picture of the Rebbe and showed it to him, he was amazed by the likeness. He held the painting and was as excited as a child. After that I was able to go over to him and discuss Judaism a little at a time. Many times art enables me to reach people's hearts."

In a world where cameras are ubiquitous and they can capture any possible scene, what value is there in painting, realistic as it may be?

"I have no desire to compete with a photograph. They are two separate things. When people ask me to draw their portrait or a certain building, I tell them that if exactitude is important to them, they should use a photographer. A

painting can never be as precise as a photograph, but in painting there are effects and layers that you can't have in a photograph.

"I can insert into my paintings people's line of thought as I understand them. I can add things to a house that will make the painting more interesting. It's still realistic but within the realism you can see things that are different than the dry reality. For example, in one painting I drew a Chassid spreading Chassidus to the entire world. In the painting, it might seem like a surrealistic combination, but I drew the Chassid and the world realistically."

To what extent has learning Chassidus influenced your work?

"To a dramatic extent. Every artist, after learning Chassidus and getting acquainted with the world of Chassidus, draws differently; with more depth, more p'nimius, even in the external aspects of the work. Previously, I was unable to work for fifteen hours in a row. I would start something and would complete it over several months, while today I can sit for an entire day and paint until I am finished.

"In Maryland I was asked by the shliach to draw eleven paintings and to make postcards out of them, paintings that express concepts in Judaism and Chassidus. I was so surprised when every two days I finished a painting.

"That's on the superficial level, but even on the internal level I felt I had undergone a tremendous change. When I first started out on the road to Judaism, I would write B"H on the top of every painting or I would draw a building amidst the scenery and write 'mikva' on it, thus 'converting' the painting. Today, the paintings themselves cry out Chassidus, cry out truth, and cry out Rebbe and Geula."

When did the change begin?

"The change began in yeshiva in



Migdal HaEmek when I started learning a lot of Chassidus. One day, we learned about the mitzva of belief in G-d in Derech Mitzvosecha where it says that daas is the key to the six middos. I thought about how I could express that in a drawing and had an idea. I drew a Chassid in a valley learning Likkutei Torah and from the book there extends a road that leads to a gate and on the gate is a keyhole. The text from Derech Mitzvosecha is in the painting with the relevant passage. The painting itself cries out Chassidus."

Maoz has some amazing

likenesses of the Rebbe and the Rebbe Rayatz and I asked him about what he felt when he drew these paintings.

"I consider it a great privilege. Before I draw I gaze at the picture. I keep niggunim playing in the background in which I hear the Rebbe sing. This has a great effect on me. Many hours after I finish drawing, the Rebbe's eyes are still with me. It's not easy drawing a painting of the Rebbe, but it affects me deeply."

When I asked about the

[Continued on page 31]

BECAUSE THE REBBE SAID SO

By Rabbi Moshe Ashkenazi a"h
Former rav of the Chabad community of Tel Aviv

“Today it is easier to explain the concept of Moshiach generally and ‘Yechi Adoneinu’ in particular, since everybody can sense how the Rebbe is actually with us.”

The Rebbe made Moshiach and Geula the topic of the day. It began with his sichos to the Chassidim and from there it went to the newspapers and the world at large. Suddenly, Geula became something tangible and anticipating Moshiach was no longer merely a dream. This is a reality which is unfolding before our eyes.

At the Kinus HaShluchim 5752 the Rebbe made it clear that the avoda of shlichus consists of preparing the world to greet Moshiach. This avoda is not only the job of the shluchim but the work of every Jew! As the Rebbe put it -since this is the avoda these days, it obviously pertains to every Jew without exception. Therefore, the obligation lies upon each one of us to ensure that involvement in inyanei Geula and kabbalas p'nei Moshiach

does not get lost in the shuffle. When we are busy with this, the world will be busy with it too.

I remember that when the Rebbe Rayatz made a commotion about “immediate repentance, immediate Geula,” in the Chabad shul in Tel Aviv, Nachalas Binyamin, which was frequented by all the great Chabad Chassidim of the time, the *ovdim* and *maskilim*, this was “the” topic that was spoken about and repeated at every farbrengen.

There are sights and memories that are engraved in one's mind and cannot be forgotten. An example of this is the amazing farbrengen of R' Yona Levits, one of the great Chassidim of Tel Aviv in those days, and R' Pinye Altheus. The pronouncement of the Rebbe served as the centerpiece of the farbrengen and R' Yona spoke about it with

fervor.

At some point, R' Pinye asked him: What will you say if the time passes and Moshiach, G-d forbid, does not come?

R' Yona said: I will continue to believe!

Take note: This was the pronouncement of the Rebbe Rayatz which was not said as a prophecy. Furthermore, there was an explicit condition – only through immediate t'shuvah would there be an immediate Geula. And yet, when Chassidim heard this news from the Rebbe, it became the main topic of farbrengens and even of ordinary conversation and it was all interwoven with utter trust that the Rebbe's pronouncement would come true. Why? Because the Rebbe said so; and to a Lubavitcher Chassid, that is sufficient.

We need to learn from the attitude of these genuine Chassidim with a *kal v'chomer* (an extrapolation from a minor premise to a major one): In our time it's not a conditional pronouncement but an unconditional prophecy! When the Rebbe prophesied that “behold, Moshiach comes” – he made no conditions whatsoever. Not only that but the Rebbe said explicitly that it was not possible for lack of t'shuvah to hold up the Geula since sufficient t'shuvah had already been done in order to bring the geula and there is no reason for a delay.

There is no doubt that as Chassidim, with the Rebbe's *ratzon* (desire) before our eyes, we must focus on this vital subject and not allow anything to push it aside.

The teachings about Geula are immense and the topics connected with Geula and Moshiach are numerous, and we need to treat them all with a particular *koch* (enthusiastic involvement). There are several points that should be emphasized, one of which is the

pronouncement of “Yechi.” The very fact that the Rebbe encouraged the singing of this proclamation so much and so often, after each t’filla, is reason enough for Chassidim to view this proclamation as highly important in the task of bringing the Geula.

It is obvious that the Rebbe saw with his *ruach ha’kodesh* (spiritual vision) what would take place after 3 Tammuz when we don’t see him, and what did the Rebbe choose to instill in us before he was hidden from us? The importance of “Yechi.” Clearly, the Rebbe wants us to continue with it more strongly than ever since this is the way to hasten the Geula.

Right after 3 Tammuz, Chabad rabbanim in Eretz Yisroel convened, including me, at the central shul in Kfar Chabad. The mood was one of uncertainty. We were all in a state of confusion and we did not know precisely what direction to take. Yet it was clear to us that we could not abandon Anash who were no less confused and who looked to us for guidance. We had to arrive at a consensus about what the Rebbe wanted of us now.

After a lengthy discussion about the Rebbe’s sichos, there was a vote with a majority of fifteen rabbanim who concluded that we must continue to proclaim “Yechi” and with the full *shturem* (commotion). The implication was that our relationship to the Rebbe cannot be and is not one in which the Rebbe is someone from the past. We must live with the awareness that the Rebbe is in the **present** tense, and is with us as he always was.

We saw the results within a short time. We all remember how some people predicted that Chabad would fall apart. Today we all know that what saved Chabad was the decision to move forward with the belief that the Rebbe is with us without any change, precisely as he was before.



This gave the Chassidim the ability to move forward.

In those days there were some who claimed that this would not be accepted by outsiders and they chose a different tack of “just as his children is alive” and similar expressions which refer to the Rebbe in past tense without a definite emphasis on the present. Those who thought that the first approach wouldn’t be accepted were proven wrong. They see how “Yechi” has been accepted in all Chabad communities and in all shuls and Chabad schools, showing how the present situation is only a test and we will immediately meet with the Rebbe again.

Even those who are uncomfortable saying “Yechi” say “and he will redeem us.” What does that mean “and he will redeem us?” Precisely the same thing as “Yechi,” namely that the Rebbe is with us now and will immediately come and redeem us!

This clear knowledge that the Rebbe is with us now is both a palpable sensation and an incontrovertible fact. Those who

describe the Rebbe’s being with us in terms used for other tzaddikim who are no longer of this world are denying the reality.

The Rebbe’s answers in the Igros Kodesh are in the category of “I will show them wonders” and numerous examples that are too many to count prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that the Rebbe is actually with us.

This is why it is much easier today to explain to people on the outside the idea of Moshiach in general and “Yechi” in particular since everybody can see the big difference between the Rebbe and other tzaddikim, those who have left this world.

As far as the claim that publicizing Moshiach’s identity pushes people away from Chabad, I meet many people from various walks of life and I have never heard of a Jew **who started learning Chassidus and left because Chabad publicizes that the Rebbe is Moshiach!**

There is no such thing and there never will be. There were always people who looked for excuses not to learn Chassidus; these are people who never really sought to learn Chassidus. Someone who starts learning Chassidus or truly seeks to learn Chassidus cannot possibly be distanced because Moshiach’s identity is publicized.

We, Lubavitcher Chassidim who believe that any minute now we will see the Rebbe again, have the obligation not to get swept up in debates that have no positive results whatsoever, and only serves to fan the flames of divisiveness within our own ranks.

More power to *Beis Moshiach* which is doing its job as a weekly publication to spread the Besuras HaGeula in a positive manner and with Ahavas and Achdus Yisroel.

A BRACHA, A DOLLAR, AND A BABY GIRL

By Nosson Avrohom

Translated by Michael Leib Dobry

I headed straight there. Just as I arrived, I saw the Chabad House director, Rabbi Mendy Klein, standing at the entrance of the building. I introduced myself and then immediately burst into bitter sobs, asking, “What shall I do?”

The influence of Chabad activities in the southern Israeli city of Eilat is known to all. The seeds planted by the shluchim of the Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach, have long since been transformed into a tree deeply rooted in the teachings of Chabad chassidus. This has thereby created a domino effect, as more and more Jews from a variety of backgrounds throughout the local population join the growing circle of Chabad House supporters.

Many of them have had the

privilege of connecting to the Tree of Life, receiving the Rebbe’s bracha, and personally experiencing his miracles, which encompass a wide range of medical and personal issues.

The following unique and most amazing story created a tremendous *kiddush sheim* Lubavitch when its details became known.

