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BEIS MOSHIACH

744 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn, NY 11213-3409

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

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:
M.M. Hendel

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

ENGLISH EDITOR:
Boruch Merkur
editor@beismoshiah.org

ASSISTANT EDITOR:
Berel Goldberg

IF YOU'VE GOT A DOUBT, GO AND ASK MOSHIACH HIMSELF!

Every Jew will be able to approach Moshiach Tzidkeinu – after the proper show of respect due to Moshiach Tzidkeinu, being one of the “Eight Princes of Man” and “the Seven Shepherds,” and so on – and ask him: At first glance, regarding a certain detail in the construction of the Beis HaMikdash, Moshiach Tzidkeinu did not build it in accordance with what is understood from the Rambam. Thus, “from what source was the legal recourse derived” to deviate from the ruling of Rambam?!

Translated by Boruch Merkur

LEARN ABOUT THE HOLY TEMPLE - IN ANY LANGUAGE

When a Jew learns about the Beis HaMikdash, the Holy Temple, he may do so in English or any other language. The main thing is to understand the subject matter.

Thus, a Jew goes about visibly in a state of concentration or muttering something, and a Gentile asks him: What are you in such deep thought about? The Jew answers that he is contemplating the measurements of the Beis HaMikdash.

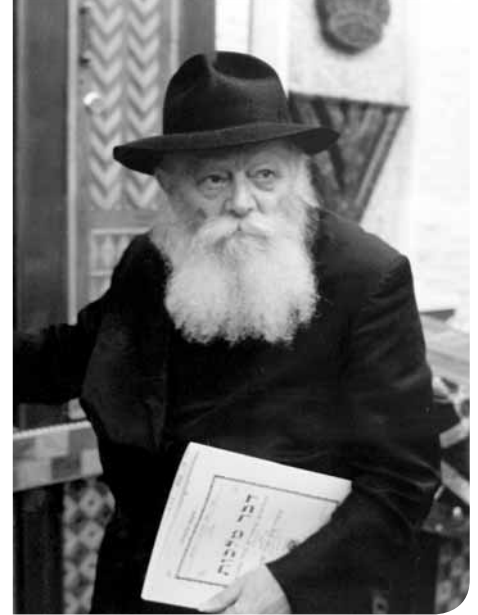
NO CONCERN ABOUT THE THREAT OF ANNIHILATION

This encounter is reminiscent of what took place in the time of the wicked Haman, when

Haman approached Mordechai and saw him with the Jewish children, engrossed in their studies. Haman asked what the topic was. They answered that they were steeped in a discussion about how to offer the Omer sacrifice.

[To this Jew it is as if] the Beis HaMikdash is built, there is a Kohen [serving there], and the Omer sacrifice [needs to be offered]... The only thing that bothers him is how to properly offer the Omer. He doesn't give the slightest thought to Haman's decree of annihilation!

Mordechai, of course, “knew all that was transpiring” – not only below, in this world [i.e., the palace intrigue and Haman's anti-Semitic plots] but also what was going on Above, meaning the severity of the decree On High, may G-d have mercy upon



us. Nevertheless Mordechai's sole concern [at that moment] was the laws of offering the Omer!

The fact that there is a decree upon the Jewish people and there is a need to fast, to say T'hillim, etc. – that will have to wait for another time. Right now he is involved with learning the laws of offering the Omer! ...

THE SOLE CONCERN OF A JEW

Similarly today – when “the matter [of bringing about the redemption] is only dependent upon *t'shuva*, repentance,” and all the decrees have already been nullified – the sole concern of a Jew is: the measurements of the Beis HaMikdash!

The exile does not bother him; [as far as he is concerned] Moshiach has already arrived and there already is the Beis HaMikdash, and so he studies Tractate Middos [dealing with the measurements of the Holy Temple]. From his perspective, exile from the onset does not exist.

EVERY JEW CAN CONTRIBUTE TO BUILDING THE BEIS HA'MIKDASH

Indeed, even after the advent of Moshiach we will need to study Hilchos Beis HaBechira, the Laws of the Holy Temple.

Although Moshiach will build the Holy Temple, every Jew can add nuances regarding how it should be constructed, in accordance with what is written in Rambam's *Hilchos Beis HaBechira*.

In fact, when Moshiach builds the Holy Temple, and one detail is not in line with what is written in Rambam's *Hilchos Beis HaBechira*, every Jew will be able to approach Moshiach Tzidkeinu – after the proper show of respect due to Moshiach Tzidkeinu, being one of the “Eight Princes of Man” and “the Seven Shepherds,” and so on – and ask him: At first glance, regarding a certain detail in the construction of the Beis HaMikdash, Moshiach Tzidkeinu did not build it in accordance with what is understood from the Rambam. Thus, “from what source was the legal recourse derived” to deviate from the ruling of Rambam?!

Indeed, “Torah is not in Heaven” [and so there must be a source for this divergence]. Moreover, “the bashful cannot learn [Torah]” [for they are ashamed to voice their questions and curiosities, and in this case, they would be reluctant to approach Moshiach Tzidkeinu himself in questioning the veracity of his ruling]. Therefore, if a Jew has a doubt as to the manner by which Moshiach Tzidkeinu constructs the Holy Temple, he can and must ask him for an explanation.

Of course, Moshiach will

“The exile does not bother him. From his perspective, exile from the onset does not exist. As far as he is concerned Moshiach has already arrived and there already is the Beis HaMikdash, and so he learns Tractate Middos, studying the measurements of the Holy Temple...

not bear any grievance or spite towards him, knowing that the correct approach to Torah study is [to be assertive, being] that “the bashful cannot learn [Torah].” Thus, Moshiach will surely answer his question.

BUILDING THE BEIS HA'MIKDASH FOR THE ENTIRE WORLD!

The main thing is to strive – throughout the Three Weeks – to learn the portion of Torah connected with *Hilchos Beis HaBechira* and to influence all others Jews to follow suit. For by doing so, each Jew builds the Holy Temple, which is the foundation of the entire world, as our Sages teach that in the Holy of Holies of the Beis HaMikdash, on the Temple Mount, there was the Even HaSh'siya, the Foundation Stone “from which the entire world was established.” That is to say that every single Jew who studies *Hilchos Beis HaBechira*, builds the Beis HaMikdash for the entire world!

In these days we must, therefore, go out to the street, find a Jew, and tell him: Listen, you must build the Holy Temple for the entire world! This is done by studying the portion from the Torah connected with building the Holy Temple.

‘BUT I STILL DON'T EVEN KNOW ALEF-BEIS!’

And when he retorts that he doesn't even know Alef-Beis yet, he still doesn't know the Alef-Beis [the basics] of Judaism – tell him: All calculations of this sort are irrelevant when you must build the Holy Temple for the entire world! Of course, if you don't understand the literature on building the Beis HaMikdash, written in the Holy Tongue, study the topic in a different language. Regardless, you are obligated to build the Holy Temple for the entire world!

When they know that by means of this study, every single Jew builds the Beis HaMikdash for the entire world, all concerns that would cause them to lack tranquility of body or soul fade away. For what worth are these consideration when compared to [the all-important task of] building the Beis HaMikdash for the entire world, the place “from which the entire world was founded”!

Moreover, every Jew is to be told that in this manner “these fast days are transformed into days of celebration and joy and holiday festivals” with the true and complete redemption, though the imminent arrival of Moshiach Tzidkeinu.

(From the addresses of Shabbos Parshas Mattos-Massei of 5736 and 5740, and Parshas Mattos 5741, bilti muga.)

INCREDIBLE SHLICHUS IN THE DEN OF DECADENCE

The Neve Shaanan neighborhood in southern Tel Aviv is an awful neighborhood from both a spiritual and a moral perspective. • A young couple, Rabbi Shmuel HaPartzi and his wife came to this seedy, crime-ridden place and set up a base of operations. • A peek into the topsy-turvy world of Neve Shaanan.

By Nosson Avrohom

The Neve Shaanan neighborhood in southern Tel Aviv, along with several other neighborhoods nearby, has become a center of sorts for foreign workers. It is inhabited primarily by refugees from Africa, China, foreign workers from Southeast Asia, and various shady individuals. The cheap housing is what attracts them. It is not a place to raise Chassidish children, to put it mildly.

Potholes, dilapidated homes and social outcasts fill the streets. The urban landscape meshes well with the population of alcoholics, drug users and foreign workers.

Then, five years ago, a

dynamic young shliach and his wife moved in. Rabbi Shmuel HaPartzi can already point with satisfaction at several baalei t'shuva who have established beautiful Chassidic homes. One of them will soon be coming back to the neighborhood to help him. The shliach reopened the local shul, which had closed due to lack of worshipers, and started shiurim for men and women. He runs large-scale holiday programs and does lots of social work.

"I can tell you for certain that all those young boys and girls who are here are lofty souls who have been searching for answers

to questions that bothered them. When they did not find answers, they dropped out of school. Once they start to go downhill from there, it's hard to stop them. When I am able to have a serious talk with one of them, I am amazed. Their desire for truth is great. These are children with problems that their parents preferred to ignore rather than address."

SEARCHING IN THE WRONG PLACES

Amidst preparing for Shabbos, R' HaPartzi sat down with me as I interviewed him. He



told me the story of how he came on shlichus to this unusual place. When I asked him where he gets the strength for this kind of hard work, work that few of us would be able to do, he tells me his life story, a story about his search for answers and truth.

He was born to a Jewish communist family in Magnitogorsk, a town near Siberia.

“Growing up, the only thing I understood as far as my Jewish identity was concerned was that I was expected to marry a Jewish girl. My family made aliya when I was 12, but

“All those young boys and girls who are here are lofty souls who have been searching for answers to questions that bothered them. When they did not find answers, they dropped out of school. When I have a serious talk with one of them, I am amazed. Their desire for truth is great. These are children with problems that their parents preferred to ignore rather than address.”

by then I had received many years of Communist schooling. I was an outstanding student and had many achievements as a member of the youth wing of the Communist Party. In my

childhood, there were hardly any anti-Semitic incidents. I learned later that Jews filled most of the high positions in the city, and maybe this is why the goyim kept quiet.

“When I grew up, I saw that things weren’t that simple. My mother told me that it was very hard for her to find a job, and when she finally got one and she said her Jewish name, she was suddenly informed that the job would be given to someone else. I remember that in third grade, my classmates told me that their parents said they should not be my friend because I’m Jewish, but they wouldn’t listen to them because I was a good boy. On another occasion they shouted ‘dirty Jew,’ but this was nothing compared to those Jewish children in other cities who were persecuted on a daily basis. I knew I was Jewish, but nothing more.

“One time, my family was sitting and watching a television program that was anti-Islam, describing some barbaric practices practiced by Muslims. Among other things, they mentioned the circumcision their children go through. I was shaken by this, but my mother took me aside and told me that my father was circumcised, and this is a commandment that the Moslems learned from us.

“After that conversation with my mother, my Jewish consciousness began to surface. I understood that, as a child, there were many other things that I didn’t know about Judaism. I then began to realize that I did not belong to just another ethnic minority.

“When we made aliya in the beginning of the 90’s, we lived in Maalot Tarshicha, and I was sent to study in the boarding school named for Meir Shfeya in Zichron Yaakov. It wasn’t a religious place, but the director was religious, and he opened a shul under the auspices of the agronomy department for

whoever was interested. Many went to pray there. Every so often I was asked to be part of a minyan, and I was happy to do so. When I became bar mitzva, I heard from my traditional friends about the aliya to the Torah and putting on t’fillin, and I wanted to do this. The problem was that I wasn’t circumcised.

“The director, who was impressed by my sincerity, spoke with my parents who were happy to let me have a bris. I was sent to Yerushalayim and Bris Yosef Yitzchok. At the end of the celebration, I received a T’hillas Hashem Siddur from them that was translated into Russian. I kept it with me, but I didn’t open it. After my bar mitzva I began an intensive, exhausting search in which I sought answers to my many questions. I wasn’t willing to go with the flow.

“I was a bookworm, and I read books on Eastern teachings. I got excited over every approach I read about, but I was quickly disappointed. I felt that this was momentary truth, but not truth upon which a person could base his life. In the course of my life I saw amazing instances of Divine Providence. I meditated a lot, and it was clear to me that there had to be a spiritual power that was causing all this, but who and what was this power? I did not know. At home I was raised with atheism, and I searched for depth, for meaning.

“For a year and a half I believed in Taoism. They preach about a spiritual world that exists, and since I intuitively felt that there must be a spiritual Power, I connected to this philosophy. I did not know at that time that authentic spirituality is found only in Judaism.

