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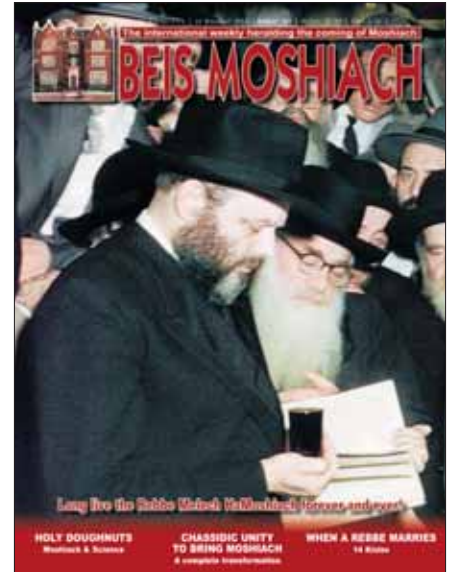
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Shleimus HaAretz | Sholom Ber Crombie



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

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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 and the special spiritual qualities of Jewish women. * From the address of Thursday, 21 Sivan 5730, Parshas Shlach. * Part 2 of 2

[Continued from last week]

4. Another lesson can be learned from the above in light of the principle that the preparation for every blessing received from On High must resemble the blessing desired.

That is, when one wishes to receive, for example, an increase in livelihood, in money, the *segula* (the spiritual catalyst for this) is to increase in giving money to charity, as in the saying of the Gemara, “the preservative of money is diminution [i.e., spending money on charitable and benevolent causes]” (K’subos 66b). So too, when one wishes to strengthen his health, the advice for this is to see to the wellbeing of another Jew, by visiting those who are ill, or assisting another

Jew so that he doesn’t need medical attention from the outset. In general, this principle is in accordance with what it says in the Gemara – that G-d interacts with his creations in a manner that is “measure for measure”; the aspect that one presents to G-d is reciprocated in kind to the Jew who needs His blessing.

On this basis we can derive the correct approach to evoking the fulfillment of the wish of each and every one of us, together with all the Jewish people. Namely, the wish that very soon we experience the fulfillment of the Biblical promise, “I have broken the bars of your yoke, and made you walk upright” (VaYikra 26:13), that G-d will shatter the walls of exile and bring the true

and complete redemption through our righteous Moshiach, who will take every single Jew to Eretz Yisroel, to “the land which the eyes of G-d are upon it from the beginning of the year until the end of the year.” The preparation for this must resemble the outcome. To that end, every single Jew, in whatever place he may be, must make it recognizable in his household and his surroundings – and certainly his own family – that “the eyes of G-d are upon it from the beginning of the year until the end of the year,” that G-dliness shines there from the beginning of the year until the end of the year, irrespective of whether it is Shabbos, Yom Tov, or a regular workday.

And when someone comes and wants to temper his enthusiasm, saying that there is an angel who directs the affairs of the country, and it is through this angel that blessings and resources are drawn from G-d, to the extent that one must reckon with this angel for everything that comes from G-d, especially insofar as [the Torah itself says] “the law of the land is law” – all of this is only with regard to monetary issues and taxes and the like, matters which have no relevance to fear of Heaven and religion. In those specific conditions one reckons

with the state and fulfills the law of the land where he lives, being that the state has an angel overseeing it, whose function is to draw down from On High all blessings and influence. However, with regard to matters related to Torah, fear of Heaven, and Judaism, every Jew (in every place) has no authority upon him other than G-d his L-rd. He prays and requests everything he needs from G-d directly, and G-d sends and gives him blessings and success in all that he needs. The angel can do nothing to change it at all; he cannot even delay it – so long as one’s prayer to G-d is as it should be.

5. The story of the spies and the commendable reaction of the women teaches us that since women have particular spiritual qualities – that they love “the land which the eyes of G-d are upon it from the beginning of the year until the end of the year” – they also have special spiritual qualities that enable them to make of their families, their homes, and environments that they too should be “Eretz Yisroel.” That is, a land, a home, a family, and an environment that is befitting of Jews. Indeed, every Jew is called by the name “Yisroel.” It is, therefore, immediately understood that since it is a Jewish home and a Jewish environment, “the eyes of G-d are upon it,” they are found there together with G-d, as it were, and G-d watches over it “from the beginning of the year to the end of the year,” every day throughout the course of the entire year.

The Torah (which is not just a historical narrative, nor is it merely an instruction as to how things ought to be now) gives us more than a lesson; it generates the power and ability [to walk in

its path]. When one studies a story in the Torah, this itself strengthens the faculties needed to fulfil the instructions derived from that story.

Therefore, when it comes to the week when the Torah speaks about how the Jewish people must go and conquer Eretz Yisroel, and the notion of sending spies is considered, the Torah immediately tells us that women have no need for that; they have no desire for it and they have no need for it. Rather, they depend upon G-d, knowing that conquering the land is something that must be done, and can be done, and shall be done. They have no need for investigations and determinations, to spy and scout and to formulate opinions.

How is this actually done in the simple sense? As discussed above, by each woman, here in the Diaspora (and how much more so does this apply to the women of Eretz Yisroel) doing all that is dependent upon them to make of their “four cubits” – their family, home, and environment – that it should be overtly seen, even with the unassisted human eye, that G-dliness is visibly perceptible there all year long, from the first day of the year until the last day of the year.

And then the women ask, “Give us an inheritance.” That is, they ask, through Moshe Rabbeinu, from G-d, to apportion for them an inheritance and a property, to have a holding (which is the simple meaning of the word “*achuza*” (estate)) in Eretz Yisroel. This process begins with establishing a spiritual Eretz Yisroel [i.e., making their surrounds pervaded with sanctity and G-dliness], which they do while it is still the time of exile. And in so doing, they bring the repossession of Eretz Yisroel



Every single Jew must make it recognizable in his household and his surroundings – and certainly his own family – that G-dliness shines there, irrespective of whether it is Shabbos, Yom Tov, or a regular workday.

Since it is a Jewish home and a Jewish environment, “the eyes of G-d are upon it,” they are found there together with G-d, as it were, and G-d watches over it “from the beginning of the year to the end of the year,” every day throughout the course of the entire year.

closer in the simple sense.

This is accomplished by means of preparing all those who are in their sphere of influence, helping them to recognize the Divine providence that exists in every place a Jew is to be found, both throughout the week and on Shabbos and Yomim Tovim. And by doing so, they indeed see Divine providence, and the sight is beheld with joy and good heartedness.

6. We have with us today those who have completed a stage in their education, in order to advance to a higher level, and in order to utilize the knowledge they have acquired and learned for their own development and especially for the good of others,

those who will be under their sphere of influence

And of particular note, we have with us those who utilized the summer for counselling and guiding Jewish children that they should grow up in the way that Moshe Rabbeinu outlined in the Torah, which is a guide for living life from day to day, to go in the way of the Torah, for in this manner they receive all blessings, both spiritually and materially.

By fulfilling their duties with joy and goodness of heart and in a complete and perfect manner, it shall be fulfilled in them, amongst all the Jewish people and everyone together, that very soon we will merit to greet our righteous Moshiach in the true and complete redemption.

They should not be put off by the fact that there are those who make calculations to the effect that the nation who dwells there is powerful, that there are many nations who are intolerant of the Jewish people, many nations who oppose the Jewish people, and they have power and fortifications, with all the details enumerated in the weekly Torah portion.

They should not be dismayed by these fears, because “G-d is

with us; do not fear them” (Shlach 14:9). G-d is with every single Jew, especially with the Jewish masses, even more particularly with the Jewish body at large, in every place they may be, to the extent that “their shadow (the [protective] shadow of G-d – Rashi) has abandoned them [the enemies of the Jewish people]” (ibid). Thus, they are not affected by all those who are not friends of the Jewish people (to put it mildly), and they know that “we shall surely go up” – that soon we will go to the true and complete redemption, by means of illuminating the end of exile with the “candle of a Mitzva and the light of Torah,” by increasing in Torah and in mitzvos in their daily life.

And then we will leave this exile – with kindness and mercy and “with the joy of the days of yore upon their heads” – and experience the true and complete redemption, “with our youths and our elders, etc., our sons and our daughters,” (men and women, children and grandchildren) with joy and goodness of heart, very soon, with the true and complete redemption through our righteous Moshiach. Amen, may it be G-d’s will.

CHASSIDIC UNITY TO BRING MOSHIACH

By Rabbi Zvi Homnick

This eye-opening experience occupied my thoughts for a long time afterward. Yes, I had witnessed the intense power of the Ahavas Yisroel that the Rebbe had implanted within his Chassidim, such that it could completely overtake and even momentarily transform a person whose personality (naturally or through force of habit) was strongly invested in projecting negativity and hostility...

SOUL UNITY

When I first began coming regularly as a newbie to 770 Eastern Parkway, also known as Lubavitch World Headquarters, I found myself for all intents and purposes being completely ignored. Apparently, the outreach instincts of the locals didn't extend to someone of obviously religious appearance. Over time, a handful of individuals did reach out a friendly hand and I got to know a few people here and there, but for the first two years I was pretty much anonymous. At the time, I considered that a plus for a number

of reasons, including the opportunity that it presented to observe and learn from others, something which the hubris of youth had long caused me to eschew.

As an observer on the scene, I also got to see the amazing spectrum of people that were drawn to the "four cubits" of the Rebbe, including many colorful characters. One such person who stood out from the crowd was a Chassid of formidable height and girth, who would make his presence known through his frequently loud (and I mean seriously loud) and abrasive

comments. People who found themselves on the receiving end of his sometimes clever but always withering attentions, would mostly slink off shamefacedly in search of cover.

Upon further research I discovered that the man was a genius, and even referred to as such by the Rebbe. Those of a more psychoanalytical bent attributed his less-than-sunny personality to the frustration of genius whose potential is not fully realized, utilized and appreciated. Though I had no way of knowing if that analysis was correct or not, and though I couldn't help but wince internally every time his distinctive voice raised itself above the din of 770, I couldn't help but feel a liking for the man from a distance.

It was in the winter of 1993, after a number of different people had been exhorting me for some time to begin sharing what I had learned and the insights that I had gleaned from the Rebbe's teachings, to audiences both inside and outside of Lubavitch, particularly on the topics of Moshiach and Geula which were very much the topics of the day, that I sent in a note to the Rebbe asking if I should do so. The main reason that I included for continuing to maintain a lower profile and focus on my own

personal growth was the fact that I was a latecomer with serious Misnagdic ego issues, and who was I to open my mouth in the presence of those who had merited to bask in the Rebbe's presence for years and years.

The secretary (Rabbi BK) reported back to me that the Rebbe had nodded his head in the affirmative to the question whether I should begin looking for opportunities to speak in public, and he nodded again to the question as to whether it was appropriate for little old me to address Lubavitch audiences as well. As much as my guts were churning when I sent in the question, they really started doing flip-flops when I received the answer along with a bracha. The impact of the Rebbe's blessing was immediate and within a relatively brief time, I found myself very much in the public eye.

As my name and face became more public, I was approached by the aforementioned larger-than-life individual. We had a pleasant enough conversation about my background and antecedents, quickly falling into what I can only describe as "verbal shorthand" (sort of the informal language of the exceptionally bright), which he seemed to really enjoy. I remember walking away feeling really good that having come to this person's attention we had had a positive interaction, because the idea of being on his bad side filled me with dread. Oy vey, little did I know. From that point on, it could be in the mikva (unclad and nowhere to hide), it could be in 770 (with every eye turned my way), it could be on the street or in one of the local stores or eateries (out in public with an audience of men, women and children), I might suddenly hear my name being bellowed, "Hey, Homnick,"

followed by a ringing stinging insult, putdown or criticism, at a sound level that guaranteed that every person present heard it loud and clear.

We continued to have the occasional mutually enjoyable conversation, and in the privacy of those conversations I let him know that my own verbal dueling skills were equal to the task, but when in public, I never responded in kind and even thanked him (jokingly?) on occasion for helping me make up for the lost years of being deprived of Chassidic "ego-crushing." Over time, despite our age differences, differences in temperament, views and personality, we developed and maintained a fairly comfortable casual friendship.

One day, I happened to be standing in the hallway of 770, when a group of secularly raised Jewish teenagers walked in. The group seemed to be part of a tour, and I observed and listened in as the tour guide spoke to them. After addressing them, he left them standing in the hall presumably as he went to check out the situation inside, and they were just milling about looking a little lost and out of place. Suddenly, I saw my "friend" exit from the shul and noticing the group he immediately went over and began to talk to some of them. If I hadn't witnessed it with my own eyes, I would never believe it. I was moved to tears as I watched and listened, as his entire visage, demeanor, body language and verbal style, went through a complete transformation and all I could see was a Jew, a Chassid, overflowing with love, compassion and warmth for his fellow Jews. I felt that I could literally see the Ahavas Yisroel of the Rebbe shining through this person, and I would never look at him or any other Chassid of the Rebbe the same way

again.

This eye-opening experience occupied my thoughts for a long time afterward. Yes, I had witnessed the intense power of the Ahavas Yisroel that the Rebbe implanted within his Chassidim, such that it could completely overtake and even momentarily transform a person whose personality (naturally or through force of habit) was strongly invested in projecting negativity and hostility. However, it was obvious that this was coming from Above as a divine revelation to the soul, awakening the innate unity between Jewish souls, and only in the context of reaching out to those with little or no background. Similarly, when it came to times of duress and hardship, one could see the amazing love and fellowship amongst Chassidim that transcended anything seen before in Jewish history.

However, it seemed that in order to access and harness that level of love and unity for one's fellow Chassidim on a regular basis, even in the face of strong differences and/or disagreements, this required much inner work, and even someone who was a paragon of love and concern for his not-yet-observant brethren, could turn into a snarling hateful antagonist when it came to internal debates and disputes. The troubling questions were, why is it that way? What could I do and what do I need to do on an individual level? What could be done and what needs to be done on a communal level?

CHASSIDIC UNITY

Over the years, the Rebbe cited on numerous occasions the story told by the Rebbe Rayatz about the Tzemach Tzedek who stood strong against the government position during the famous gathering in Petersburg aimed at making

determinations regarding Jewish education. Time and again, he was placed under arrest and threatened with the direst of consequences and yet he wouldn't back down in the slightest. His words and actions were seen by some as outright treason against the Czarist regime, and they felt that his life was in real danger. One of the greats of the time, who was present at this gathering, asked the Tzemach Tzedek how he was allowed to put himself into mortal danger, adding that if he hadn't considered the consequences to himself, he should have at least thought of the Chassidim and other Jews. The Tzemach Tzedek gave a two-pronged response. Firstly, there were his sons, and secondly, "If the Chassidim will band together they will prevail until Moshiach comes."

At a farbrengen on the eve of the 13th of Nisan, 5726/1966, one hundred years from the passing of the Tzemach Tzaddik, the Rebbe pointed out that at this time there are no sons and he concludes, "and this we will accomplish with the unity of the Chassidim – as the Tzemach Tzedek responded then – which cancels all the decrees and (negative) matters, and bursts through all the boundaries, and brings down the 'truth of G-d' all the way here 'into the world.'"

And yet, despite all we have seen and heard about the great unity amongst Chassidim of earlier generations, there have always been differences, some of which have led to overt religious warfare and even complete splits. How do these two extremes coexist within the same people, and how do we resolve the problem, especially as it is key in these final moments before complete redemption that we "cancel all the decrees...and burst through all the boundaries" so that we be reunited with the Rebbe, something we all passionately yearn

for?

