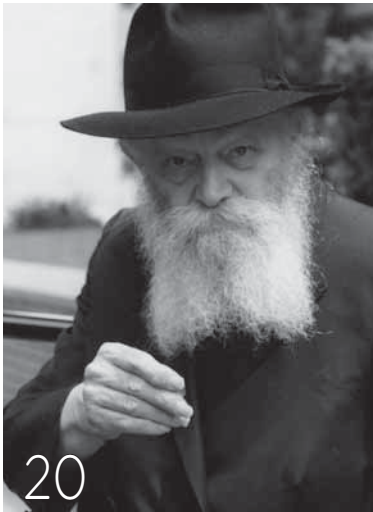




8



20



30

FEATURED ARTICLES

8 'THESE NEW ONES ARE MINE'
Menachem Ziegelboim

20 PURE FAITH, PURE WATERS

34 WHAT DO THE SHLUCHIM COUNT?
Rabbi Yaakov Shmuelewitz

WEEKLY COLUMNS

4 D'var Malchus
18 The Rebbe's Letters
30 Moshiach & Science
38 Parsha Thought
40 Moshiach & Geula

Beis Moshiach (USPS 012-542) ISSN 1082-0272 is published weekly, except Jewish holidays (only once in April and October) for \$160.00 in Crown Heights, USA \$180.00. All other places for \$195.00 per year (45 issues), by Beis Moshiach, 744 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, NY 11213-3409. Periodicals postage paid at Brooklyn, NY and additional offices. Postmaster: send address changes to Beis Moshiach 744 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, NY 11213-3409. Copyright 2010 by Beis Moshiach, Inc.

Beis Moshiach is not responsible for the content and Kashruth of the advertisements.

BEIS MOSHIACH

744 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn, NY 11213-3409

Tel: (718) 778-8000
Fax: (718) 778-0800
admin@beismoshiach.org
www.beismoshiach.org

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:
M.M. Hendel

HEBREW EDITOR:
Rabbi S.Y. Chazan
editorH@beismoshiach.org

ENGLISH EDITOR:
Boruch Merkur
editor@beismoshiach.org

ASSISTANT EDITOR:
Berel Goldberg

ANOTHER ZERO: FOR THIS SAKE, EXILE IS WORTH IT?!

This Jew is forgiving of the notion that the redemption should come one moment sooner. He just wants to savor the final moments of exile amidst the prosperity that exists in America in order to enjoy his money... * What does he get out of his money? Just what he adds (to his net worth) – another zero. * Part 2 of 2

Translated by Boruch Merkur

A PERSONAL REDEMPTION - OF THE SH'CHINA

Moreover, we approach this Jew and tell him, “Even when they will be redeemed in the future, the Divine Presence will be with them,” said with the following intent:

At first glance, it is obvious that when the Jewish people are no longer in exile, the Divine Presence will likewise no longer be in exile (as discussed above). Indeed, the whole concept of G-d being in exile is only on account of the Jewish people being in exile – “the Divine Presence was with them.”

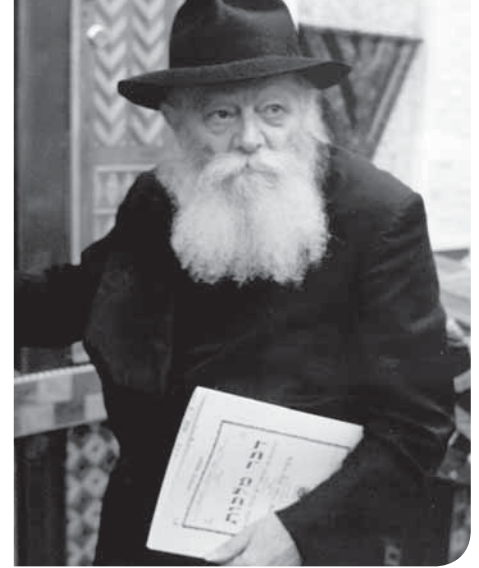
But there is a greater innovation here:

Through their Divine service in the time of exile, the Jewish people bring about that “when they will be redeemed in the future, the Divine Presence will be with them ... G-d will return **with them**, etc.” The Divine Presence goes out of exile **in**

the same manner as the Jewish people go out of exile.

That is, the Divine Presence does not leave exile automatically once the Jewish people are no longer in exile [as if the exile of the Divine Presence were only one of proxy, impersonal]. Rather, it leaves its own personal exile (independent of the Jewish people’s exile), and thereafter the redemption unfolds.

And what causes the Divine Presence to leave exile? The process does not unfold of its own accord and automatically, but because “the Divine Presence was with **them**.” That is to say, a Jew, through his service, accomplishes not only that he goes out of his personal exile but that he takes the Divine Presence out of exile as well. A Jew takes the Divine Presence out of the *helem*, the concealment of G-dliness, which is, in effect, the world we live in – for world, *olam*, means *helem*, concealment, a concealment that



is more profound during the time of exile. A Jew through his service of G-d causes the Divine Presence to go out of exile, and reveals G-dliness in the world!

Thus, the experience and state of the Divine Presence in emerging from exile is literally as if it was redeemed from its own personal exile [but it is within the power of the Jewish people to bring this about].

CELEBRATING THE REDEMPTION OF THE DIVINE

With this we can understand what is said, “G-d, your L-rd will return [with] your captivity,” for G-d returns with them among the exiles,” i.e., in the same manner as the Jewish people experience redemption:

The Jewish people will experience tremendous joy upon leaving exile, as in the parable of the “prince who was in captivity and stuck in prison” – along with all the descriptions brought in *Tanya* (Ch. 31) – but then “goes free [and returns] to the palace of his father, the king.” In this sense, the Jewish people, the only child of the King, King of Kings, the Holy One Blessed Be He, is likewise in exile. It is easy to appreciate then the great joy

when they go out of the doubled and redoubled darkness of exile to the true freedom of the true and complete redemption.

Similarly when speaking about the redemption of the Divine Presence: “G-d, your L-rd will return [with] your captivity.” Certainly the celebration of the fact that G-dliness is revealed in the world [i.e., the redemption of the Divine Presence from exile, as above] will be in the same manner as the redemption of the Jewish people, with the same leaping and jumping for joy.

HOW CAN I PROFIT FROM REDEMPTION?

The above provides a person with strength and inspiration in adding in his service of G-d, as follows.

Even if there were such a person who forsakes [his claim for imminent redemption], G-d forbid, and cries out: What is with all this outrage over staying an extra moment in exile? Why, for the sake of a single moment, must he dig in his heels, change his nature, and devote himself to Judaism, both with regard to himself and in promoting Judaism and Torah amongst other Jews.

Indeed, he argues, after 1900 years of exile, it doesn't make a difference to him to remain a little while longer in exile, so long as he can sleep peacefully in the final moments of exile... He has already toiled sufficiently and now he wants to sleep and not be overly engaged.

Of consequence, he argues, he should not be nudged and told that he must forgo sleep for the sake of Torah study and to fulfill Mitzvos in an extra special manner, for that would require

“The rich man protests: How could it be? He worked so hard to amass dollars and hoard them in the bank, and all of a sudden Moshiach comes and all his assets won't hold any value! For then there will be “no more hunger for bread nor thirst for water, except to hear the words of G-d.” And they tell him: You have so much money, but who needs it now?! This currency is no longer fungible!

him to give a few more dollars to promote Torah and Mitzvos. In order for the redemption to come as soon as possible, it is incumbent upon him to be involved with another Jew with greater enthusiasm, but he just wants to take it easy. He is a Jew that is exhausted from the 1900 years of exile. Therefore, they should just let him sleep peacefully in the final days of exile in order that he can arise awake and alert to the coming of Moshiach Tzidkeinu.

This Jew is forgiving of the notion that the redemption should come one moment sooner; it doesn't bother him that it should come one moment later. He just wants to savor the final moments of exile amidst the prosperity that exists in America in order to enjoy his money.

WHAT A DELIGHT - TO BE A RICH MAN!

This, of course, is notwithstanding the fact that he doesn't use his money; he just sits and counts his cash and considers how many dollars he has in the bank.

What kind of pleasure does he derive from this?!

He gives no more to charity than what he is comfortable parting with, in providing for his family he spends only so

much... [His dining expenses are inherently limited.] In fact, even if he so desired, he couldn't possibly eat delicacies all day long. He must rest between meals, because that is the nature of the human body. Thus, he cannot possibly spend all his money on providing for his family.

Even were he to buy the most exclusive clothing, he couldn't wear more than 18 garments, as cited in the laws of Shabbos that the greatest possible number of garments that one may go out with on Shabbos (by wearing them; not carrying them) is 18. It comes out then that even if he has so much money and he wants to buy 36 garments, it won't help him, for he cannot wear more than 18 garments!

If so, what does he get out of his money? Just what he adds (to his net worth) – another zero. For then he will have become ten times wealthier, and he cries out: What a delight!

What do you get out of your money? Use it for something good!

But he says No! He must be rich.

What does he get out of being wealthy, out of having so many zeros after the first number of his bottom line?!

After all, it's **his** wealth – i.e.,

“He doesn’t at all feel that we are presently in exile, for only when one has experienced true freedom can he truly discern what exile is all about. From the earliest possible age he was indoctrinated with the belief that his freedom is expressed in accumulating another dollar, and every additional dollar is a testimony to the additional freedom that he has attained...”

he doesn’t even permit himself to use his money for himself, let alone to use it for another Jew, etc., etc.

THE DOLLAR WON’T HAVE ANY VALUE!

We tell this Jew: Even though you want to enjoy your money, etc., for which reason you negate all other concerns and it makes no difference to you to remain in exile, etc., but Moshiach is coming imminently, and then the dollar won’t have any value!

The rich man protests: How could it be? He worked so hard to amass dollars and hoard them in the bank, which pays an interest of such and such (1% more than the next bank), and all of a sudden Moshiach comes and all his assets won’t hold any value! For then there will be “no more hunger for bread nor thirst for water, except to hear the words of G-d.” And they tell him: You have so much money, but who needs it now?! This currency is no longer fungible!

And so he cries out to leave him to remain a little bit longer in exile in order to enjoy his money, [to increase his fortune] until those who publish the list of millionaires in the United States will include him as well on the list. For this sake, exile is worth it!

Not to mention his concern

that he should have one car more than the next person. Of course, he doesn’t sit in the driver’s seat, for he has a chauffeur. He overlooks the fact that his driver gets in accidents and smashes his car, etc., so long as he sits in the passenger seat in the back... The driver sits in front and he sits in the back, and this constitutes his big honor – to sit in the back and proclaim: What a delight! I am the rich man!

He doesn’t at all feel that we are presently in exile, for only when one has experienced true freedom can he truly discern what exile is all about. He was born with this mindset; from the earliest possible age he was indoctrinated with the belief that his freedom is expressed in accumulating another dollar. And every additional dollar is a testimony to the additional freedom that he has attained. When he has two more dollars he will be even more free, and when he gains three more dollars he is already a cut above the rest.

When one has adopted this kind of mindset – that he prays for and wants to remain in exile longer in order to be able to further benefit from his money, etc. – then, since G-d is the essence of goodness, and the nature of the good is to do good to others, G-d accedes to his request and gives him more. As the literal commentators explain the verse, “Open up Your hands

and satiate *kol chai ratzon*” – G-d gives each living creature (*kol chai*) in accordance with his will (*ratzon*). Even if one’s will and desire is twisted, G-d accedes to it.

