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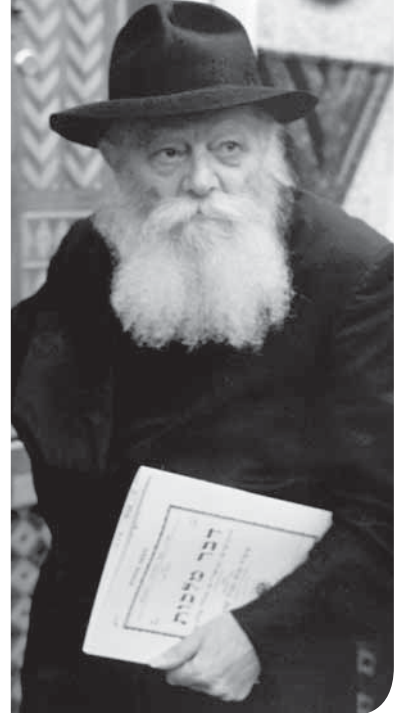
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27 ADAR: 'HE BEARS OUR ILLNESS'

The suffering of all Jews is the suffering of Moshiach. And not only in matters that for Moshiach they are considered suffering but matters of concern to simple Jews, their suffering. For there are indeed such people who have no connection to spirituality, and their only concerns are things that are seen, physically. There must be solidarity with them as well, in their particular state and condition.

Translated by Boruch Merkur



Rayatz suffered constitutes the concept of "He bears our illness."

"HE BEARS OUR ILLNESS... AND HE IS CRUSHED BY OUR TRANSGRESSIONS"

Regarding Moshiach it is said that he possesses the virtue described in the verse, "He bears our illness and he suffers our pain...he is defiled by our iniquities, crushed by our transgressions" (Yeshayahu 53:4-5). Moshiach stands with the Jewish people, using all the resources at his command in order to help them, as they are, in their present state. Thus it says, "he is defiled by our iniquities, crushed by our transgressions," for he is together with the Jewish people, helping them in their [lowly] condition. He helps them, for example, by devoting his faculty of speech to teaching the Jewish people words of Torah, spanning both its revealed and esoteric dimensions.

WHY WAS THE REBBE SILENCED FROM ON HIGH?

This quality was likewise apparent in the Rebbe Rayatz, whose yahrtzeit we are observing. Indeed, the Rebbe Rayatz was once asked: Rebbe, even if there are complaints [On High] against the Rebbe and they want to mete out punishment, why is it necessary for the punishment to affect the Rebbe's faculty of speech in particular? [That is, in his later years, the Rebbe Rayatz suffered a debilitating speech impediment.] Throughout the Rebbe's life, he used his ability to speak for the dissemination of Judaism, a mission the Rebbe pursued with self-sacrifice, with his money and with his spirit. Indeed, the Rebbe has succeeded in this manner, fashioning a dwelling place for G-d in this world. Why then does the punishment have to strike a faculty that was utterly devoted to G-d?

But this affliction the Rebbe

HE DRESSES NO MORE THAN A SINGLE WOUND AT A TIME

The example cited in the Gemara regarding Moshiach is that "he sits among the impoverished and suffers illness...applying one bandage and untying another," meaning that he dresses no more than a single wound at a time, in order that when the Jewish people repent and "they are immediately redeemed," Moshiach will be ready to come that very instant, without any delay, even a single extra moment.

But at first glance, it is difficult to fathom how Moshiach can be described as being afflicted with wounds?

The answer is, "I am with him in suffering." The suffering of all Jews is the suffering of Moshiach. And not only in matters that for Moshiach they are considered suffering but matters of concern to simple

Jews, **their** suffering. For there are indeed such people who have no connection to spirituality, and their only concerns are things that are seen, physically. There must be solidarity with these Jews as well, in their particular state and condition.

Although there is the concept of harsh labor in the spiritual realm (“‘With cement (*b’chomer*)’ – this refers to logical inference (*kal v’chomer*); ‘and with bricks (*u’vi’leveinim*)’ – this refers to the determination of Torah law (*libun hilchasa*),” as elucidated in *Torah Ohr*), nevertheless, there are those who are unaware of all of this. And even if they are aware, they do not understand the concept of toiling in the analysis of Torah. Rather, to them, suffering means poverty or injuries in the simple sense. Moshiach shows these people as well that he is “with them in [their] suffering.”



THE SPECIAL VIRTUE OF MOSHIACH

Indeed, this is the special virtue of Moshiach – that he stands together with all the Jewish people.

And this is the lesson for every single person:

One should interact with his or her acquaintances – an adolescent or an elderly person, man or woman – at the level where he or she is now.

And in so doing, we leave Egypt – for “all the exiles are called Egypt” – and we experience the Future Redemption, regarding which it is said, “As in the days of your exodus from Egypt I shall show you wonders.” That is, even when compared to the exodus from Egypt, the miracles of the Future Era will be seen as “wonders.”

And this will take place soon with the advent of our righteous Moshiach, “the joy of the days of yore shall be upon their heads” (Yeshayahu 35:10).

(From the address of Shabbos Parshas B’Shalach, 17 Shvat 5730, bilti muga)

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THE LIGHT OF GEULA IN JAPAN



By Chanie Nussbaum

“When my son Moshiach was five, he asked, ‘Ima, why were you able to see the Rebbe and I wasn’t?’ I told him, ‘Don’t worry sweetie, the Rebbe will soon be revealed to the world!’ A short while later I was sitting and reading to the children a story about Rashi and the leader of the First Crusade, from the Machanayim series. The French nobleman asks Rashi whether to conquer Yerushalayim. He only heard Rashi’s voice but did not see him (his invisibility was a nes). My son piped up, ‘Ima, now I understand. The Rebbe is with us but we don’t see him.’”

This story was related by Mrs. Efrat Edery, shlucha in Tokyo who immediately brought me into the atmosphere of shlichus in the Era of Geula.

“I was amazed by how this child made the connection and understood things. I also felt how he was growing up with tremendous spiritual resources, which to me is clearly thanks to the Rebbe. We have a set of dishes that the children prepared

– ‘When Moshiach comes we’ll be ready to eat the seuda of the Shor HaBar and the Leviasan’ And the children keep a close watch over that set of dishes.”

It is in this atmosphere that little shluchim are growing up in the Far East. There, among idol worshippers, skyscrapers and neon signs, they are sheltered as if in the Chassidic hothouse of Kfar Chabad, where their father grew up; or the block opposite the Rebbe’s house on President Street where their mother was raised.

How did a young Chassidishe couple end up in this forsaken place?

We arrived here on shlichus eleven years ago before Chanuka. We were newly married and had three suitcases – one with Mivtza Chanuka material, one with kosher food and basic kitchen supplies, and one with our clothing. We had only \$400 in our pockets! Our plan was to be here for Chanuka, to check things out, and to return for another half a year of learning in Kollel in New York. My husband

was drawn to the place and we figured that if the visit went well, we would return for permanent shlichus.

But the Rebbe had other plans. We arrived on Chanuka and people – both the Jews and non-Jews – begged us to stay. We wrote to the Rebbe through the Igros Kodesh and the answer was clear. It said that during Chanuka there is the greatest light and we have to spread it here, in the darkest place – and this is light overcoming darkness, to spread the light and wellsprings of Chassidus in the lowest place.

Of course we were very excited by this answer and we decided to stay and canceled our original plans. The mashpia we consulted with encouraged my husband and told us: It’s a special bracha for a special place (Japan) at a special time (Chanuka).

Since that Chanuka, Japan has become part of the Chabad map and we constantly merit brachos and miracles from the Rebbe, especially as when we first came here there weren’t many Jews (few tourists) and in



Ederly children on Mivtza Lulav with local Jewish children



Moto and Sakomato on a visit to 770 with Rabbi Binyamin Ederly (right)

general, there aren't many foreigners in Japan.

How did you manage without a source of funding in a country with such a high cost of living?

Today there are mekuravim and even non-Jews (whom I call "goyei ha'Geula") who help us, but as soon as we arrived the miracles began.

The first thing we did was rent a place for a Chabad house. The law is that you have to pay a half a year's rent up front. Everything is expensive here and the rental fee was very high. We had no idea how we would pay it. A Japanese non-Jew by the name of Moto came to our aid. He didn't come on his own – the Rebbe sent him. That's clear. What happened was, one day he came to us and anxiously said, "My son asks me why we cannot steal from a wicked person." We told him it's because there is a G-d who knows what is going on in people's hearts and we don't have the right to decide who is good and who is bad.

Moto lent us the entire

amount of money we needed and that is how we rented our first apartment. We took a rental home while we were still here only on a visa which is not at all accepted in Japan. I'll tell you a secret – until today, he refuses to take the money back. We are not surprised that he gets answers from the Rebbe about everything that he does. In general, the Rebbe tells him – continue helping Chabad in your city!

Although he is a Japanese non-Jew, Moto is one of our main benefactors and he doesn't make a move without asking the Rebbe and getting a bracha. He has the number 770 in his phone number and on his car. He made a Japanese website about the Rebbe! Moto helps us with everything, to the point of mesirus nefesh. And this is not something that makes any logical sense.

In any case, the landlady who rented to us said that the entire area in which this building is located was bombed during World War II and this building is the only one that remained undamaged. She says that

somehow she knew, during all these years that this house would end up in Jewish hands. After a short stay at that location we had to leave – it seems our shlichus there was completed and Moto, of course, tried to help.

One day during that time, while my husband went around with him looking for a place, a car suddenly stopped near them and the driver said, "Hello," and asked what they were looking for. My husband explained that he was looking for a place to rent for his charitable organization. The Japanese, called Sakomato, immediately took him to his office and gave him keys with a contract and said, "The office is yours." My husband had to pinch himself – was this for real?

The man explained that he had been wanting to give his office for charitable purposes. When I heard this, I thought my husband was joking. But later on, when I asked Sakomato himself, how he had made that snap decision to give his office for free he said, "I saw in your husband's eyes that he is a trustworthy person and I wanted to do something for Jews



When you want dairy products, you have to go to the cow in order to get chalav Yisroel milk



When you want to prepare gefilte fish, you have to start from the very beginning!

because I have Jewish roots.” (In Japan they say that the Ten Tribes stayed there for a while).

Moto, who helps us so much, is a real estate agent. When we came here he owned a small restaurant. Greatly admiring our work he told my husband, “Take the place for free for a year and make a Chabad house.” Till this day we haven’t paid him rent for it. It was important to him that there be a kosher restaurant in Japan, also for the purposes of refining the Japanese people. It really makes no logical sense.

And when no local slaughterhouse wanted to let us kasher chickens and we had a serious problem, Moto got involved and used his connections and finally found a slaughterhouse that would accept our chickens. Moto also urged us lately to open a falafel store under our hashgacha. So now, for the few Jews who are here, tourists and locals, there is kosher falafel. And the one who made it happen is Moto, the Japanese non-Jew. Moshiach’s times, right?

My husband took Moto (the real estate agent) and Sakomato (who gave us the office for free) to the Rebbe, to 770. They were so excited and although they were

a big help previously, afterwards they doubled and tripled their constant aid.

The most interesting thing about them happened this year. Sakomato asked my husband to come to his neighborhood to check the kashrus of the ocean algae in the area. My husband agreed and of course Moto joined him and to their surprise they discovered a Japanese cemetery with a Jewish cemetery in it, surrounded by a wall, and the gravestones have Hebrew letters. The graves are from the 1800’s! The entrance is completely separate; it’s unbelievable. My husband gave Moto the Chassidic explanation of the statement of Chazal that Hashem did us a kindness by scattering us among the nations (in order to collect sparks of holiness) and this impressed him greatly. He was so moved that he immediately said to my husband, “G-d must help us, so pray,” and he prayed.

Lately, a Japanese by the name of Hagrati began coming to us. He is a friend of Israel and has firm opinions about shleimus ha’arets. At a meal with many guests he got up and said, “In my opinion, G-d gave you the land and you need to protect it!” The

other guests were taken aback. Yes, he’s another one of our “goyei ha’Geula.”

Please describe your daily routine.

This country is so atypical that even those things we’ve gotten used to after eleven years, are still not routine; like the Japanese who come to us wanting to commit to the Sheva Mitzvos B’nei Noach. They don’t want to convert but they are looking for answers. They ask so many questions about the purpose of creation, about our existence, etc.

We work with interesting Jewish tourists. Last year we had a Japanese couple as our guests who wanted my husband to marry them because they didn’t want to be married by the local priest. They said they did not believe in Christianity, “We believe in G-d and want you, Rabbi Binyamin, to marry us!” Since I had just given birth, my husband sent one of our Japanese helpers to help them with whatever they needed and they also got a bracha from the Rebbe for their marriage, a bracha in the Igros Kodesh that also said they should help the Chabad house. That wedding made a big Kiddush Hashem in town.

Tell us some miracle stories you've experienced.

We have seen how a little light dispels a lot of darkness. There is a store in our neighborhood, a huge supermarket, whose owner did not want to bring in anything associated with religion (though he allows a tree for their holiday). What happened was, three years ago they called us from the store and asked us to set up a Jewish and kosher products display in the center of their store. Apparently they decided that it was a worthwhile business decision and boruch Hashem, it was very successful.

Since then, the owners and employees regularly ask us to set up a display. Last year, for example, before Chanuka, the manager of the chain asked that we set up a Chanuka display. We filled the store with menorahs, doughnuts and Moshiach flags. Today there is a lot of light here that chases away the darkness and coldness of Japan.

We have a public menorah lighting on Chanuka and invite the American ambassador here, who is Jewish. Last year his mother-in-law came and she was so moved by the ceremony. She is a Holocaust survivor who lost her entire family and she expressed what we all felt, "Now I know that Am Yisroel Chai."

Yes, even in Japan, which is so distant, physically and spiritually, a little light definitely dispels a lot of darkness! We try to bring in more and more light. When we came to Japan I was expecting a child and Japanese law requires you to take a birth preparation course. So I got to know a Jewish doctor who is living with a Japanese man and has a son and daughter with him who are Jewish, of course. She became very close to us. She comes for

holidays etc. She grew up Reform but it was important to her that her son put on t'fillin, eat matza on Pesach etc. but unfortunately, he refused.

On Rosh HaShana my husband walked two-and-a-half hours each way to enable them to hear the shofar. She was very touched and became more involved but she was heartbroken about her son. It was so important to her that he do something connected with his Jewish identity for if he didn't, who knew whether his children would be Jewish? (She was less worried about her daughter because her children would be Jewish regardless).