At the wedding reception for the Rebbe and Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka on the 14th of Kislev 5689/1928, the Rebbe Rayatz gave out a gift to each of the invited guests (he also sent it to many others who could not attend). The gift was a photocopy of a note written by the Alter Rebbe in his own handwriting, along with a brief historical background of the note. This note was addressed to Reb Moshe Meisels, a Chassid of the Alter Rebbe who had publicly dressed down his fellow Chassid Reb Meir Rephael's, who held communal office in the city of Vilna, over how to deal with and respond to the pressures and attacks from the Misnagdim. Many of the young Torah giants amongst the Chassidim of the time felt that Reb Meir's approach was too conciliatory and in his naïve attempts to try to make peace he was not working hard enough to stand up to the opposition, and protect his fellow Chassidim from their vindictive behavior. At a public gathering where these issues were debated, Reb Moshe took their side against Reb Meir.

At the time, the Alter Rebbe sent a message to this group saying that they were absolutely right, but the mind has to rule the heart and this has to manifest in the form of good character and love for every Jew. Therefore they should back down and know that "in the end the honor of G-d will come, when the wellsprings will be spread forth, the wellspring of the House of G-d, that was revealed through our teacher the Baal Shem Tov, and the world will be filled with the knowledge of G-d." It was following these events that the Alter Rebbe sent the note to Reb Moshe in which he writes that Reb Moshe should publicly ask forgiveness from Reb Meir.

He asks that he do so, "for my sake and for the sake of peace, because peace does not derive from quarrel ch"v, and especially from a dispute for the sake of Heaven, such that most miseries and adversities are a result of disputes for the sake of Heaven, may the Merciful One save us from it." Time and again the Rebbe has taught us that anything related to the life of a Rebbe and every action taken by a Rebbe, especially as it relates to revealing Torah and Chassidus, has zero elements of coincidence and every detail is thought out and intentional with a message for us. Clearly, the Rebbe Rayatz was sending us, the generation of Chassidim of the Rebbe, at this most auspicious time which the Rebbe described as "the day that connected me to you and you to me," a vital message.

THE UNITY DIVIDE

When someone is in a very close relationship, especially one that is the result of a deep and instinctual soul bond, the love and sense of connectedness tends to become something that is taken for granted and as such cools down, and over time becomes progressively less effusive, except at times when the connection is threatened or some distance is created in the relationship. In addition, when you truly love and care for someone, the idea that they are pursuing a course that is wrong and bad for them and others is simply intolerable. The father who is insane with grief and anguish over a bad choice that his son makes, hardly cares about all the other people's sons who make the same life mistake. So, when the love is cool and the feelings of upset are hot, it creates an environment in which people who love and care about each other get

[Continued on pg. 15]

THE SHLICHUS OF GABI AND RIVKY CONTINUES!

Interview by Rabbi Sholom Yaakov Chazan

*Two years have passed since the brutal murder of shluchim R' Gavriel and Rivka Holtzberg in their Chabad house in Bombay. * It wasn't only the world of Chabad that closely followed the story as it unfolded, but rather the entire world was witness to an unprecedented Kiddush Hashem and the spiritual awakening that resulted. * Since then, R' Gabi's father, R' Nachman Holtzberg, has been touring the world giving words of chizuk. He paused to give Beis Moshiach some insight into the tremendous impact their tragically short lives have had, even and especially after their passing...*

Since the tragedy, you have been traveling the world and speaking. Has the enormous *hisorerus* (spiritual arousal) immediately

following the massacre continued?

As time passes people tend to forget, but when something as traumatic as this takes place, the

powerful feelings generated by it are etched into people's hearts. Even if people don't think about it on a daily basis, when they meet me and hear stories about Gabi and Rivky, their



unbelievable Ahavas Yisroel and their activities to bring the Geula, they are inspired once again as though reliving those moments we all experienced two years ago.

I've yet to meet with someone who wasn't moved. People are excited to see me and they call over their children so they can see Gabi's father. They all want to see pictures of Moishy. In line with the Rebbe's approach, I try to inspire and give chizuk (strength), and people tell me in amazement: "We thought that when we meet you we will have to give you strength, but you are strengthening us!"

I recently visited a family in New York and when the wife saw me she



began to cry. She said not a day passes that she doesn't think about the tragedy. She lights candles every day *l'ilui nishmasam* and on Erev Shabbos her children give tz'daka in

their z'chus (merit). There are many others like her.

You visit groups other than Lubavitchers too, and even those who are not Chassidim. What kind of reception do they give you?

I visited a yeshivish community and they said they can't forget the tremendous achdus (unity) in the frum world after the tragedy. "We didn't forget the mesirus nefesh of the shluchim," they said, and they also said that now that they are aware of the tremendous work of the Rebbe's shluchim, their feelings of alienation from us have gone down greatly.

We were recently invited to speak in Ger - I spoke to the boys and my wife addressed the girls. From one of the principals I was led to understand that this was an instruction from the Gerer Rebbe who wanted the students in his schools to learn from Gabi and Rivky's mesirus nefesh.

I was reminded that on the Motzaei Shabbos before the funeral, I was at the Kosel and after I said Kaddish a Gerrer Chassid approached me and asked whether I was Gabi's father. When I said that I was, he asked that I go over to his friend who was standing nearby. The friend, a diamond dealer and a Gerrer Chassid, told me that a few months earlier he wanted to go to Bombay with eight other Chassidim for business purposes. When he asked the Gerrer Rebbe for a bracha for the trip, the Rebbe reacted with dismay: "Bombay? What about davening with a minyan? What about a Jewish atmosphere?"

The Chassid told the Rebbe that in Bombay there was a shliach of the Lubavitcher Rebbe by the name of Rabbi Gavriel Holtzberg, a young talmid chacham who gives shiurim every day in Chassidus, Gemara and Halacha. A few days later the Gerrer Rebbe told that Chassid: "I looked into it and everything you said was true. Go in peace."

The great esteem with which the Gerrer Rebbe regarded them was evidenced in the fact that he personally came when the bodies were brought to Eretz Yisroel and he attended the funeral and the Shloshim. It was highly unusual for him.

When I attended an evening of hisorerus with Skverer Chassidim, hundreds of Chassidim came led by their Rebbe. When it was over, their Rebbe asked me to come to his room and tell him more about Gabi and Rivky. We sat there for over an hour. He was very moved and cried throughout our conversation.

By the way, at the end of the Shiva, the Toldos Aharon Rebbe asked me and my mechutan, R' Shimon Rosenberg, to come and visit him. He had lost his son-in-law in the same massacre. When we sat with him to say l'chaim, he said that before he became Admur he had learned a shiur in Chassidus for a few years with my father, R' Moshe Tzvi and he felt that when it was decreed that his son-in-law be killed in my son's Chabad house that a spiritual circle had been closed.

L'havdil, even non-Jews are excited to meet me. They often stop me in the street and ask: "Are you Gabi's father?"

One day I got a phone call from a priest who told me that he had researched the story of Gabi and Rivky and was amazed by how this talented young man left his community and went to a place like that just in order to help people. "There is no such thing like that with us. Only the Jewish people can be so devoted."

After several phone conversations we met in person and he told me that he had decided to convert. He is a Noachide now and has started the conversion process. "After I convert I will go on a media tour to explain the uniqueness of the Jewish people," he said.

Do people tell you about

STORIES I'VE HEARD ABOUT GABI AND RIVKY

During the trips that R' Holtzberg makes around the world he meets with hundreds of people who passed through the Chabad house in Bombay and have wonderful stories to tell about Gabi and Rivky:

*Someone told me that his brother-in-law was with Gabi and Rivky shortly before the tragedy. He would visit the Chabad house often and he knew that Rivky usually did not ask for favors. She did everything herself, happily. To his surprise, Rivky asked him whether he could do her a favor and take a package to the airport and give it to a woman traveling to Israel. He agreed and managed to locate the woman and give her the package.

Upon his return, despite the late hour, Rivky was waiting to hear that the woman received the package. When she noticed his surprise she said that the woman was a kibbutznikit who did not eat kosher. During her visit to India she spent four weeks at the Chabad house, where Rivky convinced her to start eating kosher. "Today they told her that her flight was moved earlier and she rushed to the airport. Since she has a long flight ahead of her, I was afraid that without kosher food she might eat treif again. So it was important to me that you bring her the package of kosher food."

*Someone in California told me that he has an American Express card and shortly after the tragedy he called customer service and someone with an Indian accent answered the phone. As you know, many American companies use customer service representatives in India. While talking, he asked her where in India she was from. She said she lives in Bombay in the neighborhood of the Chabad house. She told him that Gabi was concerned not only for the Jews but also for his non-Jewish neighbors. When she once told him about the financial plight of the neighbors and asked that he donate 20,000

rupees for food for them, he brought her 50,000 rupees the next day and asked that she prepare food for all the neighbors.

*When I was in Australia the original plan was for me to give lectures in Sydney. I had some extra free days and we decided to go to Melbourne for the weekend. I gave a few lectures there too, in and out of the Chabad community. Between lectures, a local person came over to me and excitedly said he had to talk to me.

The story I heard from him was incredible. A month before the attack he visited the Chabad house in Bombay. Rivky, who was always interested in the families of visitors so she could be of help, asked him to show her his family album of pictures. When she saw his daughter she asked: "What about a shidduch?" He told her that just that Motzaei Shabbos she was going to meet a boy.

Rivky was happy to hear this and wished them success and then he asked: "If I send you a ticket to the wedding, will you come?" Rivky said she would. Then he asked Gabi: "If I send you two tickets, will you come, too?" He said he would be happy to attend.

The very night they were murdered, his daughter became engaged. He said that after their death he flew to the graves to invite them to the wedding.

He concluded emotionally: "My daughter is getting married this Sunday and you and your wife have just arrived in Melbourne. I am sure that Gabi and Rivky sent you to take their place and attend the wedding and you are, of course, invited to come!"

We went to the wedding and it was tremendously moving. I danced with the chassan and my wife danced with the kalla and in the middle of the wedding the father stood up and told all the guests this story.

activities they did l'ilui nishmasam?

I hear of hundreds of activities done l'ilui nishmasam. Dozens of Sifrei Torah were written in their memory, six mikvaos, soup kitchens, and nearly fifteen preschools were established in their memories. That's aside from the hundreds of children who were named for them. It's an amazing thing - close to 700 children were named either Gabi or

Rivky and there are even four sets of twins called Gabi and Rivky.

I met a big fertility specialist from New Jersey. Each treatment he does costs \$20,000. He told me that when he heard about the tragedy he was greatly moved and he decided to donate his services for free to sixty couples associated with the shluchim, l'ilui nishmas Gabi and Rivky.

When I was in Johannesburg, I

met a professor who is not observant who told me that after the tragedy he asked a rabbi what to do in their memory. The rabbi suggested that he start a shiur at the university. He started a shiur that quickly grew and from that a whole congregation evolved.

How do define your role now?

It's brought in s'farim that every person has a mission in the world and when he dies, a vacuum is

created that needs to be filled. This vacuum is filled by saying Kaddish.

I feel that my role is to fill the tremendous void left by Gabi and Rivky's deaths: to go to every Jew and tell him the time of the Geula has arrived and that this tragedy was another stage in the preparation for Geula. My feeling was that this time of unusual achdus and the spiritual uplift was auspicious for the Geula and if undesirable things hadn't mixed in, the Geula would surely be here.

I go from city to city and meet people and tell them this. When I meet children I say to each boy: You can be Gabi, and to every girl: You can be Rivky. Your role is to do more good deeds to hasten the Geula.

The Chabad house was left in a shambles. What are your plans for the future?

Immediately after the attack people made the mental connection with the events of Kfar Chabad in 5716/1956 in which terrorists murdered boys in the vocational school. When they informed the Rebbe, he said: "In building they will be consoled." We also feel we must rebuild the Chabad house.

I have a video that was taken after Gabi finished building the Chabad house. He spoke to journalists and said that he wanted this building to be an active Chabad house, that people would be happy to walk in and receive material and spiritual help, and that he even wanted to make a yeshiva there. He did, in fact, make a yeshiva for young Jewish Indian boys who made great progress in their Jewish studies and right before the massacre they were learning the laws of Choshen Mishpat with him!

There are people who said there were security problems in rebuilding the Chabad house and that's why it has been delayed but we got the opinions of many security experts who said we can rebuild and have



R' Gavriel Holtzberg hy"d talking with a mekurav of the Chabad house

first rate security. Of course, if Hashem doesn't protect you, no security measures will help, but it is possible to secure the place with natural means.

We started construction recently. We are looking now for sources of money and hope to complete the building soon so that the great light that came forth from Gabi and Rivky will be restored.

I'll end with an amazing story. When we started talking about rebuilding the Chabad house, I met someone in Australia who greatly desired to help but he wasn't sure that we were doing the right thing. He said to me: "You believe that the Rebbe answers through the Igros Kodesh, so let's ask the Rebbe." The man wrote a letter and then we put it into a volume of Igros Kodesh. The Rebbe's answer was in volume 21, page 463, and it left no doubt that not only are we supposed to build but there is no danger at all in doing so:

About your writing concerning the need for a mosad etc. the doubt and question about it is surprising.

Especially these days after the auspicious days of the Yemei Ha'Geula 12-13 Tammuz. It is known to what extent the Rebbe, my father-in-law, was moser nefesh for chinuch al taharas ha'kodesh (sacrificed for pure Jewish education) even when it entailed danger, and all the more so must there be efforts exerted in a location where there is no danger and on the contrary.

What is your message to the shluchim?

Gabi and Rivky worked to spread the Besuras Ha'Geula with tremendous achdus and Ahavas Yisroel. This is the message that all the shluchim ought to take with them - to increase in spreading the Besuras Ha'Geula, all with achdus and Ahavas Yisroel.

When this is done with genuine love it is accepted and Jews are inspired to add in Torah and mitzvos in order to be ready for Moshiach. And when Moshiach comes we will see Gabi and Rivky again - they will be in the front row.

HOLY DOUGHNUTS

By Aryeh Gotfryd, PhD

The purpose of a Jew's existence is to make this world a fit dwelling place for G-d, to make the physical a receptacle for the Divine. And this finds its ultimate expression when even one's mundane actions, not just Torah and mitzvos, are dedicated to G-d.

--From Days of Destiny, adapted from the teachings of the Rebbe.

Ahh... Chanukah. The festival of light, the miracle of oil. Dreidels, Chanukah gelt, jelly doughnuts and latkes (alias potato pancakes). Is it the memories that warm your heart, or is it the heartburn that you remember? As they say, the miracle was that they ate one latke and it burned for eight days. Ouch.

Corny jokes aside (mainly), there is more than a kernel of truth to the old kibbitz that all Jewish holidays have the same theme, and that is: They tried to kill us, G-d saved us, let's eat!

But while the redemptions marked by Purim and Pesach also share that theme, Chanukah is a little different. The Egyptians and the Persians waged war on us physically, but the Greeks wanted to destroy our soul. They fought against our faith and hence it is our spiritual liberation that we mainly celebrate.

This begs the question – if it's all

about the spirit, why do we make a big deal about the food?

The truth is that every culture marks special occasions with food. Reasons for this range from social to psychological, and from ethnic to organic. I would like to focus on another suggestion for why there's digestion – it's part kabbalistic and part Meshiachistic, as follows:[1]

Our sages compare the process of redemption to birth, and the prior stage of exile to pregnancy. Within the womb, the fetus is curled up with the head near the heart and the knees brought up around the head.

Similarly, a person in exile is in a topsy turvy position. Not only is life *in utero* upside down, but over there the head has no control over the heart, nor does the heart rule the lower faculties. So too in exile, our thoughts are no more meaningful than our speech, our speech no better than our deeds.

Actually the opposite is the case. Just as the knees surround the head in the fetus, so too in exile, actions speak louder than words, and speech dominates thought. I am sure we all know what it means to act without feeling, to feel without thinking. That's life in exile, and it's not very liberating.

But there is a way out. We can eat our way to redemption, literally. Here is how it works,

Unlike pre-borns who “eat” through their navels, we eat through our mouths. When the food hits the palate, we experience the flavor, in Hebrew, *taam*. *Taam* also means reason and the pleasure of physical taste derives from the pleasure within *chochma*, wisdom, the highest faculty of the soul.

