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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.

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AS FAR AS HE IS CONCERNED, THE LEADER OF THE GENERATION IS ALIVE

To address this argument directly: It is clear that “*l’alter l’geula*” literally means “now”! * This message is perceived most prominently among those who do not merely know that “just as his progeny is alive, so is he alive,” they actually feel that the leader of the generation is living among them – be it a feeling that was inspired through a dream, success in business, or the spontaneous thought of doing *t’shuva*, repentance.

Translated by Boruch Merkur

The proclamation the Rebbe Rayatz made in the month of Tammuz is well known: “*L’alter l’geula!* Immediately to redemption!”

“*L’alter*” is meant to be understood in the simple sense: Immediately, Moshiach now! Literally now!

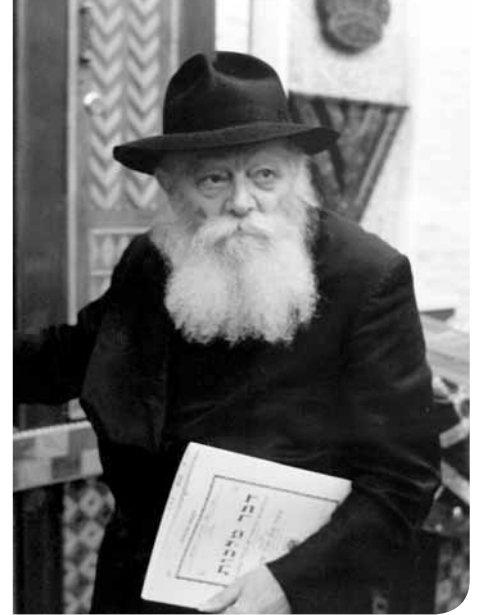
STATED IN ENGLISH: THE ADVANTAGE OF LIGHT FROM DARKNESS

I intentionally did not express this in *Lashon HaKodesh*, the Holy Tongue, so that it would not be interpreted that this call is presently only appropriately expressed in *Lashon HaKodesh* but not the national language [thus limiting the message’s reach to a selective demographic]. Indeed,

there is an advantage of light that emerges specifically from darkness. That is to say that the cry “Moshiach now!” in the local tongue reveals the especial quality of light [i.e., of G-dliness; meaning that G-dliness is most revealed when it emerges from the darkness of the non-holy realm, in this instance, a common tongue, a non-holy language].

A DEBATE WITH THE ‘OLD FOOL’: A WASTE OF TIME

Of course, the Clever One [the Evil Inclination] comes and argues: Just as the proclamation of the leader of the generation, “immediately to the redemption” was not immediately fulfilled (for various, extraordinary reasons) – and since then 42, 43, and 44



years have since passed – so it may not be immediately fulfilled on this occasion (G-d forbid)!

However, it is clearly a waste of time to debate with the “old fool” [another name for the Evil Inclination] being that he is “old” [i.e., experienced or wise, and thus a formidable opponent in a debate] and also a “fool” [who is not interested in pursuing the truth] ... Likewise it is a fruitless endeavor to argue with the spokesperson of the Evil Inclination, or worse, one who has been transformed into a channel for the “old fool.” It is even more pointless to debate with one who takes pleasure in asking these type of questions – may G-d have mercy upon us – taking pleasure in introducing doubt into the meaning of “*l’alter*” to redemption, suggesting that it doesn’t really mean “now,” and the like. Such a doubt is tantamount to destroying a world, “the miniature world – this refers to man.”

To address this argument directly: It is clear that “*l’alter l’geula*” literally means “now”!

Since the leader of our generation instructed to publicize this proclamation and publish it in the journal of Agudas

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THE FATHER OF CHASSIDIM

There are no words to accurately describe what a Rebbe is. The Sh'china speaks from his throat; tzaddikim are likened to their Creator; if one merits to bond with the Rebbe, to what is the bond? We don't connect to the Rebbe's scholarship or to his genius or to his tzidkus (righteousness) or to his ruach ha'kodesh, but to his Atzmus. * A Chassidishe farbrengen with Rabbi Leibel Groner, in honor of 12-13 Tammuz.



OUR PERSONAL LIBERATION

The Rebbe often quoted Rabbi Levi Yitzchok of Berdichev in his explanation of why the Shabbos before Tisha B'Av is called Shabbos Chazon. The reason is that on this special Shabbos, Hashem shows every person a vision of the third Beis HaMikdash. R' Levi Yitzchok gives a parable of a father who sewed an expensive garment for his son, but the son misbehaved and tore the garment. The father had another garment sewn for his son, and this too was torn. The third time, he had an even nicer garment sewn to motivate the son

to behave properly, but he did not give it to his son. Occasionally he would show it to him and say, "This is what you will get when you behave properly."

R' Levi Yitzchok explains that we are the children of Hashem. Hashem built the first and second Battei HaMikdash for us and destroyed them because of our sins. The third Mikdash is already built in the Heavens and is waiting to descend, but it hasn't been given to us yet in a physical form. Hashem shows it to us in a vision once a year, so we will be motivated to behave as we should.

The Rebbe asks: can anyone

say that he saw that vision of the Beis HaMikdash? Says the Rebbe, although no one (except for singular individuals) has seen the Mikdash on Shabbos Chazon, the part of the neshama that hovers above the person's physical body sees it, "his mazal sees it," and this inspires him. This inspiration also affects that part of the neshama that is within the body so it can see too.

We can explain the impact of the Chag Ha'Geula, 12-13 Tammuz 5687/1927, in the same manner.

When the Rebbe Rayatz was released, he said, "It wasn't only me whom Hashem redeemed,



who is just “referred to by the name Yisroel,” for it is not apparent by looking at him that he is a Jew, is also connected to the Geula of the Rebbe. Even if he is not aware of it, his neshama feels the Geula, and as the Alter Rebbe paskens, even when he sins he remains a “Yisroel.” Despite his behavior, he remains connected to Hashem.

The Arizal explains that the same revelation of G-dliness that took place during the very first Pesach is revealed once again, every year, at that time of year. As the Alter Rebbe states in *Igeres HaKodesh*, every year a new, higher light that never shone before descends and shines for each Jew.

Perhaps we can say likewise about the Chag Ha’Geula that it’s not simply a holiday when we commemorate what happened many decades ago, but every year on that date, the inyan of Geula is renewed. As the Rebbe said, every year it’s a new holiday, the likes of which we never had before. We are not just commemorating something historical that a previous generation experienced; it’s *our* holiday on which a new light shines.

When we sit here on Yud-Beis Tammuz, we need to know that we are celebrating a holiday the likes of which the Jewish nation has never experienced before; a holiday that pertains to *us*. When someone comes to celebrate something that has to do with him personally, his joy is much greater.

The question each of us must ask ourselves is: where are we (spiritually)? What *hashpaa* is Hashem drawing down to us that we never experienced before?

but all who hold Torah and mitzvos dear and all who are referred to by the name Yisroel.” This is puzzling, since only the Rebbe Rayatz was imprisoned, and only he was liberated on 12-13 Tammuz. So why does he say that all those who cherish Torah were redeemed?

This can be explained in two ways. Firstly, since “the Nasi is everything,” when the Nasi is imprisoned, the entire generation is imprisoned spiritually. Secondly, the evil government at the time believed that when they arrested the Rebbe, the leader of the movement to spread Torah and Judaism, this would effectively halt all religious

activities. Consequently, the release of the Rebbe is the Geula for all who cherish Torah.

Based on what is explained in Chassidus, that every miracle comes about through a revelation of G-dliness that transcends limitation, we understand that this lofty revelation happened not just for the Rebbe Rayatz, but for all who hold Torah dear. Although they did not sense this, the effect is compared to that which is described regarding Shabbos Chazon, that the neshama senses the revelation, and ultimately it is even felt by the part of the neshama within the body.

Furthermore, even someone

AUSPICIOUS DAYS

On the words in the verse, “and you shall rejoice on your holiday,” the Alter Rebbe writes at the end of the Laws of Holidays that Jewish courts would send agents to Jewish cities to ensure that the simcha was disciplined and would not become degenerate, but would not do so on Purim when the inyan of drinking until the stage of inebriation — “until he doesn’t know the different between cursed is Haman and blessed is Mordechai” — applies. Why is Purim different in this regard? It is unique among all other holidays because the celebration of Purim was instituted in galus, in hardship and suffering.

We can understand this based on what the Mittlerer Rebbe says about the Three Weeks, that these days are auspicious for connecting to Hashem, because it is during this time of the year that the Essential Love that Hashem has for His people is revealed, more so than at other times of the year.

Likewise, the miracles that were done in galus originate in very high levels. The same is true, says the Rebbe, regarding the miracle of Yud-Beis Tammuz.

At this auspicious time, we can ask for things that are beyond limitation, that are supernatural, because during this time period, the inyan of Geula shines in a way that is above limitation.

FARBRENGEN’S MUST RESULT IN HACHLATOS

One time at a farbrengen of the Rebbe Rashab, one of the participants asked the Rebbe what a Chassid is. The Rebbe Rashab replied, “A Chassid is a lamplighter.” In those days, every evening a lamplighter would walk

down the street and use his stick with fire on the tip to light the street lamps one by one. That’s what a Chassid does—he lights up another Jew.

The Chassid asked: What if I don’t see the other’s lamp?

The Rebbe said: That indicates that you are so coarse and the Evil Inclination so strong that you don’t see the good in another Jew. You need to work on yourself to remove that coarseness and then you will see the neshama of the other Jew.

That was the essence of the Rebbe Rayatz’s avoda. The Rebbe Rayatz said that he could sit in his room and learn Torah and nobody would bother him, but — he asked himself — how could he stand by when he saw a decree against Judaism and sit in his room? Says the Rebbe, the Rebbe Rayatz became a lamplighter who ignited the soul of every one of us, even though this was dangerous at the time.

What does this teach us?

One of the principles that Chassidus teaches us is that with every holiday and mitzvah, we need to ask ourselves: What does this teach us? How does this apply to my personal life? In Lubavitch they would say that a Yom Tov is not just another special date on the calendar. With every holiday a Jew needs to ask himself, what new thing did he experience? What inspiration did he gain from that holiday? What new kochos did he get? Every time the Rebbe said a sicha, even a sicha on a very deep subject, he always derived a practical lesson from the Chassidus he taught. He always asked: What does this teach us? How must we change and improve?

So too it is with the Chag Ha’Geula. To know that there is a Geula is important. To

farbreng and mark the day is also important. But what will be the morning following the farbrengen? Will we be the same as we were before the farbrengen or will we have made effective changes in our lives?

We cannot remain satisfied while being concerned only with our own spiritual status. We have to know that each of us has the responsibility and privilege to take an interest in another person, whether materially or spiritually, and we need to be a lamplighter to ignite the neshama of every person.

The Rebbe once told me a story that he heard from the Rebbe Rayatz, that from time to time his father would take a list of names of Chassidim and review each name. While going through the names, he would pause every so often at a certain name, murmur something and think for a few minutes. I wanted to know what he was doing — said the Rebbe Rayatz — but I wouldn’t ask, out of respect. I spoke in a roundabout manner, until my father understood what I wanted to ask. He told me, “From time to time I have to look to see what is going on with the Chassidim around the world. When I take a letter and read a name, I see what is happening with him. When I pause and say a few words, it’s because when I read the name I saw that he needs a certain bracha, and so I prayed that Hashem fulfill his desires in a good way.”

The Rebbe Rayatz told his Chassidim: Chassidim don’t know how great was the love my father had for them, so much so that “before they call out, I answer.”

A few years after the Rebbe began his nesius, he took all the letters that he had received over



Rabbi Leibel Groner standing next to the Rebbe during Hataras Nedarim on Erev Rosh HaShana

those years and asked that we the secretaries write down the names of each family on index cards – the father's name, the mother's name, and the names of the children – and that we alphabetize them. We bought a box in which to put the cards. Whenever we entered the Rebbe's room, the box would be next to his desk. At the time we didn't know why the Rebbe wanted this, but after he told the story about the Rebbe Rashab, we realized that the Rebbe wanted the names so he could go through them occasionally and see what was going on with each of his precious Chassidim, and if someone needed a bracha, he would pray for them even before they asked him to.

THE REBBE'S AHAVAS YISROEL

We can tell many stories about the Rebbe's love for every

“Our Rebbe is a father, mother and brother. The Rebbe is like a member of the family who takes care of every single detail.

one of us. My uncle on my wife's side, Rabbi Yehuda Chitrik a”h, who died at the age of 106, was one of the talmidim who learned in Lubavitch in Russia. Two months after Gimmel Tammuz, he came to my office and began crying like a little child. When he calmed down, he said, “I spent a number of years by the Rebbe Rashab, and I was sent on secret missions on his behalf. I lived through the entire nesius of the Rebbe Rayatz and then all the years with our Rebbe. Obviously, a Chassid cannot evaluate the difference between one Rebbe and another, but there were some things about our Rebbe that are unforgettable.”

He continued, “The Rebbe

Rashab only farbrenged three times a year with the Chassidim, on Simchas Torah, Yud-Tes Kislev, and Purim. The Rebbe Rayatz farbrenged a few more times than his father did. Our Rebbe would farbreng dozens of times every year.

“Our Rebbe is a father, mother and brother. The Rebbe is like a member of the family who takes care of every single detail.”

The following story illustrates this well. One time a woman went to the Rebbe to ask something, and before she left, the Rebbe asked her how her foot was. The woman didn't immediately know what the Rebbe meant. It turned out that several months earlier

her husband had written a letter in which he told the Rebbe that she had fallen and broken her foot, and now the Rebbe wanted to know how she was doing. She told the Rebbe she had forgotten about it already, and all was well. Well, she may have forgotten, but the Rebbe remembered it months later.

Every so often the Rebbe would ask us to call someone and inquire about his health.

From 12-13 Tammuz, we need to make a hachlata (resolution) not to suffice with our own avoda, but to concern ourselves with the welfare of others.

WHO TAKES PRECEDENCE?

There is a famous question posed with regards to the Laws of T'fillin. Since the t'fillin on the arm have to be put on before the t'fillin of the head, if someone put the t'fillin on his head first, then what should he do? Some poskim say he should proceed to put on the t'fillin on his arm, and some poskim say he should remove the t'fillin from his head, put the t'fillin on his arm, and then put the t'fillin on his head.