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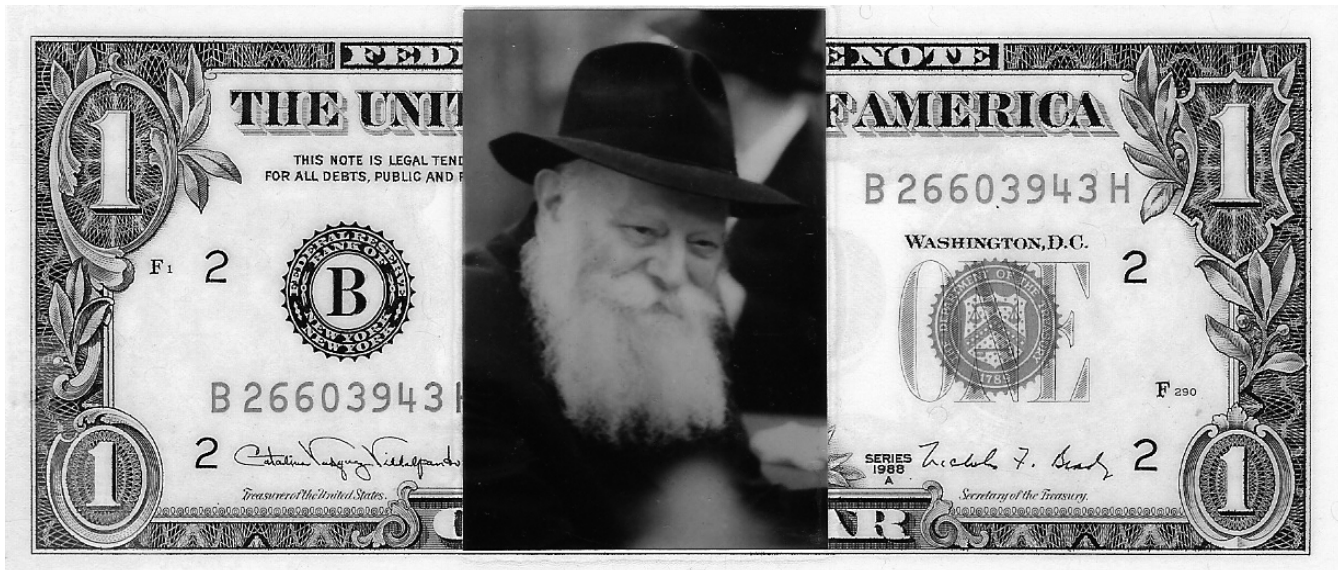
The heroine of this marvelous story is Mrs. Shuli Sharon. Shuli

becomes quite emotional as she recalls the events of this story, despite the fact that she has already told it many times in the past, as characterized in the words of our Sages, of blessed memory: “They should seem new in your eyes – literally new”. She prefaces her descriptive account by saying: “For me, the Rebbe is the greatest thing in the world.”

“This story began twenty years ago. Similar to many other Israelis, I decided to take a breather and I went to the United States for a year-long visit – to ‘clear my head’, as they say. During that year, I traveled through several regions of the United States and South America. I did a lot of touring, I worked, and I engaged in leisure activities. The time passed very quickly, and every moment was part of an unforgettable experience.

“While I was still in Eretz Yisroel, I became familiar with the wonderful activities of the Chabad movement in reaching out to fellow Jews and helping others, but this knowledge was merely superficial. When I arrived in New York towards the end of my trek in America, many Israelis and other Jews whom I met told me about the greatness of the Rebbe, and they asked me if I had already been to see him. ‘If you’re in New York, and you haven’t met the Lubavitcher Rebbe, it’s as if you weren’t in New York,’ they told me. ‘The Rebbe is a great Torah scholar, known for his miracles. There’s no one else like him in the world,’ one of my friends tried to explain. Since I had a traditional background, I was very excited by these descriptions and I decided that I would eventually make my way to the Rebbe’s beis midrash.

“During one of my tours, I met a young Jewish man named David. I was unsure whether or not I should marry him, and so I decided that when I met the Rebbe, I would



ask him and do whatever he suggested. While I had already been to Brooklyn on several occasions, a stop in Crown Heights never came about. Then, on the first day of Chanukah, I had the free time available, and I decided that this was the day when I would meet the Rebbe – no matter what. I arrived at 770 Eastern Parkway as per my friends' directions. I'll never forget that lofty experience. It's burned in the memory as if it happened only yesterday.

"I stood for several long hours together with thousands of others in a line extending around the block. Based on the number of people waiting, I realized that we weren't talking about your average everyday rabbi. I became very tense and quite anxious, and then finally, the long awaited moment had arrived. After hours of waiting, I came before the Rebbe. All of my plans in the minutes beforehand to ask various questions were for naught. I was totally speechless.

"What could I possibly say in the presence of such an illuminating face and such piercing eyes? I simply couldn't speak. I remember how I was overcome by a feeling as if I had just found the most sparkling diamond in the

world. This was a powerful and indescribable experience that only someone who had been there could understand.

"Chills went up my spine and my flesh felt like pins and needles. Finally, after several seconds that seemed like an eternity, I gathered my courage, and in a voice trembling with emotion, I asked the Rebbe if I should marry my boyfriend. The Rebbe gave me an intense look that I will always remember and then replied to my question in Hebrew. I understood from his words that this young man was not the one I was waiting for, and then he gave me a dollar for *tz'daka* and a *bracha*.

"I left the Rebbe's presence completely astounded and confused. Before coming to the Rebbe, I thought about the importance of the moment. It turned out that it was a great deal more than that. All of my estimations were like a drop in the ocean in explaining the intensity and excitement that the Rebbe infused within me. I felt that I had a father who truly showed concern for me.

"They explained to me that I could keep the dollar that the Rebbe had given me, and I should

give another in its place to charity. Naturally, I did this, and that same day, I had my dollar laminated, and it has remained with me ever since. I couldn't possibly imagine then how much this dollar would change my life.

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"After a year in the U.S., I returned to Eretz Yisroel, carrying the dollar at all times. I knew in my heart that the meeting with the Rebbe was the most important thing that had happened in my life.

"Things slowly went back to their usual and natural routine. I returned to work, and the daily pressures of life pushed everything into a corner. On various occasions when the subject of the Lubavitcher Rebbe entered the discussion, I again relived his greatness.

"In 5760, a little more than ten years ago, when I was already forty-eight years old, I got married. Despite my advanced age, I had a very strong desire to have children.

"I went through three fertility treatments that year, but none of them were successful. While I was very disappointed, I was nevertheless determined to bring a child into the world.

"During those days, my sister-

This number was familiar to me from somewhere. I pulled out the dollar I had received from the Rebbe, and to my great amazement, the first five numbers on the front of the dollar (26603) were identical to those on the medical report.

in-law, a resident of Maalot, had become connected to Chabad chassidus. With much excitement, she told me about the possibility of asking questions to the Lubavitcher Rebbe via 'Igros Kodesh' and receiving answers as in the past. I was truly fascinated by this, especially after she told me numerous miracle stories that people were privileged to experience from writing to the Rebbe in 'Igros Kodesh', but for some reason, the excitement didn't lead to practical action.

"After the three failed treatments, I was filled with feelings of bitterness and grievance towards the doctors, their mode of conduct, and the fact that they violated Shabbos during the treatment process. I was in a state of serious uncertainty as to what I should do now. At this stage, when I felt myself totally confused, I remembered what my sister-in-law had told me, and I decided that I had to write to the Rebbe and ask him. He would surely give me the best advice and ease my emotional state. I eventually came to my sister-in-law's house in Maalot, where she showed me how to go about writing a letter to the Rebbe. I did all the necessary preparations, and then I poured my heart onto the sheet of paper over all my indecision and my feelings of bitterness.

"I was filled with great excitement when she opened the

volume of 'Igros Kodesh'. It was an amazing answer to a woman in a situation similar to mine, and the Rebbe gave her encouragement and ruled that she must change the doctors who are treating her. I understood that the Rebbe was dissatisfied with the doctors, and I called that same day to move my treatment to a different medical center, also informing the previous center that I was halting my treatments at their facility.

"After the first treatment at the new location, the new doctors informed me that it had been successful, although tests showed that there was still a problem of some sort.

"For some reason, my eyes focused on the number that appeared on the back of the medical report sent on me – and as incredible as it may seem, this number was familiar to me from somewhere. I pulled out the dollar I had received from the Rebbe, and to my great amazement, the first five numbers on the front of the dollar (26603) were identical to those on the medical report. I was thrilled beyond measure. I recalled the Rebbe's look as he gave me the dollar for a bracha, and now everything fell into place. The Rebbe had already foreseen my life's journey, and he was coming to my aid now.

"Despite the pessimism displayed by the medical staff in the face of the problem that had

been discovered, a tinge of optimism crept inside of me. I was absolutely certain that there was a connection here.

"I was still concerned, and as a result, I didn't tell my husband and those around me about this unique hint, and kept it close to my heart. In the meantime, I remained firm in my resolve to continue the pregnancy in spite of the doctors' report.

"A few weeks later, when I came to Yoseftal Hospital in Eilat for a routine examination, the head of the maternity ward, Dr. Tzuberi, who was with me every step of the way, told me that as things appears from a medical standpoint, the child will be born with Down's Syndrome. After hearing such a decisive statement from someone whom I greatly admired and had helped me so much, I was positively broken and crushed.

"I went around for several days as if I was sleepwalking, not knowing where to go or how to solve this dilemma. My friends who knew about my distress suggested that I go to the local Chabad House and speak with the shliach. 'Maybe he can find a solution to your problem.' When I heard the words 'Chabad House', I didn't give it a second thought, and I headed straight there. Just as I arrived, I saw the Chabad House director, Rabbi Mendy Klein, standing at the entrance of the building. I introduced myself and then immediately burst into bitter sobs. 'What will I do?' I asked him. 'I've been waiting years for a child, I received amazing brachos from the Rebbe, but now I feel myself between a rock and a hard place – between the Rebbe's brachos and the pessimistic opinions of the doctors.'

"Rabbi Klein calmed me down. 'There's a Rebbe in Israel', he stated with absolute determination, 'and if he blessed you, you have

nothing to worry about.' He piled on word after word of faith and trust, and he proceeded to help me write a letter to the Rebbe via 'Igros Kodesh'. As he read me the letter, my tears were transformed from tears of sadness and grief to tears of joy. The letter said, 'Continue the days of her pregnancy', and that the doctor is only given permission to heal... I was very excited by this reply. 'With an answer as amazingly clear as that,' he said confidently, 'I promise you that there is no reason to be concerned.'