To release the flavor we have to break up the food with our 32 teeth, which derive from the 32 paths of wisdom described in Seifer Yetzira, the original book of Kabbalah attributed to Abraham, nearly 4000 years ago. When we chew *l'sheim Shamayim*, for the sake of heaven, the flavor released ascends to brain, the mind, and the soul, right up to its root in *taanug d'chochma*, the delight within this higher wisdom.

This is really a process of redemption because there is a spark of divinity within that flavor and it fell into this world through a process called *shviras ha'keilim*, the shattering of the vessels, which took place before the beginning of time. That spark has been waiting for you since then, waiting for you to decide if you will redeem it by eating for the sake of heaven or eat it, rather, for the sake of “yum that's tasty, can I have more,” in which case it falls into continued exile in the depths of your gut.

The failure to focus on divine purpose during eating forces bondage on the flavor-spark and on the consumer as well. Myopically tied to a materialistic perspective, the mindless eater stays spiritually curled in a fetal heels-over-head bundle, unable to liberate oneself and the environment through something so simple as ... mindful eating, chassidic style.

Even without divine purpose, mindful eating has many benefits – it remediates stress, depression, anxiety, chronic pain, and heart disease.[2] But once you infuse your eating experience with an awareness of the One who created

it, you do much more than celebrate the experience of eating, you actually sanctify the food and the flavor and the fun you have eating it, redeeming the moment, redeeming yourself, and tipping the scales toward a more conscious world – a world redeemed by our mindful interactions.

Who would have imagined that bringing Moshiach could be so

simple? Just find a jelly doughnut, make a blessing, take a bite, and think “Ahh... Chanukah. This one is for you Hashem.”

Maybe that’s why the doughnuts have jelly instead of holes. It’s to tell us that approached the right way, holiness has substance and can truly be sweet.

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and educator living near Toronto, Canada. To contact, read more or to book him for a talk, visit www.arniegotfryd.com or call 416-858-9868

NOTES:

[1] Based on Toras Menachem, Vol. 38, Book 1, p.341-2.

[2] The Center for Mindful Eating

[Continued from pg. 9]

into more heated and impassioned altercations than those who don’t.

The Rebbe of our generation has infused all those connected with him with a degree of love for his fellow Jew, beyond anything ever seen before, to the point that even the most simple have the capacity to emulate our forefather Avraham Avinu in building an open house in the spiritual desert, to shower love and kindness on every Jew, with complete self-sacrifice. The intensity of that love comes out more strongly when dealing with those we are connecting with across a distance, both spatial and spiritual, whereas with those close to us the love is more innate and less overt, cooler and less passionate, and that same intensity of passion is likely to express itself in the negative.

We need to make a concerted effort to see those close to us in the light of their finest qualities and their inherent goodness and G-dliness, or else we can end up becoming like those people who shower love and kindness on strangers, and generate hostility and divisiveness amongst those they are closest to. That is why we needed to be forewarned as far back as the original 14th of Kislev, the point of original connection with the Rebbe, to the dangers of “disputes for the sake of Heaven.” However, we also needed guidelines as to when, and regarding what, one should give in, especially when dealing with issues that affect following the Rebbe’s instructions.

Even when it comes to matters that the Alter Rebbe himself testifies that you are right and the other person is wrong, one should

give in for the sake of unity and Chassidic brotherhood, because as long as the wellsprings are being spread, the truth will out eventually. But when it comes to those trying to prevent the spreading of the wellsprings, who are actively working to hide the truth, although we must avoid confrontation at all costs, we don’t back down. And ultimately it is not so much the innate unity that we merited to have infused within us from Above, but rather the unity that we bring out in ourselves by banding together for a common goal and purpose, despite our differences, as many and wide-ranging as they may be, that we will cancel all decrees and burst all boundaries and bring about the wedding celebration of Hashem and the Jewish people, with the coming of Moshiach, immediately, NOW!

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WHEN A REBBE MARRIES

*What dowry did the Rebbe Maharash receive? Why wasn't the Rebbe Maharash present at the wedding of his son, the Rebbe Rashab? How old was the Rebbe Rashab when he was engaged? Why did the Rebbe Rashab pause in the middle of the maamer at his son's wedding? How did Rabbi Meir Shapiro react after talking in learning with the Rebbe MH" M? * Thoughts on the weddings of Beis HaRav, in honor of 14 Kislev, the anniversary of the Rebbe and Rebbetzin.*

"THE ABILITIES I INHERITED FROM MY HUSBAND"

On the day of the Rebbe Maharash's wedding, his father, the Tzemach Tzedek told him to go to the kitchen and ask his grandmother, Rebbetzin Sheina for a bracha. The chassan went to ask for her bracha but she responded in annoyance that the day was long and

she would bless him at the chuppa. When the chassan repeated this to his father, his father told him to go back and ask her for a bracha then and there.

The Maharash went back to the kitchen. The Rebbetzin was particularly busy and many women were bustling about and carrying out her instructions. In the midst of this hullabaloo stood the chassan insisting that he needed to receive

her bracha.

When she saw that he would not give in, she asked for water to wash her hands and then placed her hands on his head and in the presence of two witnesses, she blessed him as follows:

"Yehi ratzon that all the *kochos* (abilities, powers) I inherited from my husband [the Mittlerer Rebbe], should rest upon your head!"

When the Tzemach Tzedek





heard the wording of the blessing he was very pleased.

(Ateres Malchuso)

BLESSING FOR THE BRIDE

That very day, the kalla went to her father-in-law, the Tzemach Tzedek and received his blessing for her marriage. At this time, the Rebbe asked that she bless him in return.

The kalla did so and then added [in a play on words through transposing the wording of the Gemara], “The blessing of a kalla shouldn’t be considered mundane in your eyes.”

At the wedding, the Tzemach Tzedek was very joyous and he said much Chassidus.

The great Chassidim such as R’ Isaac of Homil, R’ Nechemia of Dubrovna, R’ Yitzchok Isaac of Vitebsk, R’ Hillel of Paritch, R’ Peretz of Beshenkowitz, R’ Pesach of Malastovka, and others who participated in the simcha, farbrenged together in great joy.

(Likkutei Sippurim - Perlov, p. 131)

IN THE FUTURE

The Rebbe Maharash was not present at the wedding of the Rebbe Rashab because of his poor health. Only his wife, Rebbetzin Rivka, traveled with her son, the chassan, to the wedding.

A week before the wedding, the Rebbe Maharash accompanied his son to the town of Achremova, where he said Chassidus and told wondrous things.

When he finished saying Chassidus he said to his son: “Now is the revelation of the ‘*mochin d’ima*’ and that is why the mother of the chassan is traveling, but in the future, when the ‘*mochin d’abba*’ (i.e. after the coming of Moshiach) will be revealed, I will also be there.”

The Rebbe Maharash told his son not to wear a shtraimel at his wedding and in general, not to wear it except in Lubavitch. That is what the Rebbe Rashab did all his life; he only wore the shtraimel in Lubavitch.

On this trip, the chassan and his mother brought a gift for the kalla, a new hat. The gift was in a box on the wagon. The Rebbe asked what was in the box and when he was told it was a hat for the kalla he asked to see it. When they gave him the hat

he removed the feather.

(Seifer HaSichos Toras Sholom)

WHO IS BIGGER THAN WHOM

In the year 5625/1875, when the Rebbe Rashab was four years old, his grandfather, the Tzemach Tzedek said he wanted to make a shidduch for him and he suggested his granddaughter Shterna Sarah, the youngest daughter of his son, R’ Yosef Yitzchok.

Regarding this it is told:

In his childhood, the Rashab spent nearly all day in the Tzemach Tzedek’s house. One time, when Rebbetzin Shterna Sarah, the daughter of his uncle, R’ Yosef Yitzchok of Ovrutch was there, the Tzemach Tzedek referred to them as “Chassan and kalla.”

R’ Yosef Yitzchok asked his father, the Tzemach Tzedek: “Perhaps when he grows up he won’t be suitable for her?”

His father replied: “This young one will be greater than you!”

(Chanoch L’Naar)

THE DRAWING DOWN OF A NEW LIGHT

Regarding the wedding of the Rebbe Rayatz it is said that while saying the maamer, when the Rebbe [Rashab] spoke about the concept of “*simcha poretz geder*” (joy breaking boundaries), he suddenly stopped and said that the matter was concealed from him. The Rebbe got up and went to where the maamer was and looked at it, returned to his place and continued saying the maamer.

On Shabbos Parshas Teitzei, 5714/1954, the Rebbe spoke about the Rebbe Rashab stopping in the middle of the maamer and he explained:

“Generally, things like this did not happen. How is it possible to say that it was hidden from him? What

“Yehi ratzon that all the kochos (abilities, powers) I inherited from my husband [the Mittlerer Rebbe], should rest upon your head!”

it means is that the concept disappeared to its source temporarily in order that it be drawn down again from the source. This was so that the *hamshacha* be in a loftier manner than before, along the lines of a person sleeping at which time the kochos rise to their source and renewed kochos come down.

“Things like this never happened except at the marriage of the Rebbe which is a general matter and the drawing down of a new light - at that time the joy and the saying of Chassidus were unlimited.”

WHAT IS THIS CHASSAN LIKE?

Regarding the Rebbe’s wedding it is told that before the chuppa, R’ Berel Moshe Shmotkin asked the Rebbe Rayatz what the chassan was like. The Rebbe responded:

“I gave my daughter to this man.’ He is proficient in Bavli and Yerushalmi, he knows Rishonim and Acharonim and more. At 4:00 in the morning he is never asleep - either he never went to sleep or he got up already.”

UNDER THE SKY

At the Kabbalas Panim (reception) before the wedding of a Lubavitcher which took place in the winter, they told the Rebbe that due to the cold they were planning on holding the chuppa indoors. The Rebbe said: “My wedding also took place in the winter and the chuppa was under the sky and I am, thank G-d, satisfied with the shidduch.”

THE REBBE DISTRIBUTED MASHKE

Chassidim who were present at the wedding relate that the Rebbe Rayatz went from table to table with a towel over his shoulder like a waiter and he distributed mashke and blessed the guests.

This was a repeat of what his father, the Rebbe Rashab, did at the wedding of the Rebbe Rayatz, where he went around ... among the guests ... and drank l’chaim with each one with warm blessings for each one according to his needs.

On Shabbos Parshas Naso, 5747, the Rebbe related:

“At my wedding meal the Rebbe, my father-in-law walked among the guests to give out mashke and say l’chaim. Seeing this, I could not remain seated while my father-in-law stood and gave out mashke and I stood up in order to try and at least help by holding the mashke or holding the cup etc. The Rebbe turned to me immediately and motioned that I should remain seated.

A Jew is stubborn ... and seeing how my father-in-law was circulating and distributing mashke (or wine, I don’t remember precisely) and he probably was holding a cup, I began to get up again in order to help. Then my father-in-law looked at me [with an exceedingly sharp look] and I understood that I had to remain seated. I sat “on pins and needles” ... of course, but I sat, until he came back and sat down to continue the wedding meal.

YOU TOOK A WORLD CLASS GENIUS AS A SON-IN-LAW

R’ Shmuel Zalmanov a”h related that he had the privilege of being the waiter appointed to the head table at the Rebbe’s wedding:

As a young bachur it wasn’t proper for me to hover near the table, but in my job as waiter I approached the table several times and was able to see how the Rebbe Rayatz turned to the famous gaon, Rabbi Meir Shapiro zt”l, rav of Lublin, who sat next to the chassan, and suggested that he speak to the chassan in divrei Torah. So Rabbi Shapiro said to the Rebbe, “Nu, say something.”

In the meantime, I moved away from the table out of politeness, but I continued to follow what was going on and I saw how the Rebbe spoke quietly to him for a long time and R’ Shapiro sat and listened and made brief comments.

This went on a long time and at the end, R’ Shapiro said to the Rebbe Rayatz: “Lubavitcher Rebbe, you took as your son-in-law a *gaon olam* (world class Torah genius).”

Then R’ Shapiro asked the Rebbe to continue relating chiddushei Torah, but the Rebbe gently refused saying: “Until now, I was commanded to do so; if I continue, that would be of my own volition.”

GROOM AND FATHER-IN-LAW DANCE

After the meal, at about 3:30 AM, the Chassidic Admurim present got up and danced together in a circle (as Polish Chassidim do). When they sat down to rest, the Rebbe Rayatz took his son-in-law and danced quickly, hand on shoulder, as they do in Lubavitch. The Admurim then left.

(Nisuei HaN’siim)

RED ALERT!

NETANYAHU STARTS GOLAN WITHDRAWAL

Raanan Isseroff



Town of Ghajar sitting half on the border of Israel and half on the border of Lebanon thanks to the UN which divided the town contrary to the wishes of its residents who wanted it to stay Israeli after it was captured in 1967. On the top right is the kibbutz Snir. To the left are the Golan Heights soon (G-d forbid!) to be given away as part of agreements between PM Netanyahu and Syria. In the ravine at front is the River Snir, which leads into the Jordan River.

Israel announced recently that it is withdrawing from the town of Ghajar, a small and seemingly unobtrusive town on its northern border, just under the Golan Heights. This small town, captured in 1967, sits on the border between Israel and Lebanon at the head of

the River Snir (which means snow), a Biblically referenced river that collects its waters from the snow runoff from Mount Hermon. It is one of three tributaries feeding the Jordan River.

This small river runs through a ravine that creates a natural border

between Israel and Lebanon. (See satellite picture courtesy of Google Earth)

What is strange, however, is that the Israel / Lebanon border runs right through the center of the town (See that yellow line in the picture). Apparently this has been of considerable concern to the Arab residents, who have petitioned both the UN and Israel to become Israeli.

It seems to be "old news," mentioned in October 2009 in HaAretz, a newspaper that usually reports news in support of "land for peace." Here however, the article expressed concern over the human tragedy involved. Even the Arab residents themselves do not wish to come under Hezbollah's terror machine controlling Lebanon:

"Ghajar, on the other hand, is not a challenge. As far as the government is concerned, the big achievement happened in 2000 when the United Nations drew the so-called Blue Line to determine the final border between Israel and Lebanon, after the Israel Defense Forces left. But in doing so the UN created a human tragedy, with the northern part of the village in Lebanon and the southern part in the Golan under Israel. Who in Lebanon needs Ghajar? It's the only Alawite village in the world whose residents, some 2,000 people, hold Israeli ID cards. Even in Lebanon it's considered part of Syria. Ghajar's residents petitioned UN representatives but failed to convince them."

Ignoring all this, Israel continues its quest to satisfy its misplaced feelings of "what will the world think" at the expense of Jewish safety, by again bowing to UN demands.

In 1967, when Israel captured the Golan Heights from Syria, Ghajar remained a no-man's land for the next two and a half months. The non-Jewish Alawite villagers petitioned the Golan's Israeli governor to be annexed to Israel

because they saw themselves as part of the Golan Heights. Israel agreed to include Ghajar in its occupied territory and the residents accepted living under Israeli rule. In 1981, most villagers accepted Israeli citizenship under the Golan Heights Law.

Interestingly enough, while the town is divided according to UN resolution 1701, only Israel seems to be keeping its part of the bargain.