The Rebbe explains that the t'fillin on the arm represent the avoda that a person does in relation to himself, as it says, "and it should be for *you* as a sign on your arm." The Chazal learn from this verse that the word "*you*" implies "for you and not for others." On the other hand, the t'fillin on the head signify the avoda a person does with others, as it says, "and all the nations of the earth will see that the name of G-d is called upon you and they will fear you." This reminds a Jew to reach out to others. Thus, the poskim who maintain that he should remove the t'fillin from his head in order to put the t'fillin

on his arm first maintain that a Jew must elevate himself before he can influence others.

This was personified by Aharon HaKohen. Regarding him it says, "When you raise up the lights." Rashi explains that this should be done "until the flame goes up of its own accord." Rashi adds that there was a step the Cohen ascended in order to light the menorah. The Rebbe asks, what is Rashi adding with that second detail? The Rebbe explains that before you "light" another Jew, you must elevate yourself. You need to use the aliya within yourself, the power and knowledge that you have, in order to "light" another person and affect him.

Each of us must make positive hachlatos to do avoda on ourselves and with others. May Hashem help us fulfill what the Rebbe teaches us.

LISTENING TO THE REBBE

The following incident took place in 5711-12 (1951-2). I was a talmid in yeshiva, and I was hanging around the secretarial office when the phone rang and R' Nissan Mindel answered the phone.

At that time the Rebbe would walk into the office every so often in order to bring answers that he had written in response to letters and to take the mail that had been prepared for him. The Rebbe walked in during the middle of R' Nissan's conversation. I was standing on the side, and the Rebbe saw that R' Nissan was talking on the phone. As the Rebbe was doing whatever it was that he had to do he listened to R' Nissan talking.

The Rebbe asked him to pause a moment and asked, "What's the back and forth about – what

are you talking about?" R' Nissan said a woman was on the line.

"What does she want?" asked the Rebbe.

"She said that she sent a letter to the Rebbe about her husband who is not well, and that she asked for a bracha and advice. She received a response with a bracha, but the Rebbe added that if she did not light Shabbos candles she should start lighting them. Now she wants to know: what connection is there between Shabbos candles and her husband's health?"

R' Nissan said he had tried explaining that if the Rebbe said so, it should be done.

The Rebbe said, "Tell her that I asked why she wrote to me when I am not a doctor. The answer is, she thinks that Hashem gave me a special ability to give answers and advice and bless people, so what does she care that she doesn't understand the connection between lighting candles and her husband's health? If she lights candles, that will be a source of bracha for her husband. Of course, you should say this to her in a pleasant way."

A month later she called and said, "I was told that I don't need to understand the connection, and so the first Friday I lit candles. On Sunday, I went to the hospital, and asked the doctors how my husband was doing. They said that his condition had stabilized. The following Friday I lit candles again, and when I went to the hospital on Sunday they said there was a small improvement. The third Sunday, the doctors said he was out of danger and would recover within a short time and would be able to go home."

We need to internalize that truth that if we really believe in the Rebbe, we need to listen to

what he says, even if we “don’t understand the connection”.

In 5711 (1951), the first year of the Rebbe’s leadership, there was a Chassid, a businessman, who asked the Rebbe a question about his business. The Rebbe gave him advice. When he left the room, he remarked to his friend, “Apparently the Rebbe is still young and is not yet an expert in all things.” He did not follow the Rebbe’s advice. Two months later he lost \$10,000 (which was a large sum in those days), and then he said, “Apparently the Rebbe is quite the expert.”

We must carefully heed every word the Rebbe says.

When World War II began, the Chassidim went to the Rebbe Rayatz in Warsaw to ask him what to do. Among those Chassidim was Rabbi Mordechai Mentlick—who was later to become a Rosh Yeshiva in 770—and his wife. The Rebbe told them to travel to London. “Be there for Shabbos and review a maamer at the third Shabbos meal and after Shabbos continue on to America.”

They traveled to London, and from there they planned to continue by ship to America after Shabbos. Before Shabbos they were told that the Nazis had sent submarines to the area and since it was dangerous, they must set sail before Shabbos. They were warned that there would not be another ship leaving for the US in the near future.

R’ Mentlick said, “The Rebbe told me to review Chassidus at the third Shabbos meal in London. I will remain here.” He stayed in London and reviewed a maamer as the Rebbe instructed him to do. On Monday they heard that the ship which had left on Friday had been sunk by the Germans. The British

government decided that since many more people needed to leave, they would risk sending another ship, and that was the ship on which R’ Mentlick and his wife sailed to America.

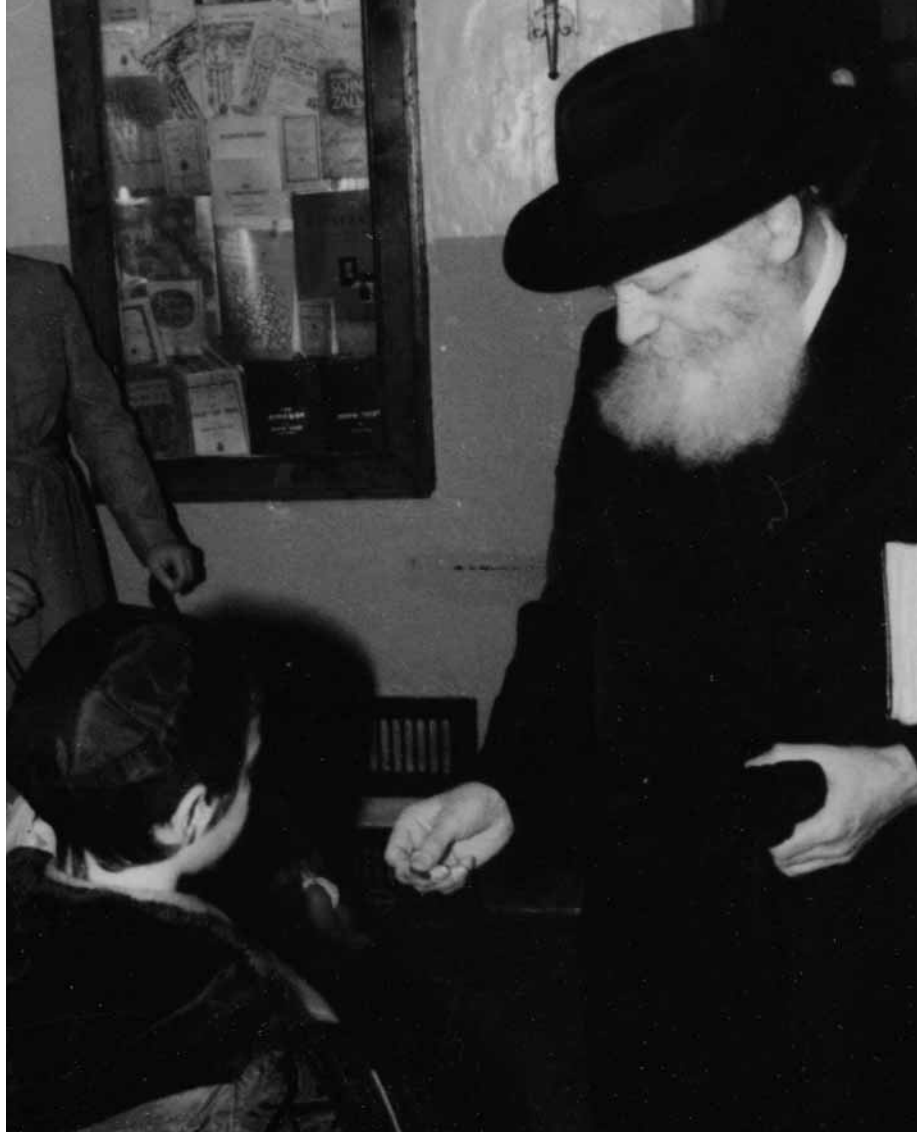
From this story we learn what obedience is. Although one might think that he is faced with the last chance to save his life, still, when a person listens to the Rebbe even if he doesn’t understand the reason why the Rebbe instructed as he did, Hashem helps. This is how we should treat anything the Rebbe says.

We often saw that the Rebbe said things that were inexplicable at the time he said them, and it was only later on that they were understood.

There was a man, not a Lubavitcher, who told me that

he had to travel to Europe on business, and he wanted to ask the Rebbe for a bracha. He had yechidus on a Sunday, and when he came out he said, “I don’t understand your Rebbe. When I went in, the Rebbe asked me where I would be this coming Shabbos. I told him that I was leaving Europe on Thursday and would arrive back here on Friday morning. With Shabbos starting at 7 in the evening, it wouldn’t be a problem.

“The Rebbe looked at me and asked me again where I would be on Shabbos and I told the Rebbe again that I was flying on Thursday and would arrive home on Friday. The Rebbe asked me a third time and I remained silent. Then the Rebbe blessed me, ‘Hashem should help that



wherever you are you should have a joyous Shabbos.' How am I to understand the words of the Rebbe?"

After Shabbos, he called and said:

"On Thursday, the plane left on schedule, but there was an emergency landing in Greenland. At twelve noon on Friday, they finally announced that the plane was fixed, and all passengers could reboard the plane. I asked the pilot when we would land, and he responded that we would arrive one hour after Shabbos came in. I said I could not fly and I remained in the airport. I walked around looking for a place to rest and finally found a room with a sign that said 'Entry Forbidden'. I was under pressure to find a private room for Shabbos so I entered. To my amazement I saw a bearded Jew sleeping. He woke up and was surprised to see me.

"What are you doing here?" he asked.

"What are *you* doing here?" I rejoined.

He said, "I am a shliach of the Lubavitcher Rebbe. There is a military base here with many Jewish soldiers, and the Rebbe wants me to make Shabbos for them. What about you?"

I told him the whole story, and the Chassid thought for a moment. Then he said that we had a technical problem, as only he had permission to enter the military base, but I did not. He told me that he would ask the commander for permission for me to enter, and this was arranged."

This businessman told me that he never had such a spiritually elevated Shabbos. He enjoyed hearing what the Chassid said to the soldiers, was impressed by how he made them feel close

to Judaism, and how he inspired them to want to know more about their responsibility as Jews.

I told the businessman, "The Rebbe's bracha helped you so that you didn't end up stranded in middle of nowhere. The Rebbe wanted you to be in a place where you would have a happy Shabbos. It didn't just "happen" that you made an emergency landing in Greenland. It could have happened in many other places.

"When the Rebbe asked you where you would be for Shabbos three times, there was a lot more to it than asking you where you thought you would be."

From this story we learn that the Rebbe doesn't just give a bracha, but orchestrates everything. The Rebbe saw that there would be a mechanical problem with the plane, but just as the plane landed in Greenland, it could have landed somewhere else. The Rebbe arranged for it to land there.

We need to be careful with every word the Rebbe says and then make sure to do what he says, and only then will the bracha be revealed.

OMNISCIENT

A certain man by the name of R' Yechezkel HaKohen Rudick, who knew the Rebbe before 1950, was a friend of my brother, Yitzchok Dovid a"h. After Yud Shevat 5711 (1951) he met my brother and said, "This Rebbe is different than the Rebbeim who preceded him. With this Rebbe you won't have days or nights; he will demand more and more of you and won't be satisfied with what you do."

Four or five years later, he called me and said, "Until now, I did not ask for yechidus, but

now I have an urgent matter to discuss with the Rebbe." I arranged an appointment for him for two weeks later at ten in the evening. When he emerged from the Rebbe's room, he took me aside and said, "If I hadn't seen it for myself, I would not have believed it."

He told me, "I am writing a Jewish history book, and I am trying to make it as accurate as possible. When I reached the part about Yoshke, since I am a religious person I thought I could not write about him. On the other hand, if I don't write about him, people won't accept the book as an authoritative historical work. I spoke to a number of people about this, and did not receive a clear answer. I decided to go to the Rebbe and perhaps he could guide me.

"When I walked into the Rebbe's room the k'dusha was palpable. I wondered how I would be able to refer to the topic in question and decided not to bring up this problem in yechidus. The Rebbe welcomed me graciously. After a quarter of an hour I got ready to leave, but the Rebbe said, 'R' Yechezkel, stay. You are hiding something from me.' Then the Rebbe surprised me when he said, 'You are having a problem writing about this era, and you are correct in your hesitancy, but you can write as a religious Jew.' Astounding! It was like the Rebbe looked inside my head and saw what I wanted to ask."

A similar story happened with Ariel Sharon. He visited the Rebbe a number of times over the years. One time, he came with his wife Lily a"h and his mother. Before he entered, his mother asked how long he planned on being in the Rebbe's room, and he estimated a quarter of an hour. They all walked in together.

After ten minutes his mother left the room, leaving Sharon and his wife. Half an hour went by, an hour, an hour and a half, and only then did they finally leave. His mother asked him, "That's a quarter of an hour?!" Sharon replied, "It was the Rebbe's fault, not mine."

In the meantime, Mrs. Sharon said to me, 'R' Groner, I want to tell you something. It is no secret that we aren't religious. We heard Chassidim say that the Rebbe has ruach ha'kodesh and knows everything, but we didn't believe it. That changed tonight. We have a problem with one of our children and we thought the Rebbe could help. We asked the Rebbe, he gave an answer, and we were ready to leave. Then the Rebbe said to Arik, 'Why don't you talk about another personal matter? I know you have a disagreement with another minister, and it's not good for there to be fights between government ministers.'

"Arik went white and his hands began to shake. He looked at me and kept quiet. The Rebbe said, 'If you don't want to talk about it, I will remain silent.' After a moment, the Rebbe told us what the disagreement is about. Only Arik the other minister and I knew about this disagreement. I never wrote to the Rebbe about it, nor did Arik, and we know for a fact that the third minister has absolutely no connection with the Rebbe."

"When the Rebbe finished, he asked, 'Am I right or not?' Arik nodded and said, 'The Rebbe knows what happened.' Then the Rebbe gave his advice, and that is what took so long."

Lily Sharon said, "The Rebbe is in Brooklyn, and he knows what is going on with us in Yerushalayim."



“The reason the Rebbe spent hours at the Ohel was because he read there all the letters sent to him. This means that all that time he spent at the Ohel was for us.

I told her, "If I may, I will tell you a story. Moshe Sharett once called me. He said that he is an emissary of the Israeli government, and he made a special trip to ask the Rebbe about a problem they have that they don't know how to resolve. The prime minister and members of the government sent him as their representative to the Rebbe. This was a Wednesday, and he had to leave the US on Thursday night. With the Rebbe's consent, I arranged yechidus for him at two in the afternoon on that same day.

"When he left yechidus, he told me, 'R' Groner, the Rebbe sits in Brooklyn and knows what is going on with us behind closed doors. When I walked in, I presented the problem to the Rebbe. The Rebbe smiled and

said, 'For such a little thing you had to come from overseas?' The Rebbe dissected the problem so simply that I felt like a child.

