



## FEATURED ARTICLES

**6 'A PERSON OF VIRTUE  
AND GOOD QUALITIES'**  
Shneur Zalman Berger

**16 MY ESCAPE FROM  
RUSSIA WITH  
REBBETZIN CHANA**  
Yocheved Zalmanov

**24 THE HISTORY OF KFAR  
CHABAD'S 770**

**30 THE FIRST YECHIDUS:  
DIRECTIVES AND  
DIRECTION**  
Rabbi Yaakov Shmuelevitz

**34 A GEULA PERSPECTIVE  
OF TISHA B'AV**  
Rabbi Shimon Weitzhandler

**38 A MODEL MIZBEIACH  
AND THRONE FOR  
MOSHIACH**  
Sholom Dovber Crombie

## WEEKLY COLUMNS

**4 D'var Malchus**  
**13 Crossroads**  
**21 Parsha Thought**

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

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

# BEIS MOSHIACH

744 Eastern Parkway  
Brooklyn, NY 11213-3409

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

**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:**  
M.M. Hendel

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

**ENGLISH EDITOR:**  
Boruch Merkur  
editor@beismoshiach.org

**ASSISTANT EDITOR:**  
Berel Goldberg

# RUNNING TO FULFILL G-D'S WILL

“Make Eretz Yisroel here” is achieved by means of evincing in oneself the concept of “wanting to fulfill the will of his Master” – “ratzta” meaning “will” or “desire,” as well as “ritza,” meaning that fulfilling G-d’s will become one’s own will, even overtly, including a permeating effect that finds expression in the legs (ritza, running). To the extent that they run with their legs “to the clouds of heaven,” rise upon them, and “fly with the clouds of heaven.” \* Continued from last issue.

---

Translated by Boruch Merkur

---

## SELF-SACRIFICE IN EXILE

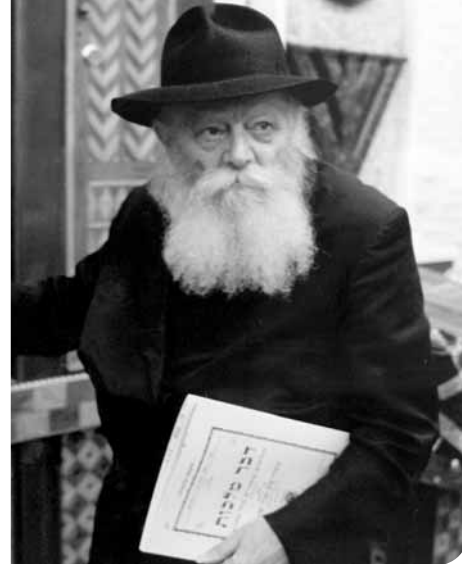
The preceding discussion can be connected with what was explained in the above-mentioned maamer concerning the concept of self-sacrifice – that in the time of exile the concept of self-sacrifice is with greater force.

To begin with, there is the exile of the soul, falling from “a great height to a deep abyss,” descending to the physical realm to be invested within a corporeal body. And as it is explained in *Tanya*, the descent of the soul into the body is tantamount to exile.

Now, the service of G-d while in a state of exile – meaning after the soul has descended into the material world – must be with self-sacrifice and by giving over one’s will to the will of G-d. The same cannot be said, however, regarding the soul as it exists Above, standing in the ultimate state of self-nullification, as it is

written, “As G-d, L-rd of Israel, before whom I stand [i.e., serve (Targum)], lives...” It is not relevant to speak about the soul as it exists in Heaven giving over its will to G-d, for it has fully assumed G-d’s will and there is no possibility for it to conceive of any other will or desire. However, after coming down into the physical world to invest itself within a physical body, cast into a state of exile, etc., then there is a need for giving over one’s will [which is influenced by the foreign desires of the body and Animal Soul, and submitting oneself to the will of G-d].

How much more so is there a need to serve G-d with self-sacrifice when (in addition to the exile of the descent of the soul into the body) the concept of exile in the literal sense is considered, the overpowering of the darkness of exile during the era of the Heels of Moshiach [i.e., immediately preceding the redemption]. [...]



## GIVING AWAY ONE'S WILL

From the above, a lesson emerges for every single Jew, among all the Jewish people, in all times and throughout all generations, especially in the Heels of Moshiach Namely, as has been said above, during the time of exile, especially in the Heels of Moshiach, the concept of self-sacrifice is with greater force.