According to Wiki, the key resolutions of 1701 approved by the Lebanese cabinet, of which 2 are Hezbollah members, are as follows:

In addition to 14 demands upon Israel, the Resolution demands the following from the other side:

***Full cessation of hostilities (OP1)** (The original wording: “Calls for a full cessation of hostilities based upon, in particular, the immediate cessation by Hezbollah of all attacks and the immediate cessation by Israel of all offensive military operations”)

***Israel to withdraw all of its forces from Lebanon in parallel with Lebanese and UNIFIL soldiers deploying throughout the South (OP2)**

***Hezbollah to be disarmed (OP3)** (The Original wording: “full implementation of the relevant provisions of the Taif Accords, and of resolutions 1559 (2004) and 1680 (2006), that require the disarmament of all armed groups in Lebanon, so that, pursuant to the Lebanese cabinet decision of 27 July, 2006, there will be no weapons or authority in Lebanon other than that of the Lebanese State”)

***Full control of Lebanon by the government of Lebanon (OP3)** (in the original: “– no foreign forces in Lebanon without the consent of its Government”)

***No paramilitary forces, including (and implying) Hezbollah, will be south of the Litani River (OP8).** (In the original: “Acting in support of a request from

the Government of Lebanon to deploy an international force to assist it to exercise its authority throughout the territory, authorizes UNIFIL to take all necessary action in areas of deployment of its forces and as it deems within its capabilities, to ensure that its area of operations is not utilized for hostile activities of any kind, to resist attempts by forceful means to prevent it from discharging its duties under the mandate of the Security Council, and to protect United Nations personnel, facilities, installations and equipment, ensure the security and freedom of movement of United Nations personnel, humanitarian workers and, without prejudice to the responsibility of the Government of Lebanon, to protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence.”)

Israel is complying with everything in Resolution 1701, yet the other side complies with nothing.

The resolutions which are supposed to be enforced by the UN & Lebanon are only 5. There is no surprise that even these cannot be kept to. They are Arabs and hate Jews. This is normal. “Halacha M’Mosheh MiSinai: Eisav Soneh L’Yaakov”. It is a Jewish law we received from Moses on Mount Sinai: “Eisav hates Jacob”. This is normal.

What is not normal is the Jewish response - Israel’s breaking of diplomatic rules and putting her own citizenry in danger. In spite of years of repeatedly broken promises from “Peaceful” agreements with her Arab neighbors, Israel still withdraws. How is this peace in any form?

What peace can come for Israelis from having vital security from the Northern border compromised?

From another point of view, Israel is withdrawing without demanding that the other side keep to the agreements which were supposed to be enforced by the UN. Now with a history of not respecting

Israel’s need to have these agreements enforced, Israel is setting itself up for another dishonest agreement that has no hope of being fulfilled, satisfied with more false promises from the UN and “Israel’s good friends” Lebanon and Syria that all will be in good faith.

In other words, Israel complies with her 14 conditions. Lebanon and the United Nations do not. Israel plows forward “to Peace!” But what sort of a peace is this?

According to Israel’s “Land for Peace” team, not only is this okay, but it is touted as “progress,” with Israel now prepared to enter into further false promises of Israel’s security. Promises the other side didn’t keep before and will not keep in the future.

One has to properly appreciate the lack of responsibility this represents, a complete lack of care for the citizens of Israel. What about at least a proper respect for what Israel stands for as a stated mission of being a homeland of Jews? At least as a diplomatic country? Since when is giving in to terrorist demands now defined as “Peace”?

Perhaps one might argue that the Germans also had a version of “Peace” like this with the Jews.

When the Jews will be dead, we won’t fight with them.

Further, it is doubtful that the people negotiating have any intent to ever make peace. Each piece of land that is given only spurs them on to more bloodthirsty acts of terror. Israel, meanwhile, simply rewards each act of terror with statements that “We Jews must have mesirat nefesh for peace”.

Knowing this, the government goes on with “Peace Talks,” plotting and planning which piece to give away next. Obviously nothing peaceful is in store for the Jews of Israel, so what is really going on?

Rambam calls it: “The beginning of retreat is the beginning of defeat” . It even rhymes in English just like

When G-d sends people against us, it is not for us to retreat from our position, whether it is philosophical or physical. Rather it is a challenge that we must face head on, in the most Jewish way possible.

it does in Hebrew - a truth that is universal.

Furthermore, each retreat acts to substantiate the enemy's claim that Israel's land was stolen. If the claim is not true, why think to retreat? It's Israel's own behavior that encourages the media to insist that there must be something to the claim. This results in more world-wide vilification of Israel and Jews. Meanwhile the land giveaway process goes on. Land is given as a reward to our enemies for their broken promises.

It doesn't need to be that way.

If anything, this is a fulfillment of what Rashi brings on the first line of Chumash, the prophecy of Rabbi Yitzchok from 600 years ago that, "The day will come when the nations of the world will come to you and say 'You have stolen Israel's land!'" Since we see that this part is being fulfilled, it must also be that the second part also will come about: "On that day you will tell them: 'The One who created the world gave them the land and took it from them and gave it to us.'"

Historically, for a Jew, there is a *seder*, a natural order. G-d gave us a mission to fulfill and we are His ambassadors, His *Shluchim*. There have always been the *Eisavs* who are unhappy with the children of Jacob but this is part of the normal natural order of the world. When G-d sends people against us, it is not for us to retreat from our position, whether it is philosophical or physical. Rather it is a challenge that we must face

head on, in the most Jewish way possible.

This theme is repeated over and over again in Torah. The bad guys come, we stand up for what G-d wants, and there is help from Above. We don't look to the Republicans. We don't look to the Democrats. We don't care if Obama does this or Hillary does that. We don't depend on our might. The Jew is the boss here, creating the options.

We simply do what we are supposed to be doing as Jews in that time and place and a Shimshon, a Gidon, a Devorah, a Yael or a Yiftach is sent from Above to help us.

This what Rabbi Yitzchok means: "Tell them that G-d runs the world!" Stand up and proclaim a simple statement: "I am a Jew, the One who created you and I gave us this land as an inheritance". Herein is the strength enough to stand up to the anti-Semitic negotiators. The world knows the Biblical claim for Israel. But that's not all there is to it.

Jews know that while the Biblical claim is important to proclaim to the outside world, still, there is another level that is even more important. "Pikuach nefesh docha ha'kol" - the danger to Jewish life puts aside everything. Here there is a dangerous enemy and first, we need to ensure that Israel is safe. Jewish life comes first. The Lubavitcher Rebbe tells us that the secret is to hold on to all of our borders and with this, G-d will give us a blessing in that we will be able to defend

ourselves.

Not only that, but holding on to this little town protects Tel Aviv. Yes, this little town in the North keeps the grand metropolis of Tel Aviv safe. How so?

There is a famous story of a boy who saved the city of Amsterdam. The city of Amsterdam is actually built below sea level. It survives surrounded by high walls that keep the sea out. One day a little boy was walking by one of the walls and saw a hole with sea water pouring through. Thinking fast, he stuck his finger in the hole, stopping the small flow. He stood there for hours until finally someone found him and called for help. The story is famous because from that little bit of water, the hole would easily have gotten bigger until it was an uncontrollable flood.

So too, our sages in their great wisdom write in Jewish Law an amazing thought. If a Jewish town is on the border of a country and it is attacked - or even if there is a *doubt* that an attack might occur - even if it is Shabbos, one must go out and fight! Why? The Shulchan Aruch explains: If this little town will fall, then the rest of the country can easily be overcome. That small breach in the wall can become an unstoppable flood.

This town of Ghajar may not look like too much, but like the small river Snir next to it, Ghajar is actually a key to bigger things. What happens to the river? It gets fed from the snow melting from Mount Hermon. The "Tal," the dew of Mount Hermon, later turns into the River Jordan. Spiritually, we each have to guard that our "small border towns" don't fall, for as we know, this can lead to bigger failures of a spiritual nature, G-d forbid. In such a way, the Rebbe discusses how a small thing like being *tznius* protects Jews from harm by causing the divine presence to rest amongst the Jewish people. At the same time we

learn from the little river Snir that the "Tal", the dew of Torah can become bigger things spiritually.

Here too, the Lubavitcher Rebbe is telling us in quoting this law of Shabbos from Shulchan Aruch that in order to protect Tel Aviv, we must ensure that Ghajar stays in Israel's hands!

Not only that but the Rebbe wants *us* to do it. For years the Rebbe spoke about the topic in his sichos. To who? To the guy in Tel Aviv? We can delude ourselves that these were directed at the non-religious Jew in Eretz Yisroel, but a little introspection makes it clear that these talks were actually directed at

us, the Chassidim. He was talking to us. We are the only ones who the Rebbe can count on to make a difference. Coming up to Yud Tes Kislev, we know this to be the truth. After all, who can one better depend on than one who has been instilled with the spark of Mesirus Nefesh? Please G-d.

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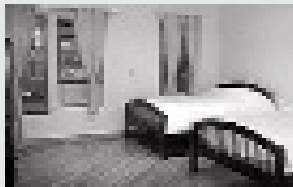
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ב"ה

GEULA – WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR?

By R' Gershon Avtzon

Part 1.

This is the introduction to our new series of articles. This series is coming after the success of our first series entitled “Moshiach - What We Believe”. I want to start by explaining the difference between the two series.

The first series, “Moshiach - What We Believe” dealt with basic questions on the fundamentals of the Jewish belief in Moshiach and a Messianic era. We dealt with questions like “Why is it important to believe in Moshiach”, “Why do we believe in a human Moshiach”, “Do Jews believe that Moshiach can be someone that had passed away?” etc. (If anyone wants a copy of that series, please email moshiachweekly@gmail.com with a request).

Our current series will be dealing with questions about life in the Messianic era. “Will there be eating and drinking in the Messianic era?” “Who will arise first in the time of the Resurrection?” etc.

Many people may be

wondering: Why is it important to know what the world will be like in the Messianic era? Isn't the main idea that I believe that Moshiach is coming?

The answer is simple: 1) Knowing the tremendous miracles that will transpire when Moshiach comes will serve to enhance our anticipation for Moshiach. 2) Misinformation about the era of Moshiach can lead someone to *lose* his anticipation for Moshiach.

I will share a story that I personally witnessed: When I was learning in Yeshivas Lubavitch Toronto, I gave the daily class in Inyanei Moshiach. One day, one of the local members of the Lubavitch community came in to speak with me.

He told me that his daughter in learning in a non-Lubavitch girls school. That morning, the teacher has asked the class what they were looking to in their lives. Most girls answered something personal, like a siblings wedding etc. but his daughter answered that she was

looking forward to Moshiach's imminent arrival. Instead of being impressed, the teacher responded critically! “Are you sure that you want Moshiach to come?” she asked dismissively. “Don't you know that there will be a big ‘Judgment Day’ when Moshiach comes?”

The girl came home from school in tears. She told her father what the teacher had said, but the father did not know what to answer. When I showed him that the Rebbe writes (Igros Kodesh volume 2, page 65) that the “Judgment Day” is only for non-Jews, he was very excited.

The point is clear: The more we are informed, the more we will anticipate the Geula.

That is why the Rebbe says (Tazria-Metzora 5751) that learning about Moshiach, is the direct path to bring Moshiach!

The Rebbe encourages and demands us to “Live with Moshiach and the Times of Moshiach”. We need to get ourselves accustomed to the lifestyle of Moshiach. This not only helps the transition, but actually makes Moshiach come sooner! When Hashem sees that we have taken the necessary steps and have enhanced our Yiddishkait to begin living with Moshiach, this encourages Him to bring Moshiach. This can only happen if we know what the lifestyle will be when Moshiach comes.

[Obviously, this applies only to things which are within the confines of Shulchan Aruch. If someone decides to break a Halacha with the intention of “Living with Moshiach” - for example: Someone may say that being that in the times of Geula, all fast-days will be annulled, so that person decides that they don't want to fast now! - this type of behavior actually pushes away Moshiach!]

I want to share a story that illustrates this point:

Some disciples of the Mezritcher Maggid wanted to see Eliyahu HaNavi. The Maggid kept on

pushing them off. One day the Maggid called them in and told them that he will allow them to meet Eliyahu HaNavi. They were obviously very excited.

The Maggid told them that the non-Jewish landowner of their town is celebrating his birthday tomorrow. In his honor, many noblemen will be visiting their town. All the noblemen come with their horse-driven carriages. At midday, continued the Maggid, all the carriages will make a procession to the landowners' mansion. The third carriage will be carrying Eliyahu HaNavi disguised as a nobleman.

The next day, the disciples got up early and went to the Mikva. They made sure that they were waiting on the main street well before the time that the procession was scheduled to pass. When the procession finally came, they jumped up to third wagon and said "Good Afternoon Reb Eliyahu" in Polish. The Polish nobleman gave them a blank stare and kicked them out. They came back to the Maggid very disappointed.

When the Maggid saw their long-faces, he asked them what happened. They told him that there must have been a mistake, for the nobleman that they saw was definitely not Eliyahu HaNavi. For would Eliyahu treat them this way? Would he not answer them?

The maggid asked them: "In what language did you greet him?" When they answered Polish, the Maggid smiled. "If you knew that you were standing in front of Eliyahu HaNavi, you wouldn't talk to him in Polish!!"

The lesson is clear. When we

The Maggid smiled. "If you knew that you were standing in front of Eliyahu HaNavi, you wouldn't talk to him in Polish!!"



know that we are about to enter Yemos HaMoshiach, we must adjust our thoughts, speech and action. What was good until now is not befitting for today. When one stands waiting to see a King, he wears his best garments and acts on his best behavior. You have to adjust to the life in the palace and not the other way around.

It is obvious that as long as we are still in Galus, we will not be able to live the Geula-lifestyle completely. But trying as hard as we can, gives us a foretaste of what the future will be like.

[Rabbi Tzvi Freeman says: When people see my Chassidic clothing,

they ask me how come I live in the past. I answer: I don't live in the past, I am showing you the lifestyle of the future!]

This is in-line with the famous story of the Tzemach Tzedek:

A Chassid once asked the Tzemach Tzedek (the third Rebbe of Chabad): "What is the point of exerting ourselves in the study of Chassidus, which deals with abstractions that no mortal mind can fully grasp? After all, when Moshiach comes, even those who did not study Chassidus will know G-d, as it is written, 'For they will all know me.'"

The Tzemach Tzedek replied: "A person listening to a conversation from the other side of a wall does not grasp it all; he only grasps its general drift. But later, when the conversation is repeated to him in all its detail, he understands everything that he had heard previously. Every moment or two he thinks, 'Aha! Now I understand all those connections and details!'"

"Here, too," explained the Tzemach Tzedek, "it is true that someone who studies Chassidus grasps only part of the subject. But when Moshiach will teach it in the Time to Come, that man will be able to look back and say, 'Aha...!'"

"And not only that, but someone hearing those teachings for the second time will understand them much more deeply than someone hearing it only for the first time. As the above-quoted verse says, 'For they will all know Me, from their smallest to their greatest' - and it is obvious that the understanding of a young child cannot be compared to that of an adult."

When people see my Chassidic clothing, they ask me how come I live in the past. I answer: I don't live in the past, I am showing you the lifestyle of the future!]

SAYING “NO” TO LAVISH WEDDINGS

By Yisroel Yehuda

An overview of the Rebbe’s views on how to make a wedding, presented for 14 Kislev, the Rebbe’s anniversary.

Mazal Tov! Relatives and friends flock to the house to give their heartfelt brachos and to share the excitement with the newly engaged couple.

Late at night, when the house finally settles down, it seems as though the family can finally relax. Boruch Hashem, a match has been finally made after an anxious period of inquiries and meetings. But the parents know good and well that they are about to face a long, hard, and winding road until the wedding.

The day after the l’chaim the parents come back down to earth, to reality. There is a long list of things to do and buy, with every detail requiring full attention and thought, keeping the parents occupied and preoccupied throughout the preparation period before the

wedding.

When a parent gets involved with wedding preparations, he knows that it is comprised of hundreds of details. Some of the details are a primary focus, without which the wedding won’t happen like the hall, reception, wedding, clothing, menu, chuppa, music etc. There are other details that are not essential but for some reason they have become so, such as photography, flowers, video, decoration of the kalla’s chair, t’shura etc. Within these details there are many possibilities and levels which usually depend on the quality of the service.