"When we finished, I wanted to leave, but the Rebbe asked me to stay, and said, 'Since by Divine Providence you are here, I want to make you my shliach to two government ministers, because there is a disagreement between them.' The Rebbe proceeded to tell me what the disagreement was about and how to solve the problem to make peace between them."

Sharett said, "These two ministers have no connection with the Rebbe, and only they and I know about the disagreement, and so, that is why I say that the Rebbe sits here in Brooklyn and knows what is going on with us behind closed doors."

“These days we need to strengthen yiras Shamayim; the children need it, as do the adults. That is why the Rebbe Rayatz wrote to our schools that the main goal of chinuch is to instill yiras Shamayim.

THE REBBE KNEW HER LINEAGE

We can sit and tell many stories about how the Rebbe looks at someone and knows everything there is to know about him or her.

A girl was born in a European country and was raised as a Christian. She went to Eretz Yisroel to work, where she met a Jewish boy, and they became friends. He asked her whether she was willing to convert, and she said no, because her family wouldn't approve. So they parted ways. After some time, they both ended up in New York, and although she was very interested in renewing their friendship, he insisted that if she did not convert, he was not interested in maintaining any connection to her.

Before Shmini Atzeres and Simchas Torah, he called her and explained the significance of these holidays. He told her that he planned on being in Crown Heights where the Lubavitcher Rebbe lives, and where one can really experience the simcha. If she was interested, he would arrange a place for her to stay.

She agreed and was very impressed by what she saw over Yom Tov. After Simchas Torah, she wanted to see the Rebbe, and after having yechidus, she told the fellow what happened:

“I told the Rebbe that I am a gentile and can't convert and that you won't marry me if I don't convert. I asked the Rebbe what to do. The Rebbe said, ‘You are

not a gentile. You are a Jew, and you can marry.’ I said, ‘What?! You don't know me, and this is the first time I am coming to you!’ I told the Rebbe that I am definitely not Jewish, and every Sunday I go to church and celebrate non-Jewish holidays. The Rebbe answered with a smile, ‘Ask your mother if you are Jewish or not.’”

She called her mother and asked whether she was Jewish. Her mother hung up the phone. She decided to fly home, and when she got home, she asked her mother again. Her mother said, “When your father comes home, don't mention anything about Judaism. Tomorrow we will go to the park, and I will tell you everything.” The next day they went to the park where her mother told her that she was Jewish and that her parents and grandparents were Jewish. After the Holocaust, her father wanted to cut himself off from Judaism because of the horrors of the war.

She was stunned by this information, and when she returned to New York she wrote to the Rebbe about it. The Rebbe replied, “Since you were in a church, you need to immerse in a mikva; not for the purpose of conversion, but to purify yourself.” The couple married, and they now have a beautiful family.

What happened here? The Rebbe looked at her, saw who she was, and knew her ancestry.

HOURS SPENT AT THE OHEL - FOR US!

The Rebbe once said that if he only needed to pray for his family, he could spend twenty minutes at the Ohel, not more than half an hour. The reason the Rebbe spent hours at the Ohel was because he read there all the letters sent to him. This means that all that time he spent at the Ohel was for us.

I had an uncle who was a secretary of the Rebbe Rayatz in Otvoztzk and in New York. His name was R' Moshe Leib Rodstein. The Rebbe would read a letter and respond orally, and R' Rodstein would write it down and then type the letters on a typewriter. Then he brought the letters to the Rebbe to review and sign.

Several times when the Rebbe returned from the Ohel R' Rodstein would be called in immediately because there was an urgent answer that needed to be written and sent off. One time the Rebbe came back from the Ohel and asked R' Rodstein to come. After a few minutes R' Rodstein came out and told me that two weeks earlier he had been by the Rebbe in connection with his work, and when he finished the work he remained standing at the door. The Rebbe smiled and said, ‘You can't go home tonight, and I'll tell you why. Your wife sent me a letter a week ago and I still did not respond, and she told you not to come home until you get an answer.’ R' Rodstein affirmed this was true. The Rebbe said, ‘Tell your wife that I have still not been to my father-in-law, and so I still do not have an answer. If she locks the door and doesn't let you in, tell her that I gave you permission because there is still no answer.’”

R' Rodstein told me all this

and said that now the Rebbe told him, “Today I was at my father-in-law, and I asked him your wife’s question. The Rebbe answered that no, do not do what she wanted to do.” The Rebbe concluded with a smile, “Now you can enter your house.”

From all this we learn that the Rebbe runs things in ways that are beyond our grasp.

A Chassid once went to the Rogatchover Gaon and asked him what he thought of the Rebbe Rashab. The Rogatchover said that in order to assess him, he would have to know two things: the assessment scale and the one being assessed. “The concept of a Rebbe is beyond our grasp. We have no way of knowing what a Rebbe is; so how can I assess him? But I can tell you one thing that I do know – the Rebbe doesn’t go to rest at night (he didn’t say “sleep,” but “rest”) until he surveys the entire world, and when he sees a Jew who needs a bracha, he does not go to rest until he accomplishes what he needs to for that person by davening to the Oibershter.”

The tzaddik Reb Mottel of Chernobyl once spoke about the greatness of the thirty-six hidden tzaddikim. A Chassid who was present said, “Surely there are hidden tzaddikim among the Chassidim of the Rebbe; perhaps the Rebbe can show one of them to us.” The tzaddik replied: “You are looking at a hidden tzaddik,” referring to himself. The Chassid was astonished. The Rebbe is a hidden tzaddik? The Rebbe is famous for his righteousness, for his ruach ha’kodesh, and his genius!

The Rebbe said: “What a pity it would be on you if I was only what you see ...”

There are no words to describe what a Rebbe is. The

Sh’china speaks from his throat; tzaddikim are likened to their Creator; if one merits to bond with the Rebbe, to what is the bond? We don’t connect to the Rebbe’s lamdus (scholarship), or to his genius, or to his tzidkus (righteousness), or to his ruach ha’kodesh (divine spirit), but to his Atzmus. What is Atzmus? It transcends understanding.

How do we bond? In HaYom Yom it says that we need to learn the Rebbe’s teachings and follow his instructions. We have an abundance of sichos and maamarim that the Rebbe edited. Everybody wants to connect to the Rebbe; everybody wants to connect with that which transcends them. The way to do

unfortunately there can be a frum Jew who learns Torah but who is immersed in this world and in coarse things, until he forgets that there is a Creator who runs the world. When a person like this hears a miracle story and is amazed by it, he shakes off the dust that covers him and discovers that indeed there is a Creator who runs the world. Afterwards, when he sees gashmius, he views it completely differently.

The Rebbe writes: I humbly ask of my father-in-law to tell many miracle stories, because now this is something that everybody needs to hear in order to remember that there is a Creator who runs the world.

“If you want to leave your “Mitzrayim,” your limitations, it’s a mitzva to relate a Chassidishe maaseh, and whoever does more is praiseworthy.

it is by learning all the maamarim and following his instructions. The maamarim are chochma, bina, daas; the instructions are the Rebbe’s ratzon. Thus, the connection with the Rebbe is with the Rebbe’s kochos and with the Rebbe’s Atzmus.

After Gimmel Tammuz a letter was found in the Rebbe’s handwriting. It was a letter that he wrote to his father-in-law in 1932, in which he thanks him for writing him a miracle story of the Alter Rebbe. The Rebbe wrote in his letter that although in earlier generations Chabad Chassidim weren’t pleased with the telling of stories about the Rebbeim, because the main focus was on delving into the maamarim and on davening as a Chassid ought to daven, nowadays however

One time, a director of a Mirzachi affiliated school in Eretz Yisroel, came to the Rebbe for yechidus. He told me that he asked the Rebbe what he could do to instill more Yiras Shamayim in the students in school. The Rebbe told him that at least a few times a week the teachers should tell stories of tzaddikim. When a boy or girl hears a story about a tzaddik, it instills yiras Shamayim.

This doesn’t mean stories about just any tzaddikim, but stories about the Rebbeim. A story about the Rebbe is “*ana nafshi k’savis y’havis*” (“I have written myself into it and given it”). Just as in letters, maamarim and sichos, so too here, the Rebbe gives over his very being through miracle stories.

These days we need to

strengthen yiras Shamayim; the children need it, as do the adults. That is why the Rebbe Rayatz wrote to our schools (and there are letters from the Rebbe on the subject) that the main goal of chinuch is to instill yiras Shamayim. Obviously, they need to learn and to know Torah, but all that should be in order to strengthen their yiras Shamayim, which is fundamental.

If the Rebbe says that by hearing stories we can strengthen yiras Shamayim, we must tell a lot of stories. Chassidim would say on the words of the Hagada, “even if we were all wise, all discerning, all know the entire Torah, it’s a mitzva to tell about the exodus from Egypt and

whoever does so is praiseworthy” – even if we were all chachomim, Chabadnikim, and we have the deepest maamarim and sichos, if you want to leave your “Mitzrayim,” your limitations, it’s a mitzva to relate a Chassidishe maaseh, and whoever does more – is praiseworthy. Both the teller and the listener are praiseworthy.

We see that the Rebbe wants us to tell more and more stories, that we strengthen our yiras Shamayim, and Hashem will help that all the stories we tell will instill yiras Shamayim in us and strengthen our hiskashrus to the Rebbe. Those who cleave to Torah scholars are considered as cleaving to Hashem. You cannot cleave to Hashem without

cleaving to Torah scholars. We need to do all we can to cleave to the Rebbe. That should be the outcome of this farbrengen.

May the result and hachlata of this farbrengen be to connect to the Rebbe more and do what the Rebbe demands of us, that we will know how to use the kochos the Rebbe gives us in order to strengthen ourselves and in order to ignite the souls of all Jews. Efforts must be made to reach every location and every Jew. We are given the kochos, and we just have to use them 100%. All this will further hasten the revelation of Moshiach, and we will merit to see the Rebbe, and he will redeem us.



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FIRST HAND ACCOUNT OF THE REBBE'S RELEASE

Presented in honor of 12-13 Tammuz

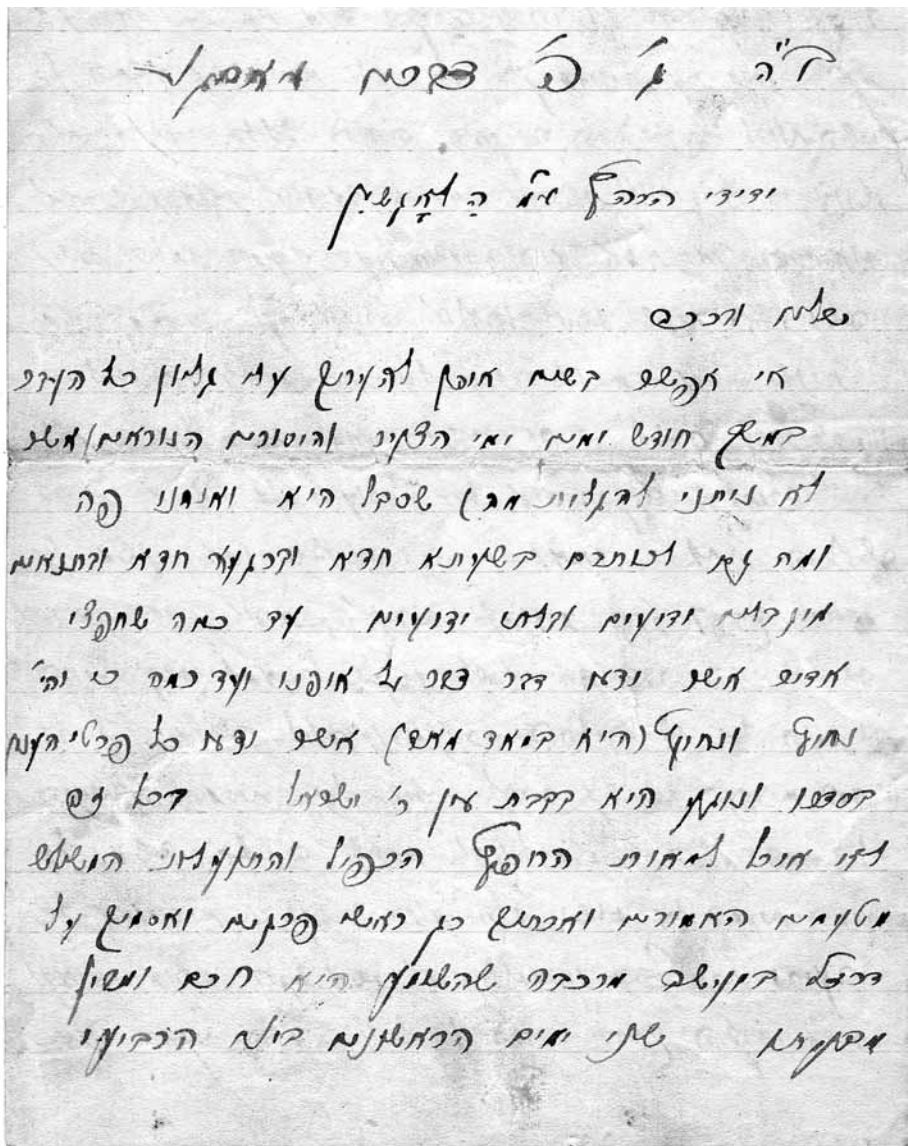
Although decades have passed since the release of the Rebbe Rayatz in 1927, there are still parts of the story of his arrest and subsequent release that were previously unknown. Here we present a letter, a moving account of those events • The letter was penned by R' Yaakov Zecharia Moskolik, the secretary of the Rebbe Rayatz at that time, and sent to his friend R' Menachem Mendel Lokshin, director of Agudas Chassidei Chabad in the United States • The letter was printed in the t'shura for the Simpson-Chasdan wedding.



After the release of the Rebbe Rayatz on 12-13 Tammuz 5687/1927, the Rebbe traveled to Malachovka, near Moscow, for six weeks. R' Yaakov served as the Rebbe Rayatz's secretary at the time. By the Rebbe's

instruction, he sent letters to Chabad askanim around the world. In a letter, published below, R' Yaakov describes the events of the Rebbe Rayatz's imprisonment in detail.

B"H
Tuesday, Parshas D'varim
Moscow
To my friend, R' M. M.
Lokshin, greetings!



mentioned, I will write brief notes and rely on what Chazal say regarding the *maaseh merkava* (lit. the Workings of the Chariot, i.e. deep, esoteric knowledge): that the listener is wise and will understand on his own.