We didn't push anything but when we made a Shabbaton (as we do twice a year in the mountains) and we needed a tenth man for a minyan, my husband asked that her son come and said we wouldn't force anything on him; it was just important to us that he be there. In the end he came with his mother.

They loved the Shabbos. Shabbos morning he had an aliya and it was his birthday! It was a Shabbos that so warmed and united the people who attended. It rained the entire Shabbos so we were inside the "bungalow" together. In heaven it was decreed that there be rain so we would sit together longer ... She asked many questions and the son was satisfied.

A few weeks later she called and said that her son had to write an essay for school and the topic was: The person you most admire. She proudly told me, "Do you know who he wrote about? Your husband!" And this was a boy who came from a completely Japanese background.

How are the two Israeli



The Chabad house makes sure there is a minyan and kosher food for the dozens of Jewish businessmen who come for the international jewelry show in Japan

bachurim who are still in jail?

It's very hard for them. My children go and visit them regularly. Not long ago, one of them asked in despair, "Please daven that we survive here in jail." Moshiach, my oldest son, looked at him in surprise and said, "Why do you want to survive here? Let's ask that you get out of here, the sooner the better." This gave him chizuk and taught him to think positively which is so important for them (because their situation is really difficult).

The children bring them such joy that I don't think the adults can compete. In the merit of their prayers may the prisoners go free.

How do you handle the chinuch of your children?

First of all, my children were born on shlichus. When we came here I was expecting my oldest and now we have five children, boruch Hashem, who were born on shlichus and live on shlichus!

There's a person here who



Five hours later he was found and brought to the hospital

came for a brief stay in Japan. He occasionally comes to the Chabad house. The first time he came, he said “Shabbat Shalom” to my son (I think he was four at the time) and my son did not respond. After a while my son explained, “He is not dressed for Shabbos.” You can’t be insulted by a four year old and the next Shabbos he came all dressed up and with a fresh haircut and he said to my son, “This is for you!” To his surprise, my son did not react. A while later my son said, “Why did you take a haircut when it’s S’firas HaOmer?” We were all amazed by this.

If my children are invited to a birthday party, I bake a cake for them. My six year old daughter teaches her younger brothers about the Beis HaMikdash; it’s a pleasure to listen to her and to watch them listening to her. I feel that this is the power of the Rebbe, not anything we are doing.

The Rebbe once told someone who asked in yechidus – how do you send young people to forsaken places – that when you are constantly connected to the fire, you can’t get cold.

At the same time, on shlichus you can’t close your eyes and you need to be alert.

For example, I have not taken my children to Disneyland because the atmosphere is so “goyish,” even though we had mekuravim who wanted to take them and pay for it. I thanked them and said, “I don’t want them to lose the purity and holiness in shlichus. We go on many nature outings. There are huge rice fields that are gorgeous and the children return happy and refreshed (no less than the kids who come back from Disneyland). They also go with us for milking, for example. I was very excited when they saw a pumpkin field and they connected it to something they learned in Mishnayos. We don’t bring in inappropriate pictures, etc.

The children sense what is appropriate for a Chassid and what is not; my daughter Mushka saw a pamphlet with the 12 P’sukim that had a photograph of a girl with long hair. She innocently asked me, “Why do they put a picture of a non-Jewish girl on a holy pamphlet with P’sukim?” I was taken aback because I had never told her anything about long hair, but these sensitivities are deep within them. It’s definitely thanks to the Rebbe and to shlichus. I remember that the Rebbe once explained in a sicha how it’s possible that boiling water that kashered a pot doesn’t make subsequent utensils treif. Since the additional utensils are busy giving out what they absorbed they are not affected, and this is true for children. When they are impacting their environment with light, they remain pure.

Where do they go to school?

They learn via the Internet

and the phone with a wonderful couple, Rabbi Avrohom Kenig and his wife from Migdal HaEmek. Thanks to them, the level of knowledge of our children is no less than that of children their age in the United States or Eretz Yisroel.

We see clearly how when the children are being influential, they are not being influenced. When I go out with my children, people are amazed and they say how did you raise them from such a young age to want to help? I know these are only the kochos of the Rebbe and feel fortunate.

All the visitors here are impressed by their love to learn Torah and from their love to give, and they respond in a big way. For example, a Canadian Jewish woman has been living here for about 25 years with her two sons. She came to us for Shabbos and enjoyed it very much. Two months later I invited her to a Chanuka party and to a public menorah lighting and her answer surprised me. She said, “I promised Moshiach (my oldest son) that I would come so I certainly won’t disappoint him.” The previous time she had been with us he asked her to come with her family the next time.

Many times guests come and say, “Mushkie asked me to come, so I came.” “Zalman asked me to come, so I came.” Children’s requests go a long way. We recently had a Japanese boy come and ask my son whether he had any more Moshiach cards like the ones he had already given him. We are pleased and we pray that we continue to have nachas from them, if only in the merit of shlichus.

Isn’t it hard for children to be on shlichus in such an isolated, challenging place?

Sometimes we are amazed by the kochos (abilities) they display. The trip from Tokyo to Chiba where the Israeli bachurim are in prison is long, yet they never complain about it but go happily. On Shvii shel Pesach the children walked 4.5 hours each way to visit a Jewish couple who lives here. They brought them the simcha of the Yom Tov and returned happy. It moved me to tears. They left at 12:00 and returned at 11:00 at night with swollen feet. They were in bed for three days but did not regret that they went; the opposite. When people tried telling them not to join their father because it would be an exhausting walk for them, they begged to be allowed to go.

So I wasn't surprised this year when they said: Although we went to camp Oro Shel Moshiach last year, this year there is so much to do and if we go, who will you help you here? – even though it's giving up a lot because in Japan they don't see children their age.

Efrat chose to conclude with an incredible story that teaches us about the haste needed to fulfill the shlichus of kabbalas p'nei Moshiach.

A while ago, a religious fellow from Eretz Yisroel came here after a stabbing attack and his recovery period was very lengthy. Since he was always looking for a challenge, he used his time to study Japanese and decided to visit Japan. Of course, being a religious person, he came straight to the Chabad house and became very close to us.

One morning, he told my husband he was going on a trip to a mountainous area where you need to do a lot of climbing. Since this was right before Chanuka, it was raining and very cold and my husband tried



Rabbi Edery visiting the injured man in the hospital and lighting the menorah with him.

to dissuade him, but he liked a challenge and he left.

My husband insisted he take a cell phone so we could be in touch. They arranged to be in touch only after twelve hours had passed but for some reason, after a few hours, I began to worry and we called him. He didn't answer and we figured it was because there was no reception. A half an hour later, at 3:30 in the afternoon, he called. "Save me. I fell 100 meters!"

We were frightened and my husband and Moto went to find him (it was a miracle that he had the ability to identify the location where he had fallen). We got people from the area to help out and five hours later he was found and brought to the hospital. He was in serious condition with much internal bleeding. Another miracle was that they found him before sunset because after sunset the law in Japan forbids searching for someone who endangered himself.

It was a miracle that my

husband got to the hospital on time because he needed an operation and without someone's signature the operation can't take place. The operation took place and he recovered. He had to be in the hospital for two months and when he was released he came to us and I asked him, "How did you call us?" He answered that he himself could not believe it but when he looked, that was the only number on his screen.

A half a year later he married a Japanese convert and they live in Canada with their two children. We learned a lesson: you have to be devoted on shlichus and not delay ...

What message do you have for your sister shluchos?

Today, wherever we are, we are on shlichus. Our role as women is vital in raising our children and in ensuring that the atmosphere in the home is as it should be since Moshiach is already here and the Geula is imminent. We will soon meet at the Beis HaMikdash.

THE REBBE'S CHECK AND THE BAAL SHEM TOV'S LETTER

A famous Baal Shem Tov story comes to life in our times through an eerily similar miracle performed by the Rebbe MH"M.

By Motti Garelik

There is an old Chassidic story about a wealthy man who heard about the Baal Shem Tov and decided to go and see the renowned tzaddik. When he entered the Baal Shem Tov's room, the Baal Shem Tov asked him whether he needed a bracha. The man said no. The Baal Shem Tov persisted, asking him whether he needed a bracha for ample parnasa or health, or anything at all and the man said, thank G-d, he had plenty of money and he didn't need a bracha for anything.

"If so," said the Baal Shem Tov, "I will ask you to do me a small favor. I want to send a letter to Rabbi Tzaddok, the *parnas ha'kahal* (communal council leader). Please deliver it to him."

The man was happy to oblige and he put the letter in an inside pocket of his coat. A few days later he returned home but he forgot the Baal Shem Tov's request. The letter remained in his pocket and he forgot about it entirely.

Years passed. The Baal Shem Tov had passed away and the man's fortune turned and he became very poor. He pawned everything of value that he owned in order to take out loans, and when even that was used up he decided to go through his

possessions again to see if he could find something of value.

In the course of his search he found his old coat that reminded him of better times. He felt in the pocket, hoping to find a stray coin and that is how he found the Baal Shem Tov's letter.

The man was beside himself with anguish. "Surely all my troubles and poverty came because I did not do as the tzaddik bade me." He decided to travel to the city to see whether R' Tzaddok was still alive so he could give him the letter.

He rushed to the neighboring city to find R' Tzaddok and when he got there he was dismayed to find that people did not know of a parnas by that name. How could people not know a person by the name of R' Tzaddok, particularly when he was the parnas? He figured that since the Baal Shem Tov had given him the letter so many years before, it was possible the man had left the city and people had forgotten about him.

He was still standing there when a child ran into the beis midrash and shouted, "Mazal Tov! Rabbi Tzaddok was just appointed as the parnas ha'kahal!"

The man couldn't believe

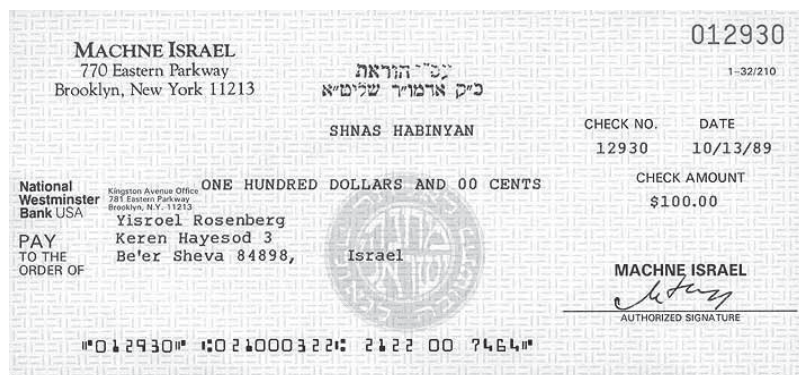
it. The Baal Shem Tov had sent the letter many years before for Rabbi Tzaddok the parnas ha'kahal and it turned out that the man had just been elected as the parnas ha'kahal! He realized that the Baal Shem Tov had seen this with his ruach ha'kodesh (prophetic spirit).

He hurried to the home of R' Tzaddok and began telling him what happened. "So and so many years ago I went to see the tzaddik, the Baal Shem Tov, and he gave me a letter for the parnas ha'kahal of this city. I forgot to deliver the letter and just this week I found it and rushed here in the hopes that I would find him. Now I heard that that a man by the name of R' Tzaddok was appointed as the parnas of the community. I have no doubt that the letter is for you and that the Baal Shem Tov envisioned this with his ruach ha'kodesh."

The astonished R' Tzaddok opened the letter and was shocked to read the following lines, "The one who delivered this letter to you is abjectly poor. Many years ago he used to be a wealthy man. Please help him to the best of your ability."

This amazing story happened not only in the time of the holy Baal Shem Tov but also in our day with the Baal Shem Tov of our time, the Rebbe MH"M.

This story was related by R' Yisroel Rosenberg of Nachalat Har Chabad by way of introduction to his personal story. This is what happened:



R' Yisroel Rosenberg (right) giving the Rebbe's check to R' Zalman Garelik

In 5748 the Rebbe announced Shnas HaBinyan (Year of Construction) and on many occasions the Rebbe asked that houses and neighborhoods be built and that construction should be done even to add rooms to existing homes. The Rebbe also promised \$100 to anybody who reported about a new building or an addition to an existing building.

At the time I lived in *Sh'chuna Gimmel* in Beer Sheva and I davened in the temporary shul that was in a building that belonged to Ben Gurion University. This structure was used as a dining room on weekdays and on Shabbos it turned into a shul thanks to the generosity of the administration of the university who allowed us to use it.

The shul committee decided that we must build a shul. I suggested that they write to the Rebbe about their decision and receive his blessing and \$100.

Apparently, they mentioned my name in the letter because a few weeks later I received a letter at my home from the Rebbe, which had a \$100 check enclosed. Well, since I received a letter from the Rebbe along with a check, I got to work. A long, complicated process began with the city to obtain

the necessary permits. First, we needed land and then we needed permission to build. After a lot of running around to various offices it reached the final stages of approval, and then we were told that construction could not be approved since the area designated to us was too close to a gas station.

In the meantime, I left the neighborhood and moved to the Ramot neighborhood of the city. After a while I moved to Nachalat Har Chabad in Kiryat Malachi and I forgot about the whole thing.

At the same time, Rabbi Shneur Zalman Garelik, director of the central Chabad house in Beer Sheva, began working on getting the permits he needed to build a Chabad house, for the place they were using was too small for all their activities. The building consisted of a small room that served as the office and two other rooms, not particularly large, that served as a shul (with a men's and women's section), a library, Kollel Levi Yitzchok, a farbrengen hall, shiurim, and sometimes even as rooms for exhibits and numerous other activities.

After a lot of effort Chabad received a lot from the city in *Sh'chuna Alef*. After a few years of working on gaining

building permits, they finally obtained them. On Gimmel Tammuz 5760/2000 they laid the cornerstone in an impressive ceremony.

The plans for the new building included three floors with a spacious shul, offices, a hall for events, classrooms, a children's library, a Kollel for seniors, a soup kitchen, and more. In the course of his fundraising, R' Garelik approached me as a former resident of Beer Sheva. I told him I'd get back to him on Motzaei Shabbos.

On Motzaei Shabbos I began looking for an important paper that I needed urgently and I turned the house upside down in my search. While looking all over I came across an envelope. When I opened it, I was surprised to find a check from the Rebbe! Then it all came back to me. This was the check I had gotten from the Rebbe for the shul in Beer Sheva!

All excited I called up R' Garelik and told him the story. "It looks like the Rebbe sent the check for you so you would use it for this building because the other building never happened."