HE HOLDS THE DIVINE PRESENCE IN EXILE

However, in the end, this person is to be pitied and taken out of his (personal) exile (with respect to money). Thus, he is told that every moment that he is in exile, “the Divine Presence is with them” – G-d is in exile together with this person, on account of the fact that he is in exile.

Indeed, this is meant quite literally; it is neither a *drush* nor a *p’shetel*. It is not meant to comfort someone, so that his heart should be at ease [learning only the interpretation that G-d is in exile, suffering with him, an atrocity to which he is no accomplice]. Rather, as it is written in the Torah of Truth, when a Jew is in exile, he holds the Divine Presence in exile with him, “an actual portion of G-d Above.”

As the Alter Rebbe writes in *Tanya* regarding sin: Even if the transgression is transient, it is “analogous to taking the head of the king and drawing it downwards and sticking his face into, etc.”

Thus, we tell this Jew that even if amassing wealth is what he wants and values, that another zero added to his net worth is of extraordinary significance to him, insofar as his wealth is multiplied tenfold – and he brings a proof that so says his accountant, so says his bank, and so says the “Dow” and the “Broad Street,” who publish a list of millionaires in order of who

is the richest (and thanks to this list he manages to secure an even greater loan (capitalizing on the fact that he is a richer man, one who can handle a larger loan)) – he should know that by doing so he is holding G-d in exile!

For then, just on account of his humanity alone (not because of fear of Heaven, *frumkait*), he forgoes his sweet sleep when he rests his head on a pillow made of dollar bills (for which reason he wants to sleep and so Moshiach should not disturb him from enjoying his money). We tell him: Have mercy on G-d! The Divine Presence is with you in every place. When you are on

“ This is meant quite literally; it is neither a drush nor a p’shetel. When a Jew is in exile, he holds the Divine Presence in exile with him, “an actual portion of G-d Above.”

your way to the bank and when you sit in the back of the car, behind the chauffeur, taking pleasure in trivialities – G-d is with you, as it were.

It is understood that when he is made aware that a change in his attitude is tantamount to taking G-d out of exile a moment sooner, if he had some human sensitivity, he would forgo his

precious sleep (for he conceives that for him this expresses true delight) and do everything dependent upon him to be a dynamic Jew (*a lebidikker*), through the Living Torah and its Mitzvos, regarding which it is said, “and you shall live with them.”

(From the address of Lag B’Omer 5738, bilti muga)

Raskin's
“if it grows we have

**Consistently
Superior**

Fruit and Produce Emporium WHOLESALE & RETAIL

Michal & Aaron Raskin

335 Kingston Ave. Brooklyn NY 11213 * Tel: (718) 756-3888 756-2221 * Fax: 756-2440



LIVE SHIURIM ONLINE
Anywhere, Anytime !

CHITAS

**INYONEI GEULA
& MOSHIACH**

RAMBAM

**SHIURIM IN LIKUTEI
SICHOS KODESH**

חת"ת

עניני גאולה ומשיח

רמב"ם

**שיעורים בלקוטי
שיחות קודש**

WWW.770LIVE.COM



יחי אדונינו מורנו ורבנו מלך המשיח לעולם ועד

ב"ה

‘THESE NEW ONES ARE MINE’

When the Jewish people left Egypt and made their way towards Sinai to receive the Torah, they were chased, they crossed the sea, traversed the desert, all while knowing that Hashem was with them. Two bachurim from Yeshivas Ohr T’mimim in Kfar Chabad made a similar journey with difficulties along the way. * With Rosh Yeshiva, Rabbi Tuvia Bolton, they share their life stories and tell of their new life in yeshiva.

Interview by Menachem Ziegelboim

In 5728, following the Six Day War, large numbers of young Americans went to Eretz Yisroel to share in the sentiments of hope and optimism that washed over the country following the miraculous victory. Feelings ran high, and many people wanted a taste of Judaism. Some of them made their way to Tomchei T’mimim in Kfar Chabad, knowing that Chabad welcomes everyone.

The hanhala of the yeshiva didn’t know what to do with them as there was no program for English speakers, nor was there a program for beginners, and yet, they didn’t want to send them away.

Rabbi Nachum Trebnik, who was the rosh yeshiva at the time, went to the Rebbe and brought

this up in yechidus. He asked what the yeshiva should do with them, keep them in the regular yeshiva program or make a special program for them. The Rebbe said they should make a separate program and someone should be asked to take on this project and learn with them. Then the Rebbe said that he suggested speaking to Rabbi Shneur Zalman Gafni and to say that it was the Rebbe who made this suggestion.

R’ Trebnik approached R’ Gafni who was taken aback by the Rebbe’s recommendation. Just two months earlier he had started working in Kfar Chabad as a mashgiach for Chassidus in the morning and now this ... Of course he immediately agreed to

do it.

At first he combined the division for baalei t’shuva with his work in the kollel, but the division grew and he had to give it more of his time.

Over the years, R’ Gafni received many instructions from the Rebbe about how to run the program and work with the bachurim.

We can see how highly the Rebbe valued Ohr T’mimim from what he said to R’ Gafni in a yechidus, that this yeshiva won’t be like the other yeshivos for baalei t’shuva, Hadar Ha’Torah or the one in Morristown. Rather, it is part of Tomchei T’mimim, the shleimus of Tomchei T’mimim, and the tiferes of



From right to left: Moshe Tzvi Klein, Rabbi Tuvia Bolton, Gavriel Turk

Tomchei T'mimim. This is the reason that Ohr T'mimim was always within Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim in Kfar Chabad, with the learning, classes and meals being done together with the rest of the talmidim. They were only separate in the dormitory building.

When Rabbi Tuvia Bolton, one of the roshei yeshiva, speaks about Ohr T'mimim he is effusive, "Eretz Yisroel is the center of the universe and Kfar Chabad is the center of Eretz Yisroel. And the center of Kfar Chabad is Tomchei T'mimim, the place of the Soldiers of the House of Dovid. And I think that the center of this Tomchei T'mimim is Ohr T'mimim. I say this based on something the Rebbe once

said, 'I got the Chassidim as a *yerusha* (inheritance) but these new ones (the baalei t'shuva) who came are mine.'"

For more than forty years, Yeshivas Ohr T'mimim has been working with English speaking students from all over the world who want to learn about Judaism and study Torah. Over 1000 students have passed through its walls, and a great many of them have gone on to establish beautiful Chassidishe families. "You can see something special in them over the other students," enthuses R' Bolton. "They don't necessarily stand out among Anash but they serve Hashem quietly and with joy." They truly radiate the shleimus of Tomchei T'mimim and the t'mimus of

Tomchei T'mimim."

You can meet bachurim from Sweden, England, Russia, South Africa, South America, Australia, Germany, Canada, the United States, Romania and even Iran.

I met with R' Bolton and two of his students, Moshe Tzvi Klein and Gavriel Turk for four hours of fascinating conversation. These two bachurim are definitely representative of the other talmidim, past and present. They started out not long ago and they are already discussing the G-dly soul, birur, and sparks, as well as the minutiae of complex halachic issues.

Their life stories are quite remarkable. Moshe Tzvi was born and raised in Malmo,

Rosh Yeshiva Rabbi Shneur Zalman Gafni tells about the Rebbe's special relationship with Yeshivas Ohr T'mimim:

Already in the early days of the yeshiva there was a correspondence with the Rebbe concerning how the yeshiva was supposed to be run. The Rebbe, like a father, addressed every detail. Without the Rebbe, nobody would have dreamed of forming a division for baalei t'shuva, certainly not one that was part of Tomchei T'mimim. In all my letters and private audiences with the Rebbe on the topic of the yeshiva, the Rebbe emphasized that this division must be part of Tomchei T'mimim.

In Tishrei 5730/1969, I went to the Rebbe, and in yechidus the Rebbe asked me at length about the bachurim and my daily schedule. I complained that in the past I spent a long time davening and I had an exact schedule of learning, and now my day was packed with shiurim and talks with the students. I'll never forget that yechidus. The Rebbe spoke at length about the obligation to be devoted to the talmidim. Then he paused for a split second – I thought that after that pronouncement the Rebbe would at least absolve me of my obligation to daven at length, but I was quickly disabused of that idea – the Rebbe said that I needed to find a way to continue the avodas ha't'filla despite my busyness!

In 1973, when the Yom Kippur War broke out, I was back to visit the Rebbe and in yechidus I brought up a certain problem we were dealing with. We had acquired a reputation and many people were coming to us. The problem was that we learned in the zal and new students often dressed and behaved in ways not appropriate for a Chassidishe environment. Some people were displeased by this. I suggested that we leave the zal for another building.

The Rebbe said no to that idea and said that the purpose in establishing the yeshiva is for it to be part of Tomchei T'mimim. The Rebbe suggested that we accept men who already chose the path of Chabad or were likely to do so and then it would be easier to influence them to change their attire. The Rebbe spoke at great length about how to go about this.

In this yechidus, the Rebbe was in an elevated mood. I saw that the time was passing quickly and the Rebbe was speaking calmly, as one engrossed in discussing a vital issue, and was unconcerned that hundreds of people were waiting outside. In this yechidus, the Rebbe also clarified that the purpose of the yeshiva is to make Chassidim out of the bachurim and he even said, "This will be the Tiferes of Tomchei T'mimim."

Towards the end of the yechidus, when I felt it was time to leave, the Rebbe began speaking about the yeshiva again, and he said that if we did everything we spoke about, it would be the shleimus of Tomchei T'mimim.

I was on cloud nine when I heard these extraordinary expressions. The Rebbe made me well aware of the responsibility towards these T'mimim, who came from the outside.

Sweden while Gavriel is from Rothenberg in the region of Bavaria in Germany. They both acknowledge being at the start of their journey, but they are happy, satisfied and mainly excited about coming to the right place,

the place that helps fill a great vacuum that they always wanted to fill.

CHILDHOOD IN SWEDEN

Moshe Tzvi Klein is 26

years old and was born and raised in Malmo, Sweden in a Jewish family. His parents were members of the Orthodox shul, but that is the extent of their Jewish association. Until he was two he would go to shul occasionally thanks to his grandmother's sister who was religious and would take him with her. After she died, this stopped. The next time he went to shul was after his grandmother died when he was 19.

Nevertheless, Moshe took pride in being Jewish and this was the reason he wore a Magen David. He also took pride in his Jewishness in public school, but that was the extent of his Jewish involvement.

Sweden is not lacking in anti-Semitic sentiment. It was a partner to Nazi Germany's ambitions, supplying metal for weapons and even helping it conquer Norway, while being nominally neutral. It is one of the only countries in the world to forbid circumcision, and kosher sh'chita is also illegal. The government does not recognize Jewish schools and is not willing to protect them, and people on the street can yell anti-Semitic epithets at Jews. Not surprisingly, the police often refuse to investigate anti-Semitic incidents and crimes against Jews.

What anti-Semitism do you remember?

At the school I attended there was a teacher who would occasionally wear a Gestapo cap and would line the children up in a row as the Germans did. People on the street would sometimes salute us with "Heil."

His grandmother who had been in Auschwitz, his grandfather, mother, and aunts, found it hard to acclimate in

Sweden because of the anti-Semitism.

He attended public school and completed English studies in college. Then he got involved in various small businesses. At age 21 he went to university where he studied criminology and English, and also began studying psychology.

He had a hard time with inner battles being waged. "I didn't get along with people," he admits. "I would argue and quarrel." After age 18 he began to calm down. "I found a job in sales at a factory."