The first two days [of his imprisonment], on Wednesday and Thursday, he did not have even a drop of water. It was only on Friday after Mincha (as he did not want to enter Shabbos fasting) that he tasted some *mezonos* and water (and only on Shabbos did he have *lechem mishneh*); for the full nineteen days the Rebbe was in prison he did not eat anything but for bread, *mezonos* and water.

Monday night was the first interrogation, and on the eighth day of his incarceration they called him to inform him of his crime and his sentence. They told him that his sentence was very severe and consisted of one of the following possibilities: 1 – execution, 2 – ten years of hard labor, 3 – exile to a desolate place for five to ten years, 4 – the lightest sentence, which would be solitary confinement. This consisted of the prisoner being forced to sit in a narrow room cut off from the world under heavy guard for three years, after which would be one year of hard labor.

On the fifteenth day of his imprisonment he was called to hear the verdict, and they told him that they had exchanged all the alternative punishments listed above for a new sentence: he would be sent to a small remote city for three years. He would be sent under heavily armed guard, and he would be sent there that very day.

He asked them not to send him on Shabbos but they refused.

He remained unfazed by this and demanded that they not force

“I cannot describe the terrible scene that ensued as this news was told to the family, the fainting, shouts and tears, may Hashem have mercy!

It is absolutely impossible to record on paper everything that took place this past month, the days of sorrow and terrible suffering which cannot be revealed; what he [the Rebbe Rayatz] suffered and we endured here. It is even more difficult to write them in one hour all at once, and under constrained

conditions, known and unknown, despite my great desire for you to know everything, and as much as it is vital (very much so) that you know all the details in order, and as much as it deeply affects R' Yisroel [Jacobson].

Although I cannot fulfill the two-fold desire and the three-fold benefit for the reasons

him to desecrate the Shabbos. He announced in open protest that he would absolutely not travel on Shabbos, even if they punished him for it. He insisted that with the full powers granted under the laws of the land to protest any act of coercion, he was protesting such coercion, and proclaimed that if they would do this, they should know it would be an act of force, which they had no legal right to perform.

The chief warden told him that he should not forget where and under whose jurisdiction he was, and that for refusing to travel in the usual way, he was being disruptive. He warned him that such behavior warranted severe punishment.

The Rebbe Rayatz replied that he knew exactly where he was, but he was under his own jurisdiction, and he would not transgress his religion under any circumstances. No matter what, he would stand firm in his position they not compel him to desecrate the Shabbos. They could send him under guard as they pleased, via express train on his account, so he could reach his city of refuge on Erev Shabbos. They turned down his request.

They told him to send a telegram to his household, telling them that they should come to the prison to say goodbye, because they would be taking him directly from the prison to the train station in a closed car and under armed guard.

Within the hour, his family came, and the prison commanders told them that he was listed among those being sent to exile to Salavetzki Manastir.

I cannot describe the terrible scene which ensued as this news was told to the family, the fainting, shouts and tears that ensued, may Hashem have mercy. For about half an hour, the Rebbe was brought accompanied by armed guards, to see his family. A double barrier of two walls of crossed bars separated between him and his family. They told his family that his sentence had been decreed as I have just described, and that he had asked that he not be sent in such a way that would force him to desecrate the Shabbos.

The news that he was being sent to a remote city [i.e. a place of habitation as opposed to Siberia or the like – Ed] in the country's interior was at that time and under those circumstances, a great comfort.

The journey was planned to begin at eight in the evening, and his family, along with several hundred people, went to the train station to wait for the prisoners to be brought. A rumor went around that the Rebbe Rayatz had actually been sent to exile in Siberia, but since the KGB didn't want us to know this, they told him that he was being sent to a city of refuge. No pen could possibly describe on paper the commotion among the hundreds

of people who came to the train station. About the cries and screams of the family there are no words to describe, because they were all almost in a faint, and even strangers cried; the noise was great.

The officials amongst the guards said he wasn't there and that at first he too had been among those on the list to be sent to exile. Then they announced that they decided to leave him for the next day, because on Wednesdays and Thursdays they sent away those who were exiled and sentenced. It is impossible to know the truth because many of the people standing near the train of prisoners swore that they saw him.

24 hours passed until the time for the next prison transport train on Thursday, and then, too, they questioned the guard officials, and many people gathered because the news had gotten out all over the city.

On Sunday, 3 Tammuz at two o'clock, they told him that he would allowed to travel to his assigned city of refuge on his own without guards, that he was to leave at eight, and that he had six hours to spend at home.

His health is weak, and he is very feeble.

This is just a little bit of what we've experienced over the past month.

Your brother,
Yaakov

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ARE YOU READY FOR GEULA?

Rabbi Yitzchok Arad (Director of the Daas Center and Rosh Yeshiva) and Menachem Ziegelboim discuss points in the weekly D'var Malchus and try to derive practical applications from the injunction to "make Eretz Yisroel here" as the Rebbe said to do in the sicha of Parshas Pinchas 5751.

A NEW FOCUS

I remember that when the sicha of Pinchas 5751 was publicized, many people rubbed their eyes in astonishment. They wondered, did the Rebbe change direction? Has a new form of our avoda in the world begun?

R' Arad smiled. He knew what I was referring to. He nodded but stopped me with a motion of his hand. "The Rebbe did not change direction, but in the sicha on this parsha, the Rebbe definitely emphasized something else, a concept less familiar than usual.

"If you follow the Rebbe's style, you know that from day one of his nesius his direction was "to conquer the world." Later on, this was called "U'faratzta." This was the approach throughout the years, until the call came to prepare the world for the coming of Moshiach."

So what happened at that farbrengen on Shabbos Parshas Pinchas 5751?

The sicha that was given over at that gathering revolved around the point of "make Eretz Yisroel here." This aphorism was said by the Tzemach Tzedek to a Chassid who asked for his bracha to travel to Eretz Yisroel. The Tzemach Tzedek told him, "make Eretz Yisroel here," i.e. why travel there if you can transform your place, which is outside of Eretz Yisroel, into Eretz Yisroel?

The Rebbe Rayatz told us about this incident and the Rebbe publicized it, as the Rebbe articulates the point in this sicha:

Since this was related and publicized [by the Rebbe, my father-in-law] to every Jew, obviously it becomes an instruction for all, that even while "here," outside of Eretz Yisroel and in galus (even the final moment), we need to make Eretz Yisroel here, in this place and time. (Ois 1)

In this sicha, it's as if the Rebbe is saying, "Stop! We are

changing direction. Not breaking forth, not conquering the world, but focusing on ourselves, on our inner worlds."

The Rebbe's sichos are generally characterized by a degree of tension; the need for things to change, how wrong it is to make do with the status quo, the imperative to yearn for more than we have attained thus far, not to be satisfied with what we achieved to date. The Rebbe constantly quoted the statement of Chazal, "one who has one *mana* wants two hundred and one who has two hundred, wants four hundred." In other words, this expression refers to the ambition for greatness. This is in contrast to the content of this sicha; the theme is one of drawing inward, making peace with the place we are in, in the present situation, while digging deeply towards inner perfection and enlivening our place; not "what will be," but what is presently happening, here and now.

So what is the Rebbe saying?

He is focusing us inward:

By doing the avoda perfectly "here" – being fully immersed in the avoda of thought, speech and action – this accustoms the person and brings him to the goal (for which he is doing the avoda "here") – the avoda in Eretz Yisroel, literally, with the true and complete Geula. (Ois 10)

The Rebbe then sharpens this message as follows:

Every Jew is told: you have been instructed by the Nasi of our generation – “make Eretz Yisroel here” – your avoda needs to be expressed, not in thinking about what is happening at the other end of the world and in another time, and to serve another separate purpose, but to be completely immersed (in thought, speech, and action) in making Eretz Yisroel here, in your particular place and in every moment of your personal time. (Ois 13)

What do these words mean?

Focus on your place and make it Eretz Yisroel.

YOUR OWN GEULA

Another central theme of the sicha is the p’nimius’dike avoda demanded of every one of us. The entire sicha is built on the idea of what is a p’nimi, one of the most widespread and valued concepts in the Chabad lexicon. A p’nimi is someone who lives in the moment.

In the sicha, the Rebbe brings two characterizations of what constitutes a p’nimi:

1) *A Jew must do his avoda “here” – in this place and time – in the most perfect way (according to all his abilities and opportunities in his situation and circumstance) in thought, speech, and action as a p’nimi who is completely immersed in the avoda in which he is presently engaged (and as he does it, he doesn’t think about the avoda that will follow this).*

2) *... Like a p’nimi who introduces perfection into every detail of his avoda.*

We have two general types of avoda: the urge to break new ground, i.e. to do more to



“The Rebbe’s sichos are generally characterized by a degree of tension; the need for things to change, how wrong it is to make do with the status quo, the imperative to yearn for more than we have attained thus far, not to be satisfied with what we achieved to date.

improve the world, and on the other hand, the desire to rectify that which needs rectification within us. The idea the Rebbe emphasizes in this sicha is that you have the ability to affect the world by focusing on your portion of it, on your personal part of it. Rectifying your part affects the rest of the world as a natural consequence. When you take that which is in you and bring it from galus to Geula, your personal Geula, you affect the entire world!

“Each and every Jew has his portion and mission in the world that Hashem gave him. One is a businessman (Z’vulun) and another learns Torah (Yisachar) etc. And in every category, each person has a different portion and mission in the world. And every person finds himself in a specific part of the world to which Hashem led him, since his mission is specifically in that

place.” (Ois 13)

How can a person know what his mission is?

Good question, but I still want to address the main point. We are used to experiencing our work in bringing the Geula from an outwardly focused perspective. We need to elevate to the world, prepare the world; we have a mission in the world, and we have to publicize the Besuras Ha’Geula and prepare everybody for it.

Although in this sicha the Rebbe also talks about publicity,

what should we be publicizing? We should be publicizing the unique avoda that each person has to rectify his portion of the world and thereby prepare the entire world. The way to effect the environment is by dealing with one’s individual place and time and family. We have to ensure that the individual, not the world out there, is complete and living in a Geula manner, and this in turn effects the world.

In other words, if the motto is “spread your wellsprings outward,” the Rebbe is emphasizing here that the way to accomplish this is through working on ourselves. This is not a new derech, but it is definitely a different emphasis than the one we were used to.

The Rebbe often says that the world is ready for Geula and the only shlichus that remains is to open our eyes and publicize

that Moshiach is already here and to see him. We have the Geula; we just have to see that we have it. We need to open our eyes and see how our personal reality is ready for Geula. Each of us needs to ensure that our portion is in fact ready for Geula in a p'nimius'dike way. When a person's portion is complete, it affects others.

So is the Rebbe saying that the avoda of shlichus to the outside is finished?

No! The shlichus is still to rectify the world and prepare it for Geula, but this happens by our doing our avoda in a p'nimius'dike way. There are people who live to effect the world. The Rebbe is stopping them for a moment and asking: Are *you* ready for Geula? Are *you* living a Geula life? Have *you* made Eretz Yisroel here, in your home, within your inner world? Or are you only occupied with the outside?

It's important to stress and repeat that the avoda we are talking about is not exclusively with oneself, but also with one's immediate surroundings: with one's family, his k'hilla, his mushpaim. They are also one's portion.

I understand that first we have to work on ourselves, but isn't it true that we will never be really ready, and if we spend all this time on ourselves, we will never have time for others?

This is what the Rebbe is asking of us. Make Geula a reality for yourself, and this in turn affects the world. If you are a p'nimi, if you are immersed in what you are doing, if you have an internal connection with what is important, then you have made the Geula a reality, you made Eretz Yisroel here.

I don't follow the logic. A

Chassid went to the Tzemach Tzedek and said he wanted to move to Eretz Yisroel. That is definitely a wonderful thing. The Rebbe told him, make Eretz Yisroel here. What is "here?" "Here" is outside Eretz Yisroel, in galus!

True. And that is what the Tzemach Tzedek asks of a Chassid. Don't travel there, bring Eretz Yisroel to where *you* are, here. Bring the Geula here, to your personal galus, and transform it into Geula.

This reflects the difference between a chitzon and a p'nimi. A chitzon wants to bring Geula to the entire world. He is told: be a p'nimi, bring Geula to *your* part of the world.

It's easier to bring Geula to the world than to fix yourself...

(Chuckling...) You're right. But this is what the Rebbe is stressing here. We often felt that in our generation it's no longer necessary to talk about p'nimius. The main thing is taking action, and indeed, this was the message throughout the years of the Rebbe's nesius. This is why this sicha was so astonishing, as you mentioned at the beginning of our conversation. Chassidim heard the Rebbe stressing the inyan of being a p'nimi, about the need to focus on ourselves, when he said, "If you will live a Geula life, this will be your utmost contribution to the entire world, but don't think about the world. Concentrate on bringing the Geula for yourself."

Every Jew is told, you have been instructed by the Nasi of our generation to "make Eretz Yisroel here". Your avoda needs to be expressed, not in thinking about what is happening at the other end of the world and in another time, and to serve another separate purpose, but

to be completely immersed (in thought, speech, and action) in making Eretz Yisroel here, in your particular place and in every moment of your personal time.

Specifically through this [the avoda in making Eretz Yisroel within yourself] will you affect the entire world [in every location and time], since within your part of the world is included all parts of the world ... Of course, "everyone must say the world was created for my sake," and since the world was created for your sake, obviously you have the ability to affect the entire world, by you – in your individual portion – having the entire world incorporated within yourself.

A WORLD OF GEULA

How can the average Baal HaBayis, who goes to work in the morning and returns home tired in the evening, and barely manages to spend a little time with the family, create this Geula within himself?

Firstly, at the beginning of the sicha, the Rebbe says the avoda of "make Eretz Yisroel here" pertains to every Jew. If the Rebbe sets this course for us in a public sicha, then it applies to everyone, and it empowers us all no matter what stage we are at in our avoda.

Second, the Rebbe himself emphasizes that the avoda is to be accomplished "*to the extent that you can do the avoda there in a perfect way,*" meaning, according to the abilities with which you were endowed.

Parenthetically, you are talking about the balabus, while I think it's a harder avoda for activists and shluchim, because by nature they are involved with the "outside," and are not focused inward.

It all begins with us. A person needs to know and feel that the portion that has been allotted to him to rectify and make into Geula is what Hashem ordained for him (and the Rebbe elaborates on this in a special way in Ois 13). “The world was given into their heart” – that which is in his heart, that is the world that belongs to him. He needs to make sure that, al pi Torah, this portion is perfect in thought, speech and action, with the sense and feelings of Geula.