It took thirteen years until the check reached its destination. A Baalshemske miracle!

THE 'DRY' FARBRENGEN

It was the month of Adar and Purim was approaching. The Rebbe Rayatz planned on farbrenging and the Chassidim in Milwaukee wanted permission to bring mashke despite Prohibition, which made alcoholic beverages illegal throughout the United States. The Rebbe refused and warmed them with his words instead. * A description of the Rebbe Rayatz in Milwaukee in 5690.

By Shneur Zalman Berger

The Rebbe Rayatz on his visit
to the United States in 5690/1930

NO TO BOOTLEGGED ALCOHOL

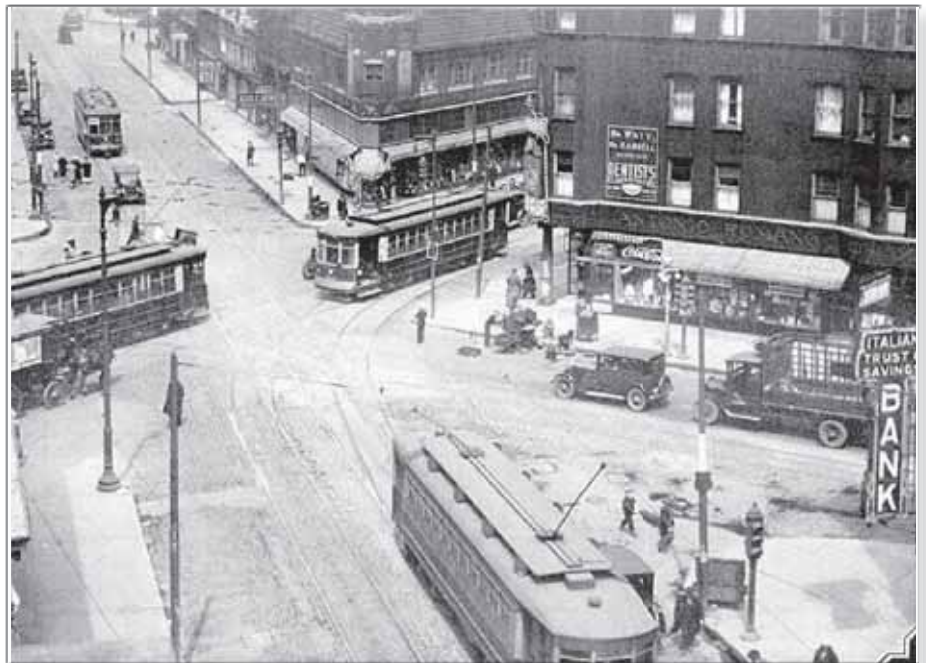
When the Rebbe Rayatz visited America in 5690/1930, Judaism and Chassidus were very much on the sidelines. Aid to Russian Jewry consisted of politely opening ears to the Rebbe but not opening hearts or pockets. Back then, the North Pole seemed warmer than American Jewry.

The question is, why was that so? Why were the hearts of American Jews, many of whom had come from Eastern Europe, cold to the plight of their brethren back in Europe as well as to Torah and mitzvos?

The answer lies in the fact that after they came to America they would get swept up in the daily struggle of existence. Under these circumstances it was difficult dealing with problems such as Shabbos observance and Jewish identity. Furthermore, the Stock Market Crash made people very wary about parting with their money.

From 1919 until 1933 it was illegal to import or export alcoholic beverages under the laws of Prohibition. Those who were really addicted had to buy liquor on the black market, smuggled in from Canada and Mexico. So Jews from Eastern Europe who were used to raising cups in l'chaim to mark a yahrtzait, birthday or simply in honor of friends and family, had to abstain completely from alcohol and their inner warmth cooled off until they froze over.

However, the Chassidim in Milwaukee could not imagine a farbrengen with the Rebbe, with the participation of hundreds of people, sans mashke. They suggested that mashke be bought illegally but the Rebbe adamantly



The center of Milwaukee. Picture taken in 1930

“The Rebbe left the train station leading a convoy of about 200 cars. In front of the Rebbe’s car was a police car with welcome signs on it that stopped traffic on the street in the Rebbe’s honor.

=====

refused to allow this. “Tables were set up with soda and lemonade. They wanted mashke but I did not allow it because in America it was illegal,” wrote the Rebbe in his diary. It was a large public event and concern for the law was obvious. So this farbrengen was held with no mashke at all!

However, the tremendous warmth that emanated from the heart of the Nasi warmed up the participants as will be related.

THE REBBE’S WELCOME

Milwaukee is the largest city in Wisconsin and is located on the west side of Lake Michigan. At that time, about 30,000 Jews lived there which included a

sizable number of Chassidim as well as a large group of Jews who descended from Chabad Chassidim. Amongst them was a wealthy man from the Lubavitcher Chanin family who helped fund the Rebbe Rayatz’s activities.

An entourage of about twenty men escorted the Rebbe from Chicago to Milwaukee which included his son-in-law Rashag and the secretaries Rabbi Chatshe Feigin and Rabbi Chaim Lieberman as well as the Rebbe’s uncle, Rabbi Moshe Horenstein. They traveled together on Sunday, 9 Adar. In the evening they arrived at the train station in Milwaukee where a magnificent welcome had been prepared for the Rebbe. On the cars that came

MILWAUKEE INSTEAD OF WASHINGTON

Milwaukee was not originally on the Rebbe's itinerary and yet he spent four days there. How did he end up there?

The Rebbe's visit to the United States was dedicated towards strengthening Chassidim and Chassidus, strengthening American Jewry, and working on behalf of Russian Jewry with the attempt to harness organizations and public figures for the benefit of the oppressed Jews under communist rule.

In those days financial aid for shomer Shabbos Jews was not spoken about. At this time, the communist regime did all it could to uproot Judaism. In the winter of 5690 there were waves of arrests. In one, twelve rabbanim and communal figures were arrested in Minsk, and in Leningrad the heads of the Chabad community and yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim were arrested. Among those arrested were Rabbi Shimon Lazaroff, rav of the Chabad community and Rabbi Nissan Nemenov, menahel and rosh yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim.

The Rebbe Rayatz pleaded for people to help them but the Jews of the United States were preoccupied with their own problems for this was the Great Depression and they were not particularly enthusiastic about doing anything for the Jews of Russia.

The Rebbe visited Chicago and during the visit he received an invitation to participate in a large meeting of the Joint that would be taking place on Sunday, 9 Adar, in Washington. Senior public figures in the US were invited and the Rebbe wanted to take advantage of this convention to arouse public sentiment and get Jewish organizations involved in helping Russian Jewry. He turned to Dr. Cyrus Adler, then chairman of the cultural committee of the Joint to arrange for a special session of Jewish askanim (communal figures) in which the Rebbe would take part, so he would be able to do something on behalf of Russian Jews in distress. Dr. Adler, like the rest of the people in the Joint, was not prepared to get involved at this stage and he suggested meeting with the Rebbe in Philadelphia on 12 Adar, not at the big meeting in Washington.

The Rebbe declined the offer and sent his son-in-law Rashag to the meeting with Dr. Adler. The Rebbe did not refuse because of the distance, since the trip from Chicago to Philadelphia or Washington was more or less the same, but the Rebbe wanted the meeting to take place during the course of the convention, where many askanim would meet. It was likely that the Rebbe's presence would lead to significant results.

Also, it seems the Rebbe wanted to return to Chicago for Purim and traveling to Philadelphia to meet with Dr. Adler so close to Purim would have prevented this from happening. The Rebbe did not want to weaken the Jewish-Chassidic inspiration that had begun in the city and this was just as important to him as helping Russian Jewry. Furthermore, Dr. Adler's response did not indicate his great readiness to help.

This is why the Rebbe went back to his original plan and sent Rashag to Dr. Adler. The time he would have been in Washington, he spent in Milwaukee and he returned to Chicago for Purim.

It should be mentioned that towards the end of his visit, the Rebbe Rayatz went to Washington and met with the President.

to welcome the Rebbe waved American flags as well as flags with Magen Davids which said "Boruch Haba" on them.

The Rebbe stepped out of the train and journalists' cameras began to click all around him. The crowd was obviously excited; for most of them, this was the first time they were seeing the Rebbe. The Rebbe left the train station leading a convoy of about 200 cars. In front of the Rebbe's car was a police car with welcome signs on it that stopped traffic on the street in the Rebbe's honor.

The Rebbe davened Maariv in the Anshei Lubavitch shul and from there he went to the apartment that had been prepared for him which was attached to the shul. Even during this short walk he was surrounded by a large crowd and many journalists who didn't stop taking pictures. The non-Jews who gathered said the Rebbe was a personality who made a positive impression. The apartment was decorated with welcome signs and colorful flags.

After a brief supper the first visitors arrived, members of a delegation from the nearby town of Sheboygan. They were thirty men, old and young. The community so greatly desired to see the Rebbe that they went to Milwaukee to invite the Rebbe to their town. They pleaded with the Rebbe to visit them for at least one day but the Rebbe's crowded calendar and his desire to fan the inspiration in Milwaukee and Chicago prevented him from giving them a positive response. The meeting ended after about half an hour and the visit to Sheboygan did not come to pass.

After the delegation left, people came in for yechidus (private audience) for several hours.

VA'YAVO AMALEK

The following day, Monday, 10 Adar, many Jews continued to see the Rebbe including quite a few young Americans. In a letter to his wife, the Rebbe wrote that the young men listened politely and some of them even promised to put on t'fillin.

The delegation from Sheboygan together with the Chassidim in Milwaukee as well as those who weren't Chassidim, sat together to farbreng. This gave the Rebbe much nachas and he wrote, "A hundred people sat and farbrenged, speaking a bit, telling one another stories, warming one another up. That's what they told me, it made a nice impression." At the end of the farbrengen the people from Sheboygan went to the train station to return home and the Jews of Milwaukee escorted them.

From morning till night the Rebbe's apartment hummed with many Jews from all backgrounds who wanted to see him. In the evening, Jews from Milwaukee packed the Anshei Lubavitch shul in anticipation of the Rebbe saying a maamer Chassidus.

The large hall of the shul was full with Jews from all walks of life, young and old, those with trimmed beards and those with untouched beards, those who put a yarmulke on in the entrance to the shul as well as rabbanim, shoachim, chazanim and students. The women's section was also full with women from various communities.

The shul was lit up and there was a babble of languages, Yiddish and English, and then suddenly, silence. All eyes were turned to the main entrance. The Rebbe, wearing a black coat and a tall fur hat walked in and strode the length of the shul, went up

בס"ד, ש"פ בשלח, י"ג שבט, תש"ט.

יאצ"ט כבוד אמו הרבנית הצדקנית מרת שמערינא שרה נ"ע זי"ע.

וַיְבֹא עַמְלֵק וַיִּלָּחֶם עִם יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּרִפְיֵיהֶם, וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל יְהוָה בְּחַר לָנוּ אֲנָשִׁים וְצֵא הַלָּחֶם בְּעַמְלֵק כּו'. וְהָנָה מִלְחַמַּת עַמְלֵק הִ' אַחֲרֵי הַנְּסִים הַמְּפֹרָסִים דִּיצִי"מ, קִרְיַת יָם סוּף, נְתִינַת הַמֶּן וְהוֹצֵאת מִים מִן הַסֶּלַע שֶׁהָם נִסִּים גְּלוּיִם בְּשִׁנּוּי הַטֶּבַע, וְאִזּוּ בֹא עַמְלֵק לִלְחֹם עִם יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְהָנָה בְּכָל הַתּוֹרָה נִקְרָאִים יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּשֵׁם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְכֵן אָמַר וַיִּלָּחֶם עִם יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְלִכְאוּרָה הִ' לוֹ לומר וַיִּלָּחֶם עִם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְכֵן אָמַר וַיִּלָּחֶם עִם יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְעַצַּת מֹשֶׁה ע"פ מֵאֲמַר הוּא הוּא בְּחַר לָנוּ אֲנָשִׁים אֲנָשִׁי מֹשֶׁה דּוֹקָא, וְצֵא הַלָּחֶם בְּעַמְלֵק, דְּלִכְאוּרָה הִ' לִי לְמִימַר וַיִּצְאוּ וַיִּלָּחֶם, אוֹ צֵאוּ, וְלִמָּה אָמַר צֵאוּ, וְגַם מִתּוֹ בְּעַמְלֵק דְּהוּלִּל עִם עַמְלֵק, וְלִהְיוֹת כִּי בַעֲבוּרָה בְּנֶפֶשׁ הָאָדָם, אוֹ נֶאֱדָר דַּעַם וְהִ' אֶם מַעֲנִשׁ זַעֲהָת הַשְּׂגָחָה פְּרִטִּית וְהִ' הַשִּׁי"ת פִּירֵט מִיט אִיהֶם, אוֹן טוֹט מִיט אִיהֶם וְהוֹנְדֶּרְלִיכֶע זָאָכֶען, וְהִ' ע"ד הַנְּסִים דִּיצִי"מ וְקִי"ס אוֹן הוֹצֵאת מִים מִסֶּלַע בְּמִדְבָּר, דָּאָס אִיז דָּאָךְ אֶלְץ וְהָאָס הַשִּׁי"ת בִּיט אִיבֶער דִּי גָאָנְצֶע נְאֻמָּה, מִשְׁנֵה אֶת הַטֶּבַע, קוֹמֵם אֶם עַמְלֵק אוֹן הָאֵלֶּס מִלְחָמָה מִיט דַּעַם מַעֲנִשְׁשֶׁן, וְהָאָס דִּי סִבָּה אוֹיֵף דַּעַם אִיז וְהִ' עַד זָאָגְט אִין פֶּסוּק וַיִּבֹא עַמְלֵק

The Maamer, "Va'yavo Amalek" which was said in Milwaukee was published in 1949 by the Rebbe as per his father-in-law, the Rebbe Rayatz's instructions.

“They leave “children of stone” after them. None of them think about the chinuch of children that they become like Jews in the Old Country. Rather, each one gives money to found orphanages, for old age homes, for shuls, and they write on it their names, i.e. they engrave their names in stone as an everlasting memorial, “a child of stone.”

near the Aron Kodesh and sat in an armchair next to a small table. He gazed at the crowd and waited for a few minutes before beginning the maamer that begins “Va'yavo Amalek.”