"In order to make a proper vessel to receive this bracha, Rabbi Klein told me about a Torah class for women held every Sunday, taught by Rebbetzin Leah Eisenbach. From that day forward, I started participating in this class and I have tried to take part every week ever since. A strong feeling of faith replaced the emotional pain and anguish that had gripped me until then.

"At my next meeting with Dr. Tzuberi, I told him about the Rebbe's clear answer. When he saw how confident and certain I was, he stopped pressuring me and promised that he would be at my disposal to assist me.

"On the 10th of Adar, during the thirty-sixth week of my pregnancy, I suddenly felt unwell, and I went to Dr. Tzuberi for a check-up. After he examined me, he determined that it was time for the birth. It must be said in his merit that he did everything possible to make the process go

easily and help the fetus emerge healthy and intact. There were three more digits on the dollar I had received from the Rebbe: 943. I wrote them down on a slip of paper and told the doctor, 'Don't open this until after the birth.' He smiled and agreed; he was already used to my craziness. Now all that remained was to see how things developed. While I felt myself under tremendous pressure, I also maintained my great faith in the Creator.

"After the birth, the doctor quickly checked my newborn daughter. 'What a beautiful little girl, completely healthy and normal, against all expectations!' he said with undisguised exhilaration. 'It's all in the merit of your Lubavitcher Rebbe,' he added in the presence of all the doctors and nurses who gathered together to come and bear witness to this amazing miracle.

"I had told the doctor to open the note after the birth, and to his absolute astonishment, he saw on the slip of paper the exact time that I had given birth. He stood there positively stunned. 'How did you know the exact time of the birth?' he said in bewilderment. I told him about the special dollar that I had received from the Rebbe, and he admitted to me that he had never experienced anything like this before.

"The story of this miracle spread throughout the city. People were simply amazed when I told them about the dollar.

"The account of my daughter's

miraculous birth was publicized with great detail in Eilat's local newspapers. The city's most widely distributed magazine, 'Erev Erev', devoted four pages to the story, and the reporter burst into tears after she heard the complete account of what had happened. 'I don't know what to say,' she told me. 'I'm in shock.' It made an incredible *kiddush sheim Lubavitch*. Many women became connected or strengthened their connection to the Rebbe, as they asked to know how they too could be privileged to receive a blessing to solve their problems."

The story even appeared on various websites, eliciting many positive responses.

The child was named Rinat Y-H. When I asked Shuli why she specifically chose this name, she smiled and said, "Very simple. Song (*rina*) to Alm-ghty G-d for the sweet little girl with whom He has blessed me through His messenger, the Lubavitcher Rebbe."

When the girl was four years old, Shuli came with her to the office of Rabbi Uzi Kaploun, head of the city's Chabad kindergarten network. "I want to register my daughter in a Chabad kindergarten," she said with a smile. When R' Uzi inquired as to the reason for her great enthusiasm, she reminded him about the story that had been publicized three years ago. "This is the Rebbe's little girl."

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CROSSROADS: THE “BIBI” WITHIN US ALL

By Sholom Ber Crombie

Translated by Michael Leib Dobry

For the Israeli prime minister to stand firm and not be affected by the world, we must give him strength. When a chassid stands firm against his own “world opinion”, this helps that even the Israeli prime minister should be able to stand proudly against the world opinion he faces and make no compromises.

A REGULAR MAGICIAN

For years now, the Israeli public has believed that Bibi Netanyahu is an all-powerful magician who can do the unimaginable. Such a magician who can say that he doesn't talk with the terrorists while talking with them, who can promise security and proclaim that he has the right stuff while telling the Americans that he's one of them, someone who will save the economy, education, national security and Israel's relations with the world, and thereby instantly

turn the country into a different place entirely. This is what many in Israeli society believed, while the more realistic among us laughed.

Apparently, however, we were wrong. It seems that the reality has exceeded all expectations.

Bibi the magician has succeeded in continuing the settlement freeze and not continuing it at the same time. Not only that, but he also let out all the air from the balloon of the “unwavering” settlers of Yesha. Their gullibility led them to fervently prepare for “the day of reckoning”, the official date

declared for the end of the settlement freeze. “This will be Netanyahu's decisive hour,” they proclaimed, and Bibi the magician calmed them down and told them how the freeze had ended and construction had been renewed.

But immediately thereafter, he ran to the ultra-Orthodox parties and made a deal with them: He arranged the passage of a law guaranteeing a one thousand shekel income for 11,000 kollel students in return for their support in continuing the construction freeze. He apparently also gave something to the “Jewish Home” Party, a.k.a. the new National Religious Party – otherwise there's no explanation why its chairman, Professor Daniel Hershkowitz, Minister of Science and Technology, knitted kippa and all, announced that he would not rule out the idea of continuing the freeze. Thus, Bibi continued to proclaim that the freeze would not continue, while arranging a full coalition support for a renewed freeze.

In other words, Bibi said: I also don't want to continue the freeze, but I'm not prepared to stand up to the Americans for more than two months.

*

When you look at Bibi's conduct, you can practically see right through him. On the one hand, it seems that he really believes in everything he spoke about in the past. But, on the other hand, he does nothing about it in practical terms. He starts off every time by making declarations about “self-sacrifice”, and he finishes by acting in a totally disgraceful and groveling manner, worse than any of his predecessors in the Israeli premiership.

This is perhaps the most difficult problem among Israeli leaders. They have no backbone. They aren't prepared to go the

distance with the truth.

In the Middle East, this trait is more prominent specifically when we face our Arab neighbors. The Palestinians, for example, could have compromised long ago and would have been handed most of Yehuda and Shomron. But they're not prepared to compromise. As the Rebbe prophesized in a most precise manner, they won't agree to take anything until they can have it all, since from their point of view, compromise is not an option.

In this fashion, they win out time after time. In the last scene, Abu Mazen refused to come for talks with Netanyahu. He gave an angry look, and instead of pressuring him and standing him in a corner, America specifically pressured the Government of Israel to agree to a freeze on construction in Yerushalayim, Yehuda, and Shomron for a period of ten months. Why, then, should it come as a great surprise that their demands merely grow and intensify?

*

The right-wing (or what's left of it), which had depended upon Bibi to act according to his words, is the same right-wing that depends upon Bibi *not* to act according to his words on the matter of Yerushalayim and a Palestinian state. They say that he's just talking for the foreign press and to placate the Americans when he speaks about "painful concessions" regarding Yerushalayim and the establishment of a Palestinian state. But in his heart, Bibi is still the same strong Bibi who will stand by his principles.

All this is happening a year after Netanyahu's speech before the United Nations General Assembly, his first during his current term as prime minister. As you may recall, this was a very patriotic Israeli speech filled with Jewish pride. Bibi

"The Rebbe explained to me that there is eternal falsehood in this place [the UN], continual darkness, and such darkness can only be driven out with light. Every light of truth that you kindle in this house is what will expel the darkness of lies." This is a summary of the Rebbe's words as freely translated by Netanyahu.

announced to the world that Hamas has hated us for generations and that we must stand uncompromisingly against Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. But the most important part of this UN appearance was the message Bibi gave to the reporters after he came down from the speakers' rostrum. He spoke about his meeting with the Rebbe when he was Israel's ambassador to the United Nations: "The Rebbe explained to me that there is eternal falsehood in this place, continual darkness, and such darkness can only be driven out with light. Every light of truth that you kindle in this house is what will expel the darkness of lies." This is a summary of the Rebbe's words as freely translated by Netanyahu.

There are many questions for Netanyahu on his actions: If you believe so much in the truth of the Rebbe's words, then why do you take action against them on a daily, if not hourly basis? And from the opposite vantage point, as well: If you do things that are so removed from the path laid out by the Rebbe, how did there suddenly illuminate within you this feeling that led you to make such a patriotic speech?

The truth is that the answer is

found within each and every one of us. Each person has a little "Bibi" in his heart. We honesty and truly want to act as the Rebbe wants and demands from us at all times. However, we don't always conduct ourselves one hundred percent of the time as the Rebbe has taught us. While we want this very much, we are also confronted by the pressures of the world. Perhaps they're not the same as in Bibi's world, which includes the entire United States and all of Europe. Nevertheless, each person has to deal with his own world, or the "*oilam*", in the language of chassidim.

As chassidim who believe that everything that happens in the world is influenced by spiritual matters, it clear to us that for the prime minister of Israel to be able to stand firm and not be affected by the world, we must give him strength. When a chassid stands firm against his *oilam*, this is what can cause the Israeli prime minister to be able to stand proudly against his *oilam* and make no compromises.

CONCLUSIONS DRAWN FROM THE RABIN ASSASSINATION

In recent weeks, the left-wing in

The right-wing simply turned into the left's building contractor, and as they have already said, today all Israeli politicians speak "Beilinish", the language of Yossi Beilin, the trailblazer of Oslo.

Israel has again been celebrating "Rabinfest". As usual around this time, they looked for ways to jab the right-wing, reminding all of us who's to blame for the assassination and who in the general public was being persecuted just because they wanted peace.

The left-wing has already adopted its own method of memorializing Rabin. They have divided his legacy in two: that which we must forget and that which it's forbidden to forget. They don't talk at conferences dedicated to his actual heritage about those issues currently being discussed in negotiations, such as Yerushalayim. No one mentions that Rabin never agreed to talks on Yerushalayim or the establishment of a Palestinian state, despite the fact that he went further than most in discussions with the terrorists. They don't mention that it was Rabin who said that we have to break the arms and legs of Arab rock throwers, and it was he who drove Arabs out of Eretz Yisroel, more than the whole right-wing combined over the course of generations.

We also find Rabin's legacy rather problematic and steeped in controversy. On the one hand, he left permanent stains of the deck of the *Altelena*, when dozens of Jews were murdered in cold blood. Among them were holocaust survivors who had made it through all the horrors of the camps, only to be killed at the hands of their

Jewish brethren. He was also the one who gave thousands of rifles to the terrorists, who then murderously turned them on Jewish soldiers and citizens – may G-d avenge their blood. And of course, we cannot forget the Oslo Accords, which led to terrorist bombings, the second intifada, and over one thousand murdered Jews – may G-d avenge their blood.

On the other hand, we must remember Rabin in a positive light. When we look at the "right-wing" prime ministers, Rabin seems like a Knesset Member from the Moledet Party in comparison, or at least like a Likud opposition leader. Rabin never dreamed of uprooting Gush Katif, and he was the one who said that "anyone who would consider leaving the Golan Heights is abandoning the security of Israel". He also proclaimed that Yerushalayim is not subject to negotiations and he left Chevron under Israeli control.