One of the main arenas in the ongoing battle between k’dusha versus the “other side” is p’nimi versus chitzon. The chitzon is klipa. P’nimi is k’dusha. It’s like the fruit versus the peel. In our lives, there are external events which may be perceived as negative, that make us feel tense. We can’t allow ourselves to be fazed by the external “shell,” but have to look at the internal nature of everything, which is essentially k’dusha. We need to know that Hashem is here, everything is truly good, and nothing happens without divine providence. Everything has deep significance; everything has value.

When a person is worried about a problem in his life, he’s thinking, “What’s going to be?” and “Why did this happen to me?” Those are reactions to the external layers of the challenge.

The p’nimi, however, looks at the inner dimension of that which he experiences, knows very well that there is nothing to worry about, and what will be, will be. If



We should be publicizing the unique avoda that each person has to rectify his portion of the world and thereby prepare the entire world.

Hashem did this, then what is it that He wants of me? What does this mean? How do I experience what happens to me as reflecting my connection to Hashem? And if I feel that connection, am I happy? Am I calm? Do I feel bitachon in Hashem, at peace with what has happened?

In the sichos of the D’var Malchus of previous weeks, the Rebbe explains the way to achieve this and how a p’nimi in his own place can find shleimus. The fact is that all of reality can, and should, be whole. When I put Hashem into the picture, Aluf shel olam, who is represented by the letter alef that is placed in the word “gola,” I transform the Gola into Geula.

It all begins with us. If I focus on the inner dimension without being fazed by what happens externally, I am actually transforming my galus into a place of Geula, which is “making Eretz Yisroel here.”

Besides for inner contemplation, is there any way we can take action to transform the “outside of Eretz Yisroel” within us into Eretz Yisroel, the Gola to Geula?

Each of us needs to contemplate what is going on in our world and bring Hashem into the picture by learning Chassidus, by studying what the Rebbe is

saying in the sichos. Chassidus broadens our perspective. It teaches us how to transform our personal lives – and consequently our general lives – into lives of Geula.

The truth is that we find it difficult to take the Rebbe at his word, to trust completely that what he says has the power to bring us joy and serenity and give us a true, inner wholeness. We are not perfect, but this is the way to bring us into the world of an inner Geula.

What is a world of Geula? It’s a world of tremendous serenity – no competition, no jealousy, abundant good, no wars or battles – with others or within our own selves.

We can bring Geula to our individual world and not get caught up in competition and the pressure that competition brings. Meditating on the inner meaning of the world will bring us to the feeling that we really don’t lack for anything; it brings us to a peaceful place, a place of trust and no conflicts. When the Rebbe tells us to make Geula in our individual lives, or in our individual day, it’s possible. Make the Geula here. We have the ability to do it, and everybody can do it. Most importantly, nobody can do it for us. Only we can do it.

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

YAAKOV YAGEL

Despite the fact that the Yagel settlement is located only a short distance from Kfar Chabad, it existed for many years without a shliach. • R' Yiftach Yugav and his wife, Elior, arrived in Yagel and became the local shluchim. A meeting with the shluchim opens our eyes to the energy this couple creates with the unique activities they conduct there.

By Nosson Avrohom

Translated by Michael Leib Dobry

Yagel is a thriving agricultural settlement located just a few minutes from Kfar Chabad. It was founded in 5710 by pioneer immigrants from Iraq and Kurdistan, who settled there and made its desolate land flourish. As it developed, the moshav also took in immigrants from Morocco, and today these Moroccans constitute the strong nucleus of the local community.

The settlement's first residents gave it the name Yagel, based on the pasuk in T'hilim: "When G-d returns the captivity of His people, *Yagel Yaakov* (Yaakov shall rejoice)." The local population is considered traditional with a strong attachment to its Jewish roots.

Due to its relatively close proximity to Kfar Chabad, students from the central yeshiva in Kfar Chabad would visit the moshav each Shabbos to conduct group activities with local children. Periodically, Kfar

Chabad residents would come for Simchas Torah to dance and rejoice with the moshav community members, but there was no permanent Chabad presence in Yagel. This void was filled with the arrival of R' **Yiftach Yugav** and his wife, **Elior**.

Yiftach, a former kibbutznik from Kibbutz Yotvata in the Eilat district, and Elior, who holds a high-level position in a hi-tech company, returned to Yiddishkait and became devoted Chabad Chassidim. "Ramat Aviv where we previously lived is a shluchim factory," says Elior. "We lived there for two years, absorbed a great deal, and were therefore naturally drawn to a life on shlichus."

Yagel residents accepted the couple with open arms. It turns out that Yagel has a great love and appreciation for Chabad Chassidus and the Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach. Generally speaking, anyone familiar with Rabbi Yugav knows that it's hard

to confront him. He's a Chassid with a great deal of warmth and friendliness, concern and vitality, an educator with every fiber of his soul – qualities that certainly aided in the process of his acceptance in the moshav and reaching the hearts of the local residents. "Shlichus on a moshav is different from shlichus in a city," says R' Yiftach. "Here it's one big family where everyone knows each other. When I organize a parade here, I personally know every child in attendance."

A LONG ROAD TO LUBAVITCH

Before we spoke about the comprehensive activities on the Yagel settlement, we asked Rabbi Yugav to tell us about the long journey he made to Lubavitch, which began with absolute estrangement and concluded with passionate closeness.

He spent his childhood and adolescent years on Kibbutz



R' Yiftach Yugav at the moshav gate

Yotvata, when there was still a children's home in operation and cooperative living was the system in place. "My mother ran the kibbutz school, and my father was in charge of the kibbutz irrigation system. We were raised in an atmosphere of pioneer-ism. We lived in a location that was far from any other settlement; every trip to the central part of the country was made by bus and took several hours."

"In the kibbutz educational system, they tried to instill us with a sense of love for every person as a human being. I remember an occasion when all the kibbutz children traveled to the Arab village of Baka al-Gharbiyye, where we spent the whole day in the company of local Arab children. We played soccer with them and ate together as a group, all for the purpose of perpetuating a reality of co-existence, as it were. However, what seemed to apply with our Arab neighbors was totally irrelevant with regards to

“The first meaningful Jewish decision I made was to wait seven hours between meat and milk. Why seven hours and not six? Because I thought that in Judaism, everything revolved around the number seven, as in the seven days of Creation.

ultra-Orthodox Jews, whom we perceived as evil.”

“I’ll never forget my bar-mitzvah ceremony. I call it a ceremony because that’s all it was – just a ceremony. My father sent me to a Reform “rabbi” from a nearby kibbutz who taught me the weekly Torah portion and how to put on t’fillin. Together with several other children, we learned the parsha from audiocassettes, and at the end of the brief course, he instructed us to put on t’fillin for the day of our bar-mitzvah and afterwards to put them in the closet as a memento. This is exactly what I did until the age of twenty-six.”

“There was a kibbutz member

who decided one day that he wanted to become a baal t’shuva. He grew a beard and started wearing a kippa on his head. The whole kibbutz looked at him as totally weird, as someone who had lost his sanity. My father once told me jokingly that I had become a baal t’shuva because the mezuzos in our house weren’t kosher... All kidding aside, however, most kibbutz homes in those days didn’t have any mezuzos. Today, the situation is slightly different, but in the days of my youth, the kibbutz institution was at the pinnacle of its power and glory. We went around feeling like the elite of the earth.”



A smile that breaks through all barriers



By the public menorah at the moshav entrance

TRANSFORMATION

Upon reaching the age of military conscription, Yiftach did the same as most of his kibbutznik friends and enlisted in the army, specifically in the special reconnaissance troop for anti-tank missiles. “During my years as a soldier, I often came across Chabad Chassidim involved in Mitzva T’fillin or other mitzvah campaign

activities. I always adamantly refused to even speak with them. My friends would call me “a real heretic”, but I didn’t even have a notion of what a heretic was...”

“There was an incident that occurred in Neve Tzuf that stands as a clear illustration of the extent of my ignorance. We were on a yishuv where we were hosted by a local family for meals, both weekday and Shabbos. One Shabbos, after finishing the meal, I asked my host if I could have a cup of coffee with milk. He opened his eyes wide, and I couldn’t understand what the problem was... I simply had no idea that you couldn’t have a cup of milk after eating meat.”

“When I completed my rigorous military training I needed time to relax. I decided to take a trip to the Far East – Nepal, India, Burma, and Thailand. This was the first time that I had ever thought about the true meaning of life. Standing before the tranquil and breathtaking vistas that arouse introspection and reflection, questions about our purpose on Earth, and about the world beyond our own began

to peck away at my heart and mind.”

“When I was in Pushkar, I heard about a kabbalistic group that organized Shabbos meals for tourists. There was barely any food, but I was drawn into the discussions they held. For the first time in my life, I realized that Judaism possessed depth, not just something superficial or parasitic as I had thought up until then. It aroused my curiosity, and I felt that it touched me to the depths of my soul.”

“It took more than just a moment to turn in the direction of t’shuva. Several long years passed until I understood that there’s a soul, a Creator of the World, and a Rebbe.”

“The first meaningful Jewish decision I made was to wait seven hours between meat and milk. Not that the meat I ate was kosher or the milk I drank was specifically *chalav Yisroel*, but I was stringent to observe this separation. Why seven hours and not six? Because I thought that in Judaism everything revolved around the number seven, as in the seven days of Creation.”

“After my trip, I returned to the kibbutz for a year, and during that year, I fasted on Yom Kippur for the first time in my life. The kibbutz held a ‘*seuda mafsek*’ on Erev Yom Kippur, but there were regular meals afterwards. After the ‘*seuda mafsek*’, I decided that I wouldn’t eat. While I did play volleyball that day and didn’t fully observe the holiday, food did not pass my lips until nightfall. After breaking the fast, I had a wonderful feeling of inner spiritual elation and excitement.”

“After one year back on the kibbutz, I didn’t feel at home any longer, and I moved to Nes Tziona, where I found work and was first introduced to Chabad

Chassidim. I participated in farbrengens at the Chabad House and turned into a regular guest there. The person who helped me a great deal during the first stages of my kiruv process was Rabbi Yehoshua Zeigin, a former kibbutznik. In Chabad I experienced the feeling of true caring and consideration, and as they showed their concern for me and gave me guidance, my soul bonded with the Rebbe and the Chassidim. The shliach in Nes Tziona, Rabbi Sagi Har-Shefer, was always at my side, providing clear rationales and explanations for everything.”

“A year later, I decided to make that definitive transformation in my life, and I became a Chassid. The following year I got married and initially established my home with my wife in central Tel Aviv. It was there that my wife had begun her own journey back to Judaism under the guidance of the local shliach Rabbi Yosef Gerlitzky. Afterwards, we spent two years in the Chabad community of Ramat Aviv, where we developed much love for the Rebbe and the spirit of shlichus, which lead us to search for a place that we could personally prepare to greet Moshiach.”

A BRACHA OF THE REBBE TO FIND A HOME

“The Chabad Youth Organization (Tzach) suggested that we consider moving to the settlement of ‘Mishmar HaShiva’. We had already received the permission of the shliach in Beit Dagan, Rabbi Shmuel Grumach, but we hadn’t found an appropriate home, and in the meantime, I had received my orders for reserve duty. My wife continued to look for a place near Kfar Chabad to go out



R' Yiftach at the Torah class with Chabad supporters

on shlichus, and she eventually came to Yagel and discovered that it had no shluchim. She went around the moshav, found a house to rent, signed a rental contract, and when I returned from reserve duty, we came to Yagel to begin our shlichus. The most significant activities took place during Chanukah, after we made house visits to almost every home on the moshav.”

By Divine Providence, the name of the first person that Rabbi Yugav met was Menachem Mendel. “The only Ashkenazic Jew on the moshav,” Rabbi Yugav laughs. “He is a descendent of the tzaddik, Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Horodok, and was named after him. He was not religious, and initially reacted to our move to the city with some cynicism, but since then we have become close friends. The local council clubhouse has been used for our activities, and we have even founded a branch of the ‘Shifra V’Puah’ organization, as we visit each new mother with a cake and a ‘Shir HaMaalos’.”

The Yugavs went through some rather difficult housing

problems on the moshav. After their rental contract expired, they had a very hard time finding an alternative place to live.

They lived in Kfar Chabad for about a year, and when the year was up the landlord asked them to renew their lease, but they weren’t in any particular hurry to do so, because they strongly desired to find a home in Yagel.

After a long and thorough search proved unsuccessful, and they had already almost given up hope, they received a clear answer from the Rebbe in Igros Kodesh. The Rebbe gave them a bracha for their move to a new apartment: “One who changes his residence, changes his fortune for good and a blessing.” Encouraged, they intensified their search until finally, on the day their lease was up, one of Rabbi Yugav’s friends called with some great news. He had found them a newly built home in Yagel. “The very next day, we had already closed a deal with the contract, and this is the house where we live today, literally as the Rebbe had blessed us with a move into a new home.”

YISHUV MEMBERS LOVE THE REBBE'S SHLIACH

Rabbi Yugav's cheerful kibbutz-style chumminess helped him out a great deal in his acceptance on the moshav. "In addition to the tremendous activities that he does with children and adults, he connects with each person on an individual level. Everyone loves him for the unique person that he is," says Mr. **Meir Yifrach**, a moshav resident for many years. "We've had many people here before, but no one possesses the magic that he does. He does all his work in a peaceful and loving way, and as a result, he is well liked by all."

Meir also tell us that his first encounter with Chabad took place when he was a young soldier in basic training in the IDF armored corps on the base in Beit E-l, during the Chanukah holiday.

"It was in the year 5739 (1979), and we were a group of young soldiers in our first months of basic training. When Chanukah came, a group of Chabad Chassidim came to the base to bring us some holiday simcha. They entered in a cheerful mood with lots of jelly donuts and drinks. We sang and danced together, and at the end of the visit, they gave each soldier a tiny plastic bag containing coins and a picture of the Rebbe, telling us that it was Chanukah gelt from the Lubavitcher Rebbe. I have kept these coins to this very day as a segula for success and protection.

"We were educated to believe in tzaddikim, and I put the coins in my equipment belt. They stayed there throughout my grueling army service in Sinai, where we were brought after we finished our basic training. One day, I was traveling alone in my military vehicle, when it suddenly turned over into a ditch at the side of the road. The vehicle was totaled, and I was knocked unconscious for fifteen minutes. I was injured from the force of the blow, but thanks to Divine Providence, I remained alive. With my last ounces of strength, I crawled to the road and called out for help. I was eventually transported via helicopter to Soroka Hospital in Beersheva."