Why did you feel antagonistic towards your environment?

"I think it was a result of being a foreigner though I wasn't really a foreigner. I didn't look Swedish and my name 'Klein,' is a Jewish name. This is the reason I was constantly a target for bullying, because Swedes are xenophobic."

Klein notes that today, Sweden is flooded by Arabs and there is no anti-Semitism against them. He attributes this to the fact that although Hitler was racist and anti-Semitic, he got along with Arabs somehow. Ironically, the Swedes today are more open about accepting foreigners and the foreigners they are taking in are themselves anti-Semitic.

When he began working, his soul calmed down. "I decided that I would no longer take the barbs personally. If they started up, that was their problem, not mine. I realized that part of the problem was that I reacted and that I had to control my reactions and not get pulled in."

MY FIRST PESACH

One day, three years ago, when he was 23, he decided he wanted to see the world. He



Rabbi Gafni (right) and Rabbi Bolton (left) farbrenging with talmidim

planned on traveling to South Africa and working as a volunteer for the Red Cross. A friend of his mother's heard about this and suggested that he might as well visit Israel and volunteer on a kibbutz.

Moshe Tzvi landed in Eretz Yisroel for the first time, three years ago. From the airport he was taken to Kibbutz Ein HaShofet and he began working there as a volunteer. For a while he worked in the kibbutz general store, and in the factory and laundry of the kibbutz. Then he went to Kibbutz HaZoreia, an anti-religious kibbutz.

"I remember that period well. As a volunteer I was given free room and board and on my days off from work I could tour the country. I met many people my age, Jews as well as many non-Jews, but they were more Jewish than the ones I knew in Sweden."

After so many years of

almost no contact with Jews, what did you think of being in Eretz Yisroel among so many Jews?

"It didn't impress me," he said candidly and with a chuckle. "On the contrary, in a certain way I was disappointed. Sweden is more advanced than Israel and it's cleaner and prettier and much bigger. I understood that the Jewish population is better than goyim but I didn't actually see this. Tel Aviv seemed to me like Berlin except with nicer weather. I was disappointed and thought of returning home."

Then, a gentile friend from Canada, who was also touring Israel, suggested that he join him on a tour. He promised to visit Jerusalem with him and show him the beauties of the city. Moshe Tzvi agreed. When they arrived at the Kosel something moved in his heart. He said, "Shma Yisroel" and when they were about to leave he told his friend,

"I found what I was looking for. I'm staying here."

What happened at the Kosel?

"I couldn't explain it. Now that I'm learning Chassidus I can say that this was the first time that I felt my G-dly soul."

What happened next?

"Some time later I met relatives, cousins of my mother. This was the first time I was meeting them personally and they are religious. I remember being very impressed by them, an Orthodox family from Hungary who were living a religious life and seemed normal. I wondered what they believe. I was very curious about their way of life even though I did not consider keeping mitzvos myself.

"Meeting them led to my remaining in Eretz Yisroel despite my original plan of returning to Sweden. Since my experience at the Kosel, I felt that I wanted to stay, that this is my country. Something budged in my emuna. In Sweden I was very much an atheist (despite my Jewish pride) and this had changed a bit.

"I decided to enlist in the army and become a 'good Israeli.' I thought it was better than being a Swede. After long conversations with my family I parted from my gentile girlfriend."

Moshe Tzvi formally made aliya through the Jewish Agency and moved to Kibbutz Ramat Yochanan on the eastern side of Emek Z'vulun. However, he soon discovered that he didn't like the location. "I felt that something was missing here." He left the kibbutz and rented an apartment in Chaifa and began studying Ivrit in an Ulpan.

He went to his relatives in Petach Tikva for Pesach and spent the entire Yom Tov with them,

even though they told him that if he was having a hard time with their Pesach customs he should feel free to leave, "but I was curious and I wanted to know more and more. They taught me what is forbidden and what is permitted and I went to shul with them. I didn't know how to pray and I said the Shma dozens of times. For the first time, I saw my uncle learning Talmud and I found this interesting. They didn't force me to do anything and were very patient.

"Before going to them, I asked what I should bring and they said, 'Just bring a white shirt and appropriate clothes.' After Pesach I went back to Chaifa but I couldn't take off what I was wearing. I felt they were part of me. It was only the next day, when I had no choice, that I took them off and went back to my usual way of dressing."

He came across a book written by a woman who had investigated different forms of Judaism and described what she saw, the good and the bad, in her opinion. She described certain groups of Chassidim in the United States that she had visited.

What did you learn from her book?

"There weren't many details, but it was enough to acquaint me with subjects I had not known about before. I learned about Chassidim, how the Chassidic movement began, and what their approach is."

The one who helped him during this period was a religious girl, a neighbor of his, who was studying medicine. He asked her questions about Judaism and she guided him in what to do and what not to do. "She gave me a lot of information about Judaism." He decided to stop

studying at the Ulpan and to start studying Judaism. He had a number of options and he didn't know which one to pick.

SEARCHING AND AMAZING HASHGACHA PRATIS

"I had already learned that Reform wasn't for me. I spent some time at Machon Meir in Yerushalayim, but that wasn't for me either. The only ones who impressed me as doing the right thing despite the difficulties were the ultra-Orthodox and Chassidim. I asked the girl about the Lubavitchers and she said, 'If you want Judaism 100%, then Chabad can help you.'

"I went to the Chabad house on Rechov Freud in Chaifa where there is a kollel. The first Lubavitcher I met was Tanchum Rivkin with whom I am still in touch. I also got to know Rabbi Yishai Kali, who does outreach at the university in Chaifa. I helped him establish the Chabad minyan at the university. Wherever I went, all the people I met supported me and encouraged me to go to Chabad. On Shavuos I learned with R' Kali all night and in the morning we went to immerse in the ocean which was quite an experience.

"One day, Kali said to me, 'You can continue the way you are doing now; a little here, a little there, but this will take you years. Another option is to go to Yeshivas Ohr T'mimim in Kfar Chabad.'"

Moshe Tzvi was ready for this and he went to Kfar Chabad last summer. "I am here ever since," he says with a big smile.

A relative bought him a hat and suit as well as a Siddur and taught him to put on t'fillin.

So you started serious learning here in yeshiva?

“Yes. Until I came here, I had not learned in a systematic way.”

What was the first thing you learned in yeshiva?

“That I really don’t know anything and I don’t stand a chance considering how much there is to know in Torah.”

(After some thought): “I had learned a little Tanya in Chaifa and that opened a new world for me. When I began learning Chumash and Gemara I felt the *chayus* ... While I was with my family in Petach Tikva and I saw them learning Gemara, I prayed to Hashem that He give me the ability to understand what they were learning. In yeshiva here, I also learned how to pray properly. I was very embarrassed that I didn’t know how to pray. I just recently began davening in Lashon HaKodesh. In particular, at Ohr T’mimim I learned how to learn Gemara and Chassidus.

“I feel ashamed that all my life I did not observe mitzvos and didn’t know what to do. I wasted all my life up until now.”

Moshe Tzvi is 26, but he feels he is not yet ready for marriage. He wants to learn Gemara and Chassidus first and wants to study for smicha and know how to properly run a Jewish home. Rabbi Tuvia Bolton is the one who is pushing him to learn and is supporting him throughout. His parents are supportive of him. His father is surprised by his path, but pleasantly so. His mother started attending the shul in their city where she has begun to be active. “Last year I went to the Rebbe for Tishrei, and this year I plan on going to 770 with my mother.”

When he talks about the future he dreams of remaining in Eretz Yisroel and living a Jewish life.



From right to left: Moshe Tzvi Klein, Rabbi Bolton, Gavriel Turk

You don’t want to return to Sweden to spread knowledge of Judaism?

“I was there two weeks ago and decided it’s not for me.”

ATTAINING THE UNATTAINABLE

Gavriel Turk has a mischievous look in his eye. Talking with him was an experience since he gives off quite a bit of positive energy.

He came to Ohr T’mimim just three months ago and feels right at home. He came from Rothenberg in Germany where he grew up.

Today, just three months later, can you sum up what you got so far in yeshiva?

After three months I know without a shadow of a doubt that this is the best thing that happened to me. I had no plans of going to Israel. I was on my way to India but I ended up here. I know that if I had gone there,

my life would have been ruined.

But what have you gotten from yeshiva?

First, a foundation for Judaism. I am committed to not leave Judaism. I got my first knowledge of Judaism. I already know how to learn Gemara. I myself can’t believe that I can sit in a shiur and understand words in the Gemara.

R’ Bolton, Moshe Tzvi said that he arrived here about nine months ago and started at the beginning. Gavriel arrived here three months ago and started at the beginning. Don’t you have a program? How can anyone who shows up start at the beginning?

That’s a good question. We have shiur alef and beis for Gemara and sometimes a shiur gimmel. The students follow a curriculum with Gemara, Chassidus and Chumash. When someone new shows up, with no background, we don’t start with him at the beginning. We usually

find one of the old-time students to learn alef-beis with him and then Rashi letters, and then he jumps in. You see a guy who says he can't read without vowels and after a month or two he is learning Gemara.

It takes time and it's not always easy, but throwing them into the learning works well. Most students keep notebooks in which they write down words in Lashon Kodesh and new concepts like: bayis, abba, imma, tiyuvta, atzilus, tzimtzum, etc. and the talmidim here have the Rebbe's bracha and very quickly show that they have far greater abilities than they thought they had.

There were times we considered making special programs for beginners but we nixed the idea every time. The method I described to you usually works out well. I have seen boys from other kiruv yeshivos where they work with them at their pace, slowly, and it happens that after a year in yeshiva they don't know the proper bracha for what they're eating.

Gavriel, can you explain the difference between learning Chassidus and learning Gemara?

Gemara is the foundation of Judaism and Chassidus adds flavor and color.

I cannot imagine how I would look if I'd be in India now or learning in another yeshiva. The learning here changed everything for the better, for me. I don't think this would have happened anywhere else. It's not just the yeshiva but its location. When I arrived in Eretz Yisroel I was experiencing inner turmoil. Kfar Chabad is a small, quiet place, which provides a tranquil setting for me to think and internalize everything I learn and feel.

When you walk among yeshiva bachurim who wear hats and jackets and tzitzis showing, do you feel that you belong?

I remember being impressed by religious people (not necessarily Jews) from when I was a kid. I read about them in books and saw them in the movies. I was always impressed by people who believe in a Creator. It fascinated me and I thought that this was unattainable for me. I thought a believer is someone who is born to it and then, here I am and I see it's attainable, it's possible, I'm in it. I am fulfilling a dream and can feel and touch that which used to be out of reach.

So you felt connected to religion and faith from when you were a child?

Not exactly religion; more like identifying with faith.

NOT A SINGLE JEW

As opposed to Moshe Tzvi who was proud of being a Jew, I had to hide the fact that I am Jewish. I was ashamed to be a Jew and kept a low profile about it. There is a lot of anti-Semitism in Germany, but unlike Sweden, the Germans know how to behave and they try not to publicly express their anti-Semitic feelings.

Did you experience anti-Semitism?

There were anti-Semitic jokes but they usually weren't jokes with an underlying deeper message, but rather just general ethnic jokes such as how Jews want to conquer the world.

Nobody knew I was Jewish which is why I barely experienced any anti-Semitism.

Did you know what a Jew is?

"I knew that I am Jewish, but

did not know the significance of that."