“I grew up in an environment that completely negated a

spiritual reality. I heard the phrase ‘that’s nonsense’ often from those around me. Their approach was that there is nothing beyond what we can experience with our senses. Nevertheless, I felt and understood things that contradicted what I had been taught by my parents. With Taoism I learned how to transcend logic.

“For a year and a half I was immersed in a certain exercise that was supposed to give me a particular spiritual experience, but the results did not match up to all the promises made to me. I realized that the people around me were stopping at a certain point and not moving on.

“Since my thirst wasn’t satisfied, I went out again on a long, tiring search. I remember sitting one day at home and turning to Someone to guide me to the truth, even though I did not know who that ‘Someone’ was that I was turning to.

“The next day, a family friend came to my parents and told them that he had joined a Christian cult. My parents laughed at him, but I found it interesting. I asked him about the group and when they met, and one day I showed up and asked to join. One meeting led to another. I know now that it was avoda zara. They did bizarre things there that bordered on lunacy.

“At first I was enthusiastic and went along with it. Their entire movement impressed me.”

TRUTH SHINING FROM AMIDST THE KLIPA

After he joined the cult, Shmuel became obnoxious towards his parents. He rebuked them and embittered their lives. He was intolerant of anyone who opposed his ways. The search for

peace of mind that he hoped to find in spirituality was leading to the opposite result.

“My father suffered from my behavior. One day my father met one of his neighbors, a rabbinic figure in Maalot, Rabbi Amnon Baron, and asked him what to do with me. The rabbi asked about the kashrus of the mezuzos in our home and found out that we had no mezuzos at all. Within a few days he put new mezuzos up on all the doorposts.

“That night I sat at a cult meeting, and one of the members said he had a strange dream, which he proceeded to tell us. The head of the cult told this man that he must undergo a ‘cleansing’, and he began terrorizing him with all kinds of fearful threats. I sat on the side and thought, this guy can’t hurt a fly; what do they want from him? I decided it was all a lie. I informed them that I was no longer a member of the cult, and I wouldn’t be coming back. They made weird ceremonies in the days that followed to get me to come back.

R’ HaPartzi laughs. “The power of a mezuzah is stronger. I found my Siddur that I got from Bris Yosef Yitzchok. I opened it and began reading. I especially liked Pirkei Avos. I can’t explain it logically, but I suddenly got this sense of elevation, and I felt this was the truth I had been looking for; not a half-truth and not a quarter-truth, but the whole truth!

“I remember how I felt after reading through the Siddur; things I had known about from reading about Eastern and other philosophies were available in a deeper way in Judaism. Without knowing much about Judaism, I felt that Judaism is the source. I felt that only after sustained effort



“There are guys who come from religious homes, and when they did not get the answers they were looking for, they turned to drugs. In many communities, deep answers are simply not provided, the soul is not a topic to discuss, and life is generally lived superficially. Someone who has a sensitive soul and wants the truth can’t put up with this, and when he does not get answers, the drugs give him at least a momentary feeling of satisfaction. The only thing that can lift them up is Chassidus.”

over many years would I have been able to achieve just a drop of what I could obtain by learning Torah or through T’filla. That is the feeling I walked around with in those days, a sense of deep connectedness. A wellspring had opened within me.

“Without knowing anything about Chabad or hafatza, I had a strong desire to tell others who were searching what I felt. Why should they go through everything I had gone through? I put t’fillin on people and spoke to them about the light of Yiddishkeit. When I was in the army I got even more serious about Judaism. I read s’farim like *Tanya*, *Mesilas Yesharim*, and *Me’am Lo’ez*. Whatever Jewish

book I could get my hands on I read from cover to cover.

“People who saw me asked whether I was a Lubavitcher, and I didn’t know what they were talking about. Maybe my appearance and behavior reminded them of a Chassid, but I didn’t run to find out who Chassidim are.

“After the army I went back to Maalot, and on Shabbos I went to the Chabad shul run by Rabbi Yigal Caspi. I met Rabbi Zev Winogradov, a Russian, who is a shliach in Dnepropetrovsk today. He had a big influence on me and got me to learn the Rebbe’s sichos and maamarim. I was very impressed by what we learned. I felt I had found what I was

looking for.

“One night I dreamed of the Rebbe. When I told Winogradov, he suggested that I write to the Rebbe through the Igros Kodesh. In my letter I wrote that I saw him in a dream and asked the Rebbe what I ought to learn from this. The answer that I opened to was addressed to a yeshiva bachur who asked how to connect with the Rebbe. The answer was that it is possible to connect through learning the Rebbe’s teachings and spreading Chassidus to others. I felt the Rebbe was drawing my soul close to him.

“I was learning computer programming at the time, and I dropped that and opened a programming business. My Jewish growth continued.

“I met R’ Michoel Gotzal and R’ Sholom Lugov, both of whom worked with Russian immigrants and dreamed of starting an Internet site for Russian speakers. We collaborated on this project. I helped R’ Gotzal get his organization *Moreh Geula* off the ground, an organization that spreads Judaism and publishes a weekly newspaper. Being involved in this got me more and more involved in Chassidus, and I became a Chassid.”

THE THIEF BROUGHT A SIGN FROM HEAVEN

A year later, R’ HaPartzi moved to Bat Yam where he joined the Geula activities being done there. Five years ago, during the Second Lebanon War, he stayed with a friend in Tel Aviv. While in Tel Aviv, the following incident changed his life.

“When I got off the bus at the Central Bus Station in Tel Aviv, the first thing I saw was a woman chasing after a man who

had stolen her pocketbook. When he saw me, he threw it down and fled.

“I saw that he was afraid of me even though I did nothing to stop him. I decided that if there was such darkness here, I would bring light. I felt I had the ability to do so.”

R’ HaPartzi knew exactly what kind of a job he was taking on. “I understand that not everyone can work in a place like this. You need a lot of kochos from the Rebbe. I wrote to the Rebbe and got a bracha.”

There is a large religious population nearby, and there is one street, Rechov Salma, which divides the neighborhoods. There is an unspoken rule that the religious denizens don’t come to this neighborhood. R’ HaPartzi spent a lot of time looking for an apartment, and when he found one, he and his family moved in. “That same night we started our first shiur. The neighbor was a nice Russian fellow. When he saw me, he said that for a long time he had been looking for someone to teach him Torah, but he had a hard time because of the language.

“I saw this as a sign that the Rebbe wants this shlichus to be done. We began learning Tanya, and the shiur grew. One person brought another, mostly young people who wanted real meaning in their lives and ultimately found it in Tanya. I soon discovered that what speaks to them is the depth of Chassidus. From a superficial perspective, it is easy to categorize them as people who have sunk to the lowest levels, but on an essential level this is not true. These people are lofty souls who are seeking depth that will touch their neshamos.

“When we started learning, I saw that some of them had

good heads, and only ended up in such an unfortunate situation due to lack of proper direction. Their interest in spirituality was enormous, and there was nobody to give it to them. They asked me questions that a shliach in a normative neighborhood or yishuv is unlikely to encounter.

“There are guys who come from religious homes, and when they did not get the answers they were looking for, they turned to drugs. In many communities, deep answers are simply not provided, the soul is not a topic to discuss, and life is generally lived superficially. Someone who has a sensitive soul and wants the truth can’t put up with this, and when he does not get answers, the drugs give him at least a momentary feeling of satisfaction. These guys are fighting the establishment, which, instead of dealing with them, spits them out. The only thing that can lift them up is Chassidus.”

The shiur split into a number of shiurim. R’ HaPartzi learned the Rebbe’s sichos and extracted the points that he knew would have a direct effect on these people. R’ HaPartzi translated parts of *Reishis Chochma* into Russian after he saw that it has a positive effect on them. They began learning a lot of Tanya in depth, and the impact was tremendous. Some of them went on to establish Chassidic homes.

OPENING A SHUL OF THEIR OWN

After three years of programs in his private home and in the homes of mekuravim, he knew the time was ripe for a building of their own.

“The talmidim pushed for this. They looked for a shul where we could hold our classes

and have minyanim. There were already close to a dozen of these students who began wearing kippot. There are a number of shuls in the neighborhood, but they were all closed, testimony to better times when religious Jews lived here. However, over the years, the neighborhood declined, the population changed, and these shuls closed down.

“At first we tried to talk with gabbaim and other people in charge, but that got us nowhere. Many unscrupulous people with corrupt agendas had asked them for the shuls in previous years, some of them with seemingly spiritual motivations, and they didn’t believe anyone anymore. One of the talmidim, Dovid Mordechayev, would not give up. He kept on meeting with people and requesting access to a shul, working his way as high up as the Chief Rabbinate. When they finally understood that we are shluchim and honestly wish to spread Judaism, they helped us. After negotiations we were given permission to open a shul.

“We were able to obtain a Sefer Torah, and although we still do not have a minyan every morning, the shiurim have gone into high gear. We have a daily shiur in Tanya and the Rebbe’s sichos on the parsha. We also have shiurim on other topics in P’nimius Ha’Torah. We are about to advertise in the local papers about a series of courses that will be given in Russian and Ivrit, and based on past experience, we expect a big crowd BE”H.”

ADDRESSING THE ISSUES WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

After dedicating so many hours to the troubled population of Neve Shaanan, R’ HaPartzi is emphatic in what in his opinion as to what is needed to reach out



In the shul

“What’s special about R’ HaPartzi is that you feel you are dealing with someone straight, who isn’t trying to prettify things or make himself look good, but tells the truth as it is.

to the youth of our generation. “We have an entire generation that is being labeled as being hyperactive and lacking in concentration, and as a solution to the challenge, they are given powerful drugs. This might help in the short one, but it definitely does not address the underlying problem! The real answer lies in providing them with nourishment for their soul. When this does not happen, they experiment with drugs and other substances. I work with these guys, and most of them are people with emotional problems that were not dealt with or were dealt with in superficial ways. We must give them answers to their questions.

“Whoever learns even a little P’nimius Ha’Torah knows that it’s a preparation for Geula. This is what we are doing, fixing the world in order to hasten the Geula. When someone abandons his self-injurious behavior, when someone stops using drugs and has genuine experiences that are based solely in Torah and

mitzvos and mainly in Chassidus, this rectifies his soul and the world. I emphasize this in every conversation I have with these unfortunate young men and women.”

A BAALSHEMSKE STORY

Just as R’ Hapartzi wanted to share what he discovered with others, so too, some of his talmidim are not satisfied with their own growth, but want to share it with others as well. Dovid Mordechayev plans on returning to Neve Shaanan to help out with the work.

“I was born in the Caucasus. I come from a strong Jewish background. We had a lot of tradition at home and felt that it is always the responsibility of one Jew to help another; we are all one big family. When we made aliya when I was in my teens, I was sent to a religious boarding school, but I quickly dropped out and no longer kept any religious practices. Not only did I not

“On the way I noticed a black bag lying on the road. I was curious to see what it contained. When I opened it, I nearly fainted. . . Things like this happen in Baal Shem Tov stories ... I felt how Hashem had provided me with tzitzis.”

grow spiritually, but declined terribly and felt that everything I had learned was lies.

“You see fights between brothers, between friends, between neighbors, and between relatives, and you ask yourself how can this be? Outside of Eretz Yisroel we were so united, and here in Eretz Yisroel we’re not?! This lack of unity, the hypocrisy, broke me.

“I opened a cell phone store in Tel Aviv’s Central Bus Station and did very well. It was then, when I had money and status, that I felt the emptiness which motivated me to start putting t’fillin on again.

“One day I began asking questions about emuna and started looking for the truth. I bought s’farim, spoke with people, and searched on the Internet. I decided that if Torah and mitzvos are the truth, then I would go with it all the way. If it wasn’t the truth, then my conscience would be clear.

“By Divine Providence, I met Malcolm, a friend from the past, who like many of my friends had become a baal t’shuva after meeting R’ HaPartzi. He talked to me, and I sensed that he had found the truth.

“He introduced me to R’ HaPartzi, and the rest is history. For the first time I heard about the concept of ‘Rebbe,’ about the Besuras Ha’Geula, and more. These ideas accelerated my involvement in Judaism. What’s special about R’ HaPartzi

is that you feel you are dealing with someone straight, who isn’t trying to prettify things or make himself look good, but tells the truth as it is. His words from his heart entered my heart. I studied sifrei Halacha and Chassidus. Within a short time I changed my way of dressing to Chassidic apparel. I felt how Hashem accompanies me always.

“One evening, we were learning with the Rabbi about the importance of the mitzva of tzitzis. R’ HaPartzi gave us explanations and reasons for the mitzvah based on Chassidus and Kabbala. Right after the shiur I resolved to wear tzitzis, and I wanted to do begin right away. The problem was that there was no place to get a pair in the area, and no store was open at that hour. I biked home from Tel Aviv to Bat Yam. The entire way the impact of the shiur filled me with inspiration.