The mechutanim are the ones who decide on what sort of wedding they will make. They are faced with the choice of making a “standard” wedding, a simple wedding, or an

exclusive wedding (so people will talk about it). Each side has its preferences as to what to spend on and what’s important to them.

Most Lubavitchers opt for a standard wedding, one which is respectable and doesn’t cost a fortune, though it still costs plenty.

WHO DECIDES WHAT IS STANDARD?

Parents may recall that their own weddings were of a different sort; a nice though simple hall with a modest band and menu and a (relatively) small number of guests, without the many details that we see at today’s weddings, and yet, it was a lovely, happy wedding and they lived happily ever after.

The purpose of this article is not





to urge a return to days of old. Many new things have come up since then and the policy of Chabad is to make use of modernity for matters of k'dusha. However, "the good ol' days" reminds us that every era has its standards and these standards usually have nothing to do with new horaos. One or two people set a whole new expectation in the community and others follow them until it becomes "the way things are done" and if you don't do it that way, it seems as if the validity of the marriage is in question.

The Rebbe screamed about this many times.

THE HISTORY OF THE STANDARD

A long time ago we had an article

about old-time weddings. Chassidim who came from Russia brought with them the simplicity that they were accustomed to and since, in Eretz Yisroel, life was simple, the weddings that they made were similar in style to the ones made in Russia.

In America, though, when Anash came from Russia, they saw that people who had been living there for years were used to a higher material standard and weddings took place with far greater pomp and ceremony.

When R' Nissan Nemenov came to the United States, the Rebbe spoke to him in yechidus about the lavishness of Lubavitcher weddings. The Rebbe was not pleased about it and R' Nissan publicized this so

Chassidim would know the Rebbe's opinion on the matter.

With time, the standard of living climbed in Israel, too, and people began to do things that entail great expense. Most of these expenses had nothing to do with the simcha of the chassan and kalla but were picked up from other places and with time became the "standard."

Some readers might be thinking: what's so bad about that? These external things add to the joy of the chassan and kalla! For example, video with two photographers, a many piece band that generates great simcha, equipment that enables relatives who can't attend the wedding to be able to see it live, and various things that add to the beauty of the affair.

Yes, many innovations add to the joy of chassan and kalla and yet, we need to act like Chassidim and it's so important that every Chassid know what the Rebbe thinks about this and act accordingly. Then surely the young couple will merit all the brachos, and the preparations for the wedding will go far more easily.

THEY PRAISE US

Among other frum groups a wedding is an event that needs to be prepared for with the utmost seriousness, which is why they have a long engagement, both for spiritual reasons as well as simply to have enough time to prepare. In Israel they need to worry about buying an apartment and fully supporting the couple, and time is needed for this.

Among certain groups the father goes abroad (i.e. leaves Israel) to raise money to pay for the expenses of the wedding and an apartment. Oftentimes, the burden of debt makes him ill. Religious newspapers that try to fight this phenomenon always refer to Chabad, where parents do not promise an apartment in the pre-engagement financial negotiations. Nor do they

The “noise” and “publicity” that result from trivial and superficial things cause confusion and lack of peace of mind for soul and body, especially in matters of “hiddur” in worldly things ...

expend the huge amounts that are accepted as the norm among other groups.

The leaders of various groups have enacted *takanos* (rules) to fight the feeling that so many people have that they must keep up with and copy others who make big weddings and spend a fortune. The practice (of our Rebbeim) to hold the wedding on Friday was “to minimize expenses that are expended on a wedding.” Chazal in their time were concerned about this and they enacted for the 15th of Av that the girls wear borrowed white clothes so as not to shame those who were lacking.

The Gerrer Rebbe, the Lev Simcha zt”l, enacted strict rules that limit the number of guests at a wedding as well as other rules, desiring that weddings be of a certain standard so as to minimize excessive spending by those who don’t have the money.

In any case, a wedding today, even in Chabad, is a major undertaking, replete with countless details which usually require a great deal of time and money. Sometimes, even on the day of the chuppa itself, which is an auspicious time for the chassan, kalla and their parents, and ought to be utilized for holy purposes, they find themselves dealing with trivial matters and technical problems that arise.

Even when someone resolves to cut expenses, it’s not easy to do. One’s child only gets married once (we hope), and so one feels uncomfortable minimizing the simcha. Even when realizing that not

everything is necessary for a respectable simcha, it’s very hard to decide what to cut out.

IT’S A MITZVA TO SPEND ON A WEDDING

Many wedding practices are learned from Mattan Torah, when Hashem was the groom and we were the bride. Mattan Torah was a most impressive event. The entire world was silent because of the glory of G-d that rested upon the mountain with not a bird chirping etc. The entire world knew that G-d was giving the Torah to his bride, the Jewish people.

There is an inyan to spend on a wedding and it is important to publicize the wedding, as the Rebbe says:

1-The publicity of a marriage [that so-and-so the son of so-and-so and his female counterpart decided to marry] and the gathering of people etc. is an inyan according to Torah - as Chazal say, it is one of those things which is done publicly - and this has a number of halachic ramifications ... 2-It is self-understood that - similar to all other aspects of Torah and *mitzvos* - the concept of “at no cost,” [i.e., making a wedding in a miserly manner,] should not be entertained; it is a mitzva to take part in the funding and financing of a wedding (as is to be understood from the fact that our Sages speak at length about the greatness of *hachnasas kalla*).

Elsewhere, the Rebbe says:

It’s impossible to demand of the

“father of the chassan and the mother of the kalla” that they sit throughout this time [of preparation for the wedding] and learn *Derech Chaim* or *Tzena U’rena*, for after all, they need to prepare for the wedding.

From what the Rebbe says, it is clear that it is a mitzva to have a respectable wedding and that it be a great simcha. Surely effort should be expended on those details which bring joy to all. That’s as far as the wedding itself, but what about all the side-things that come along with making a wedding?

A RESPECTABLE WEDDING? YES. OSTENTATIOUS? NO!

Just as we learn from Mattan Torah about the idea of publicity and the public nature of a wedding, we also learn another awesome thing ... The Luchos that were given on Mt. Sinai “since they were given publicly, the evil eye reigned over them and they were broken, and here Hashem said to him [to Moshe Rabbeinu] ‘there is nothing more beautiful than modesty.’” Indeed, the second Luchos, which were given in a modest way, lasted. From here Chazal learn another idea regarding a wedding, [the verse says] “and walk modestly with your G-d” - this refers to the simcha of a chassan and kalla. Rashi explains that “walking modestly” regarding a wedding means “to eat in nice measure and to rejoice in nice measure.”

The Rebbe said this to a Chassid who had yechidus with his family (other parts of this yechidus will appear later in this article), explaining that “walking modestly” doesn’t mean to have a small wedding without publicity etc. but to minimize the expenses and increase the simcha.

But the “noise” and “publicity”

that result from trivial and superficial things cause confusion and lack of peace of mind for soul and body, especially in matters of “hiddur” in worldly things ... (and especially in quite a few instances with shocking extravagances) and therefore it is undesirable ...

I have already noted several times that we see that the greater the “hiddur” in trivial and superficial things (the opposite of “making a nice meal”) – the more we see how the inner and spiritual aspects are lacking and true joy is lacking (rejoicing nicely, i.e. properly).

In Lubavitch they did not hold of making g’zeiros (rules) (here the Rebbe smiled and said: Although I did make a rule ...) but for the benefit of chassan and kalla it is very worthwhile to minimize expenses, especially those that are in the category of wastefulness. The idea of “walking modestly” needs to be appropriate to every place according to the terms of that place etc. but in any case, in my humble opinion, the “excesses” associated with weddings lately in general, and here in the United States in particular - begins with the preparations beforehand, on the day of the wedding itself, and afterwards too - in many cases the opposite of “walking modestly” and “and there is nothing more beautiful than modesty.”

As I said, it is not for me to decrease in the simchas of Jewish people and I don’t want to limit and make rules about the number of guests etc.

Elsewhere, the Rebbe says:

And just consider, if one is so preoccupied with the expenses of the chuppa and the accoutrements where it is only a matter of one day and most of the expenses result from the desire to find favor in people’s eyes, how much more one should be preoccupied with the spiritual preparations which affect



Mashpia, R' Yehoshua Heschel Tzeitlin at a wedding

the young couple for the rest of their lives. Going on at length about this is unnecessary. Although Chazal spoke a great deal about the greatness of marrying off a kalla and the preparations for this, at this time, I think the hiddur needs to be in spiritual preparations and the extra expenditures - to be dedicated to matters of Torah and mitzvos for the merit of both the chassan and kalla.

To someone who apparently wrote to the Rebbe that many guests invited to the wedding would cause great expenses, the Rebbe wrote:

As far as how to make a wedding, whether to increase the number of guests etc. in which case this entails going into great debt, as you write, in my opinion this is not worthwhile ...

As far as a hall the Rebbe writes:

Regarding what you write about the wedding arrangements - in general I am not at all pleased by the squandering of money on renting a hall and other such things - expenses which have no



R' Zushe Wilyamovsky, the Partisan, bringing joy to a chassan and kalla

benefit, not even materially. It is true that our Sages speak in exceedingly effusive terms about the importance of causing chassan and kalla to rejoice, and how each and every individual is obligated in this [to enhance their joy].

Nevertheless, we verily observe that the greatest degree of joy results when the wedding is not made in a formal hall, a hall that costs a “king’s ransom” (hon to’afos), but rather when the wedding is made in as simple and unpretentious a manner as possible (b’ofen d’kol depashit maaleh t’fei).

WHAT DO THE PROFESSIONALS SAY?

R' Yaron Neeman, mashgiach in yeshivas Chabad in Tzfas, has married off dozens of bachurim who came to Chabad, taking care of all their needs from beginning to end, from the dates to the end of Sheva Brachos. Oftentimes the chassan and kalla had nothing and all expenses were his burden and he raised the money for them.

In your experience, do externals make a wedding nicer and more joyous?

It's the guests and the music that make a wedding. When the guests come in order to bring joy, the wedding is nicer and more joyous. We have always tried to make a wedding that brings honor to the hosts - I'm referring to the food which is average or a little better but nicely presented. All extras such as flowers don't pertain to the simcha itself and we have managed quite well without them.

At these weddings that you arrange, many unobservant guests attend. They are more familiar with exclusive weddings.

It has happened that they come with reservations about the quality of the wedding (as they put it). I'll admit that the buffet at the reception confirmed their doubts because it's usually not lavish, but when the dancing begins they are impressed. This happens time and again and they learn what simcha is and what a nice wedding is really like.

"When there is great joy, lavishness is unnecessary"

R' Shimon Bitton, manager of the Kol Yisroel band, agrees:

There are three main requirements for a decent wedding: the hall should be nice and tastefully designed; the menu should be respectable and standard; and the same for the music. In my experience you can transform a simple hall into something special with simple props. The food too - a fancy menu doesn't improve the simcha. People don't notice that the meal served at this wedding costs two dollars more a plate than at the other wedding. It certainly doesn't add to the joy of the wedding which is the main thing.

R' Chanoch Maidovnik, psychologist and marriage counselor:

In my experience working with young couples, one of the first and most common "breakdowns" happens over money matters. When preparations for the wedding are made externally nice in order to impress, the money is the main factor and in many cases it leads to arguments between the couple about which side paid more. If parents have the money, they would be better off giving it to the couple.

"Regarding a chassan and kalla: in order for you to build your home on a strong foundation, it would be worthwhile investing of your time to learn about the Jewish home (i.e. establishing a home, shalom bayis). This will have a far greater effect on your future happiness than investing time and thought in a fleeting event."

A well-known Lubavitcher shadchan says:

Except for unusual cases, money is not a factor in concluding a shidduch, because it usually comes up much later and also since most Lubavitchers make standard weddings (which also cost plenty).

It is not at all understood why a person should compel himself to take on extraordinary expenses in order for it to be a big wedding etc.

when what matters is that it be a wedding big in quality ... What the world calls big mit a tararam (with a big fuss) etc. - is not

worthwhile for a number of reasons.

The Rebbe used unusually sharp language to denounce the squandering of money and luxuries in connection with weddings. From what the Rebbe says, it seems there are two points: 1) the unnecessary expenditure of money, 2) involvement with trivial things at a time when a person ought to be busy with lofty matters.

In a number of letters the Rebbe suggests the middle way, as he said to someone in yechidus:

It would seem that in this matter, one should adopt - as in the p'sak din of the Rambam in all the affairs of man - the middle path, though in any case my view is clear that a Jewish, Chassidic wedding must be expansive in all spiritual matters - and this is connected with minimizing expenses in material things.

Weddings are made by two sides and they often don't agree. The Rebbe warns:

Furthermore and this is also essential: the above was obviously said so that it be done in a way of pleasantness etc. and not that it should cause arguments (especially among the women, for Chazal were careful to avoid arguments.

And elsewhere:

It is also obvious that things must be arranged in a pleasant manner and with the full agreement of both sides, including the views of the women and their desires.

This point is especially important since many of the extras have to do with the women, and this must be dealt with sensitively.

HOW SHOULD THIS BE DONE?

In order to fulfill the Rebbe's instructions, it would be a good idea

for every parent to consult with a rav or mashpia who knows the family (and the mechutan's family) to determine what to cut out and how to plan for the wedding and to do so in a harmonious way.

Most people are aware that many things needed for the wedding that will be used only once can be borrowed or rented. "Shtick" to make a wedding leibedig, a gown for the kalla and other female relatives, and even centerpieces can be procured without purchasing them outright. Those who don't want to wear borrowed clothing can plan on buying or having clothes made that will be used for other simchas.

Even for those things which cannot be rented or borrowed, there are varying levels of service and price and generally, even lesser quality can make a fine wedding. For example, a beautiful wedding can be made in a less expensive hall. This is what the Rebbe told a chassan who asked whether to make his wedding in a small hall:

In that place (I think) there is a mechitza that turns the hall into two halls. If so, that is in a manner [that can be described as] "that the joy is in His dwelling."

About the wedding not being that big the Rebbe wrote:

[Not big] materialistically, but particularly through this it will be big in ruchnius (spirituality) and even Jewish gashmius.

This is true for the music too. One-man bands are popular these days.

When cutting out or minimizing certain things, it's a good idea to explain to the young couple that the money that will be saved will be given to them and will start them off in life after all the guests go home following the wedding. There are weddings where people pay hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars for flowers or other extras while the couple receives no financial help.



A Chassidic wedding in Montreal

Also, it's important to carefully discuss what you want with the photographer so you know what you will be getting at what cost.

The main point is to objectively examine what adds to the simcha, what causes Chassidishe simcha, what is secondary and what is worth paying for, and based on this, to spend on that which is worthwhile and eschew that which is not.



Recent weddings of Anash

HELPING THE COUPLE

In contrast to the expenses of the wedding, where the Rebbe says to minimize them, when it comes to the comforts of the young couple, the Rebbe encourages parents to be generous. To a Chassid who wrote that the other side is ready to take on all the expenses of an apartment and furnishings for the couple, the Rebbe wrote:

In matters of holiness there doesn't need to be the concept of "at no cost," [in a miserly manner,] and all the more so with the marriage of a daughter, that not only ought this to be associated

with expenses but in addition, one should not skimp on them. Surely this is part of those things which are designated to a person during the ten days between Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur, and when a person sets himself up in an expansive way, Hashem provides for him expansively.

The Rebbe talks about this in a number of other places and from all of them we can see that he wants parents to put more into providing expansively for the couple. It makes sense even on the level of *daas tachton* (lowly human intellect), for while the purpose of a lavish

To someone who (apparently) said that he would postpone the wedding because he was financially unable to make the wedding, the Rebbe said:

About the claim that there aren't suitable clothes etc. - it is understood how absurd this is in relation to such an important matter as mentioned, and which affects all of life like a wedding and even if it were certain that there are scoffers, the beginning of all four parts of Shulchan Aruch says not to be ashamed etc. especially when it is something imaginary, since there are no scoffers about this even in the US where they have a reputation throughout the world that money is held in such importance...