The audience listened avidly to the maamer that took an hour and twenty minutes. The Rebbe described the scene in a letter to his wife:

The people sat in their places in utter silence, with great respect, all of them riveted to their seats, all of them looking at one place, inclining their heads forward, listening, comprehending, wanting to

understand. It was like sitting in a garden amongst plants that move in the breeze. Their lips move but their voices are not heard. It was apparent that each of them was going outside of himself, wanting to know what was being said, wanting to understand, wanting to know, and on all was apparent a smile of delight which expressed thanks and joy.

There are some Jews here in their forties and fifties from our district in Vitebsk who were with their fathers in Lubavitch in their youth and heard and reviewed Chassidus and



Milwaukee today

occasionally learned, but their devotion to religion ceased and they cooled off but the taste of Chassidus still remains with them. They put on t'fillin, keep Shabbos to the extent they can ... but this visit inspired them, shook them up. The first time I spoke, on Sunday (so they say), they "lost it" completely, they cried hysterically, and said the SheHechyanu blessings with tears of joy and sorrow.

The maamer was able to affect even those who were not in Lubavitch; however, on those [who were in Lubavitch] even more ... How much they understood of the Chassidus I don't know, but they spoke about it amongst themselves. They are in America for twenty years already and speak a very good English. They repeated the content of what was said in English to those who knew nothing (aside from what they saw).

Present were also reporters from English language newspapers, one a Jew and one

a Christian. The latter did not understand what the Rebbe said in Yiddish but the entire scene made a good impression on him.

The Rebbe quickly wrote up the maamer, working on it that night for two hours, and in the days that followed he devoted additional time to completing it. Nineteen years later, the Rebbe published it as per the instructions of the Rebbe Rayatz in a kuntres (booklet) that was published for 10-13 Shevat 5709 and was reprinted in the Seifer HaMaamarim 5709, p. 34.

A FARBRENGEN WITHOUT MASHKE

In a letter to his wife, the Rebbe wrote about the many things he did on Tuesday, 11 Adar. From nine in the morning until one in the afternoon there was yechidus and receiving of *panim*.

From 1:00 until 1:45 there was a special yechidus with Rabbi Yehuda Leib Twersky, the Horensteipel Rebbe, a

descendent of the Mittlerer Rebbe. Rabbi Twersky visited the Rebbe in Chicago, was present for the welcome at the train station in Milwaukee, was with the Rebbe in the shul, and then had yechidus.

From two until four – lunch, resting, and Mincha.

Between four and eight – there were yechidus and the receiving of panim and Maariv.

Between eight and nine, a break to continue writing the maamer.

From nine until ten – yechidus and the receiving of panim.

Between ten and twelve – a special meeting that was actually a farbrengen in the Anshei Lubavitch shul that was attended by about a hundred Chassidim and distinguished people from the Jewish community including about twenty of Chassidic origin. There was also a large group of women who listened from the women's section.

The tables were set with soda and lemonade and no mashke at all. At the beginning of the farbrengen the Rebbe explained about the difference between Torah and t'filla. The Rebbe spoke in Yiddish in a way that even a child could understand and then he launched into an inspiring sicha in a Lubavitcher style. The Rebbe described it in a letter to his wife:

... an inspiring sicha "like at home," the crowd warmed up a bit. Out of the two hours that I farbrenged, I spoke for about an hour in four installments... It penetrated to their core, both men and women were moved ... I spoke about Jewish communities in America not thinking about themselves. They leave "children of stone" after them. None of them think about the chinuch of children that

they become like Jews in the Old Country. Rather, each one gives money to found orphanages, for old age homes, for shuls, and they write on it their names, i.e. they engrave their names in stone as an everlasting memorial, “a child of stone.” I spoke about it at length with the appropriate terms with colorful true to life descriptions.

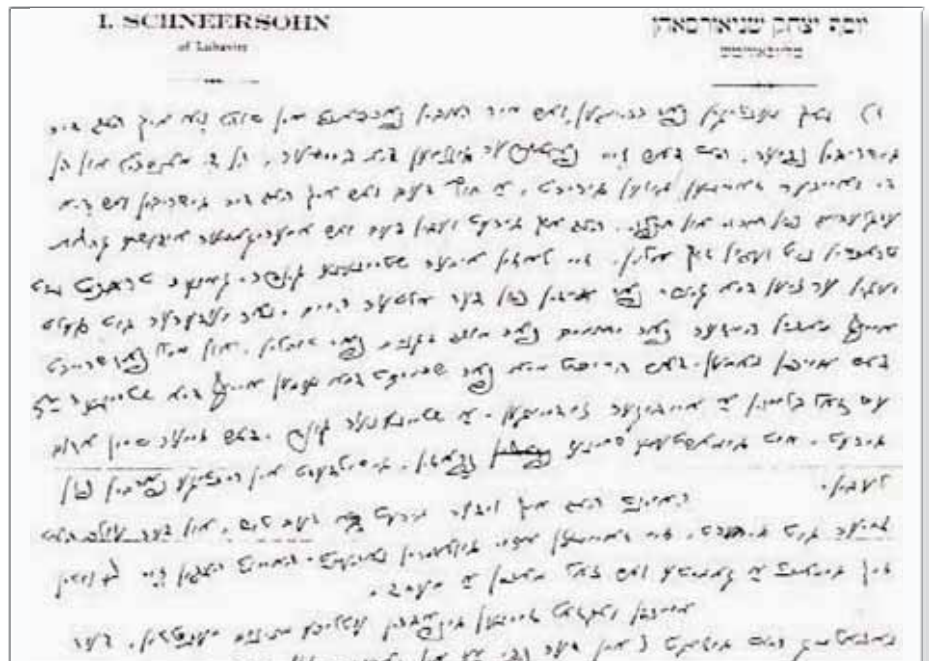
On Wednesday, the last day of the visit, the Rebbe addressed many Jews who came to listen to him. On that day there was a meeting of Chassidim and Jews of Milwaukee about *maamad* (monetary support for the Rebbe’s household).

LETTERS OF INSPIRATION

The Rebbe returned to Chicago on Wednesday evening, even as the impact of the visit continued to reverberate. A week later, on Wednesday, 19 Adar, some Jews in Milwaukee felt a great desire to see the Rebbe and so they went to Chicago to see him and gave him special regards from the Jews of their city.

In the days following the trip, the Rebbe wrote special letters of inspiration to some of the Jews of Milwaukee and one of them was sent to “Reb Chaim Eliezer,” to whom the Rebbe wrote that their community could do a lot to strengthen Judaism in general and Chassidus in particular, particularly as they had amongst them “men of stature.”

On a practical note, the Rebbe explains that Chabad Chassidim were always mekarev those who



A letter written by the Rebbe Rayatz about his visit to Milwaukee

davened in shuls and gave them shiurim in Chassidus in a style suitable to them on their level on topics of avoda, i.e. t’filla and correction of middos. Similarly, it was always the custom to exert influence on the youth in order to introduce within them a glimmer of light.

The Rebbe expresses special nachas in his letter regarding the spiritual arousal in response to what he said during the meeting in the Lubavitch shul:

I was pleased to see an inner arousal, an inner feeling, an inner enthusiasm, albeit covered in the dust of the flow of life, wrapped in a mantle of worries but it peeks through the cracks and it is easy, with Hashem’s help, to arouse it and to bring it from concealment

out into the open.

The Rebbe concludes the letter:

The group of Anash in your city is worthy of channeling the blessing of G-d to found a group of people who study Chassidus at set times according to the conditions of the place and to agitate for the establishment of a shiur in Gemara amongst the balabatim. And the learning, whether of Chassidus or Gemara, should take place in the shul of their choice.

Sources: The article is based on Toldos Chabad in the US, edited by Rabbi Sholom Ber Levin; letters of the Rebbe Rayatz to his wife that were published for the first time by Rabbi Sholom Yaakov Chazan in “Beis Moshiach.” Seifer HaMaamarim 5709, Igros Kodesh Admur Rayatz, Sichos Admur Rayatz, Toldos Chabad in Soviet Russia, Yiras Hashem Otzaro, etc.

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

HEARING HI-TECH HOLINESS

By Rabbi Yehoishophot Oliver



The potential for using audio technology nowadays is simply amazing. For a relatively small price one can purchase an audio recorder and record audio files at no cost other than the price of the batteries (and with some devices not even that is needed). These recordings can then be distributed with relative ease.

In the realm of *k'dusha* (holiness), and of spreading *Yiddishkait* and the wellsprings of *Chassidus*, this potential is vastly underused.

If Torah is truly precious to us, we will want and yearn to share it and disseminate it, to make every moment of it count as much as possible and have the greatest possible impact.

Many of those who deliver *shiurim* neglect to record them. The class is then heard only by those attending, while if it were recorded it could have been heard by hundreds, if not thousands of people. Do the maggidei shiur understand this? Do they not want the broader audience? Can they not find some youth to delegate the task of uploading and linking through their various ways and means?

The opposite question can be leveled at the listeners. Everybody is listening to something but who is listening to *shiurim*? With light and easy-to-carry devices such as an iPod, which can be purchased at a relatively cheap price and can

store increasingly more mind-boggling amounts of audio, it takes very little effort to tune in to *k'dusha*.

Boruch Hashem, there is no shortage of audio to put on one's iPod. There is a vast array of Torah audio available for download online and elsewhere, most of it very cheaply if not altogether gratis. This awesome treasure exists for a purpose—so that we make full use of it.

In fact, an audio recording has a certain advantage over a face-to-face *shiur*. Often some of the ideas heard in a *shiur* will not register after being heard once; however, after being heard a second and third time, one comes to fully grasp the teachings.

Moreover, even if one has heard the *shiur* several times and fully understands and remembers it, he may attain further insight into the topic discussed, or draw needed inspiration from reviewing it again.

And even if the person attends *shiurim*, audio technology enables one to “seize the commute” and learn in situations in which learning would be otherwise impossible, or at least very difficult—such as while walking, waiting at a bus stop, or the like. This enables one to use those few minutes here and there, which add up to many hours over the course of time, to the utmost.

This is especially necessary for those who for whatever

reason may not be able to attend a *shiur* in person that day, or live in a place where such *shiurim* are not available.

Even if one is not mentally in the mood to listen to a *shiur*, he can still make good use of his time by listening to music that inspires one to love and fear Hashem.

Another important role that audio of *shiurim* or of proper Jewish music can play (no pun intended) is to replace any excuse of a need to listen to the radio, which, like everything secular, almost always contains some objectionable content.

This technology is particularly beneficial for *chassidim*, who should make a point of regularly learning our Rebbe's teachings. It enables those who understand Yiddish to listen to the Rebbe speak directly, without the intermediate stage of a transcript, which although faithful to the original, may still lose much in translation.

Moreover, through listening to audio one can be inspired emotionally by the Rebbe's holy *sichos* in a way that would not be possible through studying the transcripts (edited or unedited) of his *sichos*.

As the Rebbe said many times, “Words that emanate from the heart will penetrate the heart” (*Seifer HaYashar of Rabbeinu Tam #313*) and have their desired impact. The

Rebbe Rashab explains (*Seifer HaMaamarim* 5671) that this is referring specifically to spoken words, for since they are uttered with passion and enthusiasm, they have a special power to penetrate the heart.

Moreover, Chassidus explains (see *ibid.*; *Seifer HaMaamarim* 5666, p. 493; *Toras Menachem* 5713, Vol. 1) that speech stems from the essence of the soul, as it is written, “his soul went forth in his speech” (*Shir HaShirim* 5:6). (Unfortunately this also holds true in the negative sense, for the deepest evil traits in a person are revealed specifically through vile speech—see *Seifer HaMaamarim* 5670).

So to “translate” this to listening to the Rebbe: Since emotions are expressed in speech, the Rebbe’s holy emotions—faith in Hashem, love and fear of Hashem, love of Torah, love of his fellow Jew, and so on—are surely expressed in his speech. And since all the Rebbe’s words surely “emanate from the heart,” listening to his

words surely has a special power to “penetrate the heart” of the listener. Moreover, since spoken words stem from the essence of the soul, it follows that listening to the Rebbe speaking has the power to connect the listener to the essence of the Rebbe’s soul.

Using audio technology was always a very important way to

impact on one’s feelings, in the meantime it surely behooves us to take advantage of the technology available to maintain our bond with the Rebbe as much as possible despite his having been concealed from us, albeit temporarily.

And this will prepare us to see and hear him address us again,

“Audio technology enables one to “seize the commute” and learn in situations in which learning would be otherwise impossible, or at least very difficult—such as while walking, waiting at a bus stop, or the like.

bond with the Rebbe, even before *Gimmel Tammuz*, back in the day of cassette tapes. However, it is obviously vital after *Gimmel Tammuz*, when, due to our many sins, we are no longer able to hear the Rebbe speak physically.

Although hearing the Rebbe’s holy words directly and physically is surely likely to have the greatest

and reveal to one and all the most sublime and sweet secrets of Torah, may it happen now!

Rabbi Yehoishofot Oliver is a teacher and writer. Many of his articles on the Rebbe, Chassidus, and Moshiach can be found online at a-farbrenngen.blogspot.com



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SHLICHUS AND THE POWER OF THOUGHT

The Rebbe Rayatz extols the power of positive thought about a fellow Jew. • Stories about shluchim who use this method and bring about positive change.

By Rabbi Yaakov Shmuelewitz; shliach, Beit Shaan

There is a HaYom Yom entry that says that the Rebbeim would regularly bring his Chassidim and mekusharim (who were connected to them) to mind, and this would be the impetus for a stronger bond with the Rebbe.

Since “*shlucho shel adam k’moso*” (a person’s emissary is like himself), there are shluchim who, in addition to their regular activities and official programs, shiurim, mitzvaim, etc. devote some time on occasion to think about their mekuravim. This has a positive effect on those Jews, strengthening their bond with the Rebbe, with the shliach, and with the Chabad house.

For obvious reasons, most

of these stories will be related without using the name of the shliach etc. both because the shluchim made this request (since they did not want to publicize that they deal with the esoteric and influence others with their thoughts) and for the sake of the mekuravim who shouldn’t think their power of free choice is being taken from them when thoughts are beamed at them from afar.

V’NAHAPOCH HU

A shliach told me that this happens to him all the time. He remembers a certain person and wonders why it has been so long since he heard from him and within two hours the person calls

and starts discussing Judaism with him. Or he suddenly meets him and they renew their relationship.

This shliach told me about one such instance where thinking about someone proved effective:

“In the shul where I daven and regularly say divrei Torah, a certain ‘ben Torah’ from B’nei Brak often shows up when he is visiting his parents. Whenever I get up to say divrei Torah, he makes a show of getting up and walking out of the shul until I finish speaking. A Misnaged.