“On the way I stopped to rest, and I noticed a black bag lying on the road. I was curious to see what it contained. When I opened it, I nearly fainted. It was a new pair of woolen tzitzis, straight from the store. Things like this happen in Baal Shem Tov stories! I stood there frozen in place for a long time, finding it hard to get back on my bike. I felt how Hashem had provided me with tzitzis. The next day I showed up at the shiur with tzitzis, and everybody was astounded by my story.

“Two years had passed since

I first met R’ HaPartzi and became a Chassid. I felt ready to get married. R’ HaPartzi suggested that I write to the Rebbe and commit to learning wedding-related material such as the Maamer ‘Lecha Dodi,’ and I did so. Within a few days I met my future wife who was also becoming religious through Chabad with the help of shluchim in Katzrin. Now both of us are hoping to find an apartment in Neve Shaanan so we can help our beloved shliach.”

I AM A JEW!

Like R’ Dovid Mordechayev, there are other men and women who have begun getting more involved in Jewish life through R’ HaPartzi. With his shiurim, R’ HaPartzi provides a mix of seriousness and depth along with tremendous caring, and this is why people become attached to him and make changes in their lives.

I asked R’ HaPartzi to tell me a little bit about the challenges; after all, they’re a young couple in a very difficult environment. We asked to hear what gives him strength and if he ever despairs.

“I remember something that happened when I first came here, and this will be the most accurate response,” he said after much thought. “I came home after a busy day, and in front of the building I saw a young drug addict rolling on the ground, and my heart went out to him. He was in such bad shape. He was bleeding, and his clothes were torn and filthy. It looked as though he hadn’t eaten in days, and I wondered if he would make it through the night in his condition. He stank, and I stood there looking at him, when out of nowhere a woman showed up. I thought she was from some



Talking with residents of the area

humanitarian group that helps people like him, but then I heard her praying to Yoshke that he save this man's soul. I wanted to take action, but before I made my move, I had the most powerful Jewish experience of my life. As I recount it to you, it makes me cry. This broken man on the ground picked himself up and yelled at her, 'I am a Jew, my mother is a Jew. Leave me alone!'

"I was choked up by my tears. Here was a lump of flesh lying on what seemed to be his deathbed, and in his agony he declared, 'I am a Jew!' I couldn't just walk past him. I took him into the yard of my home and two days later, when he fully sobered up, I put him in my car and took him to the hospital so they could treat his wounds and then send him to rehab. Before I parted from him, I gave him a Siddur. I haven't

“I wanted to take action, but before I made my move, I had the most powerful Jewish experience of my life. . . This broken man on the ground picked himself up and yelled at her, ‘I am a Jew, my mother is a Jew. Leave me alone!’ I was choked up by my tears. Here was a lump of flesh lying on what seemed to be his deathbed, and in his agony he declared, ‘I am a Jew!’ I couldn't just walk past him.

seen him since. When you ask where I get the strength from, this is your answer.

FACING THE CHALLENGES AND THE DARKNESS

"As I raise my children, I constantly remind myself of Yaakov Avinu and his special qualities as the Rebbe describes

them. Avrohom had two children, Yitzchok and also Yishmoel. Yitzchok had Yaakov, but he also had Eisav. Yaakov was the only one to raise his children in Charan, with neighbors such as Lavan, and yet he had twelve righteous sons.

"Obviously, it takes some chutzpa on my part to live here, but I am sure you know the

“I am sure you know the vort on the words, ‘az panim l’Gehinom’, meaning that the brazenfaced are destined for hell. Chassidim love to say that this refers to Chassidim who have it hard in this world, and then, even after they die, they enter Gehinom in order to save souls.

vort on the words, ‘az panim l’Gehinom’, meaning that the brazen-faced are destined for hell. Chassidim love to say that this refers to Chassidim who have it hard in this world, and then, even after they die, they enter Gehinom in order to save souls. We are doing all we can to help the chevra here. We are living on a block with good neighbors. It’s an island of normalcy within a sea of chaos. Aside from that, there are good preschools and a Chabad elementary school in the

city, and we will have to provide the rest during after-school hours.”

R’ HaPratzi understands that on a daily basis, he has a spiritual impact on the neighborhood. The influence is clearly apparent. “I can tell you that around the shul where we learn Torah and give shiurim in Chassidus for many months now, there used to be criminal enterprises and drug dealing. Within the two years that we have been here, that has all disappeared. We recently

noticed this as we schmoozed about what it used to be and what is happening now. Our motto is ‘a little light dispels a lot of darkness.’ People are searching for spirituality even as they are fallen in the mud.

“These people feel that we are on the threshold of Geula more than big Chassidim do, as strange as that sounds. But it’s the truth. We don’t stop talking about it. Their neshamos cry out for Moshiach even if they don’t know to refer to it as such. All our shiurim are based on the reality that the Rebbe is Moshiach, and that *ah, ah, kumt Moshiach*. People understand this in the plainest way. They badly need a personal Geula. When they see me on the street they call out, ‘When is Moshiach coming? We can’t wait another minute!’”



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



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יחי אדוננו מורנו ורבינו מלך המשיח לעולם ועד

ONE CHASSID CAN TRANSFORM AN ENTIRE CITY

According to the HaYom Yom, a Chassid can accomplish miraculous things in the merit and with the power of Torah. This is the reality, as we witness shluchim who are transforming cities into places of Torah and Chassidus.

By Rabbi Yaakov Shmuelevitz

Shliach, Beit Shaan

In the HaYom Yom of the 4th of Tammuz, the yahrtzeit of the mashpia, R' Mendel Futerfas a"h (see box), the Rebbe writes the following. "A single Chassid or student who devotes his heart, mind and soul to Torah and to bolstering Torah, affects wonders in a large city, in all that city's affairs – in a manner that transcends the natural order, by the merit of our Patriarchs, the Fathers of the World."

If, until now, one thought that "affecting wonders" is the business of Rebbes and Kabbalists, the Rebbe is telling us with these words that every Chassid, even a talmid, can and does affect wonders when he devotes himself to spreading Torah with his heart, mind and soul. This does not necessarily

mean that he can heal the sick, but he will surely affect wonders in that big city, in *all* matters of the city, and in a supernatural way.

TRANSFORMATION OF A TOWN

Nes Tziyona was considered a local municipality (i.e. a township as opposed to a city) for decades. Then, on the same day in 5752 that the Rebbe gave his bracha to Rabbi Sagi Har Shefer and his wife to go on shlichus there (the first shluchim to the area), the Interior Ministry decided to promote the status of the yishuv and to categorize it as a city. The shluchim had not yet arrived, and the work had yet to begin, but the moment the Rosh B'nei Yisroel

gave his bracha, and the Chassid – of course – set his mind, heart and soul to the work that he will do in that city, wonders took place, and it openly became a city.

In Nes Tziyona there is a Chassid named Rabbi Menachem Feldman who is a "shliach Torah." He definitely affects wonders in this city. From the moment he arrived, he devoted his mind, heart and soul to organizing many different shiurim. As of this writing, he runs a network of 96 weekly shiurim! Some of the shiurim he himself teaches, while other classes he organizes for others to teach. For example, he arranges for a driver to pick up Rabbi Moshe Rosenfeld from Kfar Chabad once a week so that he can give a popular Tanya

class that takes place in one of the shuls. He also has to arrange for someone to set up the table and chairs, the refreshments, and volumes of Tanya so that at the appointed time everything will be ready for the shiur.

In the list of locations for the 96 shiurim one will find business offices, preschools, workshops at schools, and shuls. The number of participants in each shiur varies between one and dozens. In Nes Tziyona they constantly try to increase the number of shiurim. The goal is now to have 100 weekly shiurim in place!

THE POWER OF MIVTZAIM

R' Feldman shared some stories with me about wonders that took place in the merit of the shiurim in Nes Tziyona.

"A new participant joined one of the shiurim I give in the industrial area. In our first conversation, I learned that this man had a large real estate brokerage in the center of town, which rents and sells houses, businesses and real estate. I arranged to visit him at his office. By this, I implied that I would be launching a new weekly shiur to take place in the brokerage office with all the employees invited to join. Afterward, I would make sure that those who wished could put on t'fillin, ask halachic questions, have mezuzos checked, and receive guidance regarding schools for their children.

"This man's office has separate workstations for each of the employees. Near one of the tables sits a diligent employee; when he was approached, he refused to put on t'fillin. I could see the coldness in his expression towards anything Jewish. On one of the occasions when I asked him if he wanted to put on t'fillin,

he exclaimed, 'What for? I have no connection with these things.'

"After that, I saw him every week, and we exchanged light greetings as I came and went. Then, one day, something unusual happened. When I walked into the office, the owner was in a great mood. He called out loudly to me so that everybody could hear what he said. 'Do you know that since you started visiting us, the company has really improved? There is more business, greater profits, more customers... you can really feel it, and there is such a great atmosphere here.'

"It seemed to me that even that cold fish smiled a bit. I

joining the t'fillos and shiurim. The shul and community are constantly growing in quality and quantity.

"This past Shavuot I decided to have learning and Tikkun Leil Shavuot at the shul. Some of the people expressed their reservations, saying that nobody would show up. 'It's hard enough to show up for davening,' they said.

"However, I decided to go for it and to try the impossible. 'Even if three people come and learn Torah, it will be worth it,' I figured.

"I brought an urn, tea bags, coffee, cookies and cold drinks. I succeeded in arranging to

"R' Mendel hid two small gold bars in case of emergency. He went to bed but could not fall asleep. He thought to himself, 'How can I hide gold bars for myself when there are Jews around me who don't have what to eat?'"

seized the moment and asked him, 'Perhaps you'd like to put on t'fillin today?'

"He responded with, 'Why not?' He rolled up his sleeve, put on t'fillin and said Shema with feeling.

"When I showed up the following week, he had joined the group of regulars who put t'fillin on every week."

SHAVUOS LEARNING

R' Feldman continues:

"Before I came to the shul of which I am currently the Rav, the shul consisted of an older Ashkenazi population. The minyan was shrinking, and I was asked to revive it. Now, many young people attend our shul,

have volumes of the Tikkun Leil Shavuot donated, and I announced that everybody was invited to join. To everyone's surprise, fifteen people came, and we learned together until dawn. At sunrise, I told them we were going to the mikva. Some of them had never seen a mikva, but they all willingly joined me. In a certain way, this was the highlight of the holiday and a peak experience in their lives. Some of them called me after Shavuot and said that Shavuot night had made a change in their neshama.

"Today, each of them passes the word along to bring more and more people to the many activities that take place at the shul."

FELDMAN AND FELDMAN

R' Feldman had a connection to Nes Tziyona even before he was married, when he still learning in the yeshiva in Lud and would go there every Friday on mitzvaim. More than ten years have passed since then, and R' Feldman does not remember most of his clients from back then, but sometimes events come full circle.

A few months ago, R' Feldman walked into a large business. It was the local wholesale distributor of Feldman ice cream. He suddenly realized that he knew the owner. He asked the man, "Tell me, do you remember a young yeshiva guy who would come here every Friday, ten years ago, to put t'fillin on with you?"

The man asked him, "Aren't you Feldman?" He remembered that back then he had noticed the similarity in the names – Feldman Ice Cream and Menachem Feldman. "Of course I remember you."

On the spot, R' Feldman arranged a Tanya shiur, and now Feldman supports Feldman! The ice cream business owner has committed to observing Shabbos and other mitzvos. He helps R' Feldman and is mekarev many people to the Chabad House. At every opportunity he asks colleagues and customers: what about t'fillin? Have you checked your mezuzos recently? Are you aware of the t'filla and shiurim schedules around the city? The ice cream storeowner already has students of students who show up for davening and influence others to increase in Torah and mitzvos.

ONE CHASSID = DOZENS OF MOSDOS

Another shining example to

illustrate how one Chassid can affect wonders in a city is Rabbi Leibel Schildkraut, shliach of the Rebbe to Eretz Yisroel and director of Chabad mosdos in Chaifa and the Krayot.

R' Schildkraut arrived in Chaifa in the summer of 5739/1979. The only Chabad presence in Chaifa at the time was R' Reuven Dunin a"h on Rechov Hertzl 70. R' Dunin was busy most of the day with his work, and in his free time he was mekarev people to Torah and Chassidus. The Krayot had a tiny school run by Rabbi Moshe Oirechman with six or seven pupils.