To someone who wrote to the Rebbe that he hoped the vort would be in an appropriate way, the Rebbe wrote:

[The appropriate way is] **the opposite of what has been done lately among Anash, to waste money on it just in order to outdo the neighbor, and the more vacuous the neighbor, the more the Evil Inclination drags him into greater debt, just so that he shows that "he is also vacuous and even more so, and therefore this void needs to be filled with the "honor of grandparents etc."**

wedding is for people to talk about it, or for the wedding video to be made in the most professional manner possible, when you provide for the young couple the benefit is far more worthwhile. The couple actually enjoys the money and their lives together start off on the right foot both because of the peace of mind due to financial security and because of the accessories that accompany them and serve them well for years to come. A wedding is over in five hours!

IT CAN SUPPORT A SCHOOL IN MOROCCO!

The Rebbe addressed three issues related to wedding preparations in very specific terms. On the subject of spending money on flowers:

There is absolutely no sense at all in squandering money on wedding expenses. Would only that you merit to demonstrate to other young men of Anash that a Chassidishe wedding consists of expansiveness - true expansiveness - regarding all spiritual matters. Jewish money is dear in that it should be utilized, not to

demonstrate to another that you had nicer flowers at your wedding than the other and so on, but that chassan and kalla gave much tz'daka before their wedding....

The Rebbe also spoke very negatively about photography at weddings. During the period that the Rebbe was the officiating rabbi at weddings, he did not allow more than two or three pictures at the chuppa. R' Mordechai Zajac related:

"When I had yechidus before my wedding, I asked that the Rebbe be the *mesader kiddushin*. The Rebbe said yes but then immediately added: On condition that you don't take more than three pictures, and two would be better. I had someone take movies of the wedding (because the photographer's flash bulbs disturbed the Rebbe during the chuppa but the video camera did not) and when the Rebbe came out for the chuppa he noticed this and he smiled."

The Rebbe said:

Like flowers and pictures, especially lately, they don't suffice with black and white photos but need colored pictures, heaven have mercy ...

As for his thinking that he

needs to be preoccupied with these matters so that his wedding will be like everybody else's ... we see that at the first wedding, of Adam HaRishon, that not only weren't there color photos but there weren't even any in black and white ... it was all pure and nevertheless it was a successful wedding! ...

In another response the Rebbe wrote:

You are correct in negating these "customs" which our ancestors didn't even imagine and others like this that you don't mention (wasting Jewish money in general, and especially on matters that are undesirable even if they were free. Furthermore, the entire direction is, heaven have mercy, to make the important thing secondary and the undesirable at all into something important.

And thus, am I obligated to be part of the ceremony which will be immortalized afterward in an album only for the gossipers, whose cost is a sum that is enough to support a large class in Morocco for six months and more.

The mashpia, R' Pinye Korf related that when he had yechidus before his wedding and he invited the Rebbe to be *mesader kiddushin* (at that time the Rebbe had already stopped being *mesader kiddushin*), the Rebbe expressed his dissatisfaction with the presence of a photographer at a wedding and he said the money could support an entire school in Morocco.

R' Korf decided that he wouldn't have a photographer at the wedding and he sent the money to Chabad schools in Morocco.

LET OTHERS TAKE CARE OF IT

The third point the Rebbe spoke about in detail is the chassan and kalla's involvement in the material preparations for the wedding. In a

number of places the Rebbe encourages the chassan and kalla to use the time until the wedding to store away more and more spiritual treasures that will serve them in building their new home. The Rebbe calls this time “precious beyond precious.”

In a sicha (apparently to chassanim) of 20 Av, 5714/1954, the Rebbe spoke explicitly about involvement in material wedding preparations:

At a time like this, why should he think about and *tumel zich* (get caught up) in all these external matters, or even in matters concerning an apartment, which is something that affects a person even more than food and clothing. At this time it is worthwhile increasing in t’shuva so all your sins are forgiven ...

All that was said was not meant as a joke or a speech but literally, and intended in actual fact. Since a number of chassanim are present and others who will become chassanim within a few weeks - they need to know that they should not confuse themselves with all these things. All the work for these matters should be done by others while the chassan and kalla ought to be occupied not with that which is secondary but with the main thing.

And the main thing is that the wedding be in a good and successful time and that it be an everlasting edifice and ensuring this cannot be done through “pictures” and the like but through



The wedding of Herschel Chitrik with the Karasik family. Rabbi Eliezer Karasik is on the right with Rabbi Yehuda Chitrik

learning Torah, doing mitzvos b’hiddur, involvement in t’filla and t’shuva, and genuine t’shuva.

... All this pertains to the parents ... [who are obligated to be involved in making a wedding] but as for the chassan and kalla themselves, it is demanded of them that they should not be at all immersed in trivial matters since these can be done by others.

When it is necessary to take a fitting, it is necessary to measure it on the chassan ... but even then he should not be immersed in it (especially when in any case he cannot see on himself how the garment looks) although the fitting needs to be done on his body. But in other matters, especially being immersed in them - there is certainly no place for this. What’s needed is trust in Hashem that

everything will be done properly ...

To conclude with what the Rebbe said in yechidus to a Chassid:

I hope that at least by Anash who listen to me, this will be accepted in a receptive manner, and as the Alter Rebbe said (at the end of the introduction to Tanya) “and to those who listen it will be pleasant and will come upon them the blessing of good.”

Note: It is not the intention of the article to “pasken” but to bring things to the readers’ attention. Regarding color photos and the expression “heaven have mercy” - it should be noted that in certain places that expression was deleted (and reintroduced in the Toras Menachem series) and perhaps this was by the Rebbe’s instruction.

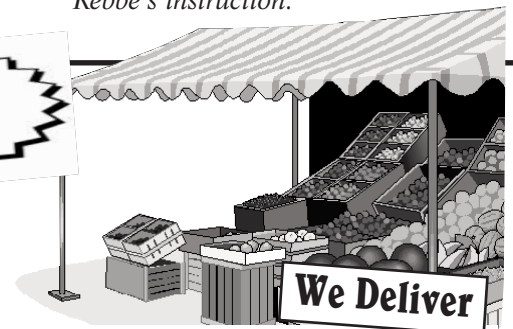
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FROM PRAGUE TO BELGIUM

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.

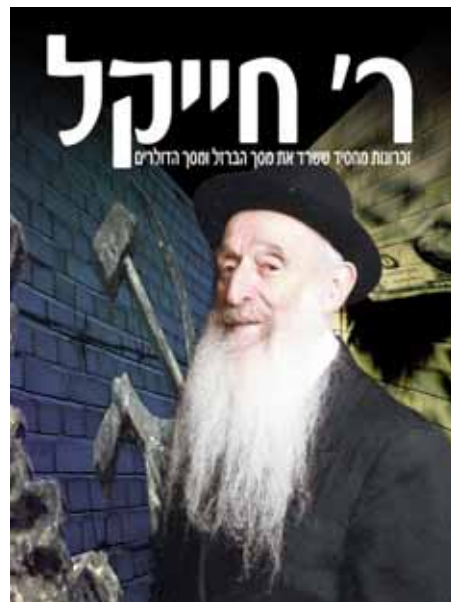
IS HE ONE OF OURS?

R' Yitzchok Goldin relates that the *Chassid* R' Bentzion Shemtov and the *Chassid* R' Mendel Futerfas, who were on the other side of the Iron Curtain, were committed to remain there until the last *Chassid* crossed over the border safely.

In the end R' Bentzion Shemtov escaped at the final moment and evaded the NKVD, who were waiting to devour their prey. R' Bentzion traveled with the last group of *anash*. R' Mendel Futerfas succeeded in sending his wife and children across the border while he remained behind. At a later point in

time he attempted to cross the border with a small group of *Chassidim*. However, he was caught by the Soviets and sentenced as a traitor and spent eight years imprisoned in Siberian labor Camps. He waited for nineteen years until 1963, when he received permission to leave the country.

In the letter R' Yitzchok Goldin specifies the names of many *Chassidim* that are "there," and he requests that blessings be requested from the Rebbe on their behalf. He inquires regarding the character of Rabbi Rappaport (as mentioned previously, Rabbi Jacobson stayed at Rabbi Rappaport's home during his



first Shabbos in Prague) and the identity of Rabbi Greifel (whom I wrote about in a previous chapter), and he wonders whether he can rely on them and speak with them openly on the telephone.

At the conclusion of the letter R' Itche requests that Rabbi Jacobson ask his first cousin, S. Dingal from Ragachov (a writer for the Yiddish paper *Der Tag*) why he does not respond.

B"H

Sunday, the day after Yom Kippur 5707

May G-d command a blessing wherever you turn, His Honor, my honored

and esteemed friend HaRav HaChassid HaTamim R' Yisroel

Today I received your letter from 12 Elul, Sunday of Parshas Tavo [written by Rabbi Jacobson while still in Europe]. You are greatly surprised. (Please forgive me) that I write about deficiencies in your laborious great work. Do you remember your first and second letter, that the main thing is that we remain in constant contact – Lodz, the city of the Maharal [Prague], and R' S.Z. [Rabbi Schneur Zalman

Bentzion Shemtov and his brother-in-law Mendel will remain there [in Russia] until the last

וקלה יתשאר וביצו יזל הארכבו קפ טוס -
 אלה כה הימים קלה
 יצא לנסות וקלה קטח שהם שמה
 אלה שנים הדמיון אצמאמם שמה

 אלויות אשכנזי קת האשכנזי כן קנגז לו נאיד י
 קי קת כיוון גביל, שאין אחיו ואחיותיו היו כה
 יקרא מידי הנכרים וכבר נסין אלה אצמאמז וזתה
 קת יונת צריך ארשם קהלונגס, קת

leave. I do not know if this is wise. However, due to matters it is necessary. For the wise a hint will suffice.

Give a *pidyon nefesh* to the Rebbe on my behalf and a communal *pidyon nefesh* on their behalf. May G-d have mercy upon them. R' Yisroel Noach the "Great," R' S.C. *mashpia* [R' Shlomo Chaim Kesselman], Saadia Kaladier [Liberov] and another five hundred are "there" [in Russia]. As of now we do not know anything about the mother and sisters of the *Tamim* Yonason Blatner. We will attempt to find out with the help of G-d. The main thing is that you immediately respond and let me know with whom I can be in contact when necessary in the city of the Maharal (Prague, because R' Y. Chitrik already left).

Who is Rabbi Rappaport? How does he breathe? Is he one of us or not? Also Greifel his character? [See the chapter titled "A Long Story on a Short Note" in an earlier issue of *Beis Moshiaich*.] I must know if I can speak with them on the telephone.

Also, did you meet with Ellenson? He spoke with me on the telephone. In the past he was a member of *anash*, and now he is part of Mizrachi. In general I have seen certain things about him. He talks but does not do, decrees and doesn't fulfill.

Rabbi Shpalter [the Rabbi of Sanik] already traveled to the next page [left Russia]. I know him. He is a sincere and very honorable person.

If it is not too difficult for you, please speak with my cousin on the phone and ask him why he does not write to me. I wrote to him twice, and I did not receive a response. His name is S. Dingal from Ragachov, and he is a writer for the newspaper *Der Tag*.

I remain your friend, blessing

you with eternal good from a desiring heart all days, materially and spiritually.

Yitzchok Goldin

At this moment I was informed by the *Tamim* Feival Green about the family of the *Tamim* Blatner. His mother, brothers, and sisters were here and received from the hands of gentiles. They already traveled from here to the Zone and now the *Tamim* Yonsaon must search for them in the zones.

The above-signed

WHERE DID CHITRIK AND CHAIKIN DISAPPEAR?

Apparently R' Yitzchok Goldin was completely confused by the departure of Rabbi Chitrik and Rabbi Chaikin. He complains about the disrupted communication, and he is concerned how the work will continue and how the members of the network will coordinate the next steps. The next letter is a response to Mr. Grinke Slavin, one of the *T'mimim* in Prague, who apparently inquired about the last group that crossed the border. R' Itche does not know where they were or which route they took. Mr. Slavin also requests to be informed of the location of R' Yehuda Chitrik and R' Chaim Chaikin and why they suddenly traveled. (My thanks to R' Sholom Dovber Friedland, who gave me this letter from the archive of his grandfather the *Chassid* R' Shalom Mendel Kalmanson of Paris.)

B"H

Sunday after Yom Kippur (11 Tishrei) 5707

His Honor My Friend Grinke Slavin

Yesterday evening I received your letter and I am quickly responding to you. Even though our friend Mr. Gurevich [R' Zalman Gurevich the grandson of R' Yazik] is with you and I sent everything with him in detail, I will write you a little. You write

that I surely know the route of those who traveled. I am notifying you briefly that I do not know anything. The idleness of *anash* is a big wonder to me. We already agreed to communicate through letters but in actuality I received nothing. This is a wonder of wonders.

Therefore I request that you inform me:

1) Perhaps you know to which city in the Zone they traveled [the above-mentioned group].

2) Their address. Also perhaps you know the address of those who traveled without passports, meaning the first group of Nissan [Nemenov, together with my father R' Chaikel Chanin. They traveled and crossed the borders with the "Bericha," as related previously. The members of the Bericha took all the passports and provided their own documents.] The second group [which arrived from Poland and traveled on.]

3) Where and why did Yude [Chitrik] and Chaim [Chaikin] and their families travel through Paris? Is there a specific purpose related to this?

4) Immediately write to me the address of Binyomin Gorodetzky and R' Zalman Schneerson. Where did Michel Paricher [Pierkarski], Moshe Neimark, and Yakov Lipsker travel?

Regarding your question about my friend and acquaintance Fishel Dimchovsky [his mother was the sister of the Rogatchover Gaon and his father was a *shochet* in Minsk] Tzvi, Par, [R' Eliyahu Paricher Levin. His son was the *Chassid* R' Eliyahu]. They were all together there [in Russia] where a total of 500 remain. May G-d have mercy upon them. I have given over everything in detail to Mr. [R' Zalman] Gurevich. I will not travel from here until I greet them [all of *anash*] due to the urgency of the matter. For the wise a hint

will suffice.

And now my dear friend, I request that you immediately meet with R' Yakov Greifel and Mendel Meisels [son-in-law of the Chassid R' Meir Simcha Chein of Nevel] and notify what to do with R' A.E. [R' Avrohom Eliya] the brother of Mendel Meisels. Convey to R' Greifel that Rabbi Landinsky did nothing and Landau also did nothing. [They were both from the Agudah and from the Vaad Hatzalah of B'nei Torah.] It is unhealthy for him [R' A. E. Meisels] to be here [in Poland] . . . Therefore, you shall help him with the greatest speed. Just immediately let me know which telephone number to call if I desire to communicate without intermediaries.

Regards to Rabbi Rappaport and R' Yakov Greifel. I bless them with a sweet year in all details and when it's sweet it's good.

With feelings of esteem,

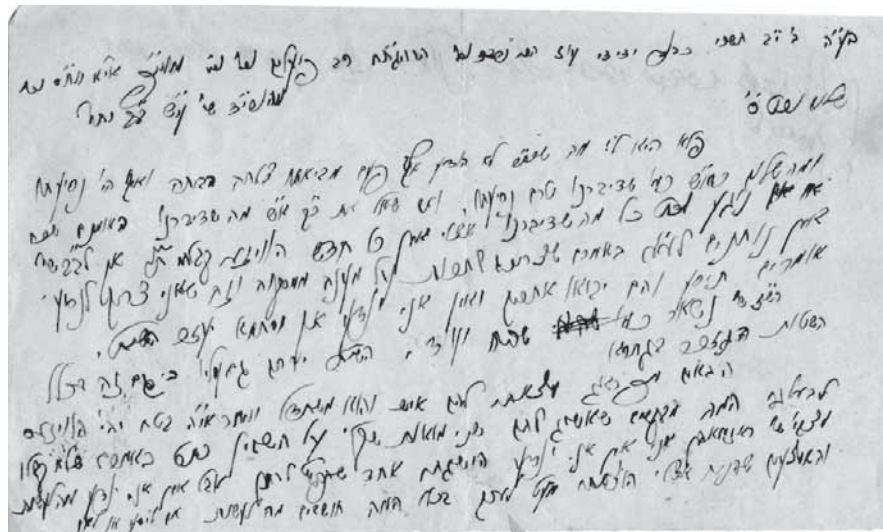
Yitzchok Goldin

Please notify if you have news from Munich.