“Obviously, his rude behavior was unpleasant, to say the least, and the moment I would see him walk into shul, my heart would sink. This went on for months.

“One time, when he walked into shul, I decided – probably because I had been reading about the power of positive thoughts, to try this method out on him. I closed my eyes for two minutes and began thinking positive thoughts about him. *He is a ben Avrohom, Yitzchok and Yaakov.*





Hashem loves him as His only child. He is not at fault. He is a tinok sh'nishba. It's a rachmanus on him and I ought to love him.

"And you know what happened? When I got up to say the sicha before Krias Ha'Torah, he remained and listened like everybody else. Not only that, but when the davening was over he came over to me and said, 'Yashar ko'ach for the divrei Torah. You made some interesting points.'

"And since then he always stays and listens."

The power of thought.

HOW TO BE MEKAREV PEOPLE

I know about a Chassidische rav in one of the Chabad yeshivos who reads many chapters of T'hillim every day for the sake of a number of his students, as well as chapters that correspond to their age, for success in their learning and avodas Hashem.

I met this Chassidische rav one Tishrei in 770 and I saw that he was reciting many chapters of

T'hillim. I asked him why he was doing that and he told me that he has some students who are not doing well in their learning and in their Chassidische behavior. All the personal talks he has had with them did not bring about the desired results and therefore, he says their chapter of T'hillim and hopes it will help.

Another shliach noticed a young man who often visited the Chabad house and he thought about how he needed to be mekarev him. He wondered how to go about it until the familiar words in Kabbalas Shabbos, "s'u Mincha u'bou l'chatzrosav" jumped out at him. The words say to pick up a gift and bring it to the holy courtyards. That was it! He would bring the young man as a gift to the Rebbe. He thought, "With Hashem's help I will be mekarev him until he becomes a Tamim in the Rebbe's yeshiva."

Amazingly, not too much time elapsed before the shliach saw that the young man had taken on some Chassidic practices and was proceeding in the right direction.

In an issue of *Ateres Chaya* there was an article about a teacher in a Chabad school who has been using this method for years, the method of influencing her students with the power of thought. She said that she has some students who aren't behaving as Chassidic as they should and all her talks with them were fruitless and so she thinks about them. She devotes time to thinking about each of these girls and imagines them improving and progressing in the ways of Chassidus.

The teacher said the girls are starting to change for the better.

The power of thought.

THOUGHTS THAT LED TO A RENEWED FRIENDSHIP

Another shliach, who is a rav in his city of shlichus, told me:

I was plagued by troubling thoughts because I thought I had unwittingly offended one of my closest friends. I spent hours obsessing about how I hadn't been sufficiently sensitive in our last talk and he may have been insulted and maybe this would lead to his keeping his distance from me and the Chabad house. I thought perhaps I should call him and appease him.

I was immersed in these thoughts when I suddenly got a phone call from him. "What's up?" he asked in a friendly manner, and we had a long conversation that was completely positive. He conveyed his desire to strengthen our relationship.

Afterward I began thinking about why he had called me. He hadn't asked me anything, so why did he call? I came to the conclusion that it was my thinking about him that caused him to feel favorably disposed towards me and to call.

"As waters reflect a face, so too the heart of man to another."

THINKING STREET BY STREET, HOUSE BY HOUSE

Rabbi Shmuel Grumach, shliach of the Rebbe in yishuv Beit Dagan, uses the power of thought a lot and sees results. Every time he goes to the Rebbe, he "brings with him," in thought, all the residents of Beit Dagan.

Before Gimmel Tammuz, he would do this during a farbrengen with the Rebbe, during the niggunim between sichos etc. Now, after Gimmel Tammuz, he does this while saying T'hillim on Shabbos Mevarchim. In his thoughts he goes street by street

and house by house, thinking about every resident of Beit Dagan. He usually knows what bracha each of them needs.

Before he makes a trip, many residents ask R' Grumach to keep them in mind, "Bless me," "I'm asking for a bracha for such-and-such," etc. When he returns from the Rebbe, they all ask, "Did you remember me?" "Did you think about me?" Many tell of good things that happened to them in the meantime, thanks to his thoughts and prayers.

NOT JUST IN THOUGHTS

R' Grumach doesn't only traverse the streets of Beit Dagan in his mind but in real time. Once a week he goes on Mivtza Moshiach with his regular helper, Rabbi Velvel Marantz of Kfar Chabad who brings along his flute.

They make house calls and talk to people about getting ready for Moshiach's coming. Each visit begins with the Rebbe's Besuras and Nevuas Ha'Geula. They conclude by urging them to make a good *hachlata* (resolution).

A woman committed to lighting Shabbos candles with her daughters. R' Grumach made a note for himself to remember to call her on Friday and remind her about candle lighting time. That Friday, he was busier than usual with Mivtza T'fillin, in giving out food parcels and in announcing the candle lighting time from the loudspeaker attached to his car, and he did not call her. Apparently, his intention of calling her was effective because the following Friday, when he called her, the woman told him excitedly that she hadn't forgotten. She had gathered all her daughters and they all lit, just as the rabbi had explained.

THE POWER OF THOUGHT

The first two words of *Likkutei Dibburim* of the Rebbe Rayatz are "*machshava mo'eles*." The Rebbe explains that it is possible to accomplish a great deal by thinking of another person. He says, **"Thought has no constraints and has no barriers ... at any time it reaches the place it needs to reach."**

The story is told there about how the Rebbe and those present (on Simchas Torah 5693/1932) mentioned some names of Chassidim as a segula so they should be able to leave Russia. One of the people there, who had himself left Russia at that time, asked the Rebbe how effective could thought be. The Rebbe replied, "Very." The Rebbe also hinted to him that he himself had left Russia thanks to the Rebbe's thinking about him. The Rebbe then said, **"Where were you last Sukkos? With the power of thought one can help another be saved from his place and situation, materially and spiritually."**

The Rebbe Rayatz quotes a letter that Rabbi Pinchas of Koretz sent to his Rebbe, the Maggid of Mezritch, **"Many thanks for the remembrance that you remembered and brought me up on Yom Kippur. You should know that at that moment that I merited to be brought up in your holy memory, I immediately felt it here."**

The Rebbe then goes on to say that the effect of thought is something readily understood and it is no wonder or novelty at all. It is one of the basic things of Chassidus from the very beginning, from the days of the Alter Rebbe. And so, Chassidim are expected to operate and help one another, with the power of thought.

In the Rebbe MH"M's *Igros Kodesh*, volume 22, p. 141, there is a letter to someone who asked about "what is explained in certain places that thought can help another, is this only for special people or also for every Jew?"

The Rebbe responds: **One can learn regarding this from the statement of Chazal about lashon ha'ra killing three which refers to every single Jew. Thought is not far from speech; on the contrary, in some respects it is more effective.**

"It happens to me a lot," said R' Grumach, "and I'm sure that it happens to all the shluchim, that I plan on inviting someone to an upcoming event and I realize that I don't have their telephone number, and I'm thinking what a shame it is that I can't reach him, and then I see him walking down the street or at the entrance to the supermarket."

The power of thought.

I will conclude this column with the hope that after writing about this idea, Chassidim will use the power of thought to help

one another. Bachurim should have a positive influence on their friends overseas, to strengthen their connection with the Rebbe and the ways of Chassidus. Let's hear about shluchim who close their eyes and influence their mekuravim to keep Shabbos, put on t'fillin, and come en masse to shiurim.

Most importantly, let us see Chassidim of all ages using the power of thought to start "living with Moshiach," and "in the place of a person's thoughts – that is where he is to be found" – to bring the Geula now!

PUT OUT THE FIRES!

By Rabbi Heschel Greenberg

Founder and Director of the Jewish Discovery Center in Buffalo



This week's parsha of *VaYakhel* begins with Moses gathering the entire Jewish nation in order to convey G-d's instructions concerning the building of the Mishkan, the portable Sanctuary in the desert. Interestingly, before discussing contributions to the Mishkan and its construction, Moses transmits to them the command concerning Shabbat: "For six days work may be done, but the seventh day should be holy for you, a day of complete rest to G-d."

Immediately after this general exhortation to observe the Shabbat by refraining from work, Moses mentions one of the thirty-nine forms of work prohibited on that day: "You should not kindle fire in any of your dwelling places on the Sabbath day."

From Talmudic times to the present our Sages and Torah commentators have often addressed the question of why the Torah mentions only this one Sabbath prohibition. All of the thirty-nine categories of proscribed work are derived in the Talmud by the way the Torah juxtaposes the commandment to build the Mishkan with the requirement to rest on the Shabbat. From this we derive that all those activities that were instrumental in the construction of the Mishkan may not be performed on Shabbat. Why then does the Torah have to specify the prohibition against lighting a

fire if it is already implied in the general command against work on Shabbat?

One answer with an ethical focus has been offered in which the commandment against lighting a fire is to be understood allegorically as a reference to disputes in which fiery anger and passion that are kindled are very likely to disrupt the tranquility of the Shabbat. The Torah's message here is thus: While discord and strife is a destructive fire that should be avoided every day of the week, it is even more damaging when it occurs on the Shabbat.

What precisely is the relationship between this form of fire and the Shabbat? And why is this specific aspect of Sabbath desecration mentioned **here** in the context of building a Mishkan? The commandment to observe the Sabbath is mentioned several times in the Torah. Why then was this specific command concerning lighting fires not mentioned before? And, more generally, why does the Torah link the laws concerning the Shabbat with the construction of the Mishkan?

To answer all these questions we must first understand at least one aspect of the spiritual dimension of the Shabbat.

Shabbat is more than just a day of rest. It is the day that brings perfection to the entire week that precedes it. When we engage in our everyday activities during the

workweek—with which we attempt to construct our own personal sanctuaries for G-d—we might not consciously feel our connection to G-d. Even when we devote time for daily Torah study and do our best to observe all of the commandments that govern our lives, we frequently feel that the weekday and work-related pressures deprive our Torah study and Mitzvot observance of some, if not most, of their power. Our minds and hearts may be in some other place, and our actions suffer from a lack of soul. Our Mishkans collapse.

All of these distractions can, happily, be remedied with the onset of the Sabbath. Shabbat, with its heightened spirituality, has the capacity to perfect our Torah study and Mitzvot observance and thereby reverse all of the failures of the preceding week. Shabbat, Chassidic thought asserts, not only gives us a respite from the negativity that we experienced during our weekday activities. To the contrary, it actually elevates the days and activities of the past week.

This concept is based on the Chassidic interpretation of the words we recite in the Kiddush recited as we usher in the Shabbat every Friday night. In this prayer we invoke the verse in Genesis that states:

"The heavens, the earth and all their hosts were completed.

On the seventh day, He rested from all His work that he had done.”

By employing the term “completed” the Torah is simply stating that G-d finished the work of creation before the onset of the first Sabbath. According to Chassidic thought the term “completed” conveys a much more profound idea: all the works which He did during the preceding six days were made complete on the Shabbat.

Without the Shabbat, G-d’s handiwork is incomplete. By definition then, all of our creations are inherently flawed because we are finite beings. Perfection is the province of the Divine.

When G-d created the universe during the Six Days of Creation, He withdrew His infinite light to allow for a finite world. However, Shabbat is when G-d removes the shield that eclipses His infinite light and allows G-dly perfection to enter the world. As long as we do not create our own obstructions that prevent the infinite light to enter our lives, we can access the world of Divine perfection. As a result, all of our flawed efforts of the past week are endowed with a dimension of G-dly perfection.

Generally speaking, the things that we can do to render us resistant to the prevailing infinite light on the Shabbat are the thirty-nine forms of work the Torah prohibits. These activities are essentially physically creative acts that demonstrate our own abilities to change the world. G-d gave us these talents to become His partners in creation. By utilizing these talents we can make the world a better place, one that is suitable for human existence. Once the world is a civilized, habitable world,

we can then introduce into it G-dly energy and transform the world—the human microcosm as well as the global macrocosm—into a Mishkan.

If, however, we begin to believe in our own abilities and ingenuity and imagine ourselves capable of changing the world without the introduction of the Divine element, we are destined to fail. Only when we withdraw from active creation during Shabbat and disengage from the finite can we become receptive to the Infinite. And the consequence of that is that we acquire the capability of retroactively investing our weekday efforts with the ability to truly make a difference. By observing the Shabbat all of our efforts at constructing the Mishkan during the preceding week are crowned with success.

In addition to the general need to desist from the thirty-nine forms of work (to construct our Mishkan during the week but that undermines that very construction effort if we were to continue doing it on the Sabbath), there is one other specific imperative for Shabbat to “succeed.”

If Shabbat turns into a day of division it creates a new barrier to the realization of the Infinite state of perfection. If the leisure time afforded us by our absence of work should lead to strife and conflict, the perfection of the week on Shabbat is lost to us.

There is a Kabbalistic aphorism: “The Holy One, Blessed is He dwells only in a wholesome place.” This echoes the sentiment expressed in our daily prayers: “Bless us our Father, all of us as one.” Where does G-d’s blessing dwell? In a place of peace and harmony. Our Sages articulated this idea most

forcefully and poignantly—in the end of the Mishnah, symbolizing the end of our existence in exile—“G-d could not find a vessel that contains a blessing other than that of peace, as it says, ‘G-d will give His people strength; G-d will bless His nation with peace.’”

There is no place more holy than the Mishkan, and no time more holy and harmonious than the Shabbat. Only our “fires” of anger and discord can undermine our ability to access the extraordinary blessing of the Shabbat.

Thus prior to commanding us about building the Mishkan in the six work days the Torah commands us to observe the Shabbat. This is to underscore that if we want the Divine to dwell in our midst during the week we must properly observe the Shabbat. And the Torah follows this command with the one of not lighting a fire to underscore that the Shabbat functions as it was designed to only when there is tranquility, peace and unity in our midst. If the fires are kindled on the Shabbat this denies us the opportunity to touch the Infinite.

* * *

The last time we were privileged to hear the Rebbe’s words spoken in public, the Rebbe emphasized the theme of VaYakhel: “And he **gathered**” with which this week’s parsha commences that underscores the theme of unity.

For eleven months prior to this talk the Rebbe spoke to us consistently and persistently about the imminence of Moshiach’s coming and the true and complete Geula. The Rebbe also illuminated the straightforward path we ought to take to prepare ourselves for the Messianic Era: by learning the Torah’s teachings about

Moshiach and translating this knowledge into our conduct in our daily lives. In the final Shabbat before the Rebbe suffered a stroke, his final instruction to us to date was: VaYakhel: Jewish unity!