Rothenberg is a historic, medieval town and a beautiful place overlooking a river, which is visited by tourists from all over the world. There are about 11,000 residents and no Jewish community. Gavriel says that officially there are no Jews, "but you can't know for sure."

R' Bolton: Hashem took Avrohom out and showed him the stars and said, 'thus shall your seed be.' Why did Hashem do it this way? One answer is that when you go outside and look at the sky, at first you only notice stars here and there, but the more you look and search and get used to the darkness, the more stars you see. The same is true for finding Jews. You go someplace and they tell you there are no Jews aside from a few individuals. The longer you stay there, the more Jews you find, who had hidden their Jewishness or were unaware of it.

AN UNEXPECTED ENCOUNTER

Gavriel's mother is Jewish and his father is a non-Jew, a dentist from an aristocratic family. After his parents divorced, his father moved to Hungary and he stayed with his mother in Germany. She was aware of her Jewishness, but had no knowledge of it.

"My mother always said that we are Jews, but she didn't know the significance of this. When my father left, my relationship with her naturally grew stronger and the fact that I am a Jew became a stronger feeling within me."

He had an ordinary childhood. He got good marks in school and got along well with others. At age 18, he went to Budapest to attend university

where he wanted to study physics. He stayed in Hungary for a year, where he studied Hungarian before entering university. Then he had a change of heart, and before starting his studies he decided to devote a year to broadening his horizons and seeing the world.

Gavriel returned to Germany to work as a door guard at a nightclub in Frankfurt.

Gavriel asked: Do you think it's a good idea to mention all this?

R' Bolton: In the articles I put up on the Internet, I once wrote about the need to transform the darkness into light and evil into good. I received an e-mail from a reader who wrote, "How do you do that? Is it possible?" I wrote back, "Pardon me, I don't know you, but do you have an overdraft at the bank and for how much?" He wrote back that he was minus \$20,000 at the bank. I asked him: What will happen if they pass a law that says that someone who has a "minus" at the bank will have it transformed to a "plus?" He wrote me back, "Hey, if only I had a million dollar deficit in my account..." I told him that this is the idea of transforming the darkness into light and evil into good. And if you Gavriel were in those distant, lowly places, now you are transforming the darkness into light and that light, which corresponds to the darkness, is that much greater.

Gavriel laughed and was reminded of an incident that took place at the nightclub. He continued talking, in English with a German accent:

"One night, from the doorway of the club I saw a Jew wearing a hat and jacket. From the newspapers I knew he was a religious Jew. I saw that he was looking for something. I



Rabbi Bolton with Gavriel Turk

couldn't imagine what a religious Jew would be looking for in that area. I later found out his name – Berry (Berel) Shpitzky and that he had landed in Frankfurt in an unplanned stopover and he was looking for a place with Internet. We got into a conversation, and he told me that his stopover would last an entire day.

"He asked me whether I am Jewish. I said I am, and briefly told him my life's story. I suggested that since he had an entire day until his flight to the US, I would take him around to see the sights and he agreed. We quickly became friends. As we toured around he, as a Lubavitcher, took me to the big, central shul of Frankfurt where I put on t'fillin for the first time in my life. That opened new channels within me to Judaism.

What did you feel?

It felt very special. A privilege. I felt chosen. Just ten hours earlier I didn't know what t'fillin are and here I was, putting on t'fillin. It was like entering another world.

When you think about this today, how do you explain what happened?

In Basi L'Gani it explains that the connection a Jew has with Hashem is comprised of 613 strands. Putting on t'fillin was my first connecting strand with Hashem.

How did you part ways?

He continued on to New York that day, but we kept in touch and spoke occasionally. He would e-mail me about customs and special dates and tell me what was done on those days. Before holidays he would tell me about the upcoming holiday and how it is celebrated. I felt that he cared about me.

ALONE

Gavriel worked for a year, and after saving his money he set off to realize his dream of seeing the world. The first place he went to was Tahiti, an exotic island in the South Pacific.

"I was looking for a place that not everybody went to," he said.

Gavriel arrived with only his backpack and a one-way ticket. He started out in the capitol, Papeete. One day he saw a shul. "Without quite knowing why, I walked in. I was amazed to see a shul in Tahiti. I didn't know what it was doing there; I didn't know there were Jews there."

Well, there were Jews and especially gracious ones, at that. They welcomed the young man and invited him for Shabbos. He attended the davening on Shabbos and felt part of the community, which felt wonderful. They invited him for the Shabbos meals and to sleep. It made a tremendous impression on him.

"Although they didn't know me, the feeling was that we were the best of friends. The relationship was natural and so warm. It was without fanfare and without thoughts of reciprocity."

Gavriel spent three months in Tahiti, which included Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur, both of which he observed for the first time.

"I was embarrassed that they all knew about their Judaism and I knew nothing, but it was this embarrassment that got me more involved in Judaism. During the three months I spent there, I went to the shul for most of the Shabbasos."

There was a doctor there who said he lived on Bora Bora, a charming island near Tahiti, and he invited Gavriel to visit him. Gavriel accepted and left Tahiti though not before receiving a pair of t'fillin from his new friends with his commitment to using them.

Three months later, Gavriel left for the man's island, about 200 miles from Tahiti. He went by boat and hoped to find the doctor although he did not have his address. How many doctors

could there be? It turned out that the doctor worked on Bora Bora and went there once a week but he didn't live there. One of the locals who heard that Gavriel was looking for him, suggested that he go to the island where the man lived, one of many islands that surround Tahiti. The man had built himself a home on the little island and his home was the only one there. He wanted Gavriel to live in it because he left for periods of time on business, and he wanted Gavriel to watch over his island to ensure that other people didn't come and settle, establishing facts on the ground in his absence.

"I agreed," said Gavriel with a grin. "There was no electricity and no running water. It was far from civilization. The man had built himself a house and lived in it. I lived for six months on this little island."

What did you do there all that time?

I read books, swam a lot, and thought a great deal. I enjoyed the quiet and the atmosphere. When a hurricane struck I was alone, and I didn't have much to do. The hurricane flooded the entire island, which is only half a meter above sea level. The storm tilted the house I was living in, and it wasn't a pleasant experience at all. The seawater flooded the reservoir of drinking water that I had.

Weren't you afraid?

My outlook was – what will be, will be.

URGE TO PUT ON T'FILLIN

"I sat all night on a rock overlooking the sea and watched the breaking waves, enjoying the freedom of life. I waited for the sun to rise over the ocean and announce a new day. Suddenly,

I had a pressing urge to put on t'fillin. I got off the rock and ran to the other side of the island where my house was, and put on t'fillin. It was a magical moment. I heard the captivating melody of the sea as I said the Shma, and felt directly connected to G-d and what it means to be a Jew. The door to my neshama had opened wide."

After a long stay on Tahiti, Gavriel continued on to New York where he met his old friend Berry. Berry introduced him to Rabbi Avrohom Lipsker, who has a lot of experience in teaching young people about Judaism. The two of them sat down to talk over a meal and R' Lipsker asked him why he didn't attend a yeshiva.

"I thought it was a good idea. Why should I continue wandering the world? I was always impressed by and interested in religious people. So I went to R' Lipsker's yeshiva Tiferes Menachem in Seagate for two months."

Then Gavriel returned to Germany, determined that Judaism is for him. He was so impressed that he decided to sit in yeshiva and learn, but then something strange happened to him, which to this day he cannot explain.

"After landing in Germany, I completely forgot the resolutions I had made and all the spiritual experiences I had had, as though it was all a dream. It's not that it slipped my mind or I pushed it out of mind; it all simply flew out of my head!"

VISA TO INDIA AND THE YESHIVA IN KFAR CHABAD

"After a short period in Germany, I decided to continue traveling the world, this time to India. But heaven did not allow



Ohr T'mimim alumni farbrengen

me to completely forget and since the door had opened and I had an *is'arusa d'l'eila*, I simply wasn't allowed to continue.

"That was three months ago. I took an El-Al flight from Frankfurt to India with a brief stopover in Israel. Security checked my passport and discovered that I did not have a visa to India. They told me I could not take the flight to India, and I could either remain in Israel or return to Germany and make a visa there for India. I decided to remain here, and I've been here ever since."

How did you get to Kfar Chabad?

"I started traveling around the country. When I was in Yerushalayim, I passed by one

of the yeshivos and a bachur invited me in. The rosh yeshiva suggested that I learn there and I suddenly remembered what I had decided in the US, that this is what I really wanted to do in life, but I had forgotten it all. I could not understand how I could have completely forgotten about it.

"Since I knew a bit about Chabad, I asked the rosh yeshiva whether this yeshiva was Chabad. He said it wasn't and that it wasn't the same thing. I left and continued searching.

"One day I was talking with a friend from Germany by the name of Benjamin Brown, who had become a baal t'shuva. I told him that I was in Israel and asked him where I should learn. He told me to go to the Kosel

and I would surely meet someone who would direct me. I did as he suggested and went to the Kosel where I met Aharon Luft, one of the teachers at Ohr T'mimim in Kfar Chabad. It was by divine providence that I met him and I asked the right man the right question..."

R' Bolton: "It is really amazing hashgacha pratis because the reason he went to Yerushalayim was to find bachurim for the yeshiva."

You got stuck here between Germany and India. When are you continuing on to India?

Gavriel laughed heartily and said, "What do I need in India? Over here there is bracha and simcha and anything a Jew can want."

Crown Travel International



- Express service
- Fully Computerized

331 Kingston Ave.
(2nd Flr) Brooklyn NY 11213

(718) 493-1111

Fax: (718) 493-4444

Get your tickets within minutes!

ON PHILOSOPHY, MEDICINE, AND SCIENCE

The Rebbe's letter, published for the first time, from the t'shura of the wedding of Simpson and Stock.



By the Grace of G-d
11 Tishrei 5712/1951

In reply to your letter and questions contained therein:

1-Re the apparent contradiction between the Omniscience of G-d and man's Free Will (or choice of action), there is a whole literature dealing with the subject, and it is impossible to give an outline of it in the course of a letter. I would refer you, at least, to the Rambam (Hilchos Teshuva, ch. 5). However, I cannot leave without some answer, so I will state very briefly:

G-d's foreknowledge is no contradiction to man's free choice. What could be a contradiction to free choice is compulsion, not knowledge. Hence, a foreknowledge that is not compelling or forcing, is in no way a limitation on one's free choice of action.

I will cite two illustrations. First, assuming that there are men with prophetic knowledge, their forecast concerning certain people does not compel them to act in a certain way and does not

rob them of their free choice of action.

Secondly, as you know, G-d is not subject to time, and the past, present and future is all the same to Him (He Was, Is, and Will be, all in One). It follows, that to G-d, man's future is like the past, and as knowledge of a past action is no contradiction to free choice, so is His knowledge of a future action. In other words, G-d knows the thoughts of man and his decisions, and such knowledge does not rob man of thinking and deciding how to act.

2-Re your question as to my opinion of the theory of Evolution. You do not mention what Evolution you are referring to. Presumably the evolution of vegetable and animal life.

My opinion is, as stated in the Torah, that during the Six Days of Creation, G-d created the Four Kingdoms (minerals, vegetation, animal and man) independently of each other. Our Sages have enlarged upon this question in detail. However, this Creation does not deny the possibility of evolution after that

of particular species through various mutations.

3-With regard to your question concerning the role of Aggadah in the Talmud, particularly those dealing with medicine, I want to point out that you are touching upon two distinct questions: Aggadah in the Talmud, and Medicine in the Talmud.