"I was still conscious on the operating table when they cut away my clothes and got to my equipment belt. The surgeon took out the little bag with the coins and said, 'Look what he's holding!' I suddenly remembered about those coins and said to the doctor, 'That's what saved me.' I realized that the Rebbe had been with me. If someone else had gone through such an accident, he wouldn't have survived."

YAGEL RESIDENTS WRITE TO THE REBBE

The phenomenon of writing to the Rebbe via Igros Kodesh has reached the Yagel moshav too. Residents come to write to the Rebbe and accept his advice and blessing when they are confronted with difficulties or indecisions in important matters.

"At the start of our shlichus, we experienced a most interesting story," tells Mrs. Elior Yugav. "There was a couple here who had already waited many years without having any children. They wrote to the Rebbe and received a response about the great merit of Torah study. I knew that the husband had a very sharp mind, but he had been injured in his youth and lost the ability to read well. Not wishing to offend or sound discouraging, I preferred to give over other messages that appeared in that letter."

"After two years passed, and they were still childless, I decided that maybe it would now be appropriate to raise the subject of Torah study. One day, this Jew left his job and started learning in a Kollel. While I was totally stunned when I heard this, I wasn't when I heard just two months later that his wife was expecting a baby. The joy on the moshav was very great..."

"After this incident, I learned that we don't always understand the Rebbe's words, but we must give over whatever is written."

THE REBBE'S POINTED RESPONSE

Even at the outset of their journey on shlichus, the great dream of these shluchim was to open a kindergarten. In a city, this is a relatively simple job, while on a moshav, where several organized kindergartens already exist, the opening of any new kindergarten can create problems for the others. This caused constant delays in the project, despite the fact that there were numerous parents who supported the opening of a Chabad kindergarten. "The only ganim

We've had many people here before, but no one possesses the magic that he does. He does all his work in a peaceful and loving way, and as a result, he is well liked by all.

‘WHEN THEY HAVE NOT YET CALLED, I WILL RESPOND’

The Yugav family represents the type of shluchim who don't make a move without first asking the Rebbe for his advice and consent. The shlucha, Mrs. Elijor Yugav, tells about an amazing and extraordinary miracle that she experienced a few years ago, when she was in the early months of her pregnancy with her son, Shneur Zalman Dovid.

“During this period, we had to vacate the first home where we lived on the moshav. The owner had sold the house, and so until we found a new place, we were forced to live in a caravan. That arrangement came to an end as well when we had to vacate the caravan home within a short period of time. This was a very confusing and uncertain time for us. We had been unable to find another house on the moshav, and we felt totally helpless.”

“When a Chassid is faced with a problem, he turns to the Rebbe, and this is what I did. At the end of a period of hectic searching for a place to live, during which nothing turned up, I asked the Rebbe for a bracha that we should succeed in finding a home, which we needed in order to continue our activities. The Rebbe's answer via Igros Kodesh was: ‘In reply to his question about his wife's state of health, there should be an increase in the giving of tz'daka.’ This was a letter that the Rebbe wholly devoted to an explanation of the merit in giving tz'daka in light of the wife's illness.”

“I closed the seifer at a loss to understand. I felt perfectly fine, I was working, and the pregnancy was progressing normally. I was rather worried, though, that we hadn't been privileged to receive a clear answer on our housing problem.”

“A few days later, a Lubavitch Women's Organization kinus took place at the Tel Aviv Cultural Center in honor of Chaf-Ches Nissan. I usually go with several women from the moshav, but this time I went by myself. As soon as I set out on my journey, I started feeling terrific pains in my head, something that I had never felt before. When I entered the hall, I had trouble seeing people, as the lighting was blinding me. I asked the organizers what the problem with the lighting was, unaware that the problem was with me. The pains in my head were intensifying with each passing moment, and I only managed to drag myself into the hall with some difficulty.”

“By the end of the kinus, during which I hadn't

been able to hear a thing, I walked in the direction of my car parked on Kaplan Street. As a mother and her two children joined me, I couldn't seem to remember where I had parked the car or where the street was. I'm a born and raised native of Tel Aviv, and there's not a street in the city that I don't know... A few people helped me by giving me directions, and I eventually reached my car and started driving. To this day, I regret doing this, because it was very dangerous. In the midst of it all, I simply forgot the way to Kfar Chabad, and towards the end of the trip back, I began to feel that my body was half-paralyzed. I strained to concentrate on my driving as best as I could.”

“Literally, thanks to G-d's kindness, I succeeded in returning safely to Kfar Chabad, dropping off the people I had taken with me at their homes, and arriving back in Yagel. Only G-d knows how I eventually did it. I came into the house after midnight, and when my husband saw me, he was startled and asked what had happened. I looked like as white as a sheet, and he wanted to take me immediately to the hospital emergency room, but I preferred to rest at home and see how I felt in the morning. When I woke up, the head pains had not diminished. I suddenly remembered the letter I had received in Igros Kodesh, and now everything the Rebbe had said was so clear.”

“My husband quickly started giving out tz'daka to the poor and the educational institutions, and after dropping off the children in day care and kindergarten, we went straight to a neurologist, who made an urgent referral to go to the hospital for a more thorough examination. After a full day of tests, I was released and my pregnancy was designated as “at risk”.”

“Prior to the birth, the doctor recommended that in light of what I had experienced, I should undergo a CT scan, adding that he wanted to give me several medications during the birth in the event of any cerebral problems. I did the examination after I wrote to the Rebbe, and the reply again was to increase in tz'daka. Not surprisingly, the test results were good. There was no sign of any problem; everything had disappeared.”

“We clearly felt that there was something very lofty here, and the Rebbe had provided the cure before the illness in a manner of ‘when they have not yet called, I will respond’, and in the merit of the tz'daka, the evil decree was torn asunder. There is a Rebbe in Israel.”

were government sponsored, run by the local council, with boys and girls learning together, and wanted separate kindergartens,” said Mrs. Yugav. “We even



A warm Chassidic atmosphere at the Chaf-Dalet Teves farbrengen

“I realized that the Rebbe was with me. If someone else had gone through such an accident, he wouldn’t have survived.”

received a sizable amount of money from a certain fund that supports the opening of ultra-Orthodox ganim.”

“We considered postponing the opening until the start of the year, but the start of the school year came and went, and the matter was still delayed. Thus, time continued to pass with nothing being done. One week, my husband wrote a detailed report to the Rebbe, and he merited to receive a clear answer in the Igros Kodesh. In his response, the Rebbe expressed his amazement that we hadn’t made use of the four thousand lira at our disposal... My husband immediately remembered about a large sum of money that we had received for the purpose of opening a kindergarten. We saw this as an unmistakable indication that the time had come to do some more serious activities with

the moshav children.”

“Since it was already in the middle of the year, we decided to open a ‘tzaharon’, an afternoon child care facility, where children of working parents can have a hot kosher l’mehadrin lunch, hear words of Judaism and Chassidus, and spend time in a proper Jewish atmosphere. We publicized the program, and we are currently in our second year of operations.”

“The influence upon the children is tremendous. One mother said that she hasn’t felt comfortable turning on the television on Shabbos since her daughter has been learning with us. She has already been instilled with the whole concept of Shabbos, frequently commenting to her mother about *chillul Shabbos*. Most recently, after we had told the children about the Rebbe Rayatz, another mother

came up to me and asked me who the Rebbe Rayatz was. Her young son has been simply nudging her for several days that he wanted a picture of the Rebbe Rayatz at home.”

“Many parents have developed a close connection with us due to the *tzaharon*, and we proceed to meet them at Torah classes and farbrengens. There are parents who come to write to the Rebbe, something they also heard about from their children. Two girls have begun to learn in Kfar Chabad after they were in our *tzaharon*, because their mother wanted a similar form of education for her daughters’ elementary school years, and sent them to learn there.”

“Several weeks ago, on Hey Teves, another mother asked if she could come to our house. She said that her daughters had come home with a note about a special sale on Sifrei Chassidus for the children as part of our *Didan Natzach* activities. Since they didn’t have such books at home, and she was unsure which books to buy, she asked my opinion regarding which s’farim would be appropriate to choose. Naturally, I gave her my help. When she left our house, I couldn’t restrain my excitement. Sometimes we don’t understand the effect we have. Quite often, we find ourselves doing things by rote, yet, these two young girls now learn in Chabad, and now without even realizing it, they have transformed their whole house.”

“Activities with children don’t stop with the *tzaharon*. The eminently successful Tzivos Hashem club conducts activities each week on the moshav. Seminary students from Beit Rivkah come to us weekly and make performances for the

children, instilling them with Chassidic values, all in a beautiful and artistic fashion. It's no wonder that the children come without fail every week.

"During the summer months, we organize a camp, staffed with counselors from Kfar Chabad, and the registration grows from year to year, and the tremendous Chassidic influence upon the children is quite evident."

THE WORLD IS CRYING OUT FOR REDEMPTION!

We asked the shluchim to describe how they publicize the announcement of the Redemption to their community. With shluchim whose home is open all day, every day, to people who want to compose letters to the Rebbe, the question perhaps

seems unnecessary. Yet, we asked it anyway, and Rabbi Yugav smiled. "All of our activities are instilled with Moshiach. Today, the whole world is ready. My wife's cousin, who comes from a non-observant family, has recently started davening. When his parents and friends ask him what happened that he made this change in his life, he says that he is davening for Moshiach to come."

"Every simple little thing is connected to Moshiach. On the one hand, we see tremendous miracles today, while on the other hand the fulfillment of the words of the N'viim regarding chutzpah and corruption plays itself out. In these we witness the Redemption. People hear this from us all the time, and they understand it themselves as well.

The world today is crying out for Redemption."

At the conclusion of the interview, the shluchim left to work on organizing the farbrengen for Chaf-Dalet Teves. "At the scheduled starting time, eight in the evening, only those in charge of the barbecue were there," Rabbi Yugav told us the following day. I cried out to the Rebbe to make sure things worked out. "I was very worried that people on the moshav would go to sleep early, as they are engaged in hard agricultural labor, and that all of our efforts would be to waste. After about half an hour, more and more people started coming. This was the largest farbrengen we had ever held, and it continued until dawn."

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DAVENING AT THE AMUD

For many years, the Rebbe, MH”M, davened at a shtender built especially for him by the students of the carpentry program in the Kfar Chabad vocational school. This shtender was presented to the Rebbe on Erev Rosh HaShana 5723, and the Rebbe dedicated a special sicha in its honor. R’ Shimon Mesheli from Teverya now tells for the first time about the work that was involved in designing this amud, adding an amazing miracle story from the Rebbe that he personally experienced.

By Nosson Avrohom

Translated by Michael Leib Dobry



The farbrengen that took place in 770 on the night of Erev Rosh HaShana 5723 (1963), in honor of the birthday of the Tzemach Tzedek, was most unique in both its content and the unusual events that occurred there. At that farbrengen, Rabbi Yaakov Peles, of blessed memory, founder of the Chabad yeshiva in Kiryat Gat, approached the Rebbe and presented him with the key to the city of Kiryat Gat – something most unprecedented at the time. Immediately afterwards, two T’mimim, Dov Teichman and Sholom Ber Lipsker, came up to the podium and presented the Rebbe with a shtender (amud) for the Rebbe to use for davening. It had been brought from Eretz Yisroel as a gift from the students of carpentry program at the Kfar Chabad vocational school.

THE TALENTED CARPENTER WHO BUILT THE REBBE'S SHTENDER

We spoke with **R' Shimon Mesheli**, who told us the story of how he was entrusted with the great honor of constructing the shtender.

Over the years, he has seen tremendous bracha in his professional carpentry work, and today he is dedicating his life to full-time Torah study.

Mesheli is now sixty-five years of age, the father of five children and the proud grandfather of fifteen, but back when he was requested to build the shtender, he was only a young man of seventeen, a gifted apprentice in the vocational school's carpentry program.

"When I was nine years old, I emigrated to Eretz Yisroel by myself from the city of Rabat, Morocco," recalled R' Shimon as he began his story. "There were many other young people who made the journey together with me as part of the 'Aliyat HaNo'ar' youth program. (The rest of my family arrived in Eretz HaKodesh later.) At first, I was sent to a religious dormitory in the Sanhedria neighborhood of Yerushalayim. Somehow, I became acquainted with Rabbi Tzvi Greenwald, who lived nearby, and he suggested that I enroll in the vocational school in Kfar Chabad. I happily consented."

"At that time, in the year 5720, after having spent five years in Yerushalayim, I was only fourteen years old. Rabbi Greenwald had a very strong influence on me, so together with several other friends, we made our way together to the vocational school in Kfar Chabad. Before long, I felt connected

with and at home in my new environment. When it was to me that I learn in the carpentry program, I immediately agreed, and with the passage of time, I developed a strong attachment to this profession. I produced some really nice woodwork, all of which foretold great things for me in this field. In fact, I did indeed continue to be involved in the carpentry profession for many years afterwards, since my discharge from military service until my retirement."

"While in the vocational school, I had a very warm relationship with the rabbis and counselors on the faculty staff. They showed a tremendous degree of care and concern for all our needs, and I particularly

school's program."

"I worked on the shtender for a whole week. I was fully aware of the fact that we weren't talking about a run-of-the-mill order; this was an amud to be used by the tzaddik of the generation during communal prayer services. Before attaching the upper board of the shtender, upon which the Rebbe would place his siddur, I engraved my name on the reverse side and prayed in my heart that I would have much material and spiritual success in all that I did, including the raising of a proper Jewish family. I also hoped that my parents and teachers would have true nachas from me. When I completed the shtender, they gave it to two young bachurim who were traveling

“Before attaching the upper board of the shtender, upon which the Rebbe would place his siddur, I engraved my name on the reverse side and prayed in my heart that I would have much material and spiritual success in all that I did, including the raising of a proper Jewish family.”

enjoyed Rabbi Greenwald's classes in chassidus."

"In Elul 5722, when I was in the twelfth grade, there were rumors circulating around the school that the students wanted to give the Rebbe a gift – a shtender for davening. At a certain point, they apparently wrote about this to the Rebbe and received his consent. Sketch diagrams for the shtender were prepared, accompanied by notes apparently submitted by a professional carpenter who was in contact with 770. I don't know why this tremendous privilege fell into my lap, except for the possible reason that I was the most skilled carpenter in the

that year to the Rebbe's court in Crown Heights. They were Dov Teichman and Sholom Ber Lipskier, and they were given the honor of actually presenting it to the Rebbe, who began using it for davening."