While writing this letter I received a telegram from Hillel Pewzner, inquiring about Sholom Dovber Chein. I request that you look for him and let him know that he is gravely ill [he was arrested by the Soviet authorities while crossing the border]. May G-d have mercy on him. Also immediately let me know where he [Hillel Pewzner] came from and which *anash* he saw. I hope to receive news from there [Russia] one of these days through a special messenger.

DID YOU FORGET?

The next letter was written on the 12th of Tishrei by R' Binyomin Gorodetzky while the Chaikin family and his uncle R' Eliayhu Shmuel Kahanov stayed at his home. In the letter, he inquires about the welfare



of Rabbi Jacobson and his return trip to the United States, and he mentions their conversation prior to his departure of two weeks earlier. However, Rabbi Gorodetzky began to suspect that Rabbi Jacobson forgot to ask the Rebbe his request, since he did not receive a response.

R' Binyomin relates that he received a visa to the United States, but his family did not and he does not know what to do. He alludes to R' Yehuda Chitrik and R' Chaim Chaikin without mentioning their names. He relates that he found someone to arrange their visas to Belgium, and he hopes that they will be ready tomorrow. As Rabbi Jacobson had left a sum of money with R' Binyomin for *anash*, R' Yehuda and R' Chaim requested two hundred dollars from this fund because they did not receive any money from Heshel Raisman. Consequently R' Binyomin asks what he should do.

B'ezras Hashem

Monday 12 Tishrei 5707

His Honor My Dear Friend,

Highly Esteemed HaRav HaGaon HaChassid,

Many Accomplishments, etc.

Moreinu HaRav Yisroel Jacobson
Greetings and eternal good.

I am surprised that you did not

notify me of your arrival home, how the trip went, and of the Rebbe's well-being, as we agreed prior to your departure. Did you ask the Rebbe what we spoke about? Did you forget?

I have no news. Thank G-d, I received a visa. However, they are not giving for my family, stating that they are waiting for a response from Moscow. They say that I should travel and they [the family] will follow. I do not know [what to do]. G-d will help.

I found a person for those who arrived from Prague [Rabbi Chitrik and Rabbi Chaikin], and he is extending efforts on their behalf. Tomorrow, G-d willing, they will surely have the visas for Belgium. They request two hundred on your account, stating that they did not receive from Tzvi Raisman . . . I found someone willing to give. However, I do not know what to do. I spent very little of the funds you left me. They are considering whether to travel or not.

I conclude with peace from the master of peace your soul mate, seeking your peace.

Your friend honoring you as befitting,

Binyomin Gorodetzky

STORIES FROM THE KINUS HA'SHLUCHIM

As the shluchim gather at farbrengens and workshops at the Kinus HaShluchim, there is a no better time to pick up dozens of little stories about the Rebbe and shlichus. Beis Moshiach staff circulated among the shluchim and share their findings with you.

MY GAN EDEN AND YOURS

Shliach in Antwerp, R' Shabtai Slavaticki, related:

When I was in Eretz Yisroel, I stood one Friday at a t'fillin stand in the Central Bus Station in Tel Aviv and asked people to stop for a moment and put on t'fillin. A man came by who was religious but not a Chassid. He had a trimmed beard and he wore modern dress. To my surprise, he too opened a t'fillin stand — my competition! I didn't say a word to him. Why should I care? Let more Jews put on t'fillin!

He asked the first person who

passed by to put on t'fillin. The man didn't even look at him but just kept walking. For a second I thought that I wouldn't call out to the man since I had just seen him ignore the other person, but to my great surprise, he came right over to me, rolled up his sleeve and asked to put on t'fillin.

When he was finished, the Litvishe guy came over and said, "Excuse me for asking, but could you tell me why when I asked you to put on t'fillin, you weren't interested, but you willingly came over here?"

The man replied, "When you

asked me to put on t'fillin, you wanted *your* Gan Eden. When he (and he pointed at me) stands here, he wants (cares about) *my* Gan Eden."

THANK YOU FOR THE BRACHOS

Shliach R' Aharon Eliezer Tzeitlin, director of Ganei Chabad in Tzfas, related:

The administration of our schools had a nice custom: every time we wrote a report to the Rebbe about what was happening at the mosdos (institutions), we would add blessings and good wishes at the end for the Rebbe and then we would all sign it.

One time, when they prepared the report, everybody signed the letter as usual, but we realized only afterwards that we hadn't actually written the brachos. I was going to travel to the Rebbe and present the report and I wasn't sure whether I should add the bracha after the letter had been signed. After giving it a lot of thought I decided to add the brachos, reasoning that the Rebbe knows everything in any





EXPLICIT BRACHA

R' Menachem Mendel Wilhelm, who does outreach among employees of Egged, had this to say:

For a long time I did outreach in Egged and every month I wrote a report to the Rebbe. For two years I would send reports but I never received a response. Lag B'Omer of that year I arranged a parade for all the employees' children and their parents. Over 5000 kids participated and their parents came too. Thanks to this project I was in debt for over 45,000 shekels.

A few days later I wrote a report to the Rebbe and asked for a bracha that my debts be covered. I also dared to write that I requested an answer from the Rebbe since I had not received a single answer in two years.

Not long afterwards, I received a reply which said that all the letters that had been sent throughout the past two years had given **much** nachas – and the Rebbe made three lines under the word “much” – and the Rebbe gave me a bracha regarding my debts.

A while later I was talking to someone who greatly admired the work I do and when I told him how much I owed after the parade, he immediately took out his checkbook and wrote me a check for 45,000 shekels, just like that.

THE IMPACT OF A PICTURE

R' Wilhelm continued:

In Tishrei of 5760, I was instrumental in arranging kosher sukkos for 70 Egged members and I gave each one a big, beautiful picture of the Rebbe for the sukka.

A few weeks later I went to arrange a chuppa for one of the members and to my great surprise, as soon as I walked into the hall I

saw a large picture of the Rebbe. I asked the groom why a picture of the Rebbe was hanging there and he said: Ever since you brought it to me, I hang it up at every event I hold.

THE ADDITIONAL LETTER

Shliach in Rechovot, Rabbi Elimelech Shachar relates:

One year I had yechidus with my wife and my oldest child. I brought along many letters that were sent by people in Rechovot. I figured I wouldn't bother the Rebbe and would submit the pile of letters to the secretaries before the yechidus.

As we stood on line before going in for yechidus, my son saw people working on their *panim* and he asked what they were writing. I explained that they were writing to the Rebbe and asking for brachos. He decided that he also wanted to write to the Rebbe. He asked someone for a paper and pen and wrote something and then put the letter into his pocket.

When we entered the Rebbe's room, the Rebbe received us graciously and thanked us for all the letters and showered us with brachos. Then he held out his hand and asked for the *p'n*. I said I had submitted them all to the secretaries but the Rebbe's hand remained suspended in the air. I felt very uncomfortable but didn't know what to do. Then my son reached into his pocket for the letter he had just written and gave it to the Rebbe. The Rebbe looked pleased and he held it with both hands and read it with great pleasure.

A MIRACLE

More from R' Shachar:

One of the people appointed to the treasury department of the

case, and so the Rebbe would know about the error. I then submitted the report and brachos.

As usual, we received a response from the Rebbe but this time the Rebbe added, “P.S. thank you for the brachos etc.”

THE RIGHT PLACE

A shliach from Chicago told this story at a farbrengen:

One Shabbos, in the middle of the Friday night meal, we heard knocking at the door. When we opened the door we saw the child of a Jewish neighbor who lives near us. We had no relationship with the neighbor herself, since she wanted to keep her distance from us, but her son occasionally came to programs we did.

I wondered why he was at my door and asked him. He said that his mother wanted to go shopping and intended to take him with her but since he had recently heard that you are not allowed to travel on Shabbos, he refused to go. She tried to convince him, but failed. Annoyed, she said, “Then go to the rabbi's house!” So he did!

Occasionally we dared to attend the Rebbe's farbrengens but since we couldn't openly attend them, we stayed in the broadcasting room, which was near the Rebbe's platform, and we listened from there.

municipality of Rechovot, who is also deputy mayor of the city, was somewhat interested in our work and occasionally helped us.

One morning, his daughter could not get out of bed – she was suddenly and inexplicably paralyzed! He called for an ambulance and she was taken to Kaplan hospital in Rechovot for tests. “It’s a paralysis and there is nothing that can be done,” the doctors said, and they sent her home.

A few months later, the father was walking down the street in Tel Aviv and came across Lubavitcher Chassidim at a t’fillin stand. He put on t’fillin and then poured out his heart to one of them about his daughter. The Chassid told him to write to the Rebbe and ask for a bracha and also gave him a booklet of the Rebbe’s sichos and told him to put it under her pillow.

The man did so and the next morning the girl got out of bed as though nothing had happened. The surprise, shock and joy were enormous. The father rushed over to the Chabad house to tell about the miracle that had happened thanks to the booklet of sichos.

REMEMBERING THOSE BEHIND THE MECHITZA

Rabbi Zalman Leib Markowitz, principal in Morristown, related:

I became interested in Chabad Chassidus together with R’ Mendel Vechter’s group and we all learned

Chassidus with R’ Yoel Kahn. Since, where we came from, learning Tanya was forbidden, we had to attend these shiurim secretly.

Occasionally we dared to attend the Rebbe’s farbrengens but since we couldn’t openly attend them, we stayed in the broadcasting room, which was near the Rebbe’s platform, and we listened from there.

We received many *kiruvim* from the Rebbe. One time, the Rebbe gave out dollars after the farbrengen and he gave some dollars to R’ Leibel Groner to give to us.

A CLEAR ANSWER

“Speaking of the utter bittul of the shliach to the meshaleiach,” said shliach R’ Leibel Raskin (a”h) of Morocco, “I will tell you something that happened in 5720.

“I had gotten engaged and I sent a note into the Rebbe and informing him and asking to go on shlichus wherever the Rebbe would send me. Then one day, I was told that R’ Chadakov was urgently looking for me. I hurried over to his office and he asked me whether I wanted to go on shlichus. I unhesitatingly said, ‘What’s the question, when we always learned that we need to do everything with kabbalas ol?’

“R’ Chadakov did not accept this answer and asked whether I was ready to go or not. I answered, ‘Of course I agree, what’s the

question?’ He persisted, ‘Tell me yes or no.’ I responded with a clear yes, and he pressed the intercom button that connected his room with the Rebbe’s and said, ‘He is here and he is ready.’

“I was privileged to be sent on shlichus to Morocco, where I am till this day (5760).”

A REQUEST FULFILLED

Rabbi Nitzan Simchon, shliach in Gilo in Yerushalayim, relates:

One of the women who regularly attended shiurim and farbrengens at the Chabad house was experiencing financial difficulties. When Yom Tov was approaching she did not have money for the expenses that arose, but she did not feel comfortable telling anyone or asking for help at the Chabad house.

She decided to write to the Rebbe, as she had heard many miracle stories from mekuravim of ours. She pictured the Rebbe in her mind and asked him to send her money for Yom Tov. She promised that if the Rebbe helped her she would make a donation to the Chabad house.

A day or two later, a friend of hers from abroad arrived in Eretz Yisroel and brought her a nice sum of money. She considered this a response from the Rebbe and true to her promise, she contributed towards the next farbrengen we held. Since then, she attends every farbrengen we have. She removed her children from public school and put them into Chabad schools.

DESPITE THE DOCTORS’ OPINION

R’ Simchon also related:

Before I go to the Rebbe I tell everybody I know that I am going and encourage them to write to the Rebbe and ask for a bracha.

One year ago, before my trip, I

went to one of the Chabad preschools in the neighborhood and told the teacher, who was a mekureves of the Chabad house, that I was going to the Rebbe and suggested that she write for a bracha. She was happy to do so and besides writing for herself, she asked for a bracha for her friend who had been childless for many years. The woman had gone to doctors but after repeatedly being tested, they all said she could not give birth.

I took her letter and read it in the Rebbe's room and asked for a bracha. A few months later I met the teacher again and she told me the good news that the woman was expecting. It is an open miracle.

YASHAR KO'ACH!

R' Meir Harlig related:

In the early years there were some bachurim who waited to make Kiddush on Friday night until the Rebbe came out of his room and went home. Only after the Rebbe left his room, said "gut Shabbos" to them and left, did they make Kiddush and eat the Shabbos meal.

The Rebbe would usually leave at 10:00. One Shabbos, the bachurim were waiting but the

Rebbe did not emerge. They wondered whether the Rebbe had left and they hadn't noticed. At 11:00 they decided to split up: two bachurim went in the direction of the Rebbe's house on President Street while the others stayed near the Rebbe's room.

As the two bachurim approached the house, they saw Rebbetzin Chana and Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka standing near the doorway and they realized that the Rebbe had not yet arrived. As soon as they turned around they heard the Rebbetzin calling them. They went over to her and she asked whether the Rebbe was farbrenging. They said he was not farbrenging and he was still in his room. They returned to 770 and continued to wait.

The Rebbe's door soon opened and the Rebbe came out. As always, he wished the bachurim "gut Shabbos" and then he said, "Thank you for letting them know at home so they wouldn't worry."

WHEN IS BEDTIME?

R' MM Wilhelm related:

In 5758, my father a"h held a farbrengen in the Chabad shul in Yerushalayim. He drank mashke and farbrenged in a particularly

p'nimius way. At some point he glanced at the clock and immediately got up and left. People were surprised and they urged him to stay and continue farbrenging, but he refused.

It was 11:32 when the door opened and my father walked into the house. Upon looking at the clock, he burst into tears. I worriedly asked him why he was crying and he told me that in 5712/1952, when he was a bachur learning in 770, the Rebbe once came to the small zal in the middle of the night and shut the light and then shut the light in the room next door.

The bachurim hadn't noticed who was shutting the lights and they turned them back on. The Rebbe saw that the light was back on and he entered the small zal and asked, "Why are the Tmimim awake at this hour when there is Chassidus to learn tomorrow morning? Bachurim need to say the bedtime Shma at 11:00 and go to sleep at 11:30."

My father explained, "Since then, I always go to sleep before 11:30, but today I was later than the time the Rebbe said and that's why I'm crying."

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made by the left-wing, e.g., if we make concessions, they'll love us; if we give in to the Americans, they'll make no further demands – sound totally preposterous today, and yet, a right wing government remains blind to the fact.

THE DEMAND FOR A CHANGE IN APPROACH

Specifically in light of the fact that the question of Israel's legitimacy in the world is being

raised for public debate, we must demand that the Government of Israel try the approach proposed by the Rebbe, to explain logically how this method is antithetical to American values.

In recent years, all other methods have been attempted on the subject of relations with America and the rest of the world. Israel withdrew from the Arab cities in Yesha, uprooted Gush Katif, removed the security barriers in Yehuda and Shomron, and widened the outposts. But nothing has helped its standing and the American demands have

merely intensified more and more, to the point that today the United States is not embarrassed to forbid construction in Yerushalayim's Ramot neighborhood (!) and no one finds this strange any longer.

The only path that has yet to be tried is the simple and logical path suggested by the Rebbe for saving the diplomacy on the American-Israeli front. Now, when the process of "delegitimizing" Israel in the eyes of the world has reached a new low, there can be nothing more logical than trying another way.