In 5740 R' Schildkraut began running a Chabad House in Chaifa, working to reach all areas of the city. He organized a Chabad shul to serve the developing community, and he began right away with the Rebbe's mitzvaim. Later on, R' Dov Ginsberg came, and eventually more and more Chabad Houses were opened in Chaifa. Today, ten Chabad Houses in Chaifa operate in different neighborhoods of the city.

In 5743, R' Schildkraut got involved in officially opening a Chabad elementary school in the Krayot. "It wasn't easy," he recalls. The municipality of Chaifa was completely under the control of the Labor party. The city was nicknamed "Red (i.e. communist) Chaifa," and there were people who attempted to halt the religious renaissance. R' Schildkraut has a clipping from a newspaper back then with an item about a Labor Knesset member who submitted a formal query to the Minister of Education. In it, he asked how it was possible for a Chabad school to be operating in Kiryat Yam even though the

school did not have certification from the Education Ministry!

It was only after R' Schildkraut went with one of the askanim to the Education Ministry in Yerushalayim that his school was finally officially recognized.

HE DAVENED IN 770 - AND SIGNED THE PERMIT

Once the elementary school was operating independently, R' Schildkraut's next goal was a high school for girls. Achieving this entailed the endless work of meeting with philanthropists and traveling to government offices and city offices. First, he rented a huge building for the school at a cost of thousands of dollars a month. Next, he went to convince the mayor that he should pay the salaries of the staff. The mayor, not surprisingly, was unwilling to do so. R' Shloimke Maidanchek was brought in to help and they exerted pressure on the mayor through every channel they could. A few months later, the mayor told R' Schildkraut, "I will pay the salaries, but you should know that you did not convince me; you broke me."

As time went on, boys and girls from all the Krayot registered in the Chabad schools in Kiryat Shmuel. They needed a permit from each council head, so that the children from each city would get funding from that city for transportation and other necessities. One council head was opposed to the plan and did not grant his approval. A meeting was arranged for R' Schildkraut with the Minister of Housing who had promised to help, but nothing came of it. R' Schildkraut continued to meet with different people in the hope that the situation could be fixed, but he was still unsuccessful.

R' MENDEL FUTERFAS - ONE MAN, MANY MISSIONS

R' Mendel's yahrtzeit is the 4th Tammuz. By Divine Providence, the HaYom Yom for that day eminently suits the famous mashpia who affected wonders in his own large city, in all that city's affairs. Whoever heard even a little about R' Mendel, immediately understood how fitting the words "One single Chassid or student who devotes his heart, mind and soul to Torah and to bolstering Torah" apply to him. R' Mendel was truly moser nefesh in a most literal sense for all inyanei Chabad and Judaism in Russia and later in Eretz Yisroel. It was clear that the only things that interested him were the Rebbe, Chassidus, davening, Torah and mitzvos.

As soon as he married, he was devoted to establishing and maintaining underground branches of Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim in Soviet Russia. He was also involved in fundraising, and he worked in the black market with an outstanding business sense. He invested all his profits in the Tomchei T'mimim, in building and maintaining mikvaos, and in food to nourish poor, starving Chassidim.

They say that one time, the Chassidim managed to convince R' Mendel to leave something for himself. "If they arrest you, you will need some money to be released," they said. R' Mendel hid two small gold bars in case of emergency. He went to bed but could not fall asleep. He thought to himself, "How can I hide gold bars for myself when there are Jews around me who don't have what to eat?" He got up, took out the gold, sold it and distributed food and money to a number of Jews.

Later on in 5707/1947 it was R' Mendel who ran the covert operation to help thousands of Chassidim and their families to leave Russia with Polish passports. This demanded tremendous mesirus nefesh. The project cost an enormous amount of money. He had to print up the passports for hundreds of families, and once again R' Mendel did all this while he himself remained in Russia to look after those who remained.

In 5731/1971, with the passing of the mashpia R' Shlomo Chaim Kesselman, R' Mendel was sent by the Rebbe to be the mashpia in Kfar Chabad. Here too, he rose to the occasion, infusing a spirit of hiskashrus to the Rebbe amongst the talmidim of the yeshiva, as well as in all of Anash in Kfar Chabad and throughout Eretz Yisroel. R' Mendel brought about a revolution

in Chassidishe chinuch, and he educated an entire generation of Chassidim about the importance of traveling to the Rebbe, learning Tanya by heart, and more. He was a role model for all Chassidishe conduct.

TRANSFORMING MIGDAL HAEMEK

In 5738/1978 R' Mendel began a peula in Migdal HaEmek which totally changed the face of the city. This is the story as I heard it recounted by Rabbi Levi Yitzchok Ginsberg, one of the first students in the Yeshiva of Migdal HaEmek in 5738.

It all started when Rabbi Yitzchok Dovid Grossman asked the Rebbe to send some bachurim from the yeshiva in Kfar Chabad to strengthen his yeshiva Migdal Ohr in Migdal HaEmek. The Rebbe sent a group of bachurim, ostensibly postponing their year on K'vutza. Then the Rebbe invited the bachurim, at his expense, to come to him for Nissan.

When the bachurim had yechidus at the end of Nissan, the Rebbe blessed them with special brachos for success in learning and shlichus. The Rebbe said that they were a branch of Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim. This was surprising, since until that moment, the bachurim were considered students of Migdal Ohr.

As soon as R' Mendel heard the news, he completely devoted himself to the goal of instituting an official branch of Tomchei T'mimim in Migdal HaEmek. Not everybody agreed with him. Of course, R' Grossman preferred that they simply be considered a branch of Migdal Ohr. The rabbanim who today serve at the helm of the yeshiva in Migdal HaEmek were very apprehensive about leaving their homes in a Chassidishe community and moving to Migdal HaEmek, because of a fantasy that R' Mendel had about a yeshiva there. The hanhala of the yeshiva in Kfar Chabad was also not thrilled about a branch that would undermine its own Yeshiva. Nevertheless, R' Mendel plowed on. He knew that "a single Chassid ... affects wonders ... in a manner that transcends the natural order" and he went from rav to rav and convinced Rabbis' Goldberg, Hendel and Gurewitz to go on this new shlichus. They asked the Rebbe for a bracha, and today, the community in Migdal HaEmek consists of hundreds of Lubavitcher families, and nearly 1000 students attend their schools. R' Mendel is the one who affected these wonders in this city.



One day, R' Schildkraut heard that the council leader was planning a trip to New York. He ordered a ticket too, and as though by chance, he met the council head in New York and invited him to visit the Rebbe. The man agreed. He showed up and davened in 770, and was very moved. He warmly thanked R' Schildkraut for the uplifting spiritual experience. As soon as they arrived back home, the man called R' Schildkraut to his office and asked, "What do you need?" He immediately signed the permit. The Chabad schools took another step forward towards their goal.

city permits, budgets, and more for schools. After the girls' elementary school was operating smoothly, it was time to work on a high school. R' Schildkraut and R' Kali found out that on the edge of Kiryat Shmuel, a huge army base was about to be decommissioned, and the area was going to be divided between Kiryat Shmuel, Kiryat Yam, and others. After many requests and pressure, Chabad received a small area to put up a new building for a girls' high school.

The Interior Ministry hired some engineers and surveyors to delineate clear borders dividing the two municipalities, and that

offices, mainly the Education Ministry, and meet with different supervisors. I need to fight for the number of hours of instruction and for teachers' salaries, and I need building permits to expand the schools. Nothing comes easily, but this is what the Rebbe sent me for; it's my shlichus.

THE PROFESSOR SAYS "YECHI"

While constructing the buildings in the former army camp, dozens of meetings were scheduled with the local, district, and national building committees. R' Schildkraut or R' Kali attended every meeting and dealt with opposition from the neighbors, as well as discussions about the height of the buildings and more.

They hired an engineering expert to represent them professionally. Before every meeting, this professor received letters concerning the mosdos, and R' Kali put "Yechi" on the top of every letter. After dozens of these letters, the professor was quite familiar with the proclamation.

After many months, they obtained the final permit to build all the buildings. Rabbis Schildkraut and Kali called to thank the expert for his help. He answered the phone, and when he heard who was on the line, he loudly proclaimed, "Yechi Adoneinu ... L'olam Va'ed – you did it!"

A NOVEL WAY TO GET PEOPLE TO COME TO A TANYA SHIUR

The Rebbe did not just send shlichim to accomplish wonders in large cities, but to any place where there are Jews. For

“He met the council head in New York and invited him to visit the Rebbe... As soon as they arrived back home, the man called R' Schildkraut to his office and asked, “What do you need?”

PUBLIC SERVANT

Many shluchim understand what it means to “give your soul” in order to expand an existing school. This applies even more when a shliach has dedicated his efforts towards starting a new school, and the challenge is compounded especially when the city strongly opposes religious education. Imagine how much effort is needed to start, run and open more and more schools. R' Schildkraut is involved in the development of each school for several years, and then moves on to opening another school, while leaving the administration of the previous schools in the hands of capable principals.

One of R' Schildkraut's old time partners in is R' Boaz Kali. R' Kali is an expert on obtaining government approval,

required some exchanges of land. With more pressure and connections, the Chabad mosdos managed to pick up another twenty *dunam* of land. They also acquired the funding to build a huge building, complete with a large auditorium, classrooms and laboratories.

I asked R' Schildkraut, “How is it that you run the mosdos when every mosad has its own administration?”

He explained to me, “Nearly every day I sit with the hanhala of one or more schools. We discuss what is going on, and I hear what their problems are, whether material or spiritual. If I can provide an answer in light of the Rebbe's sichos, I guide them; otherwise, we consult with Rabbanim or advisors. Very often I visit several government

example, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok Geldzehler is a shliach in Givat Ayla. It is a small yishuv with about 400 families. He and his wife have a personal relationship with every family. They make house calls, give shiurim, and are actively involved in mitvza mezuza and other activities the whole year. R' Geldzehler is a sofer, so when he visits a family, he can do all the work on the spot – take down the mezuzos, check them, and if necessary, provide them with a new one. His hosts say the bracha and put the new one up in its place.

As soon as he and his wife moved into the yishuv, he started a weekly Tanya class in the shul. Rabbi Moshe Eisenberg, who is the principal of the Chabad elementary school in Migdal HaEmek, gives the shiur every Monday.

About four years ago, R' Geldzehler realized that some people just would not show up at the shul for the shiur despite the massive publicity. To solve the problem, he started another shiur! However, in order to ensure that people would realize that this was something new, he and his wife advertised it as a “Tanya Chug” (a sort of club) that would take place every other week in their home.

A group quickly formed. Rabbi Shmuel Lifschitz of the Chabad yeshiva in Migdal HaEmek comes to give the shiur. One person brings another, and the Rebbe's programs are expanding.

THE CHILDREN WON THEM OVER

Rabbi Shlomo Chaim Lisson, shliach in Carmel Maaravi in Chaifa, made a creative change that was very successful. This is



Chabad schools in Krayot

“Some people would not show up at the shul for the shiur despite the massive publicity. To solve the problem, he started another shiur! He advertised it as a “Tanya Chug” (a sort of club) . . .

what happened:

For a long time a group of girls from the Chabad high school in the Krayot would come every Friday to the business district and distribute Shabbos candles to women and girls. Many women were happy to receive them, but as time went on, there were also complaints from people who were angry about “religious coercion” and wanted the girls out of their neighborhood.

To solve the dilemma, R' Lisson enlisted two of his children, 10-year-old Blumie and 7-year-old Yossi. He taught them how to cross the street to the business district, and they went from store to store and gave out candles. Interestingly, nobody protested the visits of these young children. There were

no complaints and more women joined the mitvza. One woman said, “I wait all week for you.” Another one said, “Thanks to you I light Shabbos candles every week.” The children report that often, storeowners convince their customers to take candles from the children and to light them for Shabbos.

R' Lisson gives his children small papers published by his Chabad House with the candle lighting times, and many more women find out about the Chabad House, call up, visit, learn about Judaism and connect to the Rebbe.

12-year-old Shneur takes 7-year-old Yossi, and they go on mitvza t'fillin! Shneur also makes Mesibos Shabbos for neighborhood children who

come to the house. They learn about the parsha through stories, and the kids' parents call up and enthusiastically tell R' Lisson about the change in their children. Children are begging their parents to switch them out of their secular schools to a religious school, and children who are already in religious schools are unsatisfied. They want to switch to schools that are even more religious.

A CHANGE IN PRINCIPAL

In Carmel Maaravi there is a secular school where R' Lisson does Chabad programs year-round. The school used to be run by an irreligious principal who forbade any Jewish activities on school premises. Even when a committee of parents presented a

request for it, she refused. When Lubavitchers gave out material to the children off school premises, she called the police.