Mesheli continued to feel a strong connection to the Rebbe, which grew as he matured and his appreciation for the Rebbe's greatness deepened. He would customarily write letters to the Rebbe requesting advice in all matters of his life. When a shidduch was suggested between him and his future wife, the young couple received a letter of bracha from the Rebbe. Similarly, on the day of their

wedding, the Rebbe blessed them in a letter that they should build an everlasting Jewish home together. This regular exchange of letters reached its climax with an incredible miracle that took place with their son, Yehuda Yosef, who was born with a rare brain disorder. The Rebbe gave his bracha, and the miracle was not long in coming. R' Shimon recalls the details as he continues his story:

"This amazing incident occurred in 5740 (1980). My wife's pregnancy was as normal just as those that preceded it, but when the child was born, the doctors informed us that our new baby was suffering from a serious condition. The fontanels on the baby's head were closed, thereby preventing the normal development of the child's brain. His head was literally swollen. Since the Poria Hospital in Teverya was insufficiently equipped to deal with this type of problem, they sent him to Rambam Hospital in Haifa. The doctors didn't leave us any alternative: 'If you want to save his life, you must agree to an immediate operation to reduce the cranial pressure.'"

"We were extremely fearful of allowing them to perform an operation. After all, we were talking about putting an infant, who was no more than a few days old, through complicated brain surgery lasting several hours, but we simply had no choice. The doctor in charge of our case explained to us that without the surgery, his brain could not develop properly, and he would be unable to survive for more than a few days in such a condition. 'The brain is tightly closed, and all the limbs are paralyzed,' said Dr. Gelbo of the Rambam Medical Center. When we realized the gravity of the

situation, we gave our consent to hospitalize the child, while I went to pray at the Rambam's tomb in Teverya. The operation was scheduled for the following day, and I opened up a book of T'hilim and poured my heart out before Alm-ghty G-d that He should save my son's life."

"During my prayers, I suddenly noticed an elderly Jew, surrounded by a large entourage, davening at one of the nearby holy gravesites. When I asked a member of the group who the elderly Jew was, he replied that this was none other than the Gerer Rebbe. I asked for his bracha, but at first he didn't respond, since he was deeply immersed in his thoughts. However, when he completed his prayers, I repeated my request as I mentioned my son's name, and he told me that I should remove all worry from my heart and everything will be alright."

"After davening at the Rambam's tomb, I went to the Chabad House and spoke with the shliach, Rabbi Yair. I told him that I wanted to send a fax to the Rebbe and ask for a bracha, and he happily agreed to help me."

"I headed for the hospital, calm and reassured. I knew that if I had sent a letter to the Rebbe, everything would be fine. If the Rebbe wanted to prevent the operation, he would make certain to send me the answer beforehand. The answer eventually arrived after the operation, which proved to be an amazing miracle. Just before our son was brought into the operating room, I asked the surgeon to find a room where my wife and I could daven and say T'hilim for his recovery. The doctor granted our request and made a special room available for us. According to the doctor,

the operation itself should have taken more than eight hours. As a result, we were quite surprised when he emerged after only three hours were up."

"We approached him in the waiting area, concerned that something terrible might have happened. When we saw him, he let out a sigh of relief. We didn't understand what had happened, and we prepared ourselves to hear the worst, but he didn't appear worried at all. 'The operation is over, and I believe it was successful,' he informed us. 'Your prayers really helped.' It turned out that Dr. Wolfsohn, a highly reputable brain surgeon with Hadassah Ein Kerem Hospital in Yerushalayim, arrived at the hospital that same day. He entered the operating room, heard about the problem, yet didn't understand why the surgeon was planning to perform a complicated operation when there was a far easier and simpler option available. He remained in the operating room and assisted the surgeons in carrying out a much less difficult procedure. Instead of lasting eight hours, the operation took only three hours, and the baby quickly recovered. Various possible post-op complications were no longer considered to be matters for concern."

"Deep in our hearts, we knew that it was the tzaddik's bracha that had helped us."

"It thus came as no surprise that when we returned home at the end of our son's hospitalization, we saw a letter from the Rebbe in our mailbox. The Rebbe wrote that he is giving our son a bracha for a complete recovery and will mention his name at the gravesite of his father-in-law. The letter was signed by the Rebbe himself.

When we read the answer, we knew and felt that the Rebbe had indeed aroused Divine Mercy for our son...”

THE SHTENDER'S ENTRANCE TO 770

Let us examine the details surrounding the shtender that R' Shimon Mesheli was privileged to build for the Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach, and the moment at which the two T'mimim presented it to the Rebbe.

In the Rebbe's library, there are four shtenders that the Rebbe used during davening. The first was used between the years 5710-5715, the second was used between the years 5716-5718, the third was used from 5719, and the fourth shtender was presented to the Rebbe on Erev Rosh HaShana 5722.

Further details appear in the Seifer “Beis Chayeinu – 770”, pgs. 152-154:

In the early years of his leadership, the Rebbe refused to sit on a special chair near a designated amud during davening, choosing instead to sit on a regular bench near a regular table in the small Zal room. However, there was a difference between the way the Rebbe davened on weekdays and on Shabbosim. On weekdays, the Rebbe davened the Amida near the regular table, whereas on Shabbosim, the Chassidim placed a shtender in the southeastern corner, which the Rebbe would use for davening the Amida.

This amud, which stood in the shul's southeastern corner during the early years of the Rebbe's leadership, was built low and slanted. According to Aguch library director, Rabbi Sholom Ber Levin, this enabled the Rebbe to sit near the amud when his



R' Shimon Mesheli in his graduating class picture from the Kfar Chabad vocational school

“Awareness of the shtender's inner essence aroused the Alter Rebbe's feelings of devotion for G-d.

siddur was placed upon it. While it isn't clear at what time this amud was built, we know that by Tishrei 5712, the Rebbe was already using it.

Several years later, they replaced that amud with a higher one, which was followed a few years later by a larger, wider, and more attractive shtender. Two small doors were added to the structure of the shtender, along with a shelf that could be pulled out when needed, such as when the Rebbe sat near the shtender and placed his siddur on this shelf.

In 5722, a fourth shtender, similar to the third one, was built for the Rebbe in the Kfar Chabad vocational school.

In Elul of that year, a k'vutza from Eretz Yisroel came for Tishrei on a special chartered

plane. Rabbi Berel Lipskier was a member of this group, and the shtender for the Rebbe was sent with him. He presented the shtender to the Rebbe, together with Rabbi Dov Teichman, during the special farbrengen the Rebbe conducted on the night of Erev Rosh HaShana in honor of the guests.

The Rebbe delivered a special sicha that night, referring to the amud brought from Eretz HaKodesh.

In the T'mimim diary from Tishrei 5723 [edited by the Rebbe, printed in 'Chabad Journal', and later used as part of the seifer 'The Rebbe – 30 Years of Leadership', pg. 50], there is a description of this special farbrengen, along with various episodes that occurred during the event, excerpted here:

"Afterwards, an 'amud' dedicated to Torah and t'filla – as a gift to the Rebbe from and made by the students of the carpentry division of the Kfar Chabad vocational school – was brought to the platform. In response, the Rebbe devoted a special sicha to the receiving of the gift. The sicha was based on an interesting story. The Rebbe explained:

As is known, according to the ways of Chabad Chassidus, prayer is an opportunity to contemplate G-dliness. Once, after the Rosh HaShana prayers, the Alter Rebbe asked his son and eventual successor, the future Mittler Rebbe, about his kavanos during davening. "To which content did you consecrate your prayers today?" he asked him. The Mittler Rebbe replied, "I meditated on the verse 'And all who stand erect shall prostrate themselves before You'." The Mittler Rebbe, in turn, posed the same question to his father. The Alter Rebbe replied, 'Mit'n shtender' (= with the amud)." In other words, awareness of the shtender's inner essence aroused the Alter Rebbe's feelings of

devotion for G-d.

The Rebbe emphasized his usage of the shtender, its spiritual value, and what we could learn from it.

After the farbrengen, the Rebbe gave instructions to bring the amud to his holy room, where it remained for over six months. During that year, the downstairs shul in the courtyard of 770 was built. This was established as the shul where they davened Maariv, Shacharis, and Musaf on Shabbos (Mincha on Friday and Shabbos were davened in the small Zal upstairs). They would bring the aforementioned third shtender downstairs, and then back upstairs, for each public minyan.

During Pesach 5723, the Rebbe told Rabbi Chadakov that instead of bringing the amud up and down each time, they should take the new amud out of his room and leave it upstairs permanently, while the previous shtender should remain downstairs.

These four 'shtenders', which the Rebbe used for davening during the early days of his

leadership, are kept today in the archives of holy items in the Aguch library.

LOOKING BACK ON THE ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME OPPORTUNITY

In retrospect, R' Shimon Mesheli admits that after decades working in the field of carpentry, this was perhaps one of the most exciting jobs he ever did.

"The design was absolutely beautiful. Even before the order was made, a professional designer had apparently gone over the plans. This was not just another shtender. I'll never forget how the institution's rabbanim and counselors were very moved during the entire process of making the amud, and they were constantly watching how things progressed."

"We were so young, and we didn't appreciate then what we understand today. We were young bachurim, new immigrants looking to adapt to life in Eretz Yisroel and build ourselves up accordingly. But this great merit will remain with us always..."



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BETWEEN THE MUGRABI BRIDGE AND RABBI DOV LIOR

There is a deep-rooted struggle taking place between two cultures. One culture desires to raise a generation of G-d-fearing Jews who know that the Torah applies in every time and place. Apposing it is the religion of democracy. These followers of its flag, for whom law and justice are merely an excuse for persecution of the that which is most precious and holy things to the Jewish People, are trying to invent a new type of galus'dike Jew, one for whom Jewish values are a foreign entity.

By Sholom Ber Crombie

Translated by Michael Leib Dobry

The Mugrabi Bridge, used by the security forces that guarded the entrance to Har HaBayis, was destroyed six years ago. As a result of unplanned construction in the area and the weight of the soldiers using the bridge, the old bridge collapsed. A temporary bridge was quickly built in its place. The new bridge marred the beauty of the holiest place to the Jewish People, taking up forty percent of the area set aside for women desiring to pray at the Kotel. Obviously, this was not an ideal situation and parties who were involved in the matter were looking for solutions to arrange the construction of a permanent bridge that would ensure respect for this holy site, while not inconveniencing those coming to worship.

However, the bridge was not built due to one simple reason:

the fear of Moslem rioting over Israeli interference regarding activities on the Temple Mount. This is what is still preventing the Municipality of Yerushalayim and the Israel Antiquities Authority from building the new bridge. Architects from abroad had already been brought to the location. They proposed constructing the bridge on pillars, thereby making the women's section for prayer almost the same size as the men's section. They also made attempts to reach an understanding with Moslem representatives, assuring them that the bridge construction would be done entirely within the area of the Western Wall. However, despite all these assurances, the fear of Islamic religious agitation threatened the building project of the new bridge.

Please bear with me as I tell yet another story.

A rosh yeshiva composed a seifer, devoted entirely to Torah law, discussing the halachos of the killing of a Gentile in time of war. The claim that justified the writing of this seifer was that many questions were posed before rabbinical authorities during operational activities of the Israel Defense Forces. It's no longer a secret that a sizable portion of those fighting in elite military units are Torah observant IDF soldiers, many of whom turned to their rabbanim with critical questions about pikuach nefesh, relevant during combat. For example, what do you do when a terrorist hides in a house and threatens the lives of our soldiers? What do you do when a terrorist conceals himself behind small children? In what manner are we allowed to wage battle in an operation defined as an act of revenge?

These are not just theoretical issues; rather they are very practical ones. Every soldier who had fought in Gaza during Operation Cast Lead or in Lebanon at the Battle of Bint Jbeil has encountered these questions. The enemy hides himself in a residential area, along with his Katyusha rocket launchers. Thus, what are soldiers supposed to do when they enter a village to make the area free of terrorists, but the Israel Defense Forces forbid this due to a ruling from the High Court of Justice, and as a result, soldiers' lives are placed in danger?

The Seifer “*Toras HaMelech*” was written in order to provide answers to these questions. It was compiled by a scholarly rabbinical authority and received the approval of well known and learned rabbanim throughout the Torah observant community.

Those who didn’t approve of this scholarly work were, of course, the members of the enlightened left-wing, who happen to control the legal and judicial system in Eretz Yisroel, not to mention the media.

It’s possible that the authors of this seifer have been a bit careless and imprecise insofar as their phrasing of the halachic clarifications is concerned. But as of now, rabbanim have given their halachic approval that the seifer is authentically based on Torah and not merely the personal opinion of its compilers.

WHO IS NOT ABOVE THE LAW?

These two stories clearly reflect the situation in Eretz Yisroel today. The police forces flex their muscles against rabbanim, stripping them of every sense of dignity. They have no qualms about arresting a rav, despite the fact that we’re talking about the remote possibility that he might have been one of those who gave approval to a seifer that may arouse incitement. They never bothered to clarify with the rabbi they are arresting if he read

every chapter and verse in the seifer, including the two lines that have all of law enforcement up in arms, stating that it is permissible in a situation of pikuach nefesh to even harm infant children of the enemy. The police also didn’t conduct an in-depth examination into the subject of rabbinical endorsements given to scholarly Torah texts, when it’s clear that such endorsements don’t always cover every section of a given seifer.

So these Rabbis are very well reminded to whom they must answer. Whom *doesn’t* the State remind that he is subservient to the law? These are the sheiks and imams, all those extremist Islamic religious leaders who exhort their followers in the mosques to commit acts of murder and violence against the Jewish People. The police are well aware that they have an obligation to maintain a close watch on Friday public prayer meetings in Arab mosques, as this is the critical time for the Moslem clerics to incite the masses to violence. Yet, they’re afraid to arrest them – and perhaps they’d rather not. After all, it lacks the sweet taste of conquest experienced by harassing the most hated sector in Israeli society – the settler community.

There’s no shortage of examples of people who are above the law. College professors who receive large state budgets take the liberty of excoriating

their Jewish brethren without restraint. It was reported only recently that a lecturer at Ben-Gurion University called for the “breaking of settlers’ arms and legs,” yet no one even bothered to open a criminal police file against him.

This hypocrisy stems from the same feeling of inferiority expressed by those who want to be a nation like all others. They can’t tolerate the fact that a large community exists in Eretz Yisroel which obeys the laws of the Torah and is interested in knowing what the Torah demands of them, including in their conduct during a state of war against an enemy.