After him came the "right-wing" prime ministers, and they put everything up for sale. Bibi gave away Chevron, Sharon uprooted Gush Katif, and Bibi the second time around is prepared to hold talks on Yerushalayim and actually freeze all construction in the capital city of Eretz HaKodesh.

*

This is particularly amazing due to left-wing statements in recent weeks about "the fading of Rabin's legacy". They lament the passing of the path of "peace" and the sad

state within the Labor Party today. However, they completely fail to notice the simple fact that almost all of Israel's political parties are implementing the path that Rabin began in Oslo. The Labor Party has shriveled because it has become irrelevant, as the Likud and Kadima parties are together advancing concessions to the terrorists and the establishment of a Palestinian state.

The left-wing cries over Rabin's "great promise" that has evaporated, as if he would have continued some miraculous journey to bring peace if he were still here, and we would have been sitting for years now in tranquility and with security. They totally ignore the fact that what has occurred since he left the scene is exactly what the architects of the Oslo process had planned would happen. Bibi didn't put a halt to the Oslo Accords, instead he actively carried out the provisions of Oslo II and continued further talks with the terrorists on the agreement at Wye Plantation. Barak continued the tradition and met with the terrorists at Camp David in order to offer them Yehuda and Shomron and the establishment of a terror state there. Sharon not only continued the talks with them, he implemented this path on the ground.

Thus, the question is asked: Why is the left-wing complaining about "the fading and declining path", when this path continues with even greater fortitude? The right-wing simply turned into the left's building contractor, and as they have already said, today all Israeli politicians speak "Beilinish", the language of Yossi Beilin, the trailblazer of Oslo.

*

As usual, everything in the world teaches us a lesson in connection with the only avoda that the Rebbe has placed in our hands.

In stark contrast to the obstacle course along the path of this nightmarish “peace”, which has bitten and spread into all aspects of Israeli national policy, there’s also another side to this coin.

Several decades ago, the Rebbe started to arouse awareness throughout the world on the subject of the Redemption and the anticipated greeting of our righteous Moshiach. Generally speaking, such talk at the time was quite novel and most unusual. No one thought that everything happening in the world was connected to the Geula or spoke about the Redemption as a literal modern-day concept to be longed for and awaited every day.

But the Rebbe did go the full distance. He didn’t relent and he

turned the subject of the Redemption into a central issue of discussion among the religious Jewish community. Today, not only is it legitimate to deal with the subject of Moshiach and to speak about the fact that the Redemption is happening now, but the fact is that there is no ultra-Orthodox radio station that doesn’t broadcast programs on Moshiach and the Redemption. Similarly, there’s no rav who doesn’t speak publicly about this matter or conclude his speech with a bracha including mention of Moshiach. The whole world is talking about the Redemption and the revelation of Moshiach as something real that can take place right now at any moment.

The Rebbe didn’t keep this path

of faith in Moshiach just for his own community or those close to the teachings of Chabad chassidus. He turned the subject of the Redemption into a general inheritance for all Jews, to the point that even those who initially raised their eyebrows and expressed their opposition when the Rebbe first began to discuss the concept publicly decades ago now deal with the subject with great enthusiasm, as if it was quite obvious from the start.

As the Complete Redemption approaches, we can see how the activities of Melech HaMoshiach are being implemented throughout the world. Today, everyone speaks the language of Moshiach, and if Bibi can do it, so can you.



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Prepared for publication by Avrohom Rainitz

*R' Hillel Zaltzman dedicates this chapter of his memoirs to his brother, the well-known chazan R' Berel Zaltzman. R' Berel is a chazan who led the Rebbe's minyan and sang for the Rebbe during the distribution of Kos shel Bracha for many years. * In yechidus the Rebbe encouraged him to be a chazan. The Rebbe told him to produce a recording and promised to cover the expenses. * This is the moving story of R' Berel Zaltzman and the special consideration that he received from the Rebbe over the years. All the kiruvim conveyed the Rebbe's message of using his talent for chazanus to spread Judaism. * Part 2 of 2*

THE REBBE: STAY HERE AND PERFORM IN CONCERTS

According to the plan, I was supposed to return to Eretz Yisroel right after Sukkos. Before I left I had yechidus like everyone else. It

was at that yechidus that the Rebbe changed my plans. "You need to stay here and do concerts," the Rebbe told me. "You need to tell the Jews in America how you were able to remain religious Jews in the Soviet Union and you should do this

through story and song."

So I stayed three months and did a series of concerts. The first concert was in Rabbi Yaakov Hecht's shul. The Rebbe told R' Gershon Ber Jacobson a"h to write about me in his newspaper *Tog Morgen Journal* and to describe me as a world renowned chazan (cantor). Following these instructions two articles appeared. R' Hecht was told by the Rebbe to have a concert and to sing my praises as is done in America.

The first concert was packed. Although there were 900 seats, there were actually 1200 people including famous chazanim like Moshe Stern. R' Hecht told me that big chazanim usually wanted free entry to chazanus concerts but this time they were willing to pay like anyone else. I think this was the Rebbe's work, for aside from spreading Judaism through song, he also wanted to help me earn money so I could settle in Eretz Yisroel.

Then I did a concert in Worcester, MA, and in the Ford Auditorium in Detroit which was attended by 2000 people. R' Eli Lipsker was there, too with his choir. Then I traveled to do concerts in Toronto and Montreal.

ADVENTURES AT THE CANADIAN BORDER

I bought a one-way ticket for my trip to Canada since I didn't know precisely when I wanted to return. When I got to passport control at the airport in Montreal I presented my Israeli passport and the clerk asked to see my ticket. When he saw that I did not have a return ticket he suspected that I wanted to settle in Canada illegally. He began interrogating me in English and I didn't understand a word he said.

They took me to a side room and questioned me but I did not know what they wanted. I tried speaking in Yiddish and when they heard it,

they mistook it for German and tried to find someone who spoke German. The situation was escalating and I had no idea what to do.

Then I walked the organizer of the concerts, a nice guy named Motti who asked in a fright: "What happened? Why are you delaying him? He is a world famous cantor! Delegations are waiting to greet him in the arrivals terminal, led by a delegation of cantors from Montreal, and you are holding him up?!"

The officials felt uncomfortable for delaying someone so important and they justified themselves by saying that since I did not have a return ticket this aroused their suspicion. Motti didn't lose a moment. He took out money from his pocket and paid for a return ticket and took me out.

In the arrivals terminal two delegations waited for me, one of chazanim whom I did not know and one on behalf of N'shei Chabad. In the latter group I recognized Mrs. Rivka Aharonov, who had previously lived in Samarkand and was a friend of my family.

All the chazanim in Montreal attended my concert. Two of them, who were younger than me, Moshe Shorov and Arik Klein, came up to the stage and also sang, to make it easier for me so I wouldn't have to sing the entire night. I had a cold and a cough and before the concert the chazanim expressed their fears that I wouldn't be able to sing well, but the Rebbe's bracha helped me and the concert was a great success.

Afterwards, the chazanim took me to a restaurant where they had arranged a lovely reception with each chazan singing a cantorial piece for me. Then they gave me a gift, an album "Chazanim and Chazanus in Montreal."

NOW YOU HAVE TO PRODUCE A RECORD

When I returned to New York



R' Berel Zaltzman receiving Kos shel Bracha from the Rebbe

after all the concerts, the secretaries told me that I could have yechidus. The Rebbe told me, "I heard that all went very well and thank you. Now that you have become famous, you need to produce a record!"

I told the Rebbe that the Community Council on Kingston Avenue had already suggested that I do so. The Rebbe said, "We will give you the money." Then the Rebbe repeated, "You need to make a record and I will give you the money."

I thought to myself: How can I dare take money from the Rebbe? I told the Rebbe that the Community Council was willing to invest in this. The Rebbe interrupted my thoughts and said, "But I am telling you that I will give you the money. Do you want it here, in dollars, or in Eretz Yisroel in liras through R' Wolf?" Then the Rebbe concluded, "Tell them in the office and they will give it to you as you like."

While in New York I noticed that there were many dry cleaners. It was a business I had not seen in Russia nor in Kiryat Malachi. I had the idea of opening a dry cleaning business in Kiryat Malachi and employing people, which would leave me free to

do mitzvaim under the auspices of Chama, as I had done back in Russia. When I mentioned this idea to the Rebbe, the Rebbe said, "It is worthwhile looking into it and if it will be necessary, I will give you money for the business." Then the Rebbe said, "I will be your partner in the business," but he immediately clarified, "I don't mean to be a partner in your parnasa because I have distractions over my head (and he demonstrated this with his hands, raising them above his head) but I will be a partner in the mitzva." And he gave me \$2000.

YOU WERE ABLE TO MANAGE WITH STALIN BUT NOT WITH \$2000?

I left New York around Chanuka time, about two months after all the Tishrei visitors left. When I arrived in Israel I signed an agreement with a good company that produced records and I put out a high quality record. At the same time, I opened a small dry cleaners and began working. I put in many hours but I was sorry to see that the business was not successful. I worked hard all day and had nothing to show for it. I

thought that I had made a mistake with this idea.

I went to the Rebbe for Tishrei, 5733/1972, and brought the records to sell. The boxes of records were confiscated at first by the US customs and it was only thanks to R' Binyamin Klein that they were released. That year, my father came with me in order to help me sell the records. B"H we sold nearly all of them and I was able to repay the Rebbe for the money he had given me for this project.

When I had yechidus before returning home, I told the Rebbe that I had problems with the business. There were hardly any customers and even with the orders that came in, I worked very hard but did not earn anything, and I had no parnasa (livelihood).

The Rebbe did not react to what I said and began talking about my producing another record. He said, "Now, after producing a record, you became more famous and with this publicity you should do another record."

I said: "I am so entangled in the business that I don't have any money at all. I simply don't have the means to produce another record."

The Rebbe answered sharply: "You were able to manage with Stalin but not with \$2000?"

THE GATEWAY TO PARNASA

A year later I returned and in the yechidus I complained again about parnasa problems, that I simply could not subsist. I told the Rebbe that I was offered a position as chazan in America and I asked whether I should sell the business.

Once again, the Rebbe ignored what I said and asked, "What about a record?" I remained silent. What else could I say? The Rebbe went on, "Without excuses ..." Once again I said I had no money.