Why?

Moshiach represents the introduction of a revolutionary

measure of G-dly light and goodness into the world. It is called "the Shabbat of existence." It is the ultimate manifestation of blessing that will engulf the world, bringing perpetual goodness, holiness and peace in its wake. However, to be receptive to the phenomenal blessing of Moshiach we need

peace and unity that is based on genuine Ahavat Yisroel.

May we all take the Rebbe's message to heart and focus our collective energies on that which unites us. And may we march towards the final Redemption as one unified nation with the spirit of boundless joy!

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Upon this statement I affix my signature, Sunday 20th Tamuz 5766



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חי אדוננו מורינו ורבינו מלך המשיח לעולם ועד

INREACH

They may look frum, talk frum and act frum as well, but deep inside something else is going on.

By Aryeh Gotfryd, PhD

Prayer is the ladder that connects souls and G-dliness ... But one reaches this level through the prior attainment of comprehension and understanding...

*The Rebbe,
HaYom Yom, 5 Kislev.*

The Jewish people are like a challa. That braided loaf of egg bread is not simply a static object waiting to be consumed. It's a symbolic and dynamic work of art that you really need to chew on in order to digest.

I'd like to focus on the braids – out, in, crossover, out the other way, back, crossover, and repeat.

We too have our outs and ins. Our generation, the Rebbe's generation, has seen a phenomenal and monumental return to roots the likes of which has not been seen in history. That great "in" was preceded by a very great "out." Propelled by social forces including secularism, atheism, communism, anti-Semitism, and more, we have been scattered to the ends of the spiritual spectrum. How miraculous is the return.

But here we are again. The forces of assimilation are not only making the weak weaker, they are making the strong weaker too. Quite simultaneous with the immense t'shuva movement is a comparably huge drift to spiritual

disinterest.

I see it all the time. Two half-observant people sit at the same table. They look fairly similar, their levels of observance are indistinguishable, but inside they are light years apart. One, the baal t'shuva, is on the outside looking in – wanting to go from 50% to 51% and beyond. The other, a lapsing Jew, is on the inside looking out – wanting to go from 50% to 49%.

The first D'var Torah I ever heard was 30 years ago and it lasted only 30 seconds. Still I remember it like yesterday. I had just walked into a room full of college students as a Chabad rabbi was saying, "You've got a ladder and there's someone on the 600th step and someone on the 2nd step. Who's higher?"

The room was silent. I thought, "What's the matter with these morons? It's obvious. As a matter of fact if this rabbi says anything else no doubt he's an idiot too."

"The guy on the 600th step," I blurted, walking right into his well-laid pedagogical trap.

"It depends," he continued, "If the guy on the 600th rung is coming down and the guy on the 2nd rung is going up, you have to ask, what's more important? Where you are standing or where you are headed? You cannot reach an Infinite G-d by being on a higher rung because a million is

still zero percent of infinity. The only way you can get closer is to do something infinite yourself. By climbing you are transcending your level. That act is what gets you close."

The Baal T'shuva has one advantage in serving his Maker. Nobody forced him to. It was his or her decision from his or her own volition. Every step up is his. For "the lifer" it is more complicated. The life of Torah and mitzvos that surrounds a person from birth is a given. They are trained to think and act in a certain way and that's that. Later when they start evaluating secular culture and thinking for themselves, they may come to any conclusion.

When we pray the Shmoneh Esrei, we say "Elokeinu v'Elokei avoseinu" – first He is our G-d, then the G-d of our fathers. The lifer's challenge is the first part. As one mashpia put it so frighteningly and so eloquently, "The problem with the children of Baalei T'shuva is that they are lifers, but don't worry – their children will be Baalei T'shuva." I am convinced that the first half is overly pessimistic, but not 100% convinced.

Ever since publishing my correspondence with the "Secular Lubavitcher" my phone and inbox have been lightning rods for feedback from around the world. This is an issue that tears at so many people's hearts



and so, so many say they have no one to turn to, for after all, “What is a Secular Lubavitcher to do?”

And of course it's not only a Chabad issue. One Charedi father of six writes me about how he and his family were always Orthodox and he looks and acts it too. He has a good marriage, a good job, and lives in a good Charedi community. But – he does not pray or wear t'fillin. He thinks G-d neither notices nor cares.

Countless teens and young adults in the community where I live feel exactly the same way. What can be done?

Someone told me, “We are so busy reaching out, we forget about our own kids, the youth of our own communities. We have to treat them exactly like Chabad House clientele, with love, warmth, basics, and acceptance.”

I am confused. Call it Baal T'shuva syndrome if you wish but I really don't understand these people. Yes, I have plenty of failings of my own and plenty of times when I forget about Hashem, but my basic attitude is I'm looking for a way in, I want to get that 51%, that little taste of infinity as I try to climb that ladder.

Whenever I'm confused about something, I go back to basics. I feel that by going back to basics I will be able to find the common ground that will bridge the gap between the Baal T'shuva and the lifer. We can and will understand each other if we try. And through that understanding we will share a will to grow.

Some of the basics we need to explore are:

1. Is there a G-d?
2. How do we know?
3. And why the Jewish G-d



“You've got a ladder and there's someone on the 600th step and someone on the 2nd step. Who's higher?”

“One, the baal t'shuva, is on the outside looking in – wanting to go from 50 per cent to 51 and beyond. The other, a lapsing Jew, is on the inside looking out – wanting to go from 50 per cent to 49.

specifically?

4. Does He know and care about what we do?
5. Why?
6. Isn't He awfully Big to worry about how I spend my time?
7. Why should I pray?
8. What is prayer about anyway?
9. If He is perfect why does He need our prayers?
10. And how do imperfect rabbis represent a perfect G-d?

We need to be able to answer these questions for outsiders, but now even more urgently, for insiders. And deeper yet, for ourselves. Because at the end of the day, the more truthfully and inwardly we take our Torah and

mitzvos, the more it will rub off on those around us.

The next few articles in this series will, G-d willing, deal with these questions, and they are dedicated to those who ask them whether explicitly or implicitly.

We will try to recreate the Elokeinu, like Avraham Avinu did – one lone individual trying to figure things out his own way regardless of what those around him believed.

The series of articles is called “The Abraham Principle” and I hope you find them as meaningful to read as I have found them meaningful to write.

Good Shabbos.

(Contact 416-858-9868 or info@arniegotfryd.com)

‘THE RABBINATE IS PART OF MY SHLICHUS’

After decades of shlichus in Kiryat Ata, Rabbi Chaim Shlomo Diskin has recently been elected as Chief Rabbi of the city. Here is Beis Moshiach’s exclusive interview.

By Menachem Ziegelboim

Translated by Michael Leib Dobry

Photos by Aharon Crombie

BRACHOS OF “MAZEL TOV”

The city of Kiryat Ata was recently privileged to have elected a new Chief Rabbi: Chabad Shliach, Rabbi **Chaim Shlomo Diskin** who assumes this increased responsibility after serving as rav for the local Chabad community and promoting Yiddishkeit throughout the region.

Following the lengthy election proceedings in Kiryat Ata one of those chosen was the gaon, and **av beis din of Makva**, a Kiryat Ata resident who was involved in the entire process with full force since he wanted very much to see Rabbi Diskin assume the position of chief rabbi. The gaon, Rabbi **Shimon Elitov**, council member for the chief rabbinate of Eretz Yisroel, also provided much

assistance on behalf of Rabbi Diskin, who was elected with a majority of sixteen out of twenty-four votes.

Immediately after Rabbi **Chaim Shlomo Diskin**’s election as chief rabbi of Kiryat Ata was made known, great celebration began among the city’s Chabad community. The rav received dozens of telephone calls and blessings from local residents, Chabad chassidim in Kiryat Ata, family, and friends. The mayor of Kiryat Ata, **Yaakov Peretz**, blessed Rabbi Diskin and his colleague, Rabbi Eliyahu Maimon, who was elected as local chief Sephardic rabbi, saying that the city’s great religious community can be certain that it has two fine rabbanim who will serve them well.

As soon as word spread that Rabbi Diskin had been elected, the rav’s house filled with Chabad chassidim from the entire region, together with the mayor and other public figures from all sectors of the local community. The joyous singing and dancing broke all boundaries, and the crowd was swept up with emotion. The Chabad community in Kiryat Ata celebrated until the wee hours of the morning.

“Thank G-d, we can say ‘*SheHechianu*’. I feel that the Rebbe’s will was fulfilled when I was chosen to be the city’s chief rabbi,” Rabbi Chaim Shlomo Diskin told “Beis Moshiach” after his election. “When I was sent to the city on the Rebbe’s shlichus, it was clear to me that the objective was to build



a community, and as things progressed, to be appointed as rav of the city.”

“I am very happy that the process concluded successfully,” Rabbi Diskin added. “I have no doubt that this is part of my shlichus. When the Rebbe sent me to Kiryat Ata, it was clear to me that part of the matter was to establish a community and also to continue to the rabbinate. The Rebbe wrote me an answer several years ago that I should continue my examinations in Heichal Shlomo, and thank G-d, it’s now understood why.

“I’m happy that there was such widespread support for my candidacy from all sectors of the city’s population. It is my earnest hope that this shlichus can be done as it should be.

“I now intend to enter the areas of kashrus, the eruv, and mikvaos, learning the subjects well and doing everything in my ability to advance them. I feel that this can provide a tremendous driving force for the city.

“As a Chabad chassid and a shliach, I feel great joy over these opportunities and I wish that my fellow shluchim can attain such things as well. In the coming days, I will sit with my colleague, the city’s Sephardic rav, Rabbi Eliyahu Maimon, and we will begin our important work.”

THE EARLY DAYS

Rabbi Diskin was educated in the Chabad Talmud Torah of B’nei Brak. Afterwards, he learned in Yeshivas Tomchei T’mimim in Kfar Chabad, and

then was sent on “shlichus” to the Chabad yeshiva in Migdal HaEmek. After marrying the daughter of Rabbi **Shlomo Kupchik** of Kiryat Ata, he took up residence in the city, near his father-in-law.

Kiryat Ata is a city located in the Zevulun Valley, east of Haifa. Recognized as a settlement in 5685, it was originally called “Kfar Ata”, after the ancient Jewish settlement of Kafarta. In 5689, the settlement was destroyed by Arab rioters, and after it was rebuilt, it was made into a place of industry. Kiryat Ata received the status of a city in 5729, after the merger of the settlements of Kfar Ata and Kiryat Binyamin in 5725. Subsequently, their names were combined to produce the new

name of “Kiryat Ata”.

Rabbi Diskin chuckles as he recalls that there was a time when he absolutely did not want to live in Kiryat Ata...

His father-in-law, Rabbi Shlomo Kupchik, a Kiryat Ata resident, suggested that he remain in the city after his wedding and start working in outreach activities. Rabbi Kupchik lived in Kiryat Ata for thirty years and worked on independently among the city's ultra-Orthodox community. He organized farbrengens and ran activities, regarding which he received letters from the Rebbe.

As per his father-in-law's request, Rabbi Chaim Shlomo Diskin came to live in the city, but from his point of view, it would only be something temporary. He learned in kollel, and he wanted to go out on shlichus in a new place. At the time, there were two offers under consideration – Kiryat Shmona and Kiryat Tivon.

R' Gidi Sharon had just started his activities in Kiryat Tivon, and he asked Rabbi Diskin to come there and join him. R' Moshe Slonim, who was then director of the Reshet Chabad school system, wanted him to come and assist in the development of the Reshet school that had opened in Kiryat Tivon.

“One day, R' Gidi Sharon, R' Moshe Slonim, and the head of the local religious council arrived at my home and asked me to come live in Kiryat Tivon. I couldn't refuse such an honored delegation, and I asked for the Rebbe's bracha, but no answer was forthcoming. Rabbi Slonim called Rabbi Chodakov and asked what was happening. Rabbi Chodakov said that he had twice placed the note on the Rebbe's table, but the Rebbe moved it to the side. I told them that I

was sorry, but Kiryat Tivon was apparently not the place meant for me.

“Afterwards, R' Menashe Althaus wrote to the Rebbe regarding the shlichus offer in Kiryat Tivon, and he received an immediate positive response. I realized that I apparently had to stay in Kiryat Ata.”

When the kollel avreichim opened in the Krayot, Rabbi Chaim Shlomo Diskin went to learn there. A few months later, he was offered a position as the rav of a school in Haifa. He traveled there every day and carried out his obligations. When he was later offered a rabbinical position with a school in Kiryat Ata, he thought to himself: “Why do I really have to go to the trouble of traveling to Haifa if I can have the same job right near my home?” Thus, the activities in Kiryat Ata commenced.

Despite this job offer, Rabbi Diskin didn't like the idea of staying in Kiryat Ata and he tried to avoid the issue. In fact, he periodically gave over Torah classes, serving as a rav in one of the schools. “But I felt like a foreigner in town,” he recalled.

Then, the mayor of Kiryat Ata discovered him, showed great enthusiasm for his rabbinical activities in the school, and offered him a position as the rav of all the city's government-sponsored schools. The Ministry of Education approved the appointment, and he began work with great satisfaction.

“I gave over Torah classes, and people started coming closer to Yiddishkeit. During those days, we made a small minyan in private homes, mainly on Shabbosim. As time passed, the minyan grew in size, and we rented a building where we founded a shul, around

which we began to establish the community.

“We reached a stage where there was a prevailing need for educational institutions with a Chabad spirit for the children in this growing community, and these institutions were established. For the staff of the educational institutions, we appointed new Anash members to give them a feeling of belonging to their community, thereby ‘strengthening’ them even more. They drew even more people after them who came to our shul, and the circle continued to widen. Thus, the community began to take root and extend even further.”

Around this time, when Rabbi Chaim Shlomo Diskin started dealing with local activities, he was studying for the rabbinical “smicha” examinations. Working for the rabbinate then was simply way over his head – with his position as a rav in the school system, his “smicha” studies, establishing the Chabad House and the community, not to mention the request for his assistance in fortifying the Chabad institutions in the Krayot, which were then enduring serious financial difficulties. Things were simply beyond his capabilities.