As to Aggadah, not all Aggadah can be treated equally. In the introductions to various editions of Ein Yaakov you will find how our Sages classify the Aggadoth of the Talmud.

As the question of Medicine in the Talmud, they are not at all as fantastic as they may appear. As a matter of fact, many medical suggestions in the Talmud have been confirmed in recent years as to their therapeutic value, although medical science had long derided them.

Generally speaking, however, inasmuch as the nature of the human organism has undergone changes since those days, the medical advice contained in the Talmud cannot be applied nowadays. But it is quite certain that in their days the remedies were quite effective.

For references consult: Tosafoth Moed Koton 11a d"h kivra, Kesef Mishnah, ch. 4 of

“However, Creation does not deny the possibility of evolution after that of particular species through various mutations.

Hilchos Deoth, chap. 18, and the sources mentioned in Sdei Chemed, vol. Of Kelolim, under "R" klal 54, where it is stated that due to physical and climate changes, medical treatment and remedies of old no longer hold good generally.

In the History of Medical

Science, many illustrations are cited as to changes in both in man's susceptibility to disease and treatment, the development of virus attack, new diseases, etc. There is quite a literature on the subject, and there is no need for me to enlarge upon this subject.

I am surprised that you

do not mention in your letter anything about your activities in influencing others to bring them nearer to Torah and Yiddishkeit, which serves also to strengthen one's own convictions.

With blessing

Continued from page 21

lead the way. In this answer, the Rebbe writes about the extensive knowledge one needs to have when it comes to mikvaos because there are so many details. In the meantime, we spoke with the mikva lady who is also a Lubavitcher and a shlucha here. We were all determined not to let this matter slide by and until the rabbanim came, we had to keep on top of things. The Rebbe was expecting this of us.

A short while later, the mikva lady herself opened to the letter I quoted above from volume 7. That really got us working. We exerted pressure on the official experts and a date was finally arranged for them to come in Av. The rabbanim and experts showed up and did a thorough check and their conclusion was that the mikva was kosher l'mehadrin according to shitas Chabad and there were some minor details that

needed attention so it would be absolutely mehudar.

One of the main things that needed to be done was to purchase rubber stoppers. The men from the religious council promised to take care of the matter. We were happy that our shlichus had ended. It hadn't been easy but in the end, it worked out. So for example, after the stopper was bought and the workmen came, it turned out that it didn't fit and they had to travel to a distant place once again to buy another one, and there were other such examples.

We felt that the Rebbe was with us every step of the way. In Cheshvan 5771 it poured all over the country but amazingly, not a drop fell in our city. If it had rained here, the work would have been postponed indefinitely.

It was first this past Adar I that everything was corrected and ... the Rebbe's answers we opened to no longer had to do with mikvaos.

The shlucha concludes her story with the following information, which she sees as being directly connected to the improvements in the mikva. First, shortly after they began fixing the mikva, she and her husband opened to a letter in which the Rebbe wrote that he was happy to be informed about the fixing of the mikva in their city. As far as the shlucha was concerned, their job was completed.

From that point on, she and the mikva lady continued to open to letters from the Rebbe about fixing mikvaos and even an answer about a rubber stopper.

"After Tishrei 5771 we were informed that I was pregnant and there were two couples in our community who had been married for several years without children and both of them became pregnant after we started dealing with the mikva renovations. One gave birth a short while ago and the other one is due in a few months."

Only 1 minute from 770 • High Style Hotel in a small format • Fancy Studio Apartments



- Kitchen with all the latest technology appliances: Fridge, Microwave, Toaster
- Breakfast, drinks in fridge all day
- Broadband Internet
- FREE calls & video

KINGSTON HOTEL



718-473-5937

- Linen & Towels changed
- Fancy Bath & Shower with plenty of Shampoo & Soap



PURE FAITH, PURE WATERS

A series of answers about pregnancy and birth, a mashpia's guidance, and hiddur mitzva.

By Nosson Avrohom

The following story happened in a city in the center of Eretz Yisroel. I don't like telling stories without names and places but I made an exception this time so the story could be told.

In recent years, stories have been publicized about miracles having to do with the kashrus of mikvaos. We all know how important a mikva with all the hiddurim is for the foundation of Jewish life; the Rebbeim wrote a lot about it. This story is one in which the Rebbe put the onus for improvement on a young couple on shlichus.

WHAT DOES THE REBBE WANT?

It started in Tishrei 5770," said the shlucha. "We had a three month old baby in addition to older children and all was well. My husband and I are on shlichus and we write to the Rebbe and give him good news of our work and ask for brachos and success.

We realized at some point that we were opening to an inordinate number of letters in the Igros Kodesh on the topic of pregnancy and birth. This surprised us, even

more so because every night we learn a random letter of the Rebbe and on many occasions the letter we opened to dealt with these topics. In addition, every week, my husband puts a detailed report of our shlichus work into a volume of Igros and most of the answers he opened to dealt with birth or pregnancy.

When this happened time after time, we realized something was afoot; the Rebbe wanted something from us. But what? In one letter we read an answer to someone who asked for a bracha for children. In another letter the Rebbe blessed a woman who was pregnant that all should go well. But what did this have to do with us? We had a newborn baby! Was the Rebbe referring to her? What were we supposed to do with all these brachos?

We were puzzled and every time we opened to a letter on these topics we just couldn't understand it. We had never had a series of letters on a topic like this before. At some point, we decided that maybe the Rebbe was preparing us for another baby but the weeks and months went by and this wasn't the

answer. We were at a loss for ideas. We felt the Rebbe wanted something from us but we did not know what it was.

When this phenomenon did not stop, my husband decided to ask an elder mashpia in Eretz Yisroel to help us decipher what the Rebbe was saying. He told the mashpia that for nearly nine months the Rebbe kept sending us this message and we didn't understand it.

The mashpia thought it over and said that he had a brochure of *HaGeula, M'anyein V'Achshavi* that he needed to give to someone but hadn't done so yet. The brochure had a story about a mikva and a blessing for children in its merit. Perhaps, this is what the Rebbe wanted.

He asked my husband whether there was a Chabad mikva in our neighborhood and my husband said there is. It's a mikva that the religious council built. The mashpia suggested that the Rebbe wanted us to check its kashrus and the level of hiddurim.

Although the mikva was built with the shitas Chabad, we wondered who checked its

kashrus periodically and whether those who checked it understood the Chabad stringencies. We had never brought this up before but now that this is what the mashpia suggested, we decided it was time to look into it.

My husband and I began calling all the officially recognized experts for their opinion and to ask maybe they would come and check the mikva. We called a Lubavitcher rav who is an expert in the laws of mikvaos and he told us that a Chabad mikva is not merely *bor al gabbei bor*, that there are other stringencies and practices that require follow-up. We soon realized, to our sorrow, that in this matter as in so many others, bureaucracy held sway. We could not get the rav to come down, and made do with the person responsible for mikvaos in our city who came to the mikva accompanied by another Lubavitcher rav who lives here.

THE REBBE DIRECTS US

It took quite some time until matters were looked into. The amazing thing, from our perspective, was that from the moment we started getting involved in having the mikva checked, the Rebbe's answers we opened to were no longer about pregnancy and birth but about mikvaos, the kashrus of mikvaos, the shitas Chabad, and the mitzva to immerse in a mikva. The Rebbe addressed the topic from all angles. One of the answers that stood out, which I saved, was an answer that is connected to the continuation of this story. The answer was in volume 7, page 277:

What you write about fixing the mikva and what HaRav HaGaon... R' A. C. Noeh wrote to you, that due to the difficulty in fixing it, perhaps

to change some details, I don't think so, because when it comes to a mikva we are particular about satisfying as many views as possible and it is likely that in changing some detail, even though you don't see the difference from the design of the Rebbe Rashab, it is possible that after analyzing it you will find a difference. It is known that the laws of mikvaos are very complicated and there are numerous halachic opinions on every detail.

This is in addition to the

reason that if someone makes a change in this way, someone else will make a change in another way, and it is not worth being the first to start in matters such as these. I strongly hope that with the proper effort you can make the appropriate corrections as per the design of the Rebbe Rashab.

We understood that the mashpia had guided us properly. We were excited to see that the Rebbe had chosen us to

Continued on page 19



ABRAHAM PRINCIPLE

Yes, Abraham was beautiful, but he didn't stop there. His commitment went far beyond his natural goodness, far beyond his kind and wise nature. His commitment was ultimate, and that can look scary, very scary. – Part 10

By Dr. Aryeh Gotfryd, PhD



BEAUTY, MEET TRUTH

One may not adopt certain truth criteria when it is convenient and then drop them when it is not.

--The Rebbe,
Mind Over Matter, p. 8.

I am not a Kabbalist. Nor a philosopher.

If I were, I could speak of sublime realities like beauty and truth in something approaching an authoritative fashion. But all

I can muster is a few life lessons and some Torah gleanings.

For instance. Sometimes truth is ugly.

Take Abraham for example. Here is a man who is everybody's hero. Who else could be adored by Christian, Muslim and Jew? Founder of ethical monotheism, host par excellence, educator, iconoclast, at once challenging men to rise above their mediocrity, yet challenging G-d to descend from His uncompromising excellence and value us for who we are.

Yes, Abraham was beautiful, but he didn't stop there. His commitment went far beyond his natural goodness, far beyond his kind and wise nature. His commitment was ultimate, and that can look scary, very scary.

Abraham's biggest test, the binding of Isaac, is not the kind of deed one calls wise, or kind, or sane for that matter. I recall studying the Akeida, the story of the binding of Isaac, with a brilliant scholar who loved nothing more than Torah. But this story bugged him, no, actually haunted him. "He was wrong! He had no right to do it!" The story drove him nuts. Here's why.

Abraham built his entire life on promoting G-d in the world. He weaned the Middle East off of idolatry, taught people, fed them, nurtured their faith in an all-knowing, just and benevolent Creator. He was a living model of the good G-d about Whom he preached.

Then came his big test: To offer up Isaac as a sacrifice. Which sounds a lot like this: Commit murder. Kill a human being. Kill your own son. Your only son. The one you love. The promised father-to-be of your millions of children. Go ahead. Make me a liar. Tie him up and slit his throat. Watch him bleed to death. Trash your life, trash My reputation, and don't ask why. Just do it.

Well, you may recall, in the end it wasn't so bad. At the last moment, G-d said "Stop". He just wanted the offer, not the deed. Yes, G-d was beautiful, but Abraham did not want to stop there. "Let me take just a drop of blood." Even then, Abraham was ready to serve in truth, ultimate truth. And that ain't pretty.

But then again, I'm not a philosopher, nor a Kabbalist.

If I were, I might see the beauty within the ugliness, the



virtue of sacrificing a beloved child. But guess what. I can't. All I know is "G-d said so." And in truth, that's enough.

If the eyes of the beholder belong to G-d, it just may be that truth is beautiful. If I had His eyes, I'd think so too. But I'm standing too close to the brushstrokes, and that crimson rose petal looks like a drop of blood to me.

TRUTH BE TOLD: STORIES

The colleagues of the Alter Rebbe, Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi, once had a discussion about how each of them would run the world if he were G-d, each offering their opinions on how things could be improved upon. When they were done, the Alter Rebbe said his piece. "If I were G-d, I'd do things just the same as He does them."

This same Alter Rebbe wrote the primary resource for Chassidic philosophy, the Tanya, and in it enshrines service in truth as the Jewish way. The present Rebbe writes that if he would have left that out of the Tanya, he would have had another 50,000 followers. But truth is not for sale.