CROSSROADS: ANOTHER FORM OF DIPLOMACY

By Sholom Ber Crombie

Translated by Michael Leib Dobry

There's only one leader who has proposed another approach – and who even specified in detail on how to implement it. This, of course, is the leader of the generation – the Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach – who blueprinted a clear way for preserving diplomatic relations with the United States, without making any concessions on standing by our principles.

The left-wing customarily says it wants to see the Jewish settlement in Yehuda, Shomron (and even Gaza, of blessed memory) remain forever in its place. But, it adds, we have constraints. First it's "peace" or security, then it's the demographic problem, and now it's the nature of relations with the United States.

In the opinion of the left-wing leaders, the connection with the

Americans and the Europeans is the greatest asset possessed by the State of Israel, an asset for which we must do almost anything. The left-wing never said, however, what the red lines are, i.e., what we will not be prepared to do to maintain the current level of our relations with the United States.

Many politicians expressed pride over the great "compensation" we

received in exchange for the eviction from Gush Katif: a document of "understanding" from then-President of the United States George W. Bush, who promised to preserve the "settlement blocs" in Yehuda and Shomron. How pathetically ridiculous!

There was a time when this call issued only Knesset backbenchers, but today those who support appeasing the Americans "at any cost" have become the centrist mainstream of Israeli politics. They say that we have to lower our heads, virtually without limitation, in order to preserve relations between the State of Israel and the United States.

Not many people know, however, that when the Israeli policymakers were discussing in recent months whether to renew or halt the settlement freeze, they also referred to a general freeze in Yerushalayim, including the Ramot neighborhood, for example, one of the largest in Yerushalayim, and one which no one questions is an inseparable part of the city.

This fact received only minimal coverage in the state-run Israeli media, which primarily emphasized that "if Israel does not respond to the American demands, there will be another crisis", while neglecting to tell the public exactly what those "American demands" are.

WE HAVE ANOTHER WAY

As always, the problem with the political right-wing is that it doesn't present an alternative.

The left-wing constantly waves the finger that the United States raises in our favor during fateful votes before the United Nations. They explain to the public that if we continue the construction, we will lose this support. We hear similar explanations in connection with the loans and other forms of foreign aid that we receive from the Americans, which no one denies is extremely

vital to Israel's security.

In contrast, the right-wing stands bewildered, as it avoids dealing with the question of how to maintain the connection with the United States without yielding to terrorism. As on many other issues, the right-wing always explains what not to do, but not what we *should* do.

There's only one leader who has proposed another approach – and who even specified in detail on how to implement it. This, of course, is the leader of the generation – the Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach – who blueprinted a clear way for preserving diplomatic relations with the United States, without making any concessions on standing by our principles.

The United States of America is a nation of “honor”, the Rebbe explained. They know how to appreciate someone who stands on his principles and whose word is his bond. In contrast, the Rebbe says, by lying and degrading yourself, you always lose with the Americans. Thus, it's not enough merely to continue building right under the Americans' noses and then try to explain that this is being done due to internal Israeli political reasons. We must proudly tell them about our clear limits and we must calmly but firmly stand behind them. In this fashion, America will appreciate us more and respect our demands.

*

The Rebbe repeated this motto time after time before Israeli policymakers and strategists.

As the Rebbe said to Mr. Elyakim Rubenstein, then-advisor to then-Prime Minister Yitzchak Shamir, “To achieve something in the United States, you have to stand firm and prove that you have no intention of giving in.” The Rebbe continued to explain: “It's not in order to anger them, but because there's no other way. It's impossible to demand that Eretz Yisroel should do something

Once we start making concessions, even on some trifle, it becomes difficult later to find the point where we will be unwilling to compromise.

which is contrary to its life and existence.”

When Mr. Rubenstein explained to the Rebbe that “these are not easy times”, the Rebbe replied: “But the solution to the political situation is the opposite of what they have done until now, for until now they have held the position that concessions must be made, and not just on something trivial, but on matters of principle for which they will receive something – and this is contrary to the nature of the United States.”

The Rebbe continued to explain to Mr. Rubenstein what can really benefit the existing relations with the United States. “The United States exists and was founded by standing firm. If something is in its vital interests, it's impossible to forego it, and it makes no difference when England yelled against them and France was against them, and as it was when the whole world was against the United States. Because they have held this position, they have succeeded and succeed to this very day.”

For some reason, the right-wing has never used this argument. It has, instead, learned to claim that “the relations with the United States are important, but we have our principles”, as if standing on principle is a contradiction to maintaining relations with the Americans. Nothing could be further from the truth.

WHAT LIEBERMAN HAS PROVEN

If we needed any proof on this matter, we received it from Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman, who

put the facts on the table from the rostrum before the United Nations, and then afterwards at a meeting with the European foreign secretaries. “The Palestinians don't want peace, and therefore, there will be no peace here in the coming years,” he said at the speakers' rostrum at the UN, and to his European counterparts, he added, “There are more problematic conflicts in the world. Go deal with them.”

While these statements initially aroused criticism, after the storm had calmed, the mayhem was forgotten and all that was left hanging in the air was the stark truth. The only thing required now is for such statements to be made continually by other officials within the Government of Israel, thus giving the world reason to think that perhaps there's more than one method in the overall approach than simply bowing to the terrorists.

The Rebbe explained that this is what will happen if we conduct ourselves properly on the policymaking front. At first, the Americans might get annoyed, but after a while, they will accept the Israeli positions, if they see that the Government of Israel is standing firm. However, once we start making concessions, even on some trifle, it becomes difficult later to find the point where we will be unwilling to compromise.

The Rebbe's words require no further proofs today. The situation on the diplomatic scene is hard and confusing enough for the Israeli government. All the claims once

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DOING A FAVOR FOR A JEW

By Rabbi Yaakov Shmuelewitz
Shliach, Beit Shaan

R' Shmuel Beckerman, shliach in Beer Yaakov, told me that hanging prominently on his Chabad house wall is the Chassidic aphorism from the HaYom Yom: "Love a fellow Jew and G-d will love you; do a kindness for a fellow Jew and G-d will do a kindness for you; draw close a fellow Jew and G-d will draw you close." When I asked him why he picked this particular saying, he thought and then said, "It's important to us that every Jew who walks in to the Chabad house feel at home and know what the purpose of this place is: to love a Jew, to do him a favor, and to be mekarev him to Hashem, His Torah, to the Rebbe and Chassidus."

Indeed, the residents of Beer Yaakov visit the Chabad house whenever they need help, not only with checking t'fillin and kashering a kitchen but with any and all important questions.

A KIPPA AND A KAPARA

In preparing to write this article I called many shluchim. I was sure that all I needed to do was ask them about helping a fellow Jew and the stories would flow, but it didn't work out quite that way. Most of the shluchim didn't understand why I should be writing about such a regular daily occurrence. It was only after much effort and pressure that

some of them volunteered the following stories.

R' Yechezkel Markowitz, shliach in Tirat HaCarmel, is busy day and night - like all shluchim - helping the needy, materially and spiritually. He gets many visitors at the Chabad house before the Yomim Nora'im. They come in droves to write a *pidyon nefesh* to the Rebbe before Rosh HaShana and to give money for *pidyon Kaparos* (redeeming the traditional Kaparos with money) before Yom Kippur.

So that it will be comfortable for everyone, they opened a long table, the length of the shul, and whoever comes sits down and writes all his requests for the new year.

One year, Erev Yom Kippur, a rather financially-strapped individual came in. He went over to R' Markowitz and asked in a low voice how much a kippa costs. R' Markowitz told him 10 shekels. "That much?" he asked. "If so, then here are 10 shekels for pidyon Kaparos."

R' Markowitz didn't understand. "You asked me how much a kippa costs, so why aren't you buying one?"

The man answered, "I don't have enough money for both a kippa and Kaparos, and a kappara is more important to me."

Needless to say, R' Markowitz gave him a kippa too.

Here's another story from Tirat HaCarmel:

Six years ago an older woman went to the Chabad house, gave a pidyon nefesh and asked for a bracha for Rosh HaShana. "This is my daughter," she said, introducing her, "and we want a bracha that she finally marries."

A year later the two women came back on Erev Rosh HaShana. "She's married," said the mother, "and we want a bracha for a child."

A year went by and they came back with a baby. And that's how it goes every year. They come, thank the Rebbe for the brachos that were fulfilled, and ask for what they need.

They came back when the child was three in order to cut his hair in the Chabad house and said, "Our entire family is here because of the Rebbe."

ONE GOOD DEED DRAWS ANOTHER

R' Nesanel Dreyfus, shliach in Netanya, tells of someone who did a small favor for the Chabad house and in exchange - and unexpectedly - he received a favor in return that affected his entire life and the life of his children.

It happened 16 years ago when R' Dreyfus went to raise money in France. Being French himself, he can speak to the Frenchmen in their own language and he is successful in raising money for Chabad mosdos in Netanya.

One day he was in the business district of Lyons and went to a shirt store owned by a local Jew. He was told that although the store was small and didn't look elegant, the storeowner owned a huge factory and made millions and he was capable of donating a lot of money. R' Dreyfus walked into the store and introduced himself. He spoke about the mosdos in Netanya and asked for a donation. The storeowner



listened half-heartedly and gave him a 50 franc note (worth about \$10). R' Dreyfus thanked him, though he added that he needed a bigger donation.

The man was furious. He began screaming all sorts of nasty things about rabbis but R' Dreyfus calmed him down and engaged him in a friendly discussion. At a certain point, he asked the man whether in addition to his French name he had a Jewish name. The man said his name was Mordechai.

R' Dreyfus explained that the only person in Tanach called "the Jew" was "Mordechai the Jew." The man was excited about this and he said, "You've just given me a mental shock. You should know that for the past two months I have been struggling with an internal battle. I met a non-Jewish woman and want to marry her but I know that by doing so, I would be cutting myself off from the Jewish people. There is this war waging inside me - am I

with you or against you; am I connected to the Jewish people or am I like the rest of the nations?"

They parted warmly, and R' Dreyfus told him to be in touch the next time he comes to Israel. Two months later the man visited Israel, and looked up his new friend. R' Dreyfus took him to the Kosel and to the graves of tzaddikim, and he became more and more excited. At a certain point R' Dreyfus said to him, "Promise me that you will only marry a Jewish woman." The man wouldn't promise but he did part ways with the non-Jewish woman and a year later, R' Dreyfus received an invitation in the mail to the man's wedding to a Jewess in a proper Jewish wedding.

Over the years, the man established a fine Jewish home and he is religious. Some of his grandchildren learn in Chabad schools. And he often sends nice donations to the Chabad mosdos of Netanya.

THANKS TO A YECHI YARMULKA

Sometimes after doing a small favor for a Jew, you get to the fruits in this world, generations worth of goodness and help. That is the story of R' Chaim Abuhav, a Chassid who lives in the Chabad community in Rechovot.

Chaim was from Lud. He wears a knitted yarmulka and goes to college. Seven years ago, he met up with a childhood friend who came back from South America. The friend became close to Chabad there and he occasionally learned Tanya, sichos of the Rebbe, or Chassidische stories with Chaim. At a certain point Chaim was drafted and he went to say goodbye to his Chabadnik friend. The friend gave him a black yarmulka with Yechi on it. Chaim didn't exactly "go for it" and so he always had another extra yarmulka in his bag. To be polite, he packed the Yechi yarmulka deep in

his backpack when he went into the army.

During the first days of training, Chaim and all his buddies went on a nighttime hike in the Negev. It was a winter night, cold and dark. They went up and down mountains and through creek beds. In the middle of the long trek they had a break. Chaim took off his helmet for a moment and a strong wind blew his yarmulka away. He put his helmet back on and did not remove it until the end of the hike.

When they arrived back at the base, he looked for the reserve yarmulka in his bag but to his dismay, only found the Yechi yarmulka and a white bar mitzva yarmulka. Having no choice he put on the Yechi yarmulka. To his surprise, he noticed that soldiers were coming over to him one after the other and asking him questions about Judaism: What's this week's parsha? When is sunset? How long do we wait between meat and milk? When is Shabbos? Etc.

After a few days he realized that when he wore his knitted kippa, nobody approached him, but with his new look, suddenly people saw him as a resource. A few soldiers asked him to say a shiur. Then they organized a farbrengen with him. Minyanim were arranged. In short, he felt like a shliach. As a natural continuation he began to grow a beard ("It wasn't comfortable for me to walk around wearing a Yechi yarmulka without a beard.") and he got more and more Torah questions. After two weeks Chaim went home on furlough and he got a look at himself in the mirror. He was a bit surprised to see the Lubavitcher looking back at him.

Chaim *felt* like a Lubavitcher, and he adopted R' Yaakov Reinitz of Lud as his mashpia. He married and his wife encourages him to get more involved in shiurim in the army and in the Rebbe's mitzvaim. Today he is an officer in command of a base and

whoever enters his office is invited to put some coins in the pushka. He arranges a weekly shiur for the soldiers, there are farbrengens, and they all get to hear stories about the Rebbe and the Besuras Ha'Geula.

Chaim thought of leaving the army on a number of occasions but each letter of the Rebbe he opens to contains messages about shlichus without leaving the frontlines, so his shlichus continues to grow.

Just imagine, it all began with a yarmulka that he got as a gift!

"YANKELE DOES A FAVOR" FROM BEIT SHEMESH

R' Eliezer Weiner, shliach in Beit Shemesh, relates:

Yankele is a nice man, a retiree from the Bezek company. He has a long ponytail and everybody knows him. Yankele's hobby has always been to help the needy. He's constantly busy helping someone, whether it's furniture that A doesn't need but B does, a little financial assistance, or boxes of food or clothing, you'll always hear him say how happy he is that he was able to make some Jew happy with a favor, small or big.

Religion though, doesn't play a prominent role in his life. T'fillin? No. And shul is not the place you'll meet him.

One day, Yankele discovered that the Chabad house also helps the needy. He and the Chabad house became good friends. He goes in and out of the Chabad house, sometimes bringing a list of the needy and sometimes taking a list. They collaborate in their good deeds.

They tried a few times to suggest that he join the davening or put on t'fillin, but he gently said that he is happy to help the needy but when it comes to t'fillin and mitzvos, please leave him alone.

One day, Yankele found out that one of the people he helped wanted

t'fillin. The man told Yankele that he wanted t'fillin of his own for years already but could not afford it. Yankele immediately saw this as an opportunity to help someone. He went to the Chabad house to find out who deals with t'fillin and spoke with R' Moshe Rivkin.

As they spoke, Yankele learned a few new things. He learned that there are hand t'fillin and head t'fillin and that there are various pieces of parchment, straps, tallis and tzitzis, a velvet bag, a Siddur and more. This item you order at that store and that item you need to select in another store, etc. For a few days, Yankele was completely wrapped up with mitvza t'fillin.

He went to the Chabad house to pick up the t'fillin. R' Rivkin knew Yankele for a long time and knew that he wasn't one of the regulars who put on t'fillin, but this was a golden opportunity. He gave the t'fillin to Yankele and said, "Now you put on t'fillin yourself."

Yankele did not refuse. Nor was that the last time he put on t'fillin. Since then he has shown up a few times for t'fillos at the Chabad house, not to mention farbrengens that he never misses. Sometimes he even "farbrengs" and inspires the participants with some of his own insights.

Not long ago, Yankele ordered a ticket for a trip to the US. R' Rivkin told him he had to include a visit to 770. Yankele went and even put on t'fillin in 770. When he returned to Beit Shemesh he attended a farbrengen at the Chabad house and asked to speak. He stood up and as he spoke he was choked up with emotion. With tears in his eyes, he said that the biggest present he got in his life, that he got from the Chabad house, was his visit to 770 and putting on t'fillin in the Rebbe's *Dalet amos* (presence; lit. four cubits).

And all he wanted was to do a favor for another Jew ...