I returned home without money



R' Berel Zaltzman appearing with a choir

and without hope. I told my wife Chaya Esther (Anyah) a"h what the Rebbe said and it was she who understood what the Rebbe wanted of us (as we know from stories that sometimes the women are the ones who understand the Rebbe's answer better than the men).

"You see," she said, "every time you ask about the business the Rebbe asks you about a record. This happens year after year, three years by now!"

I told her: "I don't understand what you're getting at. What's the connection between the business and a record?"

She said: "I don't understand it either, but you see that every time you asked the Rebbe about the business he asked you about a record. Apparently that is the gateway for our parnasa."

I protested: "There is no money to subsist so how can I produce a record?"

It's hard to judge someone in financial straits. Even today, forty years later, it's hard for me to relive the memories of the terrible situation I was in. I had a large family and my financial situation was such that I could only buy one chicken for Shabbos. As for weekdays, there was nothing to talk about. I remember

that occasionally, when my father visited me, he would check to see what was in the refrigerator. When he saw it was empty he went to the store to buy a chicken with his own money and put it in my fridge and left.

But my wife insisted. "You must take a loan. You have to do something! I believe that the only reason the business is not working out is because you have not produced another record as the Rebbe asked."

That Friday afternoon I returned home from work, tired and worried. Despite the late hour I remained sitting in the car. Another week had gone by and once again nothing had moved. I choked up and had to restrain myself from crying. I couldn't get out of the car.

Out of the corner of my eye I saw R' Pesachya Lipsker coming out of his house to throw out the garbage. On his way back, when he noticed that I seemed to have no intention of getting out of my car, he came over and asked me: "Berel, why are you sitting there so late in the day? It's almost candle-lighting time!"

What could I tell him? I decided to pour out my heart to him. I said: "Pesachya, get into my car."

He got in and I told him what was on my mind. I told him everything, how I had no parnasa and was in trouble with no idea what to do. I also told him about the record and how my wife maintained that this was happening because I wasn't listening to the Rebbe. But I didn't have a cent in my pocket and I simply did not know what to do.

R' Pesachya listened closely and when I was done, he said: "Your wife is 100% right. You see that the Rebbe constantly tells you to produce a record and so this is what you must do."

I said: "What should I do when I don't have a cent? I'll tell you a secret. I only buy one chicken a week, just for Shabbos," I admitted.

R' Pesachya is a good natured person with a heart of gold. He lovingly said: "Berel, your wife is right. Listen to her. Tomorrow night, on Motzaei Shabbos, call the studio where you produced the first record and arrange an appointment for Sunday. On Sunday I will go with you and pay the cost of a record. After you sell it ..."

I was very moved by this generous offer and I immediately said: "I will divide the profits with you!"

Pesachya said: "Fine ... the main thing is that you have a peaceful Shabbos and a happy Shabbos."

A very short time elapsed before I saw how right my wife was. Producing the record was indeed the gateway for my parnasa. On Motzaei Shabbos I called the studio and arranged an appointment. The very next day I was visited by people from the slaughterhouse near Kiryat Malachi. They asked me to wash the shochtim's coats every day because they would get splattered with blood. There were 150 of them and they promised to pay on time; I should just do a good job. I immediately signed a contract with them and saw this as an open miracle from the Rebbe. As soon as I began working



R' Berel Zaltzman with his progeny

on producing a record, I signed this contract and extricated the business from collapse. Within a short time I had repaid all my debts and had a good parnasa.

SHLICHUS IN CALIFORNIA

At the end of 5739, the people at the slaughterhouse told me that they had decided to buy their own washing machines and would no longer be sending the laundry out. I did not have time to worry, for the next miracle took place:

For years, before Tishrei, I would get invitations to Jewish communities abroad to be the chazan on Yom Tov, for payment of course. That year, the Yomim Tovim were approaching and I still had not received a single offer. Yet, I had heard that in the big shul in Tel Aviv in the Yad Eliyahu quarter, they were looking for a chazan for the Yomim Nora'im. I asked around to find out how much the salary ought to be and was told: a chazan like you should get 40,000 liros.

I called the gabbai of the shul and set up an appointment. I went there for Mincha-Maariv to audition. That night, two other chazanim were also auditioning. They sang before I

did. After hearing the three of us, the committee conferred and then told the other two chazanim to leave and asked me to stay.

After Maariv they sat down to talk to me. They said: "To tell you the truth, we like your singing and we want you to daven for us. How much are you asking for?" I told them the truth, that I usually davened abroad and my friends told me that a chazan of my caliber should ask for 40,000 liros.

They responded like good businessmen and tried to bargain me down: "If you're saying 40,000 then you want 30,000 and so if you agree to 20,000, we can sign a contract."

I told them that when I said 40,000 I meant just that and would not take less. They tried to convince me and told me about "the man who wanted to buy a cow and the seller wanted twenty rubles and he said, you probably want fifteen and I'll give you ten and we'll close the deal." I retorted: "I am sure that in the end, the man did not buy the cow."

When I saw that they did not want to pay more than 30,000, I said: "I will tell you the truth. I have a friend in California who wants me to go to him for the holidays. I will call him and ask him for the same

amount. If he agrees to the full 40,000, I will fly to the United States.”

They thought I was joking and they said, “Fine, we’ll talk tomorrow.”

That night I called R’ Naftali Estulin, shliach in Los Angeles, and told him that they wanted me to daven in Tel Aviv. He asked: “How much do you want?” I told him 40,000 liros. He said: “No problem, come to us.” I said that I also wanted a ticket from California to the Rebbe for Sukkos and he agreed.

The next day, when I was at work, I got a phone call from the gabbaim of the shul in Tel Aviv who wanted me to come and see them again. I told them: “I have to disappoint you. Last night I called California as I told you I would, and I closed with them.”

They tried negotiating with me and I said: “I’m not playing games with you. Last night I closed with California and that’s that!”

When I arrived home from work exhausted and I went to rest a little, the gabbaim came to my house. One of them picked up the briefcase they had brought with them and said: “We have 40,000 liros here and it’s for you.”

Now that was very appealing to me. The Yomim Tovim were a month away, the business had just lost the account with the slaughterhouse and parnasa was problematic, and here they were offering me 40,000 liros in cash, in advance!

On the other hand, I had made an arrangement with R’ Estulin, so I told them that I could not change my plans. They said they had been first but I said: “I spoke to you yesterday and told you that if he agreed to give me this amount, I would go to him. Even if you offer me more, I can’t go back on my word.”

One of the gabbaim, who was very disappointed with my answer,

demanded: “Make an agreement with us or we will ensure you can’t leave the country.”

I retorted: “That’s how you talk to me? I wasn’t afraid of Stalin and you think I’ll be intimidated by you? I am not at all afraid of you!”

They left my house in defeat and I escorted them. We met R’ Levik Pressman and I said to them: “Here is R’ Levik, a wonderful chazan. Talk to him. If he doesn’t have a place to daven, he would probably agree to daven for you and he will take less than me.” They asked him: “Where does the rabbi live?”

R’ Levik pointed out the rabbi’s house and said to them in surprise: “Why didn’t you ask Rabbi Zaltzman?”

They thought they would try their luck with the rav. We all went to Rabbi Yehuda Yaroslavsky’s house, where they presented their complaint, namely that they had spoken to me first and they had brought a briefcase of money for me. After hearing them out the rabbi asked me: “What do you say?”

I told him what happened and the rav said to them: “What do you want from him? He was honest and upfront with you.”

And that was the end of the story.

TO RENT, NOT TO BUY

When I arrived in California, R’ Estulin said that a new shliach had come to town, R’ Yosef Yitzchok Shusterman, and he had opened a Chabad house in Beverly Hills. He had not yet found a chazan suitable for this ritzy area and so R’ Estulin thought it would be better if I davened by R’ Shusterman.

Among the congregants was an extremely wealthy man, one of R’ Shlomo Cunin’s big supporters. He was a Holocaust survivor who, when he was liberated from the concentration camp, weighed only 24 kilograms (52 pounds). He

ended up in California where he was very successful in business and became a multi-millionaire. After Rosh HaShana he met with R’ Cunin and emotionally told him about the Rosh HaShana davening. He said: “After the Holocaust my tears dried up and it has been decades since I’ve cried. This chazan from Russia was the first one to move me to tears.”

R’ Cunin was thrilled and immediately called R’ Estulin, who was hosting me, and asked that we come over as soon as possible. When we arrived he offered me a position: Work all year with R’ Estulin and on the Yomim Nora’im daven in Beverly Hills.

I said the Rebbe told us to live in Nachalat Har Chabad and since I knew how fond the Rebbe is of this neighborhood, I did not believe the Rebbe would allow me to leave it. R’ Cunin said: “After Sukkos we will go to the Rebbe together. We will write to the Rebbe about the idea and we’ll do as he says.”

When I wrote to the Rebbe I received the following answer: “It’s not an idea to move [permanently] from Eretz Yisroel, especially from Nachalat Har Chabad of course, but consult with your father and wife about whether it is worth accepting the offer in California for a few years.”

When I told people about this answer, they said that there were shluchim who received similar answers, “for a few years” and the Rebbe had them stay there. I remembered that one time, when I had yechidus and I said that my business in Nachalat Har Chabad wasn’t working out and wondered if maybe I should sell it and try my luck abroad, the Rebbe did not answer me directly but said: “If you need to travel abroad, rent out the business.”

I returned to Eretz Yisroel and, after consulting with my father and wife, we decided to go on shlichus

to California. I began making plans for the move and the first thing I needed to do was pay my debts. I thought, if I sold the business I could easily pay my debts but since the Rebbe said to rent ...

Out of the blue, someone came to me and said that he wanted to buy the machines and rent the building. I saw this as a triple miracle from the Rebbe: First, the money I got by selling the machines enabled me to cover my debts and pay for the trip. Second, if I had also rented the machines, then after a few years they would be ruined, and third, the building remained mine and till today I get a rental fee.

Once again I saw how precise the Rebbe is for he told me to rent and not to sell the building.

When he was in California my brother Berel discovered that in addition to his singing abilities, he's



R' Berel Zaltzman (front row, third from left) at a conference for California shluchim

also a terrific speaker. Over the years he perfected his delivery and began giving lectures accompanied by song. He has been able to be mekarev hundreds of Russian Jews and many of them have beautiful Chassidishe families.