Then a new principal replaced her. Now Lubavitchers go every Erev Yom Tov to do programs in all the classrooms, and everybody is satisfied. On Erev Shavuot R' Lisson sent a group of Lubavitcher girls. They went from classroom to classroom to perform a play about Mattan Torah.

The principal called R' Lisson and said, "It was terrific. There is just one problem. They did not manage to visit every classroom, and I'd like to know whether it's possible for them to come again after Shavuot to perform for the two classes they did not have time for, so that they don't miss out."

Among R' Lisson's new mekuravos is Mrs. Chulda Gurewitz who is known in Chaifa and throughout northern Israel as "Mother of the Wounded." She visits soldiers and injured children in hospitals, and she cheers them up with gifts, flowers, and performances.

She recently found out about R' Lisson and his children. She occasionally visits the neighborhood shul where she hears R' Lisson's weekly drasha and the children singing portions of the davening. Chulda saw that this would be a great thing for the wounded, and she asked the rabbi and his children to join her at Rambam hospital. R' Lisson and his children went from department to department and cheered up the injured with their songs.

Continued From page 25

yeichida, which is united with Atzmus, because on the level of Atzmus, individual characteristics are not a contradiction to unity. It is only with the power of this level that we can reveal the achdus within, despite our divergent viewpoints.

The Rebbe gives another way to increase Ahavas Yisroel – by putting a lot of effort into learning his teachings and with chayus. The Rebbe explains the

close to Torah," as referring to bringing people close to Torah study as it will be in the future Geula ("a new Torah will go forth from Me").

When we learn the Rebbe's sichos, especially the ones from 5751-5752, which are a glimmer of the "new Torah will go forth from Me," this will help us reach a wonderful level of achdus.

You sound optimistic. Do you maintain that we have this wonderful achdus now?

people don't see it is because they don't learn the D'var Malchus. When you delve into these sichos, you see an incomparably great level of achdus right now.

How are we different from the students of Rabbi Akiva, each of whom tried to explain his understanding of what Rabbi Akiva taught?

We are not required to stop debating. Now is not the time to stop debating, because this is the time to clarify what the Rebbe said. In fact, debating is a positive thing, because this is what helps us clarify matters. It just has to be done with a genuine desire to listen to the other person's view, to respect it and give it the proper attention. There is no reason to give up what you believe for the sake of achdus, but while we disagree, there must be real respect for others' views.

“Thus, the achdus comes from and through differences, rather than by ignoring the differences.

Mishna, "Be of the students of Aharon," which ends with "loving creatures and drawing them

I am much more than optimistic. I am certain there is the achdus. The reason that

DIFFERENT THEREFORE UNITED

Rabbi Zalman Notik, mashpia in Yeshivas Toras Emes, and Menachem Ziegelboim discuss salient points in the weekly D'var Malchus • Highlights from the Sicha of Mattos-Massei 5751.



Before speaking with the mashpia Rabbi Zalman Notik I studied the sicha on Parshas Mattos-Massei 5751. The sicha is full of both deep concepts and practical ideas, similar to the other sichos that were said in 5751-5752.

At the end of the sicha in Ois 13, the Rebbe makes an amazing statement:

We should add and emphasize that the connection between Ahavas Yisroel and the future redemption is not (only) because the negation of galus results from negating the reason for the galus (which was the opposite of Ahavas Yisroel). For having finished our work during galus we are already "at the Jordan – Jericho," on the verge of Geula, and surely the reason for the galus has already been rectified. So the emphasis on Ahavas Yisroel is not only the performance of a mitzvah, but in these times it is also a taste and a beginning of the true and complete Geula, which is associated with the inyan of unity that transcends division.

• • •

I read these words and wondered about this unity the Rebbe talks about. I looked at my community and figured that I obviously did not understand

the sicha. Please explain to what and to whom the Rebbe is referring.

R' Notik thought a bit and then explained:

One of the things that we see throughout the sichos of 5751-5752 is how the Rebbe refers to the situation that would develop after Gimmel Tammuz. The Rebbe provides guidance to the Chassidim as to how to deal with the feelings they will have in this difficult time of concealment, "for a brief moment I have left you."

I'd like to pause a moment before we continue, to say that the following topic is a bit sensitive, and it is not meant to serve as a *kitrug* (accusation), G-d forbid, against anyone or anything. On the contrary, it places the current situation in a positive light.

As to your question, without a doubt, when we look around us we see a paradox. On the one hand, the Rebbe says the world is ready for Geula. We already have the Shor HaBar, the Leviasan and the Yayin HaMeshumar. Furthermore, the Rebbe told Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu z"l that we are on the threshold of Yemos HaMoshiach.

On the other hand, when we look at what is going on in our communities, we see discord and strife, the likes of which we have never seen before. How can we take a situation of machlokes, consider it a prelude to Geula, and say that this is the threshold and start of Yemos HaMoshiach?

In order to understand this paradoxical situation, we need to first try and understand an important point. We are concluding the book of BaMidbar. This siyum, which is a cause for simcha, takes place during the Three Weeks of Mourning and (in the year the sicha was said, 5751) during the most tragic Nine Days of the year.

In other words, once again, we are looking at a seeming contradiction. On the one hand, the Nine Days are a period of great weakness for the Jewish people because they are days that symbolize the galus. On the other hand, we stand in shul and loudly and joyously proclaim, "chazak chazak v'nis'chazeik." How is this possible?

One might think that since this is a time of weakness for us, we need chizuk. Therefore, by Divine Providence, we conclude

the book of BaMidbar at this time in order to say “chazak, chazak.” It would thus seem that the proclamation is an expression of our weakness, not of our strength.

But no! The Rebbe rejects this explanation and says that proclaiming, “chazak, chazak v’nis’chazeik” in the Nine Days expresses the fact that this period is one of strength for the Jewish people. The statement is an expression of strength, not a result of weakness. To assume that these are days of weakness for the Jewish people is incorrect. Rather, these are days of strength for Am Yisroel.

we try to understand it, we will be able to comprehend it clearly.

In this sicha the Rebbe explains that there are two types of unity. We can understand this through a parable of a teacher who is giving a lesson while his students sit quietly and attentively. From this perspective, there are no apparent differences in the way the students think, nor can we discern their unique talents and abilities. That is one type of achdus.

If we look at our Chabad community as it was before Chaf-Zayin Adar, we had hardly any challenges in regards with the achdus amongst us, since the

instructor’s teachings in another way. Without the teacher’s presence, as they debate amongst themselves, one can readily see the differences in their ways of thinking and the uniqueness of each student. Yet that which seems to be discord is actually genuine achdus, which is greater than the achdus that prevailed when the teacher was talking, and they were all listening.

Why?

This is because in the first case, when the teacher is talking, the “elyon” (higher force) is felt, and the presence of the “tachton” (lower existence) is eclipsed. In the second instance, however, the unique characteristic of each tachton is expressed with full force. That is where the challenge lies, for we must create achdus by coming to a unified understanding of what the Rebbe said. This level of achdus could not exist when the Rebbe spoke while we merely listened.

Initially, the achdus came because of the “maala” (above), however now, the achdus is from the “matta” (below). We understand that the process of creating unity from Below to Above is incomparably more precious than the great inspiration of natural achdus as it is imposed from Above to Below. Another application of this concept is that of “dira ba’tachtonim.” The achdus of a physical dwelling place for Hashem is created in the tachton as it is elevated towards a state of unity from its own position, and not in a way that the elyon reveals itself in the tachton and diminishes its individual form of self-expression.

It is always inspiring to discuss the concepts of achdus and Ahavas HaChassidim. This is true especially during

“One of the things that we see throughout the sichos of 5751-5752 is how the Rebbe refers to the situation that would develop after Gimmel Tammuz.

Chazal revealed to us that the Beis HaMikdash was destroyed because of unwarranted hatred. It’s amazing therefore to see that it is specifically these days that express, more than anything else, the achdus of Am Yisroel, not the weakness of divisiveness and strife. These days represent achdus on the highest level, higher than even when the Beis HaMikdash stood.

Allow me to stop you for a moment and review what you said to see if I understood it. That which represents divisiveness is actually an expression of the greatest unity, and that which represents weakness is actually an expression of the greatest strength?

Correct.

Do you agree that this sounds bizarre?

On the face of it, yes, but if

light of the Rebbe openly shone in every corner of a Chassid’s heart. The unifying light did not allow expression for the different feelings and opinions of every Chassid. We were all outwardly bateil (nullified).

This achdus is characterized in Kabbala and Chassidus by the number one, as in “it was evening and it was morning, one day.” On the first day of Creation, Hashem was the only existence felt in the world. Since there was nothing but Him, there was no room for discord.

Now we can understand what the number two signifies.

Let’s go back to the parable. After the teacher finishes teaching and leaves the classroom, the students begin discussing what they learned. Now the differences of opinion between the students are obvious, with each one grasping the

the Three Weeks when we lament the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash, which was destroyed for the sin of unwarranted hatred. There is hardly a rav or speaker who doesn't address these topics of "love" and "unity" at this time of the year. What is unique here is that the Rebbe deals with this practical issue, not only in its connection to the Three Weeks, but also in connection to the Parsha.

These two unique time periods, before Gimmel Tammuz 5754 and after, are symbolized – says the Rebbe – in the names of the Parshiyos Mattos and Massei. Each parsha's name represents a different level of achdus. "Mattos" symbolizes the achdus that comes from the revelation of Supernal Light to the tachton. When the light comes from the elyon, it negates the individuality of the tachton, and a state of achdus is created while the disunity is hidden. "Mattos" is from the root word "Matteh" meaning strength, standing firm, implying the power of the light and its diffusion everywhere, down to the lowest levels.

"Massei" is the avoda of the tachton working his way upward. "And these are the massei (journeys) of the Jewish people who left Egypt." They were journeying to Eretz Yisroel. This trip began in the lowest place, the aspect of Egypt, and headed in an ascending direction, to Eretz Yisroel. This is similar to the period after Gimmel Tammuz, a time when the Chassidim are experiencing meitzarim – constraints and limitations. Each person thinks differently, and this could lead to one Chassid opposing the other's way of thinking. This can happen because the existence of the elyon is not openly felt.

At this time we need to make special efforts to unify the opinions, even though they seem to contradict one another. Although it is much harder now to unify, the achdus is more precious even when the progress is in something small, because the achdus is coming from the tachton.

This is what the parshiyos Mattos and Massei represent – a firm position versus a true willingness to grow.

We spoke about the number one, which represents one type of achdus, and the number 2, which represents another type of achdus. In the sicha, the



The days of the Three Weeks represent achdus on the highest level, higher than even when the Beis HaMikdash stood.

Rebbe speaks about a third type of achdus ...

Despite the differences of opinion between us, we need to be making constantly an honest attempt to unite. Uniting does not mean that we all agree on one view. Rather, despite the different approaches and sometimes opposite perspectives, we can be united. When we do this, there is a special *siyata d'Shmaya* (Heavenly assistance). We are endowed with special kochos from the Rebbe that direct us towards unity.

From this aspect, we actually experience the influence of an elyon – that the Rebbe is endowing us with kochos – as well as the ascent from below-upwards though the unity generated amongst the Chassidim. This is the third type of achdus in which there are both movements.

The Rebbe then arrives at the conclusion that you quoted at the beginning of our conversation, that today the Jewish people are already in the era in which the reason for the churban (unwarranted hatred) was rectified. The emphasis now is on *"Ahavas Yisroel by way of a 'taste' and a beginning of the true and complete Geula, which is associated with the point of unity that transcends division."*

Now we can better understand what the Rebbe is teaching us. Before Gimmel Tammuz, the achdus was merely a preparation for the level of achdus that is developing now. The achdus in

this new generation is far greater than that of the previous level. Previously, it was an achdus that came about without any effort from the tachton. Now, when there are very basic differences of opinion, we are taking action to unite. Thus, the achdus comes from and through differences, rather than by ignoring the differences.

• • •

It sounds fantastic. How do we actually do this? Do we put up stickers that say, "I'm in favor of achdus"?

The Rebbe addresses this in the sicha and says that in order to reach this level of achdus, it is necessary for each person to reveal the level of yechida of the soul within himself. It can be accomplished only through the

Continued on page 22

‘I SAY TO THE REBBE: **THANK YOU, THANK YOU!’**

“Go forth to your land and your birthplace.” This was the message of the Rebbe to Mr. Danny Chein, a as a young man came from Eretz Yisroel to the United States, earned a good living, and nearly got married. This is the story of how the Rebbe’s repeated demand of him to return to Eretz Yisroel resulted in his financial success.