“Several Anash askanim got together to devise a plan on where my main involvement should be,” he recalled. “R' Zusha Wilimovsky, the *partizan*, said that I have to ask the Rebbe which of my pursuits should be given priority. The Rebbe MH”M's reply was not long in coming: ‘Work in the schools in Kiryat Ata and studying in the kollel. **All this should be with success.**’ Regarding the assistance to the Chabad Houses in the Krayot, the Rebbe replied: ‘This is not his concern

whatsoever, and I am amazed by the question.’ Regarding whether to study for the rabbinate in “Heichel Shlomo”, the Rebbe answered: **‘Quite correct. I will mention it at the Tziyon.’**

“On that day, I realized that Kiryat Ata was the place of shlichus for me! Together with my exams to become a certified neighborhood rav, I started to intensify my activities in the city. I’ve been here ever since.”

AN ENTIRE DAY WITH RABBI DISKIN

As we look to the future, to the rabbinate of the entire city, it’s impossible not to look back also to the creation of the splendor that Rabbi Diskin has built over the years in the form of the tremendous Chabad community in Kiryat Ata. The truth is that his influence has already spread throughout the entire city for many years. The rabbinate is new only in the official sense.

I’ll never forget my visit to the Chabad community in Kiryat Ata several years ago, when I spent a whole day “clinging” to Rabbi Diskin. I tried not to disturb him in his activities, slipping in my questions during periodic breaks in the action.

We began the tour that day in the Chabad House Judaica store. About fifteen men and women were standing in line there, some in order to purchase religious items. “Rabbi Diskin,” some people came up to him and said with a little embarrassment, “we would like to talk with you.” Rabbi Diskin’s face shone. “No problem. We’ll speak this afternoon. I’ll be here and we’ll have plenty of time,” he said with a smile.

We went up one flight above the store. There were two



“More than four thousand families in the city contribute toward our charitable programs, whether through tz’daka pushkas, standing bank orders, or donating clothes and furniture.”

large storerooms there, from which they distribute clothes, houseware items, beds, cribs, playpens, tables, chairs, and closets to hundreds of needy families. “People bring clothes and furniture to this place, and we serve as the intermediary between those who have and those who don’t,” the woman in charge explained. “The storerooms empty and fill up again all the time,” she added with unconcealed pride.

Regarding the extent of contributions and charitable activities in his community, Rabbi Diskin says: “More than four thousand families in the city contribute toward our charitable programs, whether through tz’daka pushkas, standing bank orders, or donating clothes and

furniture. When we operate our ‘Kimcha D’Pischa’ project prior to the Pesach holiday, you can find here a line of people coming to contribute, and for our part, we employ special people to accept the money and register their names. Our Chabad activities are built upon the donations that come from the city’s residents; we never turned to Anash from outside to make contributions.

• **How do you reach such a level of support throughout the city?**

“This is the thing that comes from the work over the years.”

Rabbi Diskin and I enter the car. He now has an appointment at City Hall with the kindergarten department. At this same opportunity, he also wants to

meet with the deputy mayor. If we're talking about support for Chabad, it can be found in the halls of the municipality building.

Rabbi Diskin goes up to the third floor, where the offices of the mayor and his deputies are located. At the top of the stairs, everyone greets him with a hearty "Good morning" – from the cleaning crew, to the secretaries, the various department heads, the city manager, and the mayor's chief of staff – the most powerful people in the municipal government. Practically speaking, he says, "Shalom, how are you?" to everyone, and they all reply. He is known everywhere and is received cheerfully. The mayor himself is a big supporter of Chabad activities in the city.

After our meetings, we head back to the car and proceed to the next destination. Rabbi Diskin works at a steady pace, "closes" matters quickly, and immediately moves on to the next stop. "The mayor supports our activities and helps us put a great deal," he explains. "He knows our strength in the city, but that's not the only reason why he helps us. He simply sees our blessed activities for all local residents, and he happily agrees to give us his assistance."

Rabbi Diskin heads for the Chabad community center, built as a model of 770. Even this building, which cost more than half a million dollars, was donated by the city's residents. Not one penny came from outside sources.

We cross into the city's central square and continue in the direction of the new building. In the meantime, Rabbi Diskin explains: "The success is not mine alone. Each of our mosdos in the city has a supervisor in charge of everything occurring in his institution. This is also expressed in a financial sense. There isn't just one single account for the Chabad institutions. Each mosad has someone who is exclusively responsible for taking care of its funding."

"Kiryat Ata has a respectable number of kindergartens for hundreds of children, several active Chabad Houses in various neighborhoods, a wide range of activities for Chabad women, and a lending library of more than two thousand books, which also holds various educational activities – and all this is besides the *'beit ha'tavshil'*, the synagogue, and the other 'usual' activities."

• **How does an 'ordinary boy such as yourself, who grew up in B'nei Brak, learn to take command of such a wide range of activities?**

"In certain Chabad Houses, all the activities are concentrated in the hands of one man. Here, I can't do everything alone, and therefore, I allocate authority, as each person accepts responsibility upon himself for a different area of concentration. If I would spend time dealing with every issue, I wouldn't get anywhere."

• **If so, what do you primarily deal with?**

"I try to deal more in spiritual

matters – Torah classes, lectures. I also serve as the rav of all of the schools in Kiryat Ata, and this demands giving over numerous shiurim in Judaism."

In fact, one of Rabbi Diskin's major projects is the school system. Today, he serves on behalf of the Ministry of Education as the rav of all the city's schools. For the past twenty-five years, he has been giving over Torah classes and lectures, and a whole generation in Kiryat Ata knows him personally. "They have grown up with me from the very earliest of ages," laughs Rabbi Diskin. "The result is that I am personally acquainted with a sizable number of families in the city."

As we go around with Rabbi Diskin, facts on the ground prove what he's been saying. At a certain point, as we approach the car, passing children wave to him. "Shalom, Rabbi Diskin," they say, and he returns the greeting. "They apparently know me from their classrooms," he explains.

• **You're not unknown in town?**

(Laughs) "Not for some time now."

• **How do you reach such a level of personal recognition with thousands of city residents?**

"This is something that comes through our overall activities. It is the main result of these personal meetings that I conduct each evening. People come and talk about whatever is bothering them, and I try to help as best I can. Many people come during this time, most of who receive advice and peace of mind. But even more than that, they get actual help, and this is how the connection grows and develops."

Rabbi Diskin has a talent

“When you assist people in material matters, they later send you their children to your educational institutions. Whole families have been brought closer to a life of Torah in the merit of these activities.”

for telling simply about what happens to him on a daily basis. He even speaks about the serious and important things in a light and pleasant manner, as if he was discussing what he had for breakfast the previous morning.

That night, when I saw the line of people standing near his office, starting from five in the evening, I realized that we were talking about no simple project. I saw a wide variety of local residents there – religious and non-religious, men and women – all of who came in need of Rabbi Diskin's advice and assistance. Later in this report, we will discuss the nature of his conversations with them, but now he gives us his motto: "The secret is to be sensitive to people's problems, to listen and to try and help."

• **What type of help do you offer them?**

"All types, but primarily material in nature. Many of these problems pertain to social services. With the passage of time, we have developed connections with the municipal welfare department, and a wonderful level of cooperation. We help them, and they help us. When I ask them to provide assistance to a certain individual, they immediately respond out of a sense of goodwill. On countless occasions, I have managed to wipe out debts on water usage and city taxes. We're talking about deeply despondent people enduring daily hardships who could solve their problems through the accepted procedure of applying for municipal assistance, but instead of letting these requests get endlessly bogged down in committee, they solve matters right away."

• **Is the Chabad House designated for solving municipal**

“I set aside one night a week when I learn with my children and I disconnect the phone... I asked him if this was urgent, explaining that I’m busy with someone. He saw my son and said, ‘But there’s no one here’, to which I replied, ‘My son is here...’ He was insulted.

welfare problems?

"When you assist people in material matters, they later send you their children to your educational institutions. Whole families have been brought closer to a life of Torah in the merit of these activities. I have said many times at Chabad Youth Organization conferences for Chabad House directors that it's hard to know the great value that comes from material assistance. When a Jew receives warmth and love, he comes closer to Yiddishkait. It's not always the chassidic maamarim on 'encompassing all worlds' that brings a Jew closer, although it's true that he'll learn them later, when he reaches an appropriate spiritual level."

During the visit we conducted at the *"beit ha'tavshil"*, Rabbi Diskin went to speak with several of those partaking in a meal. He took an interest in their situation, radiating a glow and an overall good feeling.

As we continued our tour, we reached the entrance of one of the kindergartens. I was surprised to hear little voices crying out, "Here's Rabbi Diskin! Here's Rabbi Diskin!" They know him (How could they not?) and feel close to him. He smiles at them lovingly. They're essentially his spiritual "grandchildren". Upon hearing the children's excited cries, the kindergarten teacher comes outside. Filled with the authority that Rabbi Diskin bestowed upon

him like seeds in a pomegranate, he is unaccustomed to seeing him in his little "kingdom".

Before setting out on our way, the kindergarten teacher quietly inquired of Rabbi Diskin, "Why did you come here? Did something happen?" Rabbi Diskin pointed in my direction. "I wanted to show him the kindergartens. He's from 'Beis Moshiach'," he said. The teacher shrugged his shoulders and told me, "Rabbi Diskin comes here only on rare occasions."

• **A person who builds and operates such an enterprise feels the need to come periodically and derive pleasure from it. Don't you feel that need?**

Rabbi Diskin: "Naturally, I love this place, also the *'beit ha'tavshil'*, but I don't have the time for it. As long as it's placed in the hands of someone reliable, I prefer then to devote my time for nachas to schoolchildren or meeting with people in need of help."

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

It's time to daven Mincha. As soon as the lecture was over, we drove to the shul building. Here, it's possible to feel the community atmosphere that I had heard about during the day. Everyone here is a baal t'shuva who had been brought close to Yiddishkait by Rabbi Diskin. He never considered bringing a Chabad couple from "outside" to

assist him.

Rabbi Diskin: “One of the reasons that tens of thousands of local residents know Chabad is because community members are spread throughout the city, each one working in his own location. The powerful effect upon the activities is manifold, because everyone was born and raised in Kiryat Ata, and each of them has many family and friends who live here. If I would bring a family from Kfar Chabad, it would take time until they would strike roots among the local residents. The fact that they are natives of Kiryat Ata is a tremendous advantage.”

• **To run such a community is not simple...**

(Laughs) “No, it’s not easy, but it’s not so terrible. I give over Torah classes to members of the community. Afterwards, I sit and accept people who want to speak to me, receive some rabbinical advice, and hear some helpful answers and solutions on a wide variety of subjects – their children’s education, spiritual avoda, halachic rulings for people coming close to Yiddishkait, and providing replies on any matter of concern to them. If there is any time remaining, I also conduct house visits, and from my personal experience, this has a tremendous effect upon whole families.

“On auspicious days, I also have to make a farbrengen. In addition, I frequently deal with solving problems of *shalom bayis*. Among baalei t’shuva coming close to Yiddishkait, there are often educational gaps, and as a result, one spouse has made faster spiritual progress than the other. In such cases, I convince the spouse to slow the pace a bit in order that the couple can move forward together.”

• **Is this the way you**

build a community?

“These are the tools for building a community. But first, you need the soul. You must devote yourself to people, maintain constant contact with them until they properly integrate into community life – all while providing appropriate treatment and much assistance. As I have said, one of the things that works particularly well is bringing those who have come closer to Yiddishkait into the activities taking place in the area. According to such an approach, more than half of the job is done by itself, and I also say this to many Chabad House directors who call and ask for advice and guidance.

“However, we are not allowed to forget the main point: connecting Jews to the Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach. This is the most important thing. The Torah classes and the farbrengens are instilled with the Rebbe’s concepts, including the main concept of hastening the Redemption. This is expressed in the classes, the farbrengens, the discussions, and the activities. We constantly live with the Rebbe here. Even during the week, many people come who want to write to the Rebbe and request his advice and blessing in various matters.”

Together with Rabbi Diskin’s work and other projects, his family and close friends give testimony to the fact that none of this comes at the expense of his household, as he makes certain to devote quality time to them every day and throughout the week. He personally recalls one such opportunity: “I set aside one night a week when I learn with my children, and I don’t respond to invitations or any other pursuits. During that time,

the telephones are disconnected!

“It happened once there was someone who needed me urgently, but since the phone was not connected, he came to my home unannounced. I asked him if this was something urgent, explaining that I’m busy sitting with someone. He eventually came into the living room and saw my son, about eight or nine years old at the time, sitting there. Failing to understand, he said, ‘There’s no one here’, to which I replied, ‘My son is here...’ He was insulted.

“Nevertheless, he came to realize that children are not something secondary or incidental in nature, rather they are ‘important people’ to whom we must give all our attention.”

THE DAY NEVER ENDS...

Night falls upon Kiryat Ata. It’s beginning to get late. I want to finish my day with Rabbi Diskin, and I’m interested to know what else he has left to do after such a full schedule?

Rabbi Diskin: “I soon have to go back to the Chabad House to give over my regular classes. Other people will also come, as on any other evening, in search of advice and assistance. Afterwards, I sit down and finish my daily shiurim, Chitas and Rambam, and then I start preparing my classes for the following day in Shulchan Aruch, Gemara, Tanya, and the Rebbe’s sichos. I never ‘pull out’ a class from up my sleeve; I always prepare them in advance. Today, ‘it just so happens’ that I don’t have a marriage ceremony to perform. This is also one of the tasks that the local religious council has placed upon me: conducting chuppas.”

Rabbi Diskin doesn’t sound

embittered. His heavily crowded daily schedule almost leaves him with no time for himself and his family. He accepts it all with love, as he tries to focus on action, instead of thought.

All this is besides the many varied activities not yet discussed. He also serves as an "examiner" at the Chabad Talmud Torah in Kiryat Chaim. He also often makes lectures at conferences and other events.

*

This past week, with his election to the Kiryat Ata chief rabbinate, I went back to wish

him a "Mazel tov", and then I asked him: **What new aspects will there be in your activities as a rav, as opposed to his previous role as shliach?**

"Even as a shliach," he replied, "I tried to provide answers in every Jewish and chassidic issue, leaving no area without a proper response, particularly in Kiryat Ata, where no chief rabbis had been serving for many years. Now, however, there has been added the very heavy responsibility of this position and its demanded public role.

"Besides the additional tasks in the areas of kashrus, eruvin, and mikvaos, there is a need to provide answers to a wide range of communities. People ask more and demand more, and the work is in a manner of 'increasing in matters of holiness'. Here in Kiryat Ata, there are ultra-Orthodox communities, national religious communities, even those that are currently non-religious. You have to find the approach that speaks to all the city's residents and do all you possibly can on behalf of the general public, and this definitely requires considerable effort."