After years of shlichus in California he moved to New Jersey, where he continues working on the Rebbe's shlichus and serves as rav for a congregation of Russian Jews in the shul of mosdos Bris Avrohom in Fairlawn, New Jersey.

[Continued from pg. 15]

feedback he receives, Maoz tries to push me off by saying it's not befitting for him to repeat compliments, but when I insisted, he told me about one of the most moving responses he received:

"In Tishrei we stayed with R' Yossi Paltiel. I was very impressed by him. Towards the end of our stay I gave him a painting of the Rebbe that I drew. He looked at it and immediately said, 'This is an original picture.' He got a hammer and a nail and hung it up in his living room. That touched me."

SEEING THE LIGHT OF GEULA

As an artist, son of an artist, Maoz likes to talk about the world of painting:

"I am a teacher for young

children, and I always tell them that whoever wants to express something, should do so in a picture. When a child expresses his feelings and ideas in a drawing, this causes it to become deeply ingrained within him more than anything else. There is great pleasure in viewing things from "outside" and experiencing the scene that way. Because I want to remember the picture in order to be able to draw it, I see all the details."

I had to ask Maoz about the connection between his art and the Rebbe's prophecy about Moshiach and the world being ready for Geula:

"One of the most powerful things I learned from the shliach in Maryland is 'the advantage of light that comes from darkness.' He takes the approach of seeing only Geula. I would go with him to

various places that I frequented before I became a Chassid, and I would tell him, 'I won't go in here.' He would object and explain that everything I saw in the past and causes me concern no longer exists. It's a new reality now, a reality of light.

"I decided to take this approach as my guiding light. I think about it in many of the pictures that I draw, putting in the Geula dimension in every painting, even if it seems to be talking about other points. I have a painting of a big American city with skyscrapers. It's cold and not something that broadcasts Judaism, certainly not Geula. In the center I chose an apartment in which I drew a menorah with candles illuminating the darkness. It's a tangible expression of the advantage of light that comes from darkness."

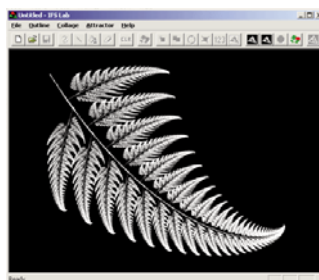
IS THERE MANDELBROT IN THE TORAH?

By Aryeh Gotfryd, PhD

complexities of nature, modeled with mastery the meanderings of the stock market, and perhaps most miraculously of all, inspired bored high school students to realize that math is indeed cool.

Put most simply, a fractal is an object in which every part resembles the whole. Nature is full of things that have a fractal structure. The fern frond at left looks quite realistic but it is actually just a graph of a mathematical formula called a Mandelbrot set.

Nonetheless the man-made version is uncannily similar to a real fern, such as the one pictured right. Simulations such as these have been beautifully rendered for all kinds of natural objects, ranging from clouds to riverbeds, and from seashells to broccoli buds. Often the simulations are



All Torah concepts are both general and particular. This does not mean that part and whole are two separate things, but rather that every concept can be viewed both as a totality and as a component.

To exemplify from mitzvos, each mitzvah has two aspects: (a) that it is a particular mitzvah, and (b) how it includes all the mitzvos. This is why at the time one is engaged in some mitzvah, he is exempt from any other mitzvah.

The same is true with regards to Torah. Any particular idea in Torah is also an inclusive notion that embraces all other concepts in Torah. And the same applies to

souls.

--The Rebbe - *Shabbos Parshas Mikeitz, Shabbos Chanukah*, 5724.
Ch.7, p. 328.

Benoit Mandelbrot's eyes are closed for now, but he has left us in this world with eyes more open. The Jewish mathematician from France will always be remembered for his wonderfully elegant yet majestically powerful gift to mankind – a mathematical discovery, a new geometry of infinity.

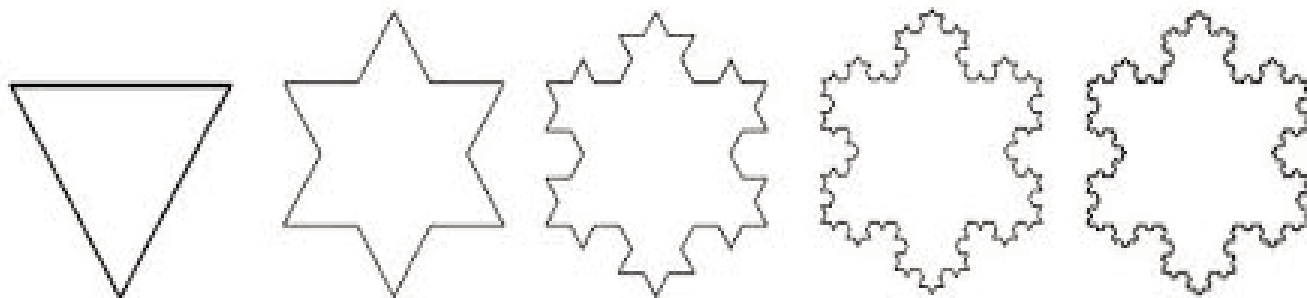
Mandelbrot's notion of "fractals" has launched an entirely new genre of art, provided a tool for unraveling the greatest

indistinguishable from the real thing.

The uncanny ability of mathematics to model nature at every scale was so wondrous in the eyes of Albert Einstein that he commented that the only thing unintelligible about nature is that it is intelligible.

"Atheistic" Physicist Paul Davies wonders if our mathematical insights into nature are just products of our imagination or actually part and parcel of the phenomena we study. If math describes nature so well, how could nature just happen to line up with our mathematical musings?

He concludes that it cannot be



that we are imposing our mathematical thinking on the world, reading math into nature but rather we are reading math out of nature. He demonstrates that we are actually detecting the abstract concepts embedded in the orderliness of the myriad things around us.

But where did that math come from? Where were those mathematical notions before they became embedded in stuff? Could our puny human minds be somehow communing with the Mind of G-d?

Our Sages say, “G-d looked into the Torah and created the world,”[1] that the Torah is the divine blueprint of Creation. Are there fractals in the Torah, self-similar patterns at different scales?

The Shabbos concept is a fine example. Thus we have seven days of the week, seven weeks in the Omer period, seven years of the Shmita cycle, and seven Shmitos followed by a Jubilee year. The same sabbatical theme is even expressed on a cosmological scale with the seven creation days on one end the seventh millennium on the other.

Here is another Torah fractal. In one of his talks,[2] the Lubavitcher Rebbe describes how the letters of the essential Divine name – Yud / Hey / Vav, and Hey – are expressed in the four spiritual worlds, the four elements of the global ecosystem, and the four dimensions of the

human nature. For example the “Vav” compares to the world of Yetzira, the plant kingdom, and the emotions. The “Vav” even looks like a plant, fixed and rooted, like personality traits that are relatively fixed in people, and like the world of Yetzira in which entities are fairly well defined and formed, albeit in the spiritual realm.

Fractals have another property that is at once attractive and infuriating, and that is the fact that they are infinite. The unfolding of self-similar patterns is an unending process, limited only by the amount of computer time you can throw at expanding the pattern, as this video portrays.

Mandelbrot asks a deceptively simple question: How long is the coastline of Great Britain? On the surface of things, anyone with a map, a string and a ruler should be able to come up with an answer, but however detailed the map, the answer is only approximate. As you zoom in there is always more and more detail so if you want an accurate answer, you must reckon it’s something approaching infinity!

Here is what they call a Koch Snowflake, a simple geometric example of an infinitely long edge to a shape of fixed size. Take a triangle and put a smaller triangle on the middle of each edge. Then put smaller triangles on those smaller edges, and keep going. The result looks like this [see images], but if you zoom in, it goes on

forever.

Mandelbrot’s gift opened a window for us into the Mind of G-d, using algebra and geometry to convey infinity in a nutshell, as it were. His mathematical infinity and the infinite thematic variations in nature both all derive from the infinity of Torah which is one with the Mind of the Infinite One Above.

Mandelbrot’s story is a fractal itself. His discovery is but one element in the grand story unfolding of how in our times science is progressively discovering more about the synergy of G-d, man and the nature of things. That process itself has been mapped out and scheduled in the Torah, in the Zohar and in Chassidus Chabad as a clear indication of the imminent redemption.[3][4] We are now entering the age of infinite revelations from both Torah and science, culminating in the complete revelation of Moshiach NOW!

There is what to see. We just need to keep our eyes open.

NOTES:

[1] Zohar 1:134a, 2:161a

[2] Likkutei Sichos, Vol. 6, the second Yisro.

[3] http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/112700/jewish/Moshiach-and-Science.htm

[4] http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/113102/jewish/Appendix-1-FaithScience-Convergence-Explained.htm

WHY DIDN'T THE REBBE FARBRENG ON 9 AND 10 KISLEV, 5735?

By Avrohom Rainitz

An amazing story reveals why the Rebbe did not farbreng that Shabbos, nor on the following day, Chag HaGeula 10 Kislev.

PART I

Beis Chayeinu. Shabbos Kodesh, 9 Kislev, 5735. Musaf ended and the gabbai stood up to make the usual announcements. Unlike previous years in which the Rebbe farbrenged with Chassidim every Shabbos, back then the Rebbe led farbrengens only on Shabbos Mevarchim and those Shabbasos that coincided with special dates in the calendar.

The system was that the gabbai would look towards the Rebbe while he made the announcements. If the Rebbe began walking from his place before he announced the time for Mincha, everybody understood that the Chassidim would have a farbrengen. Therefore, Mincha would not take place at a set time but when the farbrengen ended. If the Rebbe remained in his place, waiting for the announcement as to when Mincha would be, the gabbai

understood that there would be no farbrengen that Shabbos and he would announce the time for Mincha.

That year, 5735, the Rebbe farbrenged often (those in the know added it up at the end of the year and found that the Rebbe had farbrenged no less than 101 times!) and since that Shabbos was 9 Kislev, which is the birthday and yahrtzeit of the Mittler Rebbe, and the next day would be 10 Kislev, the Chag HaGeula of the Mittler Rebbe, Chassidim were confident that the Rebbe would farbreng that Shabbos.

The gabbai was also sure about this. He began making his usual announcements, about the tanks that would be going out on Sunday to Manhattan with *balabatim* (householders) for mitvza t'fillin, and he expected to see the Rebbe walking away from his place which would be his signal to announce

that day's farbrengen at 1:30. But the Rebbe remained in his place.