I've checked my toolkit for a nice big yardstick and I haven't yet found one big enough to measure G-d's beauty, nor his truth for that matter. But is it He that must pass my tests?

My mother, may she live and be well, rarely speaks of her war experiences, so when, as a child, she chose to share with me a lesson from the Lodz ghetto, it made a lasting impression. What got her going was me telling her exactly what I would do if there were a fire at that moment. She said, "Don't be silly. You don't know what you would do in a big test like that."



"When I was in ghetto," she continued, "Two men were arrested by the Nazis for the 'crime' of possessing a radio. Before they were hauled off for interrogation as to who else could be implicated, the younger of the two, a strong, handsome young man said, 'Let them do what they will, they'll never get any information out of me!' The elder detainee said nothing. He was old and wizened, and looked like you could blow him over."

"That very afternoon, the burly youth returned having told everything he knew about everyone with a radio, just under the threat of torture. The elderly Jew returned only three days later, his fingernails pulled off and his eyes gouged out."

"So," concluded my mom, "Don't say you know what you will do under a test, because you just don't know."

Who is more beautiful? The strong, handsome youth who spoke? Or the, blinded and maimed old man who didn't?

Life is not simple.

But let's put it into terms that a child could understand. The teacher turns his back on the class and a bunch of kids act up, making lots of trouble. Most of the class starts giggling. Things get out of control. After his call for order falls on deaf ears, the teacher calls out, "That's it, class detention. No recess today."

"Whoa! Why? That's not fair! I didn't do it! It was him!"

Why should I get in trouble for something I didn't do? Why should I behave good? I see it just gets me into trouble."

"I'm sorry class, but I've told you many times. We are all in this together. We all have a responsibility, and if the class can't move forward, you have to make up the time."

Life is not fair, at least not to our standards of fair. But if we recognize where our knocks are coming from, we will take them with humility. If it's from G-d, it's good. Does that make it beautiful? In truth, yes. But in our eyes?

We Jews are an interesting lot. We are proud of our faith despite the bitter exiles, the terrible pogroms, the unspeakable evils of the Inquisition, the Holocaust, and the mess we are in today. Yet as soon as it touches us personally, there are questions.

One last story. I heard it at an event marking the first anniversary of passing of a wonderful young man who was killed by a train in a freak accident. He had been on his way to synagogue to help make up a quorum for communal prayer. That young man was my son's Grade 5 teacher, every kid's favorite teacher, the kindest person you'd ever care to meet. R' Yosi Jacobson spoke at the memorial and shared this story with the huge crowd gathered there.

There was a Chassidic lumber merchant over a century ago, who was famous for two things. Loads of cash and unstinting support of Torah study in his town. He funded an entire study hall of bright and dedicated Torah scholars and whenever he could, he would join with them in exploring the truth and beauty of the Torah.

One year he had a great idea.

Instead of buying one boatload of lumber, he'd buy three, so when he sold it, he'd make lots more money and be able to do so many more good deeds with the charity he could spend. He spent all his savings on this grand project, and once the three ships were laden and sailing off to their foreign markets, he happily settled back into his satisfying communal and spiritual life.

But not for long. One of the local Torah scholars got wind of the storm first. The boats had all capsized. All the lumber was lost. Their gracious benefactor was ruined, but he didn't know it yet. Who would break the terrible news? And how?

Finally one young man agreed to shoulder the painful task. He conferred with his colleagues, planned his pitch and went off to see the lumber merchant at his home. "I have a question on a difficult piece of Talmud. Can you help me?"

"Me? Help you? I doubt if I can solve something you don't know, but since you're here, let's give it a try. You know I'd help you any way I can."

"Well, it says over here that we are obliged to bless G-d for the bad, exactly as we bless him for good? How is that possible?"

"That's your question?" asked the merchant. "Well, I'm no expert in Talmud but I think I can help you on this one. You see everything comes from G-d, so when bad things happen, they aren't really bad. They just seem bad to us because we have a very limited point of view. G-d has a big plan for everything, so knowing this we can feel secure and even happy that this apparent bad is deep down positive, and G-d is really doing us a favor by treating us in this way. Do you get it?"

"Well, yes and no. I

understand and believe that it's all for the best and all, but my difficulty is being just as happy about bad news as good. I mean, picture this. Say you married off a child and you were at the wedding. Would you dance from joy?"

"Of course I would! Who wouldn't?"

"And if all your boats loaded with lumber were to capsize en route to market leaving you penniless, crushed in debt, and without means to climb out of it, would you dance from joy?"

"Uh, dance from joy? Well, uh. I see what you're getting at. But if you think about it, the One Above knows what's best for us and he has our good at heart. In fact when things turn out bad in our eyes it's actually a sign that the goodness within is much greater than a revealed good. It's all explained in Chassidus."

"Yes but would you dance?"

"If all my ships suddenly capsized leaving me flat broke and in debt up to my eyeballs? Well, yeah. Yeah. I wouldn't normally think about it in those terms, but now that I am, yes I guess I would dance."

"Just as much as at the wedding of your own child?"

"Yes! Yes! Just as much, and maybe even more!"

"Well, start dancing. There really was a storm at sea. A messenger came to the study hall and told us. I verified the story myself and it's true. All your lumber has been lost."

The merchant fainted on the spot. When he came to, he said, "You know. At this moment, I'm having trouble with that Talmudic passage myself!"

To read previous installments and other Torah and Science related articles, or to comment, or to contact the author, visit www.faithandscience.com.

WHAT DO THE SHLUCHIM COUNT?

An exact count of rooms and doorways to know how many mezuzos are needed * A count of how many stores there are – to know how many menorahs to get. * How many soldiers are on base – for doughnuts. * How many plazas are there – for public menorahs. * How many lamp poles are there – for Lag B’Omer publicity posters, as well as yes, how much money is in the bank to pay for all these activities. * A shliach is always counting. * Presented for the time of year when we Count the Omer.

By Rabbi Yaakov Shmuelewitz, Shliach, Beit Shaan

“**T**he Chassidim of the Alter Rebbe would always count,” writes the Rebbe in the HaYom Yom. The Rebbe quotes the Rebbe Rashab who said at a farbrengen during S’firas HaOmer, “We need to count the hours and then the days will be counted. This is the idea of avoda.”

In the avoda of shlichus too, a shliach must be counting all the time. What do shluchim count? I imagine that the readers of this column are sure I’m talking about money, but that’s not what I mean. I’m talking about things that are more important.

This week we will focus on some of this counting and see what and how the shluchim count.

COUNTING PAMPHLETS

Friday is approaching. Among the tasks a shliach living

somewhere up north in a little town has to do is to distribute Shabbos pamphlets in all the shuls. The person in shul who takes these pamphlets for granted has no idea how much planning, thought and work are expended by the shliach. From my experience, I can tell you that it takes dedication, consistency and lots of counting.

First, you need to know how many shuls there are, how many people attend shul on Friday night, and how many pages of each type the Chabad house has to distribute.

In Beit Shaan there are about seventy shuls and at the Chabad house we get 750 *Sichat HaShavua*, the same number of *Geula M’anyein v’Achshavi*, 50 *D’var Malchus*, 1000 fliers for the Seudas Moshiach, some Yechi HaMelech, booklets, Hiskashrus, brochures in Russian, and fliers for the Kinus Ha’Torah. Go and

figure how many pages of each type has to be put in each bundle for every shul. I can’t go into detail, because there are different kinds of shuls in size and types of attendees, and the shliach finds himself counting and recounting, figuring, and putting on rubber bands and then going out for a long haul every Friday afternoon to distribute the Rebbe’s teachings to thousands of people.

COUNTING PEOPLE, ROOMS, STORES, SOLDIERS...

Another thing that needs to be counted occasionally is people. You plan an event, a farbrengen, a public seder or gathering. You need to know how many people are coming. Over the years, a shliach learns how to estimate how many guests will come and will order (count) chairs, tables, refreshments, s’farim, etc.



You also need to count to see whether you have enough people for a minyan for mincha. Sometimes you count how many people are standing outside waiting for food items to be given out, and based on the number of people, you divide the food you have so it will be enough for all.

Sometimes the shliach makes an exact count of rooms and doorways to know how many mezuzos he needs. How many stores are there – to know how many menorahs to get. How many soldiers are on base – for doughnuts. How many plazas are there – for public menorahs. How many lamp poles are there – for Lag B'Omer publicity posters, as well as yes, how much money is in the bank to pay for all these activities.

There is also the counting that is done afterward. Recently, with the conclusion of Pesach, we counted about 2000 children who participated in the matza baking activity. About seventy children participated in the day camp

during Pesach vacation. About three hundred children bought a letter in the Seifer Torah of Yaldei Yisroel. About eight hundred families received shmura matza. About sixty people attended the public seder. There were nine Seudos Moshiach in shuls.

If this is the way it is in little Beit Shaan, imagine what it's like elsewhere! You just have to count ...

COUNTING BULLETS

All this is by way of introduction to the following special stories. Most of them I heard at a meeting of shluchim on Chol HaMoed. The symposium was attended by distinguished rabbanim and shluchim including Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok Chitrik of Tzfas, Rabbi Moshe Oirechman of Kiryat Yam, Rabbi Yisroel Butman of Nahariya, and Rabbi Yigal Kaspi of Maalot. Rabbi Aharon Dov Halperin emceed the event and he asked each shliach to share a story.

This was Rabbi Butman's story:

It was our first year on shlichus in Nahariya. One day, I was in Kfar Chabad when I was told that my wife had called from Nahariya and she had to speak to me urgently. A couple had come to my house to speak to the rabbi. I told her when I would be leaving Kfar Chabad, and when I got home, three people were waiting for me – a couple in their fifties and their daughter who was about 20. The parents said that their daughter met a Druze officer in the army and she planned on marrying him. The mother made it clear that this was out of the question. "Although we are not religious, marrying a non-Jew is a terrible thing!"

To underscore how serious she was, the mother took out a revolver and said, "You see this? There are two bullets in here. One for me and one for my daughter. If she insists on marrying him, there is no reason for me or her to live."

Of course, I tried to talk to the daughter but she wasn't that receptive. At a certain point I asked her to talk to me privately, without her parents, without pressure, without the gun. She came and we spoke, but were unsuccessful. When the conversation came to an end, I didn't know what to do. I decided to go with the Rebbe's ko'ach and the segula of mivtzaim. I asked her, "At least commit to one little thing. Light one candle in honor of every Shabbos and holiday." She agreed.

The next day was Erev Sukkos. She lit a candle and did so the following Erev Shabbos and so on. A few weeks later, as I was walking down the street, I met her mother. She saw me in the distance and rushed over to me. Even before she reached me she shouted, "Rabbi Butman! What did you do to my daughter? She left the Druzel!"

Rabbi Butman concluded with, "25 years have passed since then. I know the girl and she is not quite a shomeres Shabbos and I don't know if she eats kosher, but one thing is for sure. Every Friday she lights Shabbos candles and she is married to a Jew. All this is thanks to one candle of the Rebbe's Mivtza Neshek.

COUNTING THE HOURS

Rabbi Chitrik, dean of the Chabad seminary in Tzfas, thrilled me and the other listeners with another drama that came to a happy conclusion, thanks to the Rebbe:

About 15 years ago, late at night, a very nervous madricha from the seminary told me that eleven girls had asked permission to go on a hike that afternoon and it was almost midnight and they still had not returned.