By Nosson Avraham

Translated by Michael Leib Dobry

Danny and his staff, including his sons and sons-in-law, work at simchas all over Israel. The business has been a shining success, and many customers arrange the date of their simcha in order that Danny can be the photographer. However, if you ask Danny, he does not attribute this great success to himself, nor to his professionalism, and not even to his years of experience. He attributes everything to a clear instruction that he received from the Rebbe twice.

Danny kept this story confidential for forty years, telling only his closest relatives. At this year’s Yud-Tes Kislev farbrengen

at the Kfar Saba Chabad House, run by veteran shliach Rabbi Yoel Yemini, Danny consented to tell his story publicly for the first time. His thrilling account, seasoned with anecdotes from his years as a student fifty years ago in the Reshet school system, fascinated those in attendance. “My external appearance is not that of a Chassid, but a Chabad flame burns within me. Anyone who learned in Chabad always remains a Chassid.”

SINGING AT THE REBBE’S FARBRENGEN

The first time he visited 770 was in 5723 (1963), at the tender

age of twelve. Despite the many years that have passed since then, he remembers every detail of that most exciting visit.

“I was privileged to learn in the Chabad school in Kfar Saba. Even though my parents were not considered Chabad Chassidim, they sent all of my siblings to the Chabad school. There were two teachers whom I remember well and will never forget: Rabbi Nissim Edrei and Rabbi Zalman *a”h* Levin, who had a very special singing voice. That year, the school decided to send representatives to the Rebbe on a special flight they had organized. Since I had a nice voice, the hanhala decided to send me



along with another student from the school.

“When my parents heard about this, they almost fainted. They would not agree under any circumstances whatsoever to let me fly overseas. I am from a Yemenite family, and just like many others in our community, they were terrified that maybe someone would try to snatch their child.

“After repeated promises and assurances from the schoolteachers, they reluctantly gave their consent. Along with another friend, I boarded a plane to go attend the Yud-Tes Kislev farbrengen with the Rebbe. At the farbrengen, they put me on

the stairs; I realized that other children from Chabad schools all over Eretz Yisroel had also come for this great event. They asked us to sing one of the well-known Chabad niggunim sung on Shabbos and Yom Tov.

“At first, I was so overcome that I couldn’t manage to open my mouth. The other children sang while I could not open my mouth. Then I saw the Rebbe looking in my direction, making an encouraging up-and-down motion with both his hands. As if a magic wand had touched me, I felt calmer, and I started to sing as I always did. These moments will remain engraved in my memory forever.

“This was my first meeting with the Rebbe.

“Before we returned to Eretz Yisroel, they brought us into the Rebbe. I did not know all the customs observed in 770, and I shook the Rebbe’s hand after he blessed me. Apart from the fact that he said the brachos in *lashon ha’kodesh*, the only other thing I remember was the Rebbe’s eyes looking at me with a unique shine, and despite the fact that I was just a boy, I understood that I was standing before a very holy Rabbi. Throughout my school years, R’ Zalman Levin told me that there were Jews throughout history who inspired tremendous awe in others and had a most

“I had finally gotten the message that the Rebbe wanted me to understand. . . . The Rebbe knew exactly what he was saying. Although it may appear that I have it all worked out in the U.S., the Rebbe knows where I am truly destined to be, I realized.”

impressive and distinguished appearance, but the Rebbe was something different entirely.

“After I completed my studies in the city’s Chabad school, I continued my education in the local public school system. When I reached the age of military conscription, I was moved into an elite paratrooper unit.”

THE REBBE SAID TO RETURN TO ERETZ YISROEL

“In 5731, I was discharged from the army. My military service was intense and very exhausting, and I needed a break to relax and refresh myself. I made my way to the land of dreams – the United States – where I hoped to find a good source of livelihood and a little peace and quiet.

“I lived in Cleveland, Ohio for three years and was employed as a security guard for importers of Italian porcelain. Prominent merchants in the field were concerned about possible theft or robbery, and they hired me for my services. My military experience served me well in this area, and the salary was decent. I rented a house and supported myself just as I had wanted.

“After an absence of two and a-half years, I returned to Eretz Yisroel. The Yom Kippur War had broken out, and the Israeli army called up many soldiers for duty. After three difficult months on a number of battlefronts and after the situation had calmed down

considerably, I was released. I returned to the United States.

“In the summer of 5734, I asked for a break from my work responsibilities, and I flew to New York to visit some of my friends. We planned our vacation time well, and over a period of two weeks, we toured many places on the East Coast.

“This was during the Tishrei holiday season, and at the conclusion of one of the holidays, my friends decided to travel to Brooklyn and the court of the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

“Back in those days, I was very far from a religious way of life, and despite the fact that I had visited the Rebbe in my youth, I had never contemplated for a moment that I would spend my time in New York visiting the Rebbe again. However, my friends who lived in New York and who had heard a lot about the Lubavitcher Rebbe really wanted to go. Thus, I agreed to come along with them.

“When we arrived in 770, the farbrengen was at its height. Hundreds of Chassidim crowded into the Rebbe’s beis midrash, and an atmosphere of tremendous joy reigned everywhere. The crowd pushed me further inside, and when I stood before the Rebbe and saw him again in person, I was overcome with great emotion.

“The Rebbe’s gaze immediately brought me back to that meeting when I was a boy.

“In the meantime, the

farbrengen had ended, and the Chassidim began to form a line for *kos shel bracha*. Everyone passed before the Rebbe for a brief moment, and there were those to whom the Rebbe gave a short bracha.

“When my turn came, the Rebbe raised his head and said, ‘Young man, this is not the place for you. You should return to Eretz Yisroel!’

“As I was dragged outside along with a flood of people, I thought about the Rebbe’s words. Yet, unworthy as I was, I failed to understand the importance that each word of the Rebbe has, and after a day or two, I had forgotten all about what the Rebbe had said, as if it had never happened.

“I continued my trip and my cavorting around New York City, and after a week I returned to Cleveland and my many pursuits and friends there.”

THE REBBE REMEMBERED ME

“At the time I lived in the home of a Jewish photographer, a very friendly Jew who gave me his basement as an apartment. He did not ask for monetary payment in return. The only thing that he requested was that I periodically do photography work for him when he needed a backup. I lived an easy, comfortable life and made a lot of money by Israeli standards. I loved the art of photography, so I started working in the field of newspaper photography, purchasing several new and impressive cameras. My Jewish landlord taught me the secrets of the profession, and I was very attracted to it. I had already that my future was in America.

“But then something very strange happened. After about a year, I started to think, and I

saw that despite the fact that I worked many hours each day and earned large sums of money, I had no profit to speak of at the end of the day. Everything that I earned went down the drain, one way or another. Photography machinery broke down, one after another. I attempted to complain to the company offices, but they all refused to respond favorably to my demands, and the high cost of repairs fell entirely upon my shoulders. Every time that I thought that I had succeeded in securing a large sum of money for myself, something happened that caused me to spend it, and subsequently, I had nothing left.

“Some time during 5735 (1975), friends from New York came to visit me in Cleveland. After going places and enjoying their company, they suggested that I join them for a trip back to New York. We purchased some cheap airline tickets and boarded a plane for the great metropolis that very day. Arriving in New York City, I met up with some other friends of mine there, some of whom had experienced great success in their business affairs. While there were also others who were earning smaller salaries, the dream continued to burn within them that they would someday become rich.

“One Motzaei Yom Tov we all agreed to head for Crown Heights for the spiritual experience of a visit to 770.

“We didn’t come in time for the farbrengen though, arriving with the *‘kos shel bracha’* distribution already underway. As I was waiting in line, I suddenly remembered the previous time I had come, when the Rebbe had told me to return to Eretz Yisroel and that my place was not in America.

“In my mind, I recalled



Mr. Danny Chein recalls his meetings with the Rebbe during the Yud-Tes Kislev farbrengen at the Kfar Saba Chabad Center

“... the Rebbe then said to me, ‘Haven’t I already told you that your place is not here, but in Eretz Yisroel?’. . . How did he know and remember who I was out of thousands of people?

everything I had gone through since then – how much money I had earned and how little, virtually nothing, I had left. Perhaps my fortune was not to be found in Cleveland?

“I had finally gotten the message that the Rebbe wanted me to understand, and I started to sweat. The Rebbe knew exactly what he was saying. Although it may appear that I have it all worked out in the U.S., the Rebbe knows where I am truly destined to be, I realized.

“Throughout the time I was waiting in line, I didn’t speak with my friends, as I was deeply engrossed in my thoughts. I noticed that the line was moving along rather quickly, and I would soon be standing once again before the Rebbe. At the very last moment as I stood before the Rebbe, I managed to pull myself together, but nothing could have prepared me for what the Rebbe then said to me, ‘Haven’t

I already told you that your place is not here, but in Eretz Yisroel?’

“I was absolutely stunned. The Rebbe’s eyes penetrated into my body like two flame-throwers. On my way out of 770, I was gripped by a sense of shock over how the Rebbe remembered me!

“While my friends were planning their next round of recreational activities, I was immersed in a state of deep soul-searching. I recalled all the economic failures I had gone through during the last year, how all the money I had toiled so hard to earn was wasted. Why did this have to happen to me? What a holy Rebbe! How did he know and remember who I was out of thousands of people?

“This time, I was determined to do the right thing. I flew back to Cleveland that same night. I did not tell a thing to anyone, afraid that maybe someone would succeed in convincing me to stay in the U.S. I packed my

things and booked a flight for Eretz Yisroel.

"Despite all my efforts to keep silent on the matter, there were a few who saw me packing up my stuff and asked me where I was going. I explained that I did not feel that Ohio was where I should be, and I had to return to the land of my forefathers. They thought that I had lost my mind to leave everything like that – a successful career, a high income, and more. Moreover, if that was not enough, there was a young Jewish woman whom I had met, and we had already begun talking about getting married. Nevertheless, I had concluded that if the Rebbe does not want me in America, this relationship would have to end as well.

"During those hours as I packed my belongings and got

myself organized, I felt as if the Rebbe was standing right before me with his piercing look and saying, 'Young man, don't remain here. This is not the place for you.' I am quite certain that to this very day, my friends who knew me in Cleveland do not understand what brought about my sudden and hasty departure.

"On Monday evening, only two days after receiving the Rebbe's instructions, I was already on a flight back to Eretz Yisroel."

I FELT THAT THE REBBE WAS ACCOMPANYING ME EVERY STEP OF THE WAY

Mr. Chein concludes his story with the details of his first months back after his return to Eretz Yisroel and in the years

that followed. "With the little funds I still had, I bought land, a house, and fixed assets that could neither be worn out nor depreciated. I felt that the Rebbe was accompanying me every step of the way. As time passed, I married, and my wife and I have become the parents of five children. I continued my work in photography, and I opened a large business office. This proved to be a most successful venture, and I felt that I had a real bracha in all my financial matters.

"I can say today with absolute certainty that I became wealthy in the merit of the Rebbe! I now own a large and most successful photography studio, where all my children and sons-in-law work. I say to the Rebbe loudly and clearly, 'Thank you, thank you'."

Raskin's

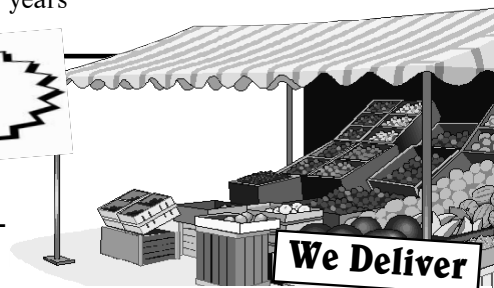
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‘HE FOUND ME HERE TOO?!’

Stories told by R’ Menachem Mendel Novikov a”h
• From a t’shura for the bar mitzva celebration
of his great-great-grandson, Yitzchok Alexander
Nov.

A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY

R’ Menachem Mendel Novikov was born in 5627/1867 in Chalopnitz in the Minsk district. His grandfather’s brother was the gaon known as the *Toras Chesed*. The family’s original name was Fradkin, but he and his brother adopted new last names, hoping to avoid the infamous draft. The move proved successful, since Russian law stated that an only child would not be drafted.

R’ Menachem Mendel married Tzivya Yershov and moved to his in-laws’ town Andriopol, near the city of Tropitz. It was a forested area, and merchants would buy lumber and ship it as rafts on the Dvina River to Riga. He worked with his father-in-law in the lumber business, while devoting the majority of his time to davening and limud ha’Torah. He was also a shochet.

In 1933, he made aliya and lived in Tel Aviv. Later he moved to B’nei Brak. He davened at length every day until at least 1:00 in the afternoon, and the b’nei ha’yeshiva would occasionally farbreng with him.

He corresponded with the Rebbe Rayatz (see *Igros Kodesh*, vol. 2, p. 540, and vol. 6, p. 401).