The gabbai, still certain that the Rebbe would farbreng that Shabbos, decided to continue making other announcements and he urged people to participate in the Rebbe's mitvzaim (mitzva campaigns) and mentioned all of those that the Rebbe had initiated up until 5735.

He finished all the announcements he could possibly make and the Rebbe was still standing there. The hint was clear – the Rebbe was not going to farbreng and he was waiting for the announcement for Mincha. He looked at the Rebbe one final time and when he saw that the Rebbe was still standing there, he announced, "Mincha will be about 4:00."

The Chassidim, who expected to hear an announcement about a farbrengen, were disappointed when they realized that despite the special date, there would be no farbrengen. The Rebbe left the shul and went up to his room, followed by his secretary, R' Chadakov.

Groups of Chassidim and bachurim discussed why they hadn't merited a farbrengen on that



auspicious day. They knew that they could not know *daas elyon* (the Rebbe's intentions) but with their *daas tachton* (lower knowledge) some people tried to come up with a reason. Perhaps the Rebbe wanted to announce a new mitvza or some other important announcement and he wanted to save it for the farbrengen that would surely take place the next day, 10 Kislev when the farbrengen would be broadcast live and Chassidim worldwide could hear it.

PART II

Musaf ended at the same time in the Franklin shul on the edge of Crown Heights. A Kiddush-farbrengen was prepared. At the main table sat an excited bar mitzva boy. Kiddush was made and some people reminded the others that surely the Rebbe would be farbrenging that day for 9 Kislev and urged them to hurry and finish before 1:00 so they could walk over to 770, a twenty minute walk.

Within minutes, people made Kiddush and wished the bar mitzva boy mazal tov. The boy was happy with the brachos he received but was bothered that they were all

sitting on pins and needles and that this significant event of his life would be finished in less than an hour. Then someone who lived nearby walked in. He had davened in 770 and reported that the Rebbe would not be farbrenging that day. In those years nearly every shul in Crown Heights had someone who let the people know whether the Rebbe would be farbrenging. So, minutes after the Chassidim in 770 knew that there would be no farbrengen that Shabbos, everybody in the neighborhood knew.

People were disappointed, of course, but since there was no farbrengen to rush to they wished l'chaim to the bar mitzva boy and the Kiddush turned into a farbrengen that lasted almost until Mincha. The bar mitzva boy was thrilled.

PART III

Sunday, 10 Kislev, 5735.

The Rebbe went to the Ohel in the morning. The Chassidim, who yearned for a farbrengen with the Rebbe, looked forward to the Rebbe's return. The way it worked in those days was that after the

Rebbe returned from the Ohel he went to daven Mincha in the small zal. After davening, if there was a farbrengen, the Rebbe called R' Chadakov to his room and informed him about it.

The Rebbe returned in the late afternoon and went to Mincha. The Chassidim were bitterly disappointed when the Rebbe immediately left for his room without calling R' Chadakov. It was clear that there would be no farbrengen that night either.

PART IV

R' Nachman Yosef Twersky was a bachur at the time in 770 and he knew there had to be a reason that the Rebbe wasn't farbrenging on these auspicious days. He decided to ask someone "in the know" who liked him and would occasionally tell him about some of the wondrous occurrences that took place behind the scenes.

The story he heard this time truly amazed him:

It began a few months earlier. The mother of a boy in a Chabad school in New York sent the Rebbe a letter in which she complained that her son, whose appearance was unusual, suffered from teasing on the part of his classmates.

THE REBBE'S PROFOUND SENSITIVITY

I heard this moving story two years ago around 9 Kislev. I shared it with some friends and all were amazed by the Rebbe's sensitivity. Although we do not understand the Rebbe, we know that the Rebbe's farbrengens brought down spiritual light into the world. It's amazing to think that the Rebbe chose to forego this so that a young boy, who felt socially disadvantaged, would not be hurt when his Kiddush ended earlier than that of his friends.

A friend of mine who is a known educator said that every teacher ought to learn from this story how to treat his students. The Rebbe sets a very high standard of sensitivity towards others. He did not suffice with getting involved with the boy's problem at school but considered how his farbrengen would make the child feel and preferred not having the farbrengen so the boy would celebrate his bar mitzva with a good feeling.

Would we forego something important to us so that one of our students would feel better?

The Rebbe told the worried mother that she should speak with the principal, who would certainly do what he could to stop it. A few weeks went by and the mother sent another letter. She reported that she had complained to the hanhala and apparently they had not handled it properly because her son

was still suffering.

The Rebbe called for R' Chadakov and told him to call the school and to ask, on the Rebbe's behalf, why this painful situation had not been remedied. "What are they waiting for, that I myself visit the school and handle the problem?"

R' Chadakov called the school and after repeating what the Rebbe said, the hanhala immediately took action. They were successful in stopping the bullying.

That Shabbos, 9 Kislev, after the Rebbe went up to his room after Mincha, he called for R' Chadakov and explained that it was that boy's bar mitzva that Shabbos and in order that he shouldn't feel cheated that his Kiddush-farbrengen ended earlier than usual because of the Rebbe's farbrengen, the Rebbe decided not to farbreng.

The next day, continued the Rebbe, would be the boy's bar mitzva celebration. If there would be a farbrengen, many guests would definitely leave early and the boy's simcha would be affected. So tomorrow there will be no farbrengen either.

(I heard this story from R' Twersky at a melava malka at the Beis Menachem Mendel shul in Crown Heights. When I repeated the story at a family gathering, someone told me that he had also heard the story at the time from somebody in the school that the boy attended.)

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LIFE ON SHLICHUS: BEYOND NATURE WITHIN NATURE

By Rabbi Yaakov Shmuelewitz
Shliach, Beit Shaan

Chassidus teaches that in the merit of a Jew's efforts to imbue his everyday affairs with holiness, Hashem bestows His blessings in a way of "higher than nature" within nature. The following are shlichus stories that bring this concept to life.

SUPERNATURAL CAR

The following story happened at the Chabad house of Azor. The shliach, Rabbi Shimon Yardeni was driving in his old jalopy when it let him know that it had finished its mission in this world. R' Yardeni had a problem. It wasn't worth buying another old clunker (been there, done that) and a better car was beyond his means. As for a new car, forget it. What should he do? Write to the Rebbe, of course!

He considered going to the bank and asking for a loan to purchase a car but the answer he opened to in the Igros Kodesh said not to rush but to wait for an opportunity. So R' Yardeni waited

for an opportunity.

A few days went by and one of the mekuravim, a car salesman, walked into the Chabad house. "I heard you are looking for a car," he said, "and I have one that is a real opportunity for you." As soon as R' Yardeni heard the word "opportunity" he immediately told the man, "Bring me the car. I've bought it." The man was taken aback. "First ask me what kind of car it is, how much it costs, take it for a test drive, use it for a day or two. Why are you making a snap decision?" But R' Yardeni insisted, "It's okay. Bring me the car."

Two days later the mekurav brought him a late model

commercial vehicle in great condition which was perfectly suited for the Chabad house's needs. The price was reasonable at 42,000 shekels. R' Yardeni paid 7000 shekels as a deposit and went to the bank for a loan for the remaining 35,000 shekels to complete the deal.

A conversation ensued between R' Yardeni and the car salesman. The shliach told him that the reason for this successful purchase was the answer he opened to from the Rebbe in the Igros Kodesh. The salesman told the story to some friends, which led to an astonishing development.

A month went by and the bank delayed in granting the loan. A friend approached R' Yardeni with a complaint, "I heard that you bought a car and that you went to the bank for a loan. How could you do that without telling me? How much money did you ask for?"

R' Yardeni told him the amount and the man took out his checkbook and gave him a check for 35,000 shekels.

A real "opportunity" – above nature.

IT'S NOT WORTHWHILE

Rabbi Binyamin Karniel, shliach in Gadera, saw and heard many stories from his mekuravim about parnasa coming in a supernatural manner, while if they did not act according to Torah then the losses were also supernatural.

"One Friday, I drove up to a gas station about an hour before Shabbos (to prepare for a long trip that would take place right after Shabbos). When the attendant came over I asked him when his shift ended. The young fellow said that he finished at midnight.

"In a friendly manner I said, 'Dear brother, it doesn't pay to work on Shabbos.'

"I will never forget what he answered me. He said, 'I have already decided to stop working on Shabbos and today is the last time that I have to finish my shift. Do you know why I decided to stop working on Shabbos? Because I saw clearly that every time I work on Shabbos, I lose the money I earn that day. I expect it by now.'

"As we spoke he suddenly pointed at a car that had just filled up and left without paying. 'You see? I just lost everything I will earn by working tonight. I don't even get excited about it anymore. It is clear to me that it's because of chilul Shabbos but this is really the last time.'"

SHABBOS OBSERVANCE ON AN IRRELIGIOUS KIBBUTZ

Another mekurav of the Chabad house in Gadera told R' Karniel many years ago about the chairman of a very large business who called all the employees to a sudden meeting. He informed them that from then on, the business would be closed on Shabbos.

Some of them wondered whether he had become religious or

was trying to get them to keep Shabbos. His answer was that it was due to financial considerations. "I noticed that on every one of the last 16 Saturdays something went wrong at the company or with one of its vehicles. The damages sustained canceled out the earnings of that day."

The chairman showed them a graph that charted the expenses and income for the previous 16 weeks and the employees saw how there were profits for six days and only losses on Saturdays. "Now do you understand why it pays to close on Shabbos?"

WONDERS OF NATURE IN MITZPEH RIMON

Rabbi Tzvi Slonim, shliach in Mitzpeh Rimon, was extremely busy recently since he was able, in a supernatural manner, to buy a three story building in the town center and he even obtained nice donations to renovate it inside and out. The goal is that the building will contain all of the Chabad house programming. The inside renovations are already done and seminars and lectures, t'fillos, clubs and shiurim are taking place there. The outside of the building is already looking like Beis Moshiah – 770. The first floor is done and now the two upper floors are awaiting their façade of red bricks.

At first there was no chance for the Chabad house to buy this building. The initial bid R' Slonim submitted was turned down. It was only thanks to some supernatural events that he received the approval of the Amidar Company to buy the building.

He saw this as a sign from heaven and a siman bracha and he asked the Rebbe, in the Igros Kodesh, what to call the building. The answer (in a response to shluchim in Morocco) was not to call the building (and the

programming) by the name Chabad, but people should nonetheless know that Chabad is behind it.