Very worried, I called the police and asked them to conduct a search, and in the meantime I went out myself to look for them. I followed the length of their intended hike, which took three quarters of an hour, but saw no sign of the lost girls. I drove around again but saw no sign of them and it was two in the morning!

I sat in my car and began to cry. These were American girls and I was responsible for them. Where were they? How were they doing?

I remembered a story about the mashpia, R' Mendel Futerfas, that when he was imprisoned in Russia he addressed the Rebbe in his mind and asked for a bracha for his birthday. Years later, he found out that the Rebbe had replied and had sent him a letter on that day. I decided to picture yechidus with the Rebbe and to ask for a bracha that the girls return safe and sound.

I stopped the car in the middle of the isolated path, somewhere between Tzfas and Miron, and composed the note that I would give the Rebbe, in my mind. I stood in line for yechidus, in my thoughts. The line moved and I was in *Gan Eden HaTachton*. Another two minutes (a little faster than reality) and I was standing in the Rebbe's room and giving him the note. The Rebbe took it and began reading it, line by line, something I was familiar with from the previous times I had had yechidus.

The Rebbe shook his head from side to side and read the entire note carefully. Sometimes he made a mark with his pencil. Then he finished reading and looked up at me and began responding. All this took a few minutes as I was transported away from the bitter reality and

overwhelmed by my encounter with the Rebbe. The moment the Rebbe looked at me, the phone in my car rang. I picked it up anxiously and it was the police who said, "We found the girls and they are all fine. They are on their way back to the seminary."

THE FIFTH SON AND THE FIFTH WHEEL

The next story was told in the name of Rabbi Noam Dekel, shliach in Yokneam:

About two years ago, I gave a shiur in the Chabad house about the Four Sons in the Hagada. I stressed the Rebbe's chiddush about the fifth son who doesn't even show up and who also needs to be reached. After the shiur one of the people, a mechanic, came over to me and warmly thanked me. He said, "I work with cars. That's my whole world. When you spoke about the fifth son it immediately brought to mind the fifth wheel (the spare tire), which is stashed away and usually not used. But the moment you have a flat, the entire car can't move and only the fifth wheel can get you out of there. The same is true for the fifth son. He seems superfluous, but sometimes, he is the one who can come to the rescue."

I listened to this and found it interesting. I filed it away.

Two years went by. A few days before Pesach (5770), a young man in Yokneam volunteered to work for a few hours in our food pantry. At some point I suggested that he take a break and eat something.

"I can't eat," he said. "I have problems with my teeth. I went to a dentist and he said I need treatment that costs 17,000 shekels. Since we are a large family and my parents don't

work, I can't afford it. In the meantime, I can't chew. For two weeks now, I've been eating only cooked cereal and yogurt."

I began to think about how to help him and I remembered someone in Yokneam, a dentist, whom I met at an event and he expressed his admiration for the Rebbe and Chabad. I called him, but didn't want to open with the urgent need for help. I spoke about Pesach and asked him where he would be for Yom Tov, etc. He told me he was going to the Caribbean and he hadn't inquired about a seder. He's the fifth son, I thought to myself, who doesn't plan on attending a seder. And then I thought of the mechanic's idea that the fifth son can come to the rescue. I told him about the fellow and his situation. The dentist immediately offered to see what he could do for him.

Although he is a successful dentist with appointments made well in advance, he accepted the young man for a series of dental treatments. He merely warned me on the phone that I shouldn't discuss money with him at all since as far as he was concerned, it was a non-issue. "It's all on me," said this fifth son.

COUNTING GENERATIONS AND SAVING NESHAMOS

Rabbi Yigal Kaspi of Maalot related:

Every year we hold a public seder for dozens of families. Two years ago, one of the participants called me and said she had an adopted daughter who was suffering from anorexia. She was in a wheelchair and had a nurse, and could she come to the seder. Of course I agreed, and even set up a ramp for the wheelchair.

Then two days before Pesach, the mother called and said that the nurse said she could not be



To underscore how serious she was, the mother took out a revolver and said, "You see this? There are two bullets in here. One for me and one for my daughter. If she insists on marrying him, there is no reason for me or her to live."

with them for the first day of Yom Tov. I tried finding a substitute nurse in Yerushalayim, Chaifa and other places, and finally found one. She arrived at the family's home, and walked with the girl and her family to the hall where the seder was being held.

The moment they opened the door, the nurse saw they were about to enter a shul. She suddenly stopped and said she would not enter. "It is two generations already that we converted to Christianity, and I refuse to enter a shul."

I went over to her and asked what she meant by this. She explained that her mother was married to a Christian and her grandmother was married to a Christian. I told her that since her mother and grandmother were Jewish, she was 100% Jewish herself. She seemed shocked by this revelation, but slowly came to terms with it and finally agreed to walk in and attend the "ceremony."

I saw that I had a particular shlichus here, in addition to the general shlichus of running a public seder, and I focused all my explanations on the importance of the Jewish people and the great privilege of eating a piece of matza on this night, and to continue eating "the bread of faith" and "the bread of healing" throughout the seven days of Pesach. She listened and when the time came, she ate matza. I was thrilled about this achievement and was unaware of

a surprise yet in store for me.

Everybody went home and we, the Kaspi family, walked home, tired but pleased by how the evening had gone. At five in the morning, we heard loud banging at the door. At first I thought I was dreaming, but soon realized the knocking was for real. I went to the door and it was the Jewish nurse standing there, holding a 100-shekel bill. "I came to buy matza," she said. "All night I waited for the light of day so I could buy matza that you explained was important to eat on this holiday."

To conclude with a story from Beit Shaan.

With the start of the Nissan break, the boys came back from yeshiva. One of them got busy with the matza bakery for kids and the camp, another one – at his own initiative – made dozens of house calls to sign up as many children as possible for a letter in the Seifer Torah of Tzivos Hashem. He was very successful and signed up hundreds of children, but what made me especially happy and moved was the fact that when he returned every evening he said, "Abba, you don't know how many people in town know you and how much they love and admire you. In nearly every house I entered, when I introduced myself as the son of the shliach, they immediately welcomed me warmly and listened to whatever I told them."

ARE YOU ON AUTOPILOT?

By Rabbi Heschel Greenberg

Founder and Director of the Jewish Discovery Center of Buffalo, NY



WHAT'S YOUR PEDIGREE?

In the beginning of this week's parsha, BaMidbar—which is also the beginning of the fourth book of the Torah—the Torah records G-d's commandment to Moses to count the Jewish people:

The Midrash Tanchuma comments on the with a Verse of Psalms: "He (G-d) has not done so for other nations, and they do not know His ordinances."

These enigmatic words of the Midrash beg for an explanation. The verse from Psalms that the Midrash cites refers to the commandments of the Torah: they were given exclusively to the Jewish nation and not to the other nations. What connection does that have with the counting of the Jewish nation?

To understand the message of the Midrash we must cite another Midrashic comment that refers to the complaint some of the nations had to G-d for having given the Torah exclusively to the Jewish people:

"When Israel received the Torah, the nations of the world were jealous, and they said, 'Why were these people more deserving than those?' G-d immediately suppressed their complaints

and said to them: 'Bring your genealogical documents as the Children of Israel did.'»

In other words, the Midrash informs us that our eligibility to receive the Torah is based on our ability to trace our ancestry back to the Patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Now the original statement of the Midrash that links the giving of the Torah to the counting of the Jewish people is understood. By counting the Jewish people, which involved tracing their ancestry back to the Patriarchs, G-d had a sound response to the complaint of the nations. G-d chose to give the Torah to the Jewish people exclusively because they have such an illustrious genealogy.

OUR CHILDREN OR OUR PARENTS?

At first glance though, this Midrashic insight seems to contradict another one that asserts that G-d would not have given the Torah on the grounds that they had such illustrious ancestors. The Midrash records G-d's demand of the Jewish people to produce guarantors as a prerequisite for them to receive the Torah. G-d declined to accept

their proposal that their prophets and forefathers would be the guarantors. Only when they offered their children did G-d consent to give them the Torah.

From this it appears that having a good pedigree does not suffice. How do we reconcile this with the earlier Midrashic comment that G-d focused on their genealogy as the reason He chose to give the Torah to the Jewish people?

One can resolve this apparent contradiction by drawing a distinction between the way *we* needed to validate our eligibility to receive the Torah and the way *G-d* had to defend His selection of the Jewish people to the other nations.

If G-d would have told the other nations that the Jewish people were chosen because of their promise to educate their children, they too would have made that promise. The only argument they could not refute was that they did not have a good track record in transmitting values to their children. The nations could not point to any ancestors that succeeded in perpetuating the seven commandments that were given to Noah after the flood. How then could they be trusted to transmit the Torah to their children and grandchildren?

INTERNALIZING TORAH

When G-d approached

“The nations could not point to any ancestors that succeeded in perpetuating the seven commandments that were given to Noah after the flood. How then could they be trusted to transmit the Torah to their children and grandchildren?”

the Jewish people He was not content with their pointing to their ancestors as guarantors. To be sure, having that noble and virtuous ancestry greatly enhanced the probability that they would continue in their path. But that would not suffice. If a good lineage were enough, the survival of Judaism would be an automatic process. Jews would just glide effortlessly down the road to perfection.

Rather, G-d wants our input and toil into the process and not just that we rely on the inherited power and energy we inherited from earlier generations. Neither does G-d want us to rely on our prophets and great leaders. G-d's wants every individual to be part of the process of receiving and internalizing the Torah.

That's where the kids come in. Hashem needed the guarantee that the parents will invest a concerted effort to raise their children in the path of Torah.

This also explains the Chassidic greeting for the upcoming Festival of Shavuot, the anniversary of the giving of the Torah at Sinai: "May you receive the Torah with joy and inwardness." The term "inwardness" implies that the Torah cannot be a superficial matter that is passed down as a cultural tradition.

Torah must be internalized by each individual as if he or she were the only person to have ever received the Torah. When we receive the Torah with true joy it is the indication that for us Torah is alive and not just a relic of the past.

There is a well-known story of a chassid who asked his Rebbe—the Tzemach Tzedek, the third Rebbe of Chabad—for a blessing that his child be raised in a good and conducive atmosphere so that he would "automatically"

become a G-d fearing Jew. The Rebbe was clearly not happy with that request. His sharp response to this chassid was that his grandfather, the Alter Rebbe (the founder of the Chabad movement), toiled for so many years to remove the term "automatic" from the lexicon of Chassidism.

FROM SINAI TO MOSHIACH

The giving of the Torah at Sinai marked the beginning of a journey that culminates with the coming of Moshiach. The revelation at Mount Sinai brought the Divine presence into this world, but that revelation was then concealed, and it is up to us to devote our lives to bringing the Divine back into the physical world we inhabit.

This is why we were given the Mitzvot. They are physical actions ordained by G-d to make even the physical world a "dwelling place" for G-d. The final Redemption will occur when this process is completed and the world will permanently reflect its Divine source. It is at that time when the world will be in total harmony with the Divine.

Although we stand today at the end of the journey, on the very threshold of the final Redemption through Moshiach, it might occur to us that it is not so crucial to invest our own sweat and toil to usher in the Messianic Age. We may argue that we have thousands of years of tradition behind us. We have the cumulative benefits of thousands of years of self-sacrificing efforts of our ancestors. We might therefore erroneously conclude that it suffices for us to be passive. Minimal efforts could be enough. Why not rest on our laurels and let the momentum of the past—the spiritual tsunamis

of the past—push us over the top into the Messianic Age?