He passed away on 16 Shevat, 1943. He is buried on Har HaZeisim in the section for Chabad Chassidim, near the grave of his great-uncle, the author of *Toras Chesed*.

A MIRACLE OF THE ALTER REBBE

R’ Novikov recorded his family’s history as follows:

“My great-great-grandfather was R’ Nissan, and he was a Chassid of the Alter Rebbe, the founder of Chabad Chassidus. He was a chazan for the Alter Rebbe on the Yomim Nora’im, and his voice was very powerful.

“One Yom Kippur he suffered from a stomach hernia and after Shacharis he lay down in a side room and did not go to daven Musaf. The Alter Rebbe asked where he was, and the Chassidim told him that he couldn’t stand and was lying down.

“The Alter Rebbe went to R’ Nissan’s room, took his hand and said, ‘*Chazak v’ematz!*’ and then said ‘Let’s go daven.’

“In great excitement, R’ Nissan stood up and went to daven Musaf and N’ila. On Motzaei Yom Kippur, the Alter Rebbe said to him with a laugh that if the same incident had happened to a Polische Chassid, he would say it was a miracle.

“R’ Nissan had a son named Chaim, who tragically passed away about five years after he married, leaving a daughter named Eida. Distinguished Chassidim came to comfort him, led by the son of the Alter Rebbe (later to be the Mittler Rebbe), but it was difficult to console him. After the conclusion of the Shloshim (thirty days of mourning) he still did not go to hear maamarei Chassidus, so the Alter Rebbe himself went to R’ Nissan’s home to comfort him. The Alter Rebbe saw R’ Nissan’s granddaughter Eida, who was four years old, and he blessed her that she would have great sons. Then R’ Nissan was comforted.

“Eida eventually had four sons. The oldest was my grandfather Chaim Nissan, who was a Rav for fifty-five years. He was a great Posek who received ordination from the Tzemach Tzedek, and I received kabbala for sh’chita from him when he was about 75. Another son was R’ Shneur Zalman Fradkin, the gaon from Lublin, who was a Chassid of the Tzemach Tzedek.”

THE REBBE THANKS HIM FOR THE STORIES

In a letter that the Rebbe wrote on Chaf Cheshvan 5715/1954 to the son of R' Menachem Mendel, R' Yitzchok Notte Nov a"h, we read the following (Igros Kodes, vol. 10, p. 75):

"The last is beloved. Thank you for the fine pearl, the story of the Rebbe Rashab, which is in the will of your father, z"l. You timed it well, for your letter arrived on the birthday of the Rebbe Rashab . . . It would be a good idea if you indicate for each story who he heard it from – if it was from the person himself – if you have such information."

In another letter to him from that year, 16 Adar (ibid, p. 387-8):

"Thank you especially for the two stories you copied from the

happened to:

There was a wealthy man, a Chassid of the Alter Rebbe, who had no children. On several occasions he asked the Rebbe to pray for him, but the Rebbe did not reply. One time, the Rebbe asked him whether he would be willing to lose his wealth in exchange for having a son. He agreed, and the Rebbe blessed him with a son. A year later the son was born, and the father lost all his money.

When the child turned 11, he lost his sight, and his father took him to the Alter Rebbe. The Rebbe told the father to take his son to the city of Metz in Germany, and that when he would arrive, he would see a high hill in the center of town. Upon descending that hill, he should turn right to a house and ask the owner to let him stay for a few

and welcomed them graciously, especially when the father told him that he had come from Russia.

The father noticed that the only ones living in the house were the owner, his wife and a maid. The owner had a large store in the marketplace and every evening he would bring poor people to his home and fed them.

The father and son stayed for nearly a week. Every day they walked around the town, and in the evening, would return to their host's house.

After a week, the father told his host what had happened to his son and the advice of the Alter Rebbe to go to Metz and to his house, but now a week had passed, and he still did not understand why he had been sent to this place. He believed in what the Rebbe said and knew the refua would come, but he still did not know how.

As he spoke, he noticed the landlord glancing over at his wife. He turned to his guest and said that perhaps he had something to tell him. He had raised a relative of his wife as his daughter, and she was a fine girl. In the course of hosting people, he noticed a yeshiva bachur from far away who learned in a spirited manner. He brought him home for Shabbos. After a few Shabbasos, he decided he really liked this young man and suggested that he eat by him on a regular basis.

After a year, the bachur made his kind host a proposal. Instead of the paying their hired watchman, he ought to be given the opportunity to be their night watchman, because he wanted to repay them in some way for all their kindness. The host offered to build him a small hut that would shield him from the elements. At first the bachur did

“A few days later she awoke in the middle of the night and again saw the entire yard including the hut engulfed in flames.

will of your father z"l, especially for the story from the year 5679 about my late father. And thank you in advance if you will indulge me with copies of other stories and inyanim from there."

(The story the Rebbe refers to is about the Rebbe Rashab's discussion of the fact that the Baal Shem Tov passed away on the first day of Shavuot and Dovid HaMelech on the second day, i.e. Shabbos 7 Sivan.)

FINDING THE HIDDEN TZADDIK

The following story appears in R' Menachem Mendel's writings, which he heard from someone who heard it from the person it

days. During his stay, he was to walk about every day and become acquainted with the town, and with Hashem's help, he would have his salvation.

The father asked the Chassidim for help, and they collected enough money for him to buy a horse and wagon. In this way, he traveled with his son from town to town. In every town, he collected a bit of money to provide for the expenses of the trip, until he arrived in Metz.

Just as the Alter Rebbe had predicted, the father saw the high hill, and on the right was a large wooden home. He asked the owner whether he might stay in his home. The owner agreed

not agree, but when he saw that his host truly wanted to construct one, he could not refuse him. Each night, this bachur would learn in the hut until midnight, then he would walk a bit in the yard, and afterwards would turn out the lights in the hut.

One time, the wife woke up and saw that the hut was aflame. She screamed to her husband, "There is a big fire in the yard!" He replied, "I told you he wouldn't be good as a watchman." He got dressed and ran to the yard but saw nothing; it was dark in the hut.

"I suppose it was just a dream you had," he said to his wife. Nevertheless, she continued to insist that she saw the hut encircled by flames. However, she had no choice but to wonder that maybe she *had* dreamt it.

A few days later she awoke in the middle of the night and again saw the entire yard including the hut engulfed in flames. She screamed and woke up her husband saying, "Look out the window now, and see for yourself that I'm not dreaming!"

Her husband was frightened.. However, this time too, by the time he reached the hut, the fire was gone, and the hut was dark.

That's when they realized that the bachur was a hidden tzaddik. They did not let him know that they knew his secret. They were so grateful to G-d for being able to host him. After some time they asked their adopted daughter whether she agreed to marry him. They asked him if he agreed to



story. "Three years have passed since the wedding, and we have not seen him. We do not go to him, and he does not come to us. Only his wife, our daughter, comes every week to visit. He bakes bagels, and she takes them to storekeepers and sells them. We asked her several times how she's managing, and she said she is managing very well, and she thanks Hashem for her husband. Perhaps you should go to him and ask him to heal your son."

The guest understood that this was the solution that the Alter Rebbe had in mind, and

“On Motzaei Yom Kippur, the Alter Rebbe said to him with a laugh that if the same incident had happened to a Polische Chassid, he would say it was a miracle.

marry her, and he said that if she was willing, then he agreed. She agreed to the marriage as well, and the host was very happy.

The host wanted to give the young man all he owned since he had no children to inherit him. At the Tanaim, the bachur called him aside and said to him, "I agree to do this shidduch on one condition, that you build me a house on the edge of town. You will not come to me, and I won't go to you. Only my wife will go to you whenever she wants." Since the host knew who his guest really was, he wholeheartedly agreed to this, and it was written into the Tanaim.

The host concluded his

immediately went there with his son. He knew the street very well, since he had familiarized himself with the town over the previous week. When they arrived, the man welcomed them and asked, "Who are you?" The father explained that the Rav from Liadi had sent them so his son would be healed of his blindness.

Hearing this, the man exclaimed, "Oy, he found me here too?! Now I will have to leave so he won't know where I am." He gave them a cure and blessed the boy.

R' Eliyahu Meizlich told me this story. He heard it from an older man, who was the boy who had been blind and was cured.

ADD IN ACTS OF GOODNESS & KINDNESS
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THE GOVERNMENT IS BUILDING FOR THE ARABS!

In the past, the Rebbe spoke with great anguish about the absurd situation in Yerushalayim. Any Arab could live wherever he wanted, even in the city's center, whereas a Jew who wanted to live in certain areas of the Old City was denied permission to do so. Today, this situation has become the reality in Yehuda and Shomron.

By Sholom Ber Crombie

Translated by Michael Leib Dobry

Without question, the hottest story last week was the “Boycott Law”, a piece of Knesset legislation proposed in response to the boycott organized by left-wing elements against products made in the settlements of Yehuda and Shomron. According to the proposed legislation, it will be illegal to boycott products from the settlements. Furthermore, companies that boycott settlement construction will be not allowed to participate in Israeli government bids. The background for this proposed legislation originates in the participation of Israeli companies in the building of the Palestinian city – “Rawabi” – and in return for their participation in the city's construction, these companies made a commitment not to build anywhere in Yehuda and Shomron.

Every company that put in a bid for the Rawabi construction project signed a

binding document forbidding its participation in any Jewish building projects beyond the Green Line. Now, Israeli lawmakers have come out with a counter proposal: anyone who boycotts construction beyond the Green Line will find themselves boycotted within the Green Line, restricting their building projects to Rawabi and no more.

The opposition is naturally in an uproar. The left-wing Knesset Members are not accustomed to being on the receiving end of maneuvers of this type. They are usually the ones to engage in nonstop boycotting. Left-wing lecturers persistently call for a boycott of the settlements. Manufacturers strike at products from beyond the Green Line, while artists try to sabotage the success of the cultural center in Ariel. Of course, all this is being done in the name of democracy and freedom of expression.

THE ONGOING SCHEME OF DECEIVING THE PUBLIC

The building of the new ‘Palestinian’ city of Rawabi is not just the story of the “Boycott Law”. The gall and the audacity of the Arabs has indeed gone up a notch here, but who really thought that we would give the Palestinians a city as a gift and they would shower us with flowers at us in return? From their vantage point, this is merely another round on the way to the establishment of a Palestinian state *r”l* – all at the expense of Israeli generosity.

Here's the real story of ‘Rawabi’. Very quietly and behind the scenes, the Arabs are establishing facts on the ground. While Bibi and Barak forbid Jews to build – the Arabs build with great vigor. Anyone who thought that Bibi is just talking will be proven wrong when he reaches the ‘Rawabi’ area and reveals the creation of a Palestinian state in every sense of the word. The construction in Yehuda and Shomron is going on there – and in full force. The Rawabi building project proceeds day and night, seven days a week. Reports on giving up territory to the Palestinians in the framework of a city development program have yet to penetrate Israeli awareness. However, anyone who knows the details of the building project can say that the 100,000 Arab residents who have been selected to live in Rawabi are asking that this should be done on a fair

share of Jewish land as well.

The city of 'Rawabi' is being built north of Ramallah, very close to the Jewish settlement of Ateret. They see the city growing and developing before their very eyes, as the highway that leads to the city is being built on land that belongs to the settlement. Ateret secretary Eli Rosenbaum states that while the new city will pose a serious threat to the security of the settlement's residents, their primary concern is for the safety and well-being of all the residents of Eretz HaKodesh. They are liable to be in grave danger after the new and developing Palestinian entity beyond the Green Line is established and lays the first stepping-stones to the future Palestinian state *r"l*.

According to Rosenbaum, the government is trying to hide this story from its ministers and other Knesset Members, in order to enable the construction to continue quietly without disturbance, while disregarding those responsible for providing security to the residents of Eretz Yisroel.

NO BUILDING FOR THE JEWS BUT A CITY FOR THE ARABS IS IN FULL SWING

It is enough to hear the words of Bashar al-Masri, the new city's building and planning director, in order to understand what's really behind the Rawabi construction project. "The establishment of this city is not due to political motivations, rather from our right to be here. We have the right to build on our land, wherever we want, throughout the length and breadth of our country." This is not a statement by the prime minister of Israel, but by the construction manager of the first city in the future Palestinian



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“When the Prime Minister of Israel won't dare to publicly announce that this is our land and we have the right to build here wherever we want, the Palestinian Authority says it instead. . . They claim their “historic rights” despite the fact that a century ago, no one had ever heard of the Palestinian people.

state. This unambiguous declaration makes the nature of their objective all too clear.