There is a deep-rooted struggle taking place between two cultures. One culture desires to raise a generation of G-d-fearing Jews who know that the Torah applies in every time and place. Apposing it is the religion of democracy. These followers of its flag, for whom law and justice are merely an excuse for persecution of the that which is most precious and holy things to the Jewish People, are trying to invent a new type of galus’dike Jew, one for whom Jewish values are a foreign entity.

KIDDUSH HASHEM

But there is also a positive side to this whole episode of the arrests of rabbanim. When these rabbanim remain firm in their allegiance to G-d’s Torah, face the authorities and declare that they will not answer a call to a political investigation, this constitutes an act of tremendous kiddush Hashem. By the very fact that they were placed under arrest, they proved to all those who tried to show otherwise that the Torah possesses the strength of halacha, and this strength rises above all forms of threat or

“What do you do when a terrorist hides in a house and threatens the lives of our soldiers? What do you do when a terrorist conceals himself behind small children? In what manner are we allowed to wage battle in an operation defined as an act of revenge?”

incarceration.

During this period of difficult challenges, both from within and from without, that the Land of Israel is now enduring, we see that this phenomenon of rabbanim being brought in for police investigation can only contribute in a positive way to the pathetic state of Jewish values in the Israel. In the face of the state's divestment of all values and ideology, in the face of the alienation from the Torah of Israel by politicians and policymakers, two rabbis stood firm and proved that they cleave to the Jewish spirit and that the Chosen People are connected to their eternal roots more than to any passing trend.

When the Rebbe cried out on the issue of shleimus ha'aretz, his call was an unambiguous claim in criticism of the rabbanim. Where are the halachic authorities who issue clear rulings in such matters? The Rebbe asked the rabbanim not to be affected and to be steadfast in their position against such a terrible chillul Hashem taking place. The Jewish People appears to be compromising the territorial integrity of Eretz HaKodesh, which G-d gave to them in a most miraculous fashion. The Rebbe's demand from the rabbanim was made with great fortitude and purpose.

In the well-known sicha where the Rebbe tells how he was educated not to remain silent, he also tells how he was raised in the home of the Chief Rabbi of Yekatrinoslav. In his position, there were matters that required an uncompromising stance. Thus, he was taught by example not to be silent and to cry out when something pains you. The Rebbe further told about how his father, of righteous



The Rebbe was taught by example not to be silent and to cry out when something pains you.

memory, stood firm in matters of rabbinical authority, even to the point of self-sacrifice, and he learned from this how the rabbanim of our generation lead the Jewish nation.

The Rebbe is surely most pleased and satisfied when the rabbanim stand firmly and proudly in defense of the honor of Torah, and in this same spirit, a rav must express Torah positions even in a situation of fear and threats.

A DAY OFF ON SUNDAY?

Whether by chance or not, the storm over the arrests of the rabbanim took place during the same week when the headlines proclaimed the prime minister's support for extending the Friday workday to the afternoon hours in order to allow for Sunday as a day off.

On the one hand, this news carries a certain message that under present circumstances, when the holy Shabbos is the only official day off, all Torah-observant and traditional Jews are forced to give up a vacation day that would have been used

for trips and other pursuits. However, on the other hand, we see that through this proposal, the politicians are trying to copy the ways of Gentiles and decimate the country's Jewish character.

The sponsors of this legislation simply don't understand that the holy Shabbos is not just a day off, but it is a G-dly and spiritual day with an entirely different significance. Therefore, it should ideally be entirely out of the question whether or not to lengthen the Erev Shabbos workday until right before Shabbos in a manner that might render harm to the holy day of rest, since according to halacha, the onset of Shabbos must actually commence from Erev Shabbos itself.

Most regrettably, the government has totally failed to notice the spiritual angle of this new proposal, focusing merely on the economic dimensions of moving the day off. We see once again that the desire to be a nation like all others leads to yet another erosion of the holiness of Israel in a country that boastfully pretends to be the Jewish state.

CLARIFICATION

In issue 791, page 18, we published a story in which an idea that is contrary to Halacha was stated. It is an issue regarding which the Rebbe publicly expressed his strong opposition on several occasions.

The story was based on the questionable recollection of a woman who recounted it many decades after the purported yechidus occurred (see Igros Kodesh Vol. 11, pg. 268). We apologize for printing the story and will do everything to prevent such an error from happening in the future.

INFINITY

By Rabbi Heschel Greenberg

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



MULTIPLE DOUBLES

There are several places in the Torah where the Holidays are discussed. This week's Parsha, Pinchas, is one of them. The main focus of the Parsha is on the sacrificial offerings that were designated for each of the Holidays.

When the Torah speaks of the special offerings for Shabbos, it states: "On the day of Shabbos, two lambs..." When we compare the number of offerings brought on Shabbos with those of the other Holidays, we see that there is a discrepancy between them. The Midrash (cited by the Tosfot commentary on the Torah) takes note of the fact that on Shabbos, only two lambs were offered, whereas on all the other Holidays there were more than two. The Midrash records how Shabbos itself complained to G-d as to why it was relegated to an inferior position *vis-à-vis* the other Holy Days.

According to the Midrash, G-d's response to this complaint was that this twin offering befits the Shabbos, because all of the activities associated with Shabbos involve pairs. The Midrash proceeds to enumerate four items associated with Shabbos in which the Torah employs a repetitive expression or which require two items: the Shabbos Psalm (song), Sabbath delight, the penalty for violation of its laws, and the double loaves of Challah that we use for each meal on Shabbos.

The aforementioned Midrash

needs to be analyzed. The question as to why the Shabbat requires only two lambs as opposed to other Holidays is presumably based on the premise that the Shabbat is superior to other Holidays. Indeed, this is the case. How then do we justify its diminished number of offerings by simply saying that there are other aspects of Shabbos that consist of just two items? In addition, Shabbos, as the **seventh** day of the week, is also obviously connected to the number seven, about which the Midrash (cited below in the same Tosfot commentary) states: "All sevens are beloved." Why not have seven offerings to highlight the beloved status of the Shabbos instead of just two?

DOUBLES AS HARBINGERS OF REDEMPTION

To understand the significance and the preeminence of the twin lambs offered as the Shabbos sacrifice, we must preface it with a discussion regarding the significance of the phenomenon of "twinning" in the Torah.

Our Sages in the Midrash (Yalkut Shimoni, Lech Lecha) state that whenever the Torah speaks of redemption it employs a double expression. The Midrash lists the five letters of the Hebrew Alphabet that come in two forms, the form of the regular letter and the form of the same letter when it appears at the end of a word. These are the letters: *chaf*, *mem*, *nun*,

pei and *tzaddik*. The Midrash then proceeds to mention five occurrences of liberation in which these corresponding five repetitive letters are employed:

When Abraham was liberated from Ur Kasdim, the Torah introduces this event with the words "*Lech lecha*," in which the letter *chaf* is repeated. Likewise, the Midrash demonstrates how each of the final letters in Hebrew is repeated in the context of other various forms of liberation. The most familiar one is the double expression "*pakod pakaditidi*." Translated literally, it means: "Remember, I have remembered." This double expression of remembrance is the one that G-d used when speaking to Moses, commanding him to inform the Jewish people of their liberation from Egypt. The final Redemption is also indicated by the double use of the letter *tzaddik* in the words describing Moshiach and his efforts to rebuild the Holy Temple in Jerusalem.

What is it about these double letters that is indicative of liberation?

TWO DEFINITIONS OF DOUBLE

In truth, there are two distinct ways of understanding the number two and the concept of duality. When we say there are two items, this can have the connotation that we have departed from the ideal state

of unity represented by the number one and entered into the inferior state of division and fragmentation represented by the number two. The most glaring example of this is the difference between our affirmation of one G-d and the pagan notion of duality. One is holy and represents utter truth, while the latter is idolatrous and false.

Indeed, the numbers one and two are the two most diametrically opposite numbers. One is truth, unity, and peace, while two is duplicity, division, and discord. Even in English, we use the term “two” or “double” to imply something negative: **double** talk, a **double** standard; **two** faced, etc.

There is, however, a totally opposite way of understanding the significance of the number two, particularly in the context of the Torah repeating itself. A double expression can also have the connotation that what we are describing is a dynamic force that is constantly increasing. Double, in this context, does not mean just double; it can also be understood to mean exponential growth. It is a symbol for that which is infinite.

LIBERATION: INVITATION TO INFINITY

Hence we find the concept of “twinning” specifically with regard to Redemption.

What differentiates between exile and Redemption? Obviously there are many things that separate them. However, if we want to capture the most salient feature of Redemption, we must view exile and liberation on all of their levels. What is the common denominator of the oppressive Egyptian bondage and our lives today in the Western world,

where we have total freedom and opportunity to grow in our spiritual lives?

On the most basic level, exile deprives us of our independence. Exile distances us from the place we want to be, as well as from the things we want to do. Exile removes all of the joy and enthusiasm even from those things that we can do.

However, in its most subtle form, exile stifles our creativity and prevents us from breaking out of our mold. An exile mentality is one that defines the person—either narrowly or broadly—and his or her potential within certain boundaries. Exile conditions compel us to accept those boundaries that confine us as unalterable. We discover that we cannot break out of the box we are in.

Liberation, by contrast, means we are empowered to break out of any confines. No matter how good and positive those things that define us may be, they are still limited and cannot, by definition, change. In addition, because exile implies that we have a limited potential, we are thus subject to the law of “diminishing returns.” Nothing that is finite can last forever.

In effect, the most salient feature of exile is that we are exposed to only a finite measure of Divine energy that a) keeps us from breaking out of our mold and b) will eventually dissipate. In its most brutal form, exile deprives us of our freedom to live freely. In its most subtle form, exile conditions and the exile mentality limit our growth.

This, then, is the most dramatic aspect of the future Redemption. It will unleash an unprecedented and unlimited flow of Divine energy that will engulf the world. Whatever good

we can experience today is, by definition, finite and therefore limited in scope. In the future, the same positive phenomena will acquire infinite G-dly energy. The good we now experience will be redefined in ways that defy our imagination today. And, because the energy that will be unleashed in the future is infinite, it will not terminate.

We can now understand why Shabbat is characterized as a day of “twos.” In addition, as implied by the Midrash, the two sacrifices of the Shabbat supersede the far higher number of sacrifices that were offered on other Holidays. This is so because Shabbos, our Sages tell us, is a taste of the future. On Shabbos we come as close as we can to experiencing the taste of the future Redemption, which is described as the “Eternal Shabbos.”

The two lambs that were offered on Shabbos, the two challot that we eat on Shabbat—as well as all the other doublets associated with the day that is a taste of the future—represent the idea of exponential growth. Shabbos is not simply about two lambs and two loaves; it is about doubling and redoubling the blessings that G-d showers upon us but which exile conditions do not allow us to absorb. During Shabbos those impediments are removed.

INFINITE SONG, DELIGHT, LIFE AND BLESSING

When the Midrash emphasizes the phenomenon of doubles that is manifest on Shabbos, it provides four examples: Shabbos Psalm (song), Sabbath delight, the penalty for its violation, and the double Challah. In light of the aforementioned analysis of the significance of doubles as symbols of infinite light, we can

discern four areas in which there will be expressions of this infinity in the future Messianic Age.

Shabbos Psalm (song): There will be unmitigated and infinite joy expressed through our singing. As we say in our liturgy: “And we shall sing for you a new song.” “New,” in this context, means something that is unprecedented and, as our Sages tell us, it will be an endless song never to revert to sorrow. The future Redemption will be permanent.

Shabbos delight: The Messianic Age will usher in a time of eternal delight. This delight will far outweigh any physical or even spiritual pleasure that we can experience in exile or that we have experienced in the past.

Shabbos penalty: Instead of the possibility of the curtailment of life—which is the penalty for some egregious examples of Shabbos desecration—we will all experience eternal life.

The Shabbat Challot: In addition to all of the spiritual blessings that will be exponentially greater than anything we have experienced in times of Galut, there will also be an abundance of material blessings that are symbolized by the Double Challah. We will enjoy—if we so desire—an infinite supply of material blessings that will parallel the unprecedented spiritual blessings. This is described in Maimonides’ words: “And all the delights will be as abundant as the dust.”

PREPARING FOR INFINITY

Every aspect of the future has its parallel today that actually prepares us for that future.

By observing Shabbat properly—which includes observing the “body” of the laws of Shabbat together with its “soul”, i.e., immersing in the joy, delight and spirit of Shabbat—we prepare ourselves for the time

when there will be a surge of infinite light that will pervade the entire cosmos and introduce true and enduring joy, delight, life, and all the blessings associated with life.

In addition, whenever we break out of our mold and do not allow ourselves to be satisfied with simply finding a comfortable niche for our Judaism, we generate some of that infinite energy that will fill the world in the future. In doing so, we accomplish four things: a) We get a taste of the future now, so that our last moments of exile are uplifted; b) We hasten the Redemption process; c) We make the process of Redemption proceed more smoothly, with less pain and travail; d) We prepare ourselves for and are receptive to the Redemption. Then, dramatic changes that will occasion the Redemption will not overwhelm us, because we have already had a taste of it in these last moments of Galus.

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Chassidei Chabad, from this it is understood that this is not something that is relegated to the past; it is something that is relevant to the practical directives of today. Indeed, it remains relevant insofar as Agudas Chassidei Chabad still operates today, unlike the opinion of those who say that in the year 5710 it ceased operating, may G-d have mercy upon us. Rather, even after [the passing of the Rebbe Rayatz in 5710], “his progeny is alive,” thus “so is he alive” [and his proclamation, therefore, remains in full force]!

NOT JUST TO KNOW HE IS ALIVE BUT TO FEEL IT

The relevance and immediacy of this message is perceived most prominently among those who do not merely **know** that “just as his progeny is alive, so is he alive,” rather, they actually **feel** that the leader of the generation is living among them – be it a feeling that was inspired through a dream, success in business, or the spontaneous thought of doing *t’shuva*, repentance, from his present condition [the status quo] of not at all considering to do *t’shuva*. For at first glance, where did this thought of *t’shuva* come from? *T’shuva* wasn’t on his mind at all!

It is true that it says in *Likkutei Torah*, on the words of the Mishna, “Every day a Heavenly voice emerges from Mount Chorev proclaiming, etc.,” that this Heavenly voice is the cause of thoughts of *t’shuva* popping into people’s minds. However, why did the thought have an impact on him in particular and not someone else? Or why is that another person only entertains a single thought of *t’shuva*, whereas he has two or three such thoughts, etc.!

The reason this awakening affects him in particular is that, as far as he is concerned, the leader of the generation is alive!

(From the address of Shabbos Parshas Pinchas 5745, bilti muga)