After all the miracles and G-d's kindness which he saw in the buying and renovating of the building, he decided to call it, "Niflaos HaTeva HaYehudi," a name which is reminiscent of the charming desert scenery in the area while also referring to the miracles that enabled him to buy the building.

THE REBBE REVEALED: YOU HAVE AN OLDER BROTHER

Rabbi Yigal Tzipori, shliach in Kiryat Shemone, relates:

Three years ago, two sisters, ages 20 and 23, called me from Kiryat Ata. They introduced themselves as single religious girls, and they asked me whether I could be mekarev someone from Kiryat Shemone by the name of Moshe Davidowitz (a pseudonym). They begged me to invite him to shiurim, t'fillos etc.

I knew Moshe. He had visited the Chabad house a few times and put on t'fillin, but I was curious why the sisters were asking me to do this. The story they told me is beyond belief. This is what they said:

"Since we have been waiting for a long time to get married, someone suggested that we ask the Lubavitcher Rebbe for a bracha through the Igros Kodesh. We went to the Chabad house in Kiryat Ata and were told how to go about it. The answer we opened to was very surprising. It said, 'In connection with the request for a bracha for a shidduch, you should try to mekarev your older brother ... and may this be a help to you as well as to him, materially and spiritually.'

"We were in shock. On the one hand it was a direct answer about a

shidduch but on the other hand, we don't have an older brother!"

They lived in Kiryat Ata with their mother. Their father, who lived in Tel Aviv, had cut off ties with them many years before, and neither the sisters nor their mother knew about an older brother. The sisters found out their father's phone number in Tel Aviv and called him after years of estrangement and they told him they were going to visit him.

After some polite questions they asked him directly whether they had an older brother. "What? Are you crazy?" was his response. They tried to the best of their ability to get more information but he was insistent that there was no older brother. One sister gave up and went home while the other sister begged her father to tell her more. She believed absolutely in the Rebbe's answer and she wanted to ascertain the facts.

After much importuning, at one



in the morning he finally "broke" and confided that before he married their mother he had been married to another woman. They had a son by the name of Moshe Davidowitz and he lived in Kiryat Shemone.

This is why the girls were asking whether I could be mekarev

him.

Thanks to R' Tzipori's efforts, Moshe got more and more involved in a life of Torah and mitzvos. A year went by and Moshe and his two sisters married and they established fine Jewish homes.

[Continued from pg. 42]

In the name of R' Chaim Chaikin and R' Eliyah Shmuel Kahanov

ALONE ON THE FRONT

In the espionage network woven by Rabbi Jacobson, R' Itche Goldin was placed on guard in Cracow, Poland. This was the first stop of the Chabad *Chassidim* traveling from Lvov across the border. R' Itche was the backbone of the network. He was in close contact with *anash* in Soviet Russia, and he was the one who searched for, met, and directed *anash* once they arrived in Poland. He was in contact with *anash* in Lodz, *anash* in Prague led by R' Yehuda Chitrik and R' Chaim Chaikin, and *anash* in Paris led by R' Schneur Zalman Schneerson and R' Binyomin Gorodetzky. Obviously he

was in close contact with R' Yisroel Jacobson and the Rebbe.

Despite all the dangers and with great self-sacrifice R' Itche committed himself to remain in Cracow until the last *Chassid* left accused Poland. Rabbi Jacobson's sudden departure to the United States on Erev Rosh Hashanah came as a complete surprise, and apparently R' Itche did not know that this was by order of the Rebbe. Also the news that the two *Chassidim* Chaikin and Chitrik left their posts completely confused him. Why did they suddenly leave Prague?

The next two letters were written by R' Itche Goldin on the same day. The first letter is to Rabbi Jacobson and the second is to Mr. Grinke Slavin. R' Itche complains, "Why did you travel without leaving a replacement? With whom can I now seek counsel? Who will coordinate

between the *Chassidim* scattered in all different countries? Why did R' Yehuda and R' Chaim leave Prague? Who will replace them?" During the postwar days disruptions in the postal service were widespread, a major obstacle for communication between *Chassidim*. Letters and telegrams either did not reach their destination or they arrived late. R' Itche complains, "I wrote letters, gave over lists of names, sent telegrams, and I did not receive a response." Postal service between the two sides of the Atlantic was irregular and consequently the letters and news that Rabbi Jacobson writes about were not received by R' Itche. In short, confusion.

I wonder how a worldwide organization would manage to operate these days without money, proper postal service, telephones, fax or e-mail?

[To be continued be"H]

FROM PRAGUE TO BELGIUM

By Rabbi Schneur Zalman Chanin
Translated by Menachem Har Zvi

Additional material from the archives of R' Yisroel Jacobson reveals more of his all-encompassing activities on his mission for the Rebbe Rayatz. In the following chapter are the fascinating letters of R' Yehuda Chitrik and R' Chaim Chaikin relating to the mission placed upon them by the Rebbe Rayatz

In the upcoming chapters I will give an overview of the activities of Rabbi Jacobson beginning Rosh Hashanah 5707, after he suddenly returned to the United States by directive of the Rebbe Rayatz. As evidenced by the letters in his archives, Rabbi Jacobson's mission did not conclude after the three-and-a-half months that he spent traveling between the refugee camps and the border points of Europe. This was only the beginning of his activities. He continued to direct the rescue efforts of our brethren the *T'mimim* from Russia until they settled in the free countries of France, Eretz Yisroel, U.S.A.,

Canada, Australia, and elsewhere.

As in previous chapters I will continue to write following the chronological order of the letters and telegrams and not according to the topical order.

In the previous chapters we left R' Yehuda Chitrik and R' Chaim Chaikin in Prague. They served as links in the chain created by the organizers of the escape of *anash* westward. In addition to the task of locating *anash* and helping them reach the American Zone in Germany, they were required to maintain communications between R' Itche Goldin in Cracow and Rabbi Jacobson, who was in contact



with the Rebbe Rayatz and *anash* in the refugee camps.

THE REBBE'S DIRECTIVE: TRAVEL TO BELGIUM

Just prior to his return to the United States, Rabbi Jacobson gave R' Yehuda Chitrik and R' Chaim Chaikin the directive of the Rebbe Rayatz that they leave their posts in Prague and travel together with their families to Belgium. What precisely would be their function? What were they to do there? To whom should they turn when they arrived in Belgium? Where to go?

All this was unknown to them. *Chassidim* are *Chassidim*; as masters of absolute obedience they placed "we will do" before "we will understand." Immediately upon receiving the directive they began to explore the means to receive entry papers into Belgium. However, to their dismay they encountered a mountain of obstacles. Apparently as long as they were in Prague they would not be able to receive visas. They learned that if they could reach Paris the chances to receive entry papers would increase.

Despite the hardships in their

path, the two *Chassidim* and their families arrived in Paris. There they directed their footsteps to the address frequented by every Chabad Chassid: Rue Dieu 10, the house of Rabbi Schneur Zalman Schneerson. Rabbi Chitrik and his family settled in the house of Rabbi Schneerson while Rabbi Chaikin and his family moved into the apartment of Rabbi Gorodetzky, the uncle of his wife Chaya Sara.

Upon arriving safely in Paris, they attempted to receive entry permits into Belgium. However, here too they encountered difficulties, primarily due to lack of funds. They appealed to the Vaad Hatzalah and to Agudas Yisroel for help and were refused. Once again we find that the Vaad Hatzalah and Agudas Yisroel acted as strangers toward the Lubavitcher *Chassidim*. All the letters, documents and telegrams from this period prove this bitter truth.

Without choice in the matter they turned to a lawyer, who arranged eight entry permits for them. However, they could not receive the permits until they paid him.

TRAVEL TO BELGIUM: FOR WHAT PURPOSE?

The following letter was sent by R' Yehuda Chitrik from Paris. In the letter he relates current events, notifies R' Yisroel that they arrived safely in Paris, and requests permission to borrow money to pay the lawyer. He writes that they will, with the help of G-d, be able to travel two days after the lawyer receives payment.

The letter was written on Tuesday the 6th of Tishrei, which meant that if they received the necessary funds it would be possible to travel either on Thursday, the 8th of Tishrei, or immediately after Yom Kippur. After R' Yehuda Chitrik relates the chapter of "we will do" he continues with the chapter of "we



R' Yehuda Chitrik

will understand." He asks Rabbi Jacobson what his function will be in Belgium, requests recommendation letters and addresses to which he can turn, and even has the boldness to inquiry regarding his livelihood.

Since they were not told specifically what their function would be in Belgium, they assumed that perhaps they should open a yeshiva and that their sons the *T'mimim* Tzvi Hirsch Chitrik and Azriel Chaikin would be its foundation. Consequently R' Y. Chitrik conveys his heartfelt request to R' Yisroel that, since he is unable to fulfill his soul's desire to meet with the Rebbe, he requests mercy for his son and for the son of R' Chaim Chaikin, "our delightful boys." Although they plan on traveling together with their families to Belgium to be the foundation of the yeshiva which will be built, "this is not their ultimate good." According to his understanding, it would be "truly good" if they traveled to the United States to study in Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim. For this he requests that Rabbi Jacobson begin arranging the affidavit and the documents necessary.

B"H

6 Tishrei 5707, Paris

**May you be inscribed and
saved for a good year.**

His Honor HaRav HaGaon



R' Chaim Chaikin

HaTamim, highly esteemed Vasik V'Chassid, G-d-fearing, etc. HaRav R' Yisroel Jacobson.

Greetings to you and your family and all of *anash*. Greetings and eternal good.

Immediately upon our arrival I wrote to you, notifying you of our arrival here. Similarly I notified the Rebbe.

I began to make visas for Belgium. We desired to procure these through the Agudah or the Vaad Hatzalah, since it would not be too expensive. However, we were unable to do so because they take the work lightly. It was necessary to do this through intermediaries. The eight passports that we have [for R' Yehuda Chitrik, his wife, his two sons, two daughters, and another two unknown individuals] cost me 100 dollars, not including small expenses.

We were unable to see the highly esteemed R' Heshel Raisman, who was at his post at the border point of Chechin, meaning that the *Tamim* Chaim Asher [Kahanov] did not find him at home. We did not have a penny when we arrived here. I am with my family at the home of the *Chassid* R' S.Z. Shass [Schneerson] where we receive sustenance. Similarly the family of Elya Shmuel [Kahanov, father of