Continued from page 42

Rabbeinu, as well as our "Moshe," tells us: **Stand and see, open your eyes, see how this is the salvation of Hashem!**

As the world trembles and we see how the Rebbe is leading world events towards Geula, we need to remember and remind the world about the Rebbe's Besuras HaGeula and to know that even if twenty years passed since we heard the Besuras HaGeula for the first time, it is still in force.

When the Jewish people in Egypt heard Moshe's Besuras HaGeula, there were difficult times ahead of them before they left with great miracles, but they knew from the moment they heard the news that the Geula

process was in place. So even if it takes a long time, ch"v, we need to strengthen our faith and trust in the Besuras HaGeula that we heard from "Moshe." Just as they finally left Egypt, we too – after hearing the Besuras HaGeula from the Rebbe, and after the Rebbe testified that the prophecy of the Yalkut Shimoni, "the year that Melech HaMoshiach is re-

vealed" was fulfilled – are in the midst of the Geula process. Along with the sadness that we are still in galus, we need to know that Moshiach is on his way and very soon we will merit the true and complete Geula with the hisgalus of the Rebbe MH"M.

L'ilui nishmas his father, Rabbi Zalman Leib ben Yaakov Yitzchok a"h.

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R' Avrohom Dunin's Memoirs

A modest and humble chassid, yet incredibly accomplished, R' Avrohom Dunin a"h passed away on 21 Teves at the age of 73. * In this chapter of his memoirs, R' Dunin tells about a visit to 770, his yechidus, his return to Eretz Yisroel and the beginning of his teaching career.

* Part 2 of 7

Interview by Chaim Cohen

Rabbi Avrohom Dunin relates:

As was mentioned in the previous chapter, we landed in the United States Erev Pesach 5720/1960 and headed for 770. I recall my very first minutes in the Rebbe's presence, which made a tremendous impression on me. We participated, for the first time, in Mincha with the Rebbe and then the Rebbe distributed shmura matza.

The bachurim's seder took place at 676 Eastern Parkway. The Rebbe came to visit and bless the bachurim. We then rushed to finish so we could go and watch the Rebbe at the special seder he conducted in the apartment of the Rebbe Rayatz in 770.

I am talking about a completely different era. T'fillos were held in the small zal with only dozens of Chassidim. In order to understand what I'm talking about, I will tell you that

there were a few invited guests to the Rebbe's seder and each time one of these guests arrived, one of the bachurim walked in with him. Nevertheless, there was room for all and no need to push. This is how it was at the s'darim as well as at the meals on other holidays we had the privilege of celebrating in "Beis Chayeinu."

Tell us about yechidus.

In my time, you saw the Rebbe in yechidus a few times during your year on K'vutza – once, when you arrived; once, around your birthday; and once again before you left for home. Since we arrived Erev Pesach and the Rebbe did not receive people for yechidus in the month of Nissan, it was pushed off for Iyar. We ended up having yechidus close to Lag B'Omer.

I had yechidus again for my birthday at the beginning of Cheshvan and in the note

I submitted I wrote that my birthday was on 6 Cheshvan. When the Rebbe received the note, he looked at me and back at the note a few times and asked, on the 6th or the 7th? I remained quiet but the Rebbe asked again, on the 6th or the 7th? From this I understood that I was mistaken about the date of my birth and when I returned home my mother told me that I was born the night of the 7th.

Bachurim today spend an entire year on K'vutza but I don't think this was the case in your time.

As I related earlier, we received visas for only a few months. According to our visas we were supposed to have returned to Eretz Yisroel already but the idea of leaving the Rebbe was just unthinkable. We asked the Rebbe for permission to extend our stay and it was



granted. The time passed quickly and a few months later we found ourselves in the same situation. Once again we asked permission to extend our stay and the Rebbe's response this time consisted of three reasons why we should not remain there but immediately return home. I don't remember all three reasons but one of them was: **So as not to close the door for those who follow you, as has happened before.**

So we had to arrange for our return trip. We did not consider flying because we didn't have the money. The plan was to set sail for Europe on the Queen Elizabeth and from Europe to go by Turkish ship from Naples, Italy. According to this plan, there were three days between one voyage and the next and the question was where would we port. Should we stop in England or maybe France? Should we split

up to three countries in order to spread Chassidus or travel together? As with everything we did in life, we consulted with the Rebbe.

The Rebbe preferred that we split up. Each of us was to go to a different country to be decided by lottery. Berel Teichman stayed in Italy, Avremel Sossonkin went to England and I went to Brunoy, France. I used the time well. I farbrenged with the great mashpiim, R' Nissan Nemenov a"h and R' Yisroel Noach Blinitzky a"h. I farbrenged with the bachurim in zal, and visited Beis Rivka, the European office of Lubavitch, and with Anash in Paris who had just moved to a new neighborhood.

BEGINNING TO WORK FOR THE RESHET

**What happened to the
bachurim who followed you?**

We returned to Eretz Yisroel in the winter of 5721. Upon our arrival, we went back to the yeshiva in Lud to continue learning. As the Rebbe had said, when the military officials saw that we had kept our word and returned when we said we would, they allowed other bachurim to go.

The first to go after us was R' Nachum Sternberg. He married in New York and remained in Crown Heights. Since that time, it has been easy to leave the country and whoever wants to see the Rebbe, can do so.

I continued learning in yeshiva until the summer of 5721.

One day, R' Zalman Abelsky came to visit the yeshiva and he suggested to the bachurim that we work as teachers in the Reshet schools. At the time, I was the organizer for Ata (Irgun Talmidei HaT'mimim) and

as such I contacted R' Yisroel Leibov a"h, the head of Tzach at the time. He eventually offered me a position in Tzach on a full time basis.

In addition to his offer, I had other offers such as being a madrich (counselor) in the Vocational School in Kfar Chabad, an offer that came from R' Efraim Wolf a"h. Since I didn't know what to do, I wrote to the Rebbe and the answer was: **Chinuch al taharas ha'kodesh, Reshet takes precedence, Vocational School, yeshiva Lud.**

From this answer I gathered that working for the Reshet came first, so I spoke to Rabbi Dovid Chanzin a"h, who was one of the people who ran the Reshet, and volunteered my services. A few weeks later I was sent to a teaching course where I learned how to be a good teacher.

After finishing the course, I went to the offices of the Reshet. At first I thought I would be sent to teach in one of the settlements of Brosh or Taanach but I was sent to Kiryat Gat. Upon arriving there, at the beginning of the school year, there was one class remaining – the first grade. That is where my teaching career began.

A few years went by and on 10 Sivan 1962 I married Rochel Sossonkin, daughter of the unforgettable R' Asher who was known as Asher Batumer, and in our first year of marriage I continued teaching in Kiryat Gat.

R' Dovid Chanzin would have a farbrengen for all employees of the Reshet around Pesach time. One year, he spoke about the lack of teachers in the Taanachim region in the north. We said we would go there on receipt of a direct order from the Rebbe's secretaries.

Following the Rebbe's response that **"this is for the benefit of the Reshet and for their benefit, materially and spiritually,"** we packed and moved together with R' Moshe Slonim a"h, while R' Yeshavam Segal continued running activities at moshav Brosh.

This was your first time in Chevel HaTaanachim?

No. I had visited there previously before my involvement in Chabad, when I learned in the Litvishe yeshiva in B'nei Brak and was a member of the P'ilim organization, and I was sent to visit a school there.

In order to understand what it was like there at the time, I'll tell you that the people were traditional and kept a few mitzvos, but since there was no religious school, they had to send their children to public school. Our purpose in visiting the yishuvim was to provide a proper chinuch for the children living there. From B'nei Brak we went to Afula and from there we went to Tzomet-Yizreel and from there we walked on a dirt road.

At the entrance to the yishuv we knocked at the door of a

wonderful person named Brozni who served as the rav there. During our stay we discussed the unfortunate spiritual state of the people and he explained that this was due to their great fear of the government and the big political parties who wielded unlimited power.

Our efforts to instill Judaism in the children of the yishuvim were fruitless and we had to return to B'nei Brak without having accomplished our mission.

The following year P'ilim learned from our failure the year before and they sent a youth director to establish a core group with which to start a school. This idea was successful. Within a few weeks a religious public school was founded alongside the public school that had been there before.

At the time, I thought the Taanach episode was a fleeting chapter in my life. I had no idea that down the road I would return there to live, this time as the Rebbe's shliach.

What were you involved in when you returned to the yishuv a second time?

We focused our attention on moshav Meitav and we lived in R' Yaakov Lerer's apartment. He ran the school in those days. His wife wasn't home because she was on maternity leave and we lived in their home until ours was renovated.

I had the eighth grade that first year and the sixth and seventh grades were combined into one class.

I remember that R' Binyamin Gorodetzky, the Rebbe's representative, came to visit that year. After we arranged a farbrengen in his honor, he spoke to each of the staff members and asked how we

“In the note I submitted I wrote that my birthday was on 6 Cheshvan. When the Rebbe received the note, he looked at me and back at the note a few times and asked, on the 6th or the 7th? I remained quiet but the Rebbe asked again, on the 6th or the 7th?”

were and about whether we were satisfied with how the school was being run. Each of us told him our individual problems and complaints. Unlike the others, I told him we were satisfied and till today, I remember how pleased he was with my response.

The residents of the yishuv, as opposed to my students, regarded me with surprise and curiosity. I suppose I looked peculiar to them and some of them even referred to me as the “butterfly from Gan Eden.”

Did you enjoy success in your work as a teacher?

That year I had an unusual class. The Taanach settlements are comprised of three moshavim: Avital, Meitav, and Prazon. Each moshav has a rav. That year, I had the sons of all three rabbanim. In addition to them, I taught other outstanding students who blossomed over the years.

When the principal, R' Yaakov Lerer, noticed that my class had a group of excellent students, he decided to put his soul into them so they would qualify to move on to a quality high school, but I had my own plan. I wanted them to go to the yeshiva in Lud but I knew this plan wouldn't work because of the firm opposition of the parents.

Astonishingly, the parents agreed to my plan except that one of the parents couldn't make peace with the fact that his son would not receive a matriculation certificate. I calmed him down by telling him that in Lud they also learned another language, Yiddish, which was like English ...

When I got involved in transferring them to Lud, I encountered an unexpected glitch. I had to see the military physician for an examination for



the purpose of being drafted. I asked Hashem to exempt me from this unexpected order so I could help my students become yerei Shamayim and lamdanim (G-d fearing and scholars).

Hashem listened to my prayers and the doctor examined me and found me unfit for the army and that was the end of that. As promised, on the Sunday following my unsuccessful draft, I took the three boys to Lud. We arrived at Pardes and I stayed and learned with them in order to bring them up to the level of the yeshiva. They remained there through the entire winter.

The boys came home for the Pesach break and one of my mekuravim told me that the boys' parents were very angry with me. Apparently they had found out that there were no courses for matriculation in the yeshiva in Lud. I was afraid to show my face in my students' homes and after a few days I found out that after Pesach the talmidim were still at home. When they finally returned to yeshiva, the hanhala said they didn't want them.

When I heard this troubling news, I decided to take swift action and I met with the rosh yeshiva together with the boys. I asked that he take them back



and he agreed but he wanted to see the parents first. That did not happen and the following year, two of them went to a yeshiva high school (with secular studies).

One of the three kept in touch with Chabad, Yishai Kletzi. He eventually went to see the Rebbe and found what he was looking for. When I returned from 770 I told the residents of the yishuv about Yishai's tremendous *hasmada* (diligence) since he learned nonstop, and one year I brought back a picture of him together with the Rebbe at *kos shel bracha*.

[To be continued, G-d willing]

MELECH HA'MOSHIACH IS WORKING BEHIND THE SCENES



On Friday, 7 Adar, when the dramatic news about the resignation of Mubarak was broadcast, I heard the demonstrators in a live broadcast from Egypt saying, “We got rid of another Pharaoh.” I couldn’t help but take note of the astonishing fact that all these events, that began immediately after Yud Shevat, the start of Shnas HaShishim, came to a climax on Zayin Adar, the day Moshe Rabbeinu was born.

By Rabbi Naftali Estulin

Sometimes, when you’re in the midst of things, the momentousness of events does not register, for “we miss the forest for the trees.” But we Lubavitcher Chassidim were told by the Rebbe to **open our eyes** and to see the Geula unfolding in world events.

In recent weeks we have been hearing and reading about upheavals in the Arab world. It started with Tunisia, continued in Egypt, and now threatens the peace in other Arab countries. The media has presented a list of “candidates,” i.e. countries that are liable to follow Tunisia and Egypt, in casting aside the long-standing status quo. There are demonstrations in Bahrain and Libya, as well as Teheran despite the media blackout the government imposed there.

These earth-shattering events bring me back two decades, to the

beginning of the 90’s. Back then it also started with one country in the communist bloc and within a short time it encompassed all those countries. The threat that had us frightened for seventy years, and from our Jewish perspective was the greatest enemy to Judaism, simply dissipated.

At the time, the Rebbe told us that we shouldn’t think for a moment that these events were just “happenings.” Everything has significance and worldwide events of this magnitude had major Geula significance.

On Shabbos Parshas Mishpatim 5752, the Rebbe disclosed that the one who was behind these upheavals was he himself, in the role of Moshiach, as he prepared the world for the new era of “grinding swords into plowshares.” Although the Rebbe focused on the announcement about the reduction of nuclear

weapons and using military resources for peaceful pursuits, we can certainly extrapolate from that sicha to what is going on today and conclude that Moshiach is behind these events too.

Twenty years ago, we were in the Shnas HaArbaim (1951-1991) and the Rebbe spoke it being time for us to open our eyes and understand. “Hashem gave you a heart to know and eyes to see and ears to hear.” If the Rebbe expected us to understand back then, surely the Rebbe expects this of us now, twenty years later, when we are already in the Shnas HaShishim of his leadership and the Shnas Arbaim since the Siyum of Moshiach’s Seifer Torah.

Twenty years ago, the Rebbe dealt with the “kingdom of Eisav.” Now the Rebbe is dealing with the “kingdom of Yishmoel.” Our job is to see the Geula in this process and to tell the world about it so all will know that this is part of the Geula.

When Hashem told Moshe to split the sea, Moshe said to the Jewish people, “stand and see G-d’s salvation.” These words seem superfluous, for it would have been enough to tell them, “Hashem will fight for you and you be silent.” But from here we learn that great miracles can take place for the Jewish people but our eyes can be closed, preventing us from seeing the salvation of Hashem. That is why Moshe

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