When the Prime Minister of Israel won't dare to publicly announce that this is our land and we have the right to build here wherever we want, the Palestinian Authority says it instead. They are not embarrassed to turn to the world and ask for recognition of the establishment of the Palestinian state. They claim their "historic rights", despite the fact that a century ago, no one had ever heard of the Palestinian people.

The establishment of this

he institutes a de-facto freeze on all Jewish construction beyond the Green Line.

When the residents of Ateret applied to build a small kindergarten, Bibi denied permission for the project. Yet, at the same time, he authorized the construction of a city for Arabs, hundreds of acres in size.

In the past, the Rebbe spoke with great anguish about the absurd situation in Yerushalayim. Any Arab could live wherever he wanted, even in the city's center, whereas a Jew who wanted to live in certain areas of the Old City was denied permission to

who protested vehemently against this serious threat. The Rebbe spoke about the concern over a Palestinian state at a time when everyone thought that such talk was simply too fantastic to believe. When the government discussed returning Yamit, the Rebbe had already seen the developing reality in Eretz Yisroel, as the policymakers lost their backbone and bowed to the Arabs demands.

Just as it never crossed anyone's mind decades ago that the future of Yerushalayim would be in question, the same situation applies today with regard to the Palestinian state. Yet truth is stranger than fiction. The Palestinians are now standing with their heads held high and talking about going to the United Nations to proclaim a Palestinian state with Yerushalayim as its capital. And while they're busy building in Yehuda and Shomron and advancing their own agenda, the government in Eretz Yisroel is occupied with the question of how to prevent the third intifada, due to break out as soon as the Arabs proclaim their independent state in the territories. However, no one asks himself how this new proclamation might be prevented.

There's only one plan under consideration behind the scenes: a proposal by the Ichud HaLeumi (National Union) Knesset faction and several Knesset Members from the Likud Party for the implementation of Israeli sovereignty in all parts of Eretz Yisroel, including Yehuda and Shomron. This is the only process that provides an answer to the Palestinian initiative in the face of the dangerously suicidal policies of Prime Minister Netanyahu, who recently stood before a joint session of the United States Congress and announced that he supports the establishment of a

“Previous Israeli prime ministers would stand before the cameras and speak unequivocally about a firm and strong settlement policy... and they even approved the construction of several hundred housing units as a means of reassuring the nationalist community. Yet, behind the scenes, they closed deals with the Arabs.

new city is expected to enable a territorial link between Sh'chem and Ramallah for the very first time, posing a tremendous danger to all Jewish residents in the region. If the project *ch"v* succeeds, the entire outer lowland area, including Lod International Airport, would be under the threat of the Palestinian entity, which could someday be under the complete control of Hamas terrorists.

The Palestinians establish facts on the ground, and the government in Eretz Yisroel cooperates. Bibi himself has been talking about the establishment of a Palestinian state for two years, but no one realized that he was serious. He sees no reason to stop the Arab construction, but

do so. It was only as a means of restoring calm that the government permitted a few hundred families to live in the liberated territories. Today, this situation has become the reality in all parts of Yehuda and Shomron. In the name of democracy, the government allows the Arabs to build wherever they want, and in the name of peace with the Americans, they forbid Jews from putting up even one additional caravan.

RESPOND TO THE ARABS IN THE ONLY "LANGUAGE" THEY UNDERSTAND

The one who first foresaw the danger of a Palestinian state was the Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach,

Palestinian state.

Under the prevailing circumstances, the only way to prevent this danger is to respond to the Palestinians in their own language. As the Rebbe requested many times, we have to go back to the “wall and tower” approach, i.e., erect new settlements quietly without fanfare. You simply come at night and erect a settlement of a wall and a tower, thus establishing a new Jewish position.

THE REBBE FOREWARNED ABOUT THE CURRENT SITUATION FOUR DECADES AGO!

As always, our challenges had already been foreseen decades ago by the Rebbe. Similar to what’s happening today, previous Israeli prime ministers would stand before the cameras and speak unequivocally about a firm and strong settlement policy. Yet, behind the scenes, they closed deals with the Arabs. Even then, they talked about Jewish settlement blocs remaining in place among the Arabs, and they even approved the construction of several hundred housing units as a means of reassuring the

nationalist community. Then as today, there was only one clear and lucid voice that sounded the warning call – the voice of the Rebbe.

This is what the Rebbe said forty years ago (!) during a sicha on Motzaei Shabbos Parshas B’Shalach, the 11th of Shvat 5731 (1971):

“With regard to the return of territories, they are making ‘noise’ that they are leaving Chevron, and those who have the authority to decide in such matters had already decided two years ago that they would be giving away Chevron, the Shomron, and several other territories to the Arabs. Furthermore, they have the consent of religious authorities. However, when asked about this publicly, these policy makers reply that it is all nonsense, and they do not believe that the territories should be returned.

“And I claim that in secret – find out and they’ll tell you – the only complaint was: Why do we have to propose legislation to make it forbidden for a Jew to settle in Chevron?

“Afterwards, when they gave permission to build two hundred and forty apartments outside

Chevron, people asked: ‘How is this possible? Shouldn’t the region now remain in Jewish hands?’ The government immediately replied that Jews can live among the Arabs, provided that the Arabs make peace.

“In simple terms (not the language of diplomats), this means that there is no connection whatsoever, and if it has been decided that they must give the designated land away, they’ll give it away together with the two hundred and forty apartments!

“Now, they’re talking about this publicly (after I restrained myself for the last two years and only protested privately). Thus, if we want to know the truth – we are now in such an orphaned generation, in a state of doubled and redoubled darkness – we have to go to the Gentiles to find it. In fact, one of the London newspapers has already reported that a decision has been made to give away 55% of the territories, and with regard to Yerushalayim, the language is now being discussed. Even though there must be a discussion of what the other side will receive in return, the negotiations are proceeding without any hesitation or discussion on this point.”

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SYNCHRONIZATION

By Rabbi Heschel Greenberg

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



STAY WITH MOSES

The Jewish people had just fought their final battle in the desert against Midyan, and they were now poised to enter into, conquer, and settle the Promised Land on the other side of the Jordan River. The Torah, in this week's parsha, recounts how the members of the tribe of Gad and Reuven "saw the land of Yaazer and the land of Gilad, and it was clearly a suitable place for livestock." They then proceeded to request of Moses to stay behind on the east bank of the Jordan. Moses initially was extremely upset about their refusal to cross the Jordan with their brethren. However, when they consented to join their brethren in the conquest of the Land of Canaan, Moses relented in his opposition to their plan to receive their share of the land on the east bank of the Jordan.

One wonders how the members of these two tribes could forgo the greatness of the land of Israel for a mere material benefit.

According to the Midrash, the Gadites knew that Moses would be buried in the east bank of the Jordan. They felt so close to him that they did not want to part from his place of burial.

The obvious question here is: how do we reconcile this explanation with the one stated explicitly in the Torah that they cared about providing their livestock with the best pasture?

Moreover, why would they not believe that the Land of Milk and Honey would also be a most suitable place for their livestock?

MOSES THE CONDUIT

The answer to these questions lies in the way they viewed Moses' role in providing the Jewish people with their material needs. Our Sages tell us that the Manna that fed the Jewish nation in the desert was in the merit of Moses. Moses thus was to them the conduit of sustenance. To be separated from Moses, in their minds, was to deny themselves the ultimate in material blessings. No matter how plentiful and rich the Land of Israel was, the land in which Moses was buried would be the source of even greater blessing.

Thus, the enticement of superior grazing land and the desire to be close to Moses' resting place were not mutually exclusive considerations. In fact, they actually complemented each other. Being close to Moses was the reason the land would be ideal for grazing.

MOSES' REBUKE

This explanation, however, invites another question:

If they were indeed so close to Moses that they did not want to part from his burial place, why was Moses initially so harsh on them? Moses rebuked them for following in the path of their evil parents' generation who did not

want to go into the Promised Land. It wasn't that they did not love the land of Israel; it was that they loved Moses, and they wanted to be close to him. It would seem that their desire to be close to Moses' resting place was no less a noble and holy desire than the desire to live in the Land of Israel. While Israel is the geographic nerve center of the world, Moses was the human nerve center of the Jewish people. Logically, the latter would appear to take precedence over the former. What can be so wrong for them to want to forgo the privilege of living in Israel proper in order to be in close proximity to Moses?

A great rabbi—a follower of the Previous Rebbe—declared in his will that he had two passions: one was the Land of Israel and the other was his Rebbe. He was thus in a quandary as to where he should be buried. In the end, he decided that he wanted to be buried near his Rebbe in the U.S., notwithstanding his passion for the Land of Israel.

The difficulty with understanding why their decision was not regarded as ideal is magnified when we consider the Midrashic tradition that these tribes (of Gad and Reuven), who were the first to settle in their territory, were also the first to be exiled. It is cited by the Midrash as an example of how hasty and impulsive efforts to get something prematurely can prove to be its undoing.

The question is: if, as the Midrash asserts, the Gadites were so consumed by a love for their Rebbe, Moses, why did they deserve to be exiled first?

TWO DIMENSIONS OF CLOSENESS

One can resolve all these difficulties by understanding the concept of closeness. There are two forms of closeness. The first is physical proximity and the second is spiritual affinity. In an ideal world, the two go together. Physical proximity can help to remind us of the love we have for someone. It can also arouse the passion and enhance the love and affection. Conversely, when the spiritual attachment is so powerful, it will manifest itself on every level, including the physical level.

However, we are not yet living in a perfect world. Frequently the spiritual and physical realms are not in sync with one another. A beautiful soul can be housed in an unattractive body. The Talmud relates an incident in which a princess challenged the Talmudic Sage Rabbi Yehoshua: "How can such a beautiful mind be housed in such an ugly body?" He responded with the analogy of aged wine that is stored in earthenware and not in silver or golden vessels.

The Beit HaMikdash, the Holy Temple, was an exception to this rule. There is a Biblical requirement that the Kohanim/Priests had to wear dignified and beautiful garments. The Temple was G-d's model of a perfect world in which the physical reflects the spiritual beauty, and the spiritual beauty is manifested in the physical. In addition, the Kohen had to be without physical blemishes. It was not because a physically blemished person is in

any way inferior to others, G-d forbid. Rather, it is because the Beit HaMikdash was a model of how things will ultimately be in the future when all imperfection will be removed from the earth.

Too often we make peace with our limitations. We have become so stoic that it seems that we can tolerate almost any pain and find rationalizations for it. Because of our exposure to so much inconsistency between what we imagine is the ideal and what is the reality, it has become difficult for some to believe or expect that a time will come when adversity will cease. By having one place on earth where a model of perfection existed, it instilled within us a vision of perfection, as well as a vision of how G-d envisions

too. We must choose between the greater of two desirable situations.

We can now gain some insight into the dilemma the Gadites faced. On the one hand, the Jewish people were commanded by G-d to enter into the Promised Land. That was their mission for which their souls were chosen. In an ideal world, they would have been able to enjoy close proximity to Moses as well as fulfilling their Divine mission because in an ideal world Moses would have not died in the desert and, instead, would have led all the Jewish people into Israel. In that scenario, their connection to Moses would have continued on all levels. But alas, that was not to be.



To be separated from Moses, in their minds, was to deny themselves the ultimate in material blessings. No matter how plentiful and rich the Land of Israel was, the land in which Moses was buried would be the source of even greater blessing.

the future ultimate reality of the world. The Beit HaMikdash, among other functions, served to whet our appetite for the time when the entire world will become a Sanctuary of G-dly perfection.

HAVING OUR CAKE AND EATING IT

Since we are not yet living in a perfect world, we cannot always have both: close physical proximity with the object of our passion, and a spiritual connection to that person. In the less than perfect world that we inhabit—until the imminent Redemption—we cannot have our proverbial cake and eat it

Now that they had to choose between these two options – to either be close to Moses or to fulfill their spiritual destiny – they chose the former. As noble and admirable as their desire was to be close to their beloved leader, their primary mission at the time was to go into the Promised Land and prepare it for the time when the world would become a perfect world.

Arguably, if the entire Jewish nation would have entered the Land—and no tribe would have been left behind—their relationship with the land would have been ideal. The holiness that could have been generated by the totality of the Jewish people

“ While Israel is the geographic nerve center of the world, Moses was the human nerve center of the Jewish people.

occupying the totality of the Holy Land could have sent tsunami forces of holiness to the entire world. And that would have resulted in there not being an

exile.

That was then. Now that we stand on the very threshold of the future Redemption, we must prepare ourselves for the time

when the dream of the Gadites – to be close to Moses in both the physical and spiritual sense – will come true. Indeed, the Midrash tells us that Moses will arise and bring his people—those who remained on the east bank of the Jordan— into the Promised Land. We will then see a world that will reflect G-dly perfection.

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