To dispel this "argument" the Rebbe—twenty years ago in a historic talk given on the 28th day of Nissan, 5751—told us that he has done all that he was capable of doing to bring the Redemption. Now, he declared, he was passing it on to us. "Do all you can," the Rebbe stated, "to bring the Redemption." The Rebbe exhorted us to exercise our stubbornness and stiff-necked personalities as Jews to bring about the Redemption. To be sure, we are blessed with all of the resources bequeathed to us by our forebears and prophets. We have all of the blessings of the Rebbe and other great leaders all the way back to the Patriarchs and Matriarchs.

G-d can therefore certainly turn to the other nations and say to them, paraphrasing the abovementioned Midrashic comment about the giving of the Torah:

"Look at their pedigree. Look at what they have accomplished over the last three thousand years plus. They have accepted the responsibility of accepting the Torah and through the thick and thin of exile they have persevered. They are the most deserving people to be redeemed and once and for all they should be free of all the hatred and jealousy directed towards them!"

On the other hand, what *we* have to say to G-d is, "We make our commitment to you that we will not rely on the past or solely on the efforts of our leaders. We will instill our faith in You, in your Torah, and in Moshiach into the hearts and minds of our children. They will see that we are not passive in our dedication to making Your plan for the world come to fruition!"

MOSHIACH NOW: MAKING IT REAL

Part 7 – Mivtza Kashrus

Rabbi Gershon Avtzon, Dean of the Lubavitcher Yeshiva in Cincinnati

Dear Reader sh'yichyeh:

This week's topic is the Mivtza of Kashrus. The source of this Mitzva in the Torah is found in Parshas Shmini (Leviticus, Chapter 11). The Mitzvah of Kashrus includes, but is not limited to, eating only Kosher products and preparing all food in a Kosher way, i.e. meat must be slaughtered and salted according to Halacha, and preparing food in Kosher utensils. (For details on the observance of kashrus, visit www.gokosher.org.)

It is interesting to point out that the Chassidic masters would always tell their disciples, «Just because it is Kosher, does not mean that you must eat it!» One must not indulge in physical, worldly temptations, but rather one ought to eat with the intention of having energy to serve Hashem.

The Rebbe initiated «Mivtza Kashrus» on 16 Tammuz 1975. The Rebbe explained (Likkutei Sichos Vol. 13 pg. 260) that in addition to fulfilling a Mitzva, a Jew who keeps a Kosher diet gains an extra sensitivity towards spirituality. The same way that a person who eats healthy food will live and think healthfully, the same is true for a Jew in regard to keeping Kosher.

The Kosher signs of a mammal are split hooves and the chewing of its cud. The Rebbe explains (Likkutei Sichos Vol.

1 pg. 230) that in addition to these being the signs of a Kosher animal, they are lessons for us in how we should live kosher lives. We must plan and review all our actions before we do them, which is similar to the repetitive chewing of cud. Secondly, we must not be over-involved in our physical pursuits, symbolized by our «hooves». This is demonstrated by the hooves, which walk on the earth, but are split.

The segulos of the Mitzvah of keeping kosher are clear to us. Here are three of them.

Firstly, kashrus reveals that Hashem loves us as a nation, as Hashem says (D'varim 14:2), «For you are a holy people to the L-rd, your G-d, and the L-rd has chosen you to be a treasured people for Him, out of all the nations that are upon the earth.»

This is explained in Rashi on a verse in Parshas Shmini. Rashi tells a parable: To what may this thing be compared? To a physician who went to visit two patients. He saw that one of them was terminally ill and said to the members of his household: «Give him whatever he asks for.» He saw that the other patient was destined to live, and said to his family, «He may eat such-and-such food, but he may not eat such-and-such food.» The family members said to the physician in surprise: «What is this? To one patient you say: «He may eat

any food he asks for,» and to the other you said: «You may not eat such-and-such!» The physician explained to them, «To the one destined to live I instructed him what he may and may not eat. But regarding the one destined to die, I told his family to give him whatever he asks for, for he will not live in any case.» The explanation of the parable is as follows. This is parallel to the words of Hashem, who allowed idol-worshippers to eat swarming and creeping things, but as for the Jewish nation, who are destined to live an life eternal, He said to them: «You shall be holy for I am holy; do not make your souls abhorrent.» Thus kashrus reveals how we are beloved.

A second segula for the fulfillment of Mitzvas Kashrus is that it makes a Jew refined and more sensitive to Hashem and to spirituality in general.

The Abarbanel writes that since the Torah uses the term *tamei* (spiritual impurity) in its description of eating non-kosher foods, consuming these foods causes spiritual defilement to one's soul. Kabbalistically, this concept can be explained by the Arizal's principle that every physical object owes its existence to holy sparks (*nitzotzos ha'kedoshos*) that are buried within it.

When a man eats, his body extracts the vitamins and minerals in the food. However, it is not



the nutrients that keep him alive, because if a person's soul would leave him, he would be no more animated than rocks or sand, which also contain nutrients. The human soul extracts the holy sparks from the food, and it is these sparks that maintain life by nourishing the soul. Non-kosher foods contain impure sparks that defile the soul when the body consumes those foods.

The effects of this defilement are clearly stated by *Chazal* and the Torah commentaries. When the Torah writes that a person who eats non-kosher foods will bring spiritual impurity upon himself, it states "*ve'nitmaiseim*." However, since this word is missing an *alef*, *Chazal* say that it can also be read "*ve'nitamtem*," literally, to cause an obstruction. *Chazal* explain that this obstruction refers to a spiritual obstruction of the heart (*timtum ha'lev*), which hinders a person from comprehending the wisdom of the Torah (*Masechta Yoma* 39a, *Rashi* ad. loc.).

Additionally, the *Mesilas Yesharim* writes that eating non-kosher foods spiritually defiles a person's soul more than any other *aveira* because these foods become part of his own flesh (ch. 11).

A third segula is that kosher food leads a person to T'shuva, since eating kosher food brings holiness to a person, giving him the desire to come closer to Hashem (*Rambam*, end of *Hilchos Maachalos Asuros*; *Or HaChayim*, *VaYikra* 18:2).

Tosafos writes that the Roman emperor Antoninus, who studied Torah secretly with Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi, eventually converted to Judaism because he was nursed by Rabbi's mother when he was an infant (*Masechta Avoda Zara*, 10b, s.v. *Amar*; cf *Bedikas Mazon*



We must plan and review all our actions before we do them, which is similar to the repetitive chewing of cud.

K'halacha by Rav Moshe Vaye, vol. I pg. 32 fn. #3 for similar examples).

We are witnessing in recent times an unprecedented number of *baalei t'shuva*. Since there is such an abundance of kosher food available in many supermarkets, this phenomenon could be attributed to the spiritual influence of kosher food that these people probably ate before becoming religious. The holiness acquired from this food paved the way for the search for their roots. (Of course it is also true that the *baalei t'shuva* drive up the demand for kosher food.)

The following is a list of details regarding the Mivtza of kashrus. The main goal of this campaign is to make people aware of the concept of Kosher. For example, to accomplish this, many Shluchim arrange "Kosher-week" tables or booths in their local supermarket. On a more advanced level, this mivtza involves encouraging Jewish people to keep a Kosher Kitchen. And then, on an even subtler level, kashrus does not only include proper food, but also includes exposure of only Jewish, "Kosher" content to one's children. The Rebbe encouraged that little children should not wear garments or be exposed to pictures that have non-kosher animals on them.

From a Yiddishe perspective, it follows that the same way we must be careful with the food that enters our mouths, we must be careful with words that leave our mouth. Here is a telling story that beautifully illustrates this point:

The "Yehudi HaKadosh" once told his Chassid, Reb Simcha Bunim of P'shischa, to set out for a trip. Although the Rebbe didn't tell him where to go, Reb Simcha Bunim was sure that there was a reason behind the strange request. After hours of traveling with fellow Chassidim, Reb Simcha Bunim stopped the wagon at an inn to dine with the group.

They ordered a dairy meal, for they were concerned of the Kashrut of the unknown owner. "Sorry, but all I offer is meat meals." The Chassidim asked a million and one questions about the standard of Kashrut of the meat. Suddenly, a voice came from a man behind the stove: "Chassidim, chassidim, why do you ask so many questions? Why are you so careful what goes *into* your mouths? You ask every detail to know whether or not it's permitted to eat the food. Yet, when it comes to the words that come *out* of your mouths, do you stop to *think* if it's permitted?" Reb Simcha Bunim overheard the whole incident and realized the purpose of the Rebbe in sending them on the mysterious journey. He gathered up the Chassidim and returned to the "Yehudi HaKadosh" with a very valuable lesson indeed.

The mitzvah of kashrus also contains an element of *Moshiach* in it. *Chazal* (*Midrash VaYikra* 13:3) teach: "A person who is careful not to eat non-kosher food will merit to participate in the great banquet that will be held in the time of *Moshiach*. There, he will enjoy eating from

the *Leviasan* fish and the *Shor HaBar* (wild ox). “

The Midrash also tells us that «In the times of Moshiach, Hashem will announce that all those who kept Kosher should come and receive their due reward.» (Midrash, Parshas Shmini).

In addition to the above rewards that will surely come to us when Moshiach arrives for having kept this mitzvah, there is a deeper connection. The goal of creation, which will be revealed in the time of Moshiach, is that «Hashem wanted a dwelling place in this physical world». Hashem desires that the physical world should be in-tune with and express spirituality. It is well known that regarding the era of Moshiach, the Torah says (Isaiah 40:5) «And the *flesh* will see that the word of Hashem is spoken”. This is accomplished when we make our physical bodies vessels for spirituality. As “we are what we eat”, by keeping Hashem’s Kosher laws our entire bodies, which receive nourishment and grow from the food we eat, become spiritual. This prepares us for the time of Moshiach.

Rabbi Avtzon’s audio classes on Moshiach and Geula can be accessed at www.ylcrecording.com

New
at


SHABBOS TAKEOUT!



25 Assorted Salads



PLUS

- Cholent*
- Kugels
- Gefilte Fish
- Moroccan Fish
- Soups
- Beef & Chicken
- Sushi Platters
- and more!

*also available Thursday!

Curbside Delivery! Fresh & Delicious! Great Prices!

FRIDAY HOURS 8:00am–1 hour before Shabbos

FROM

\$22⁹⁵

PER PERSON*

*minimum 30 people

Sheva Brochos at the JCM



To place an order, or for more information, call **718.907.8877**
 792 Eastern Parkway | Brooklyn, New York 11213 | mendys@jcm.museum

Make a “Mivtzah Kashrus” in your own computer!

Introducing JNET-The world wide web without the world wide worry™

While The Internet can be a helpful tool for business, education and personal use it can also be a potentially dangerous one.

That's why J Net was created.

Using exclusive multi-tiered intelligent filtration, the J Net portal is probably the most effective consumer resource for eliminating material not conducive to our needs.

More than virtually foolproof, J .NET is also easy – both to install and use. Plus its available in both dialup and high speed DSL and backed by highly trained customer service

experts that will solve your problems fast.

Most important, you can now get the JNET Advantage for only a bit more than non-filtered on line providers.

If you're ready for the world wide web without the world wide worry, you're ready for JNet.

✓ DIAL UP ✓ DSL ✓ Unlimited Access ✓ 24 Tech Support
 ✓ 4 Profiles per Account ✓ Web Mail

Call us toll free at 1-866-866-JNET (5638)
 (mention code “770” for special ANASH Rate)