Of course, the principle concept of self-sacrifice is (as discussed above) giving away one’s will. Because when one gives away his will [something rooted so deeply in the person’s core, his essence], there is an all-encompassing impact [affecting all aspects of his being], and automatically he gives over his intellect and his emotional attributes, as well as the three garments of the soul – thought, speech, and action – in order to fulfill the Supernal will, to establish a dwelling place for G-d in the lower realms. [...]

## “I WILL THANK YOU, O G-D, FOR YOU WERE ANGRY WITH ME”

To conclude with the concept of redemption:

Even from the time of the Gemara it was said, “all the predicted dates [for the advent

of Moshiach] have passed.” Therefore, Moshiach Tzidkeinu should have come a long time ago! Nevertheless, every Jew believes in the coming of Moshiach with simple and perfect faith. When confronted with the fact that Moshiach Tzidkeinu has still not arrived, he understands that certainly there is a reason and explanation of the matter, although he doesn’t understand it. In fact, in the Future Era he will come to say, “I will thank You, O G-d, for You were angry with me.”

Of course, this is all with respect to the past. But concerning the future – even concerning the present – not only does one need to cry out that “all the predicted dates have passed,” but one must plead and scream, “*ad masai?! until when [must we suffer in this bitter exile?!]*” ... Indeed, he will then come to cry out, “Give thanks to G-d for He is good, for His kindness is eternal,” in the context of “Those redeemed by G-d shall say it, those whom He redeemed from the hands of an oppressor.” “Redeemed” is said here in the past tense, as is said in Mizmor 107 of T’hillim, a song that is related to the Rebbe Rayatz’s 107th year, beginning with the 12<sup>th</sup> of Tammuz of this year (the Rebbe Rayatz’s birthday).

## THE MIZMOR OF THIS YEAR OBLIGATES HIM

But the main thing is as follows.

Since on 12 Tammuz the leader of our generation begins to say Mizmor 107 – “Those redeemed by G-d shall say it, those whom He redeemed from the hands of an oppressor” – it is incumbent upon him to arouse

**“Moshiach Tzidkeinu should have come a long time ago! Nevertheless, every Jew believes in the coming of Moshiach with simple and perfect faith. When confronted with the fact that Moshiach Tzidkeinu has still not arrived, he understands that certainly there is a reason and explanation of the matter, although he doesn’t understand it. In fact, in the Future Era he will come to say, “I will thank You, O G-d, for You were angry with me.”**

mercy On High. Or, to arouse mercy in this world, inclining the *beis din* to rule that there is a need for “Those redeemed by G-d shall say it, those whom He redeemed...” (in the past tense). For then the Heavenly court will come to ask how the earthly court ruled on the matter. And of consequence, they too will follow this precedent and rule On High that “all the predicted dates [for the advent of Moshiach] have passed” – taking place just a moment ago!

Simply speaking, in our time, in a single hour, in a single moment, Moshiach Tzidkeinu comes – Moshiach in the literal sense, a soul in a body – and he redeems the Jewish people, “with our youth and our elders, etc., with our sons and our daughters,” a complete nation.

## FLYING WITH THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN

And they shall go [with all their property] “their silver and their gold with them.” This includes silver and gold in the spiritual sense, love and fear of G-d, which motivate and inspire the fulfillment of the 248 Positively Stated Commandments and 356 Prohibitions (along with all their offshoots, details, and minutiae, including the

Rabbinical Commandments, and all “innovations of the advanced scholars throughout history”) – a complete Torah.

This will progress to the extent that it precipitates the spiritual integrity of Eretz Yisroel, in accordance with the saying of the Tzemach Tzedek, “Make Eretz Yisroel here,” by means of evincing in oneself the concept of “wanting to fulfill the will of his Master” – “*ratzta*” meaning “will” or “desire,” as well as “*ritza*,” meaning that fulfilling G-d’s will become one’s own will, even overtly, including a permeating effect that finds expression in the legs (*ritza*, running). To the extent that they run with their legs “to the clouds of heaven,” rise upon them, and “fly with the clouds of heaven.”

In a single moment, an instance, they shall see that “Our feet were standing” in Eretz Yisroel, and there, “within your gates, O Yerushalayim,” “a city that was joined together within itself,” through love of one’s fellow Jew and Jewish unity. More particularly, on the Temple Mount, “the Sanctuary, O G-d, which Your hands established” – and may it be with joy and goodness of heart.

(From the address of 15 Tammuz  
5746, *bilti muga*)

# 'A PERSON OF VIRTUE AND GOOD QUALITIES'

In a rare testimonial to one of his Chassidim, the Rebbe MH"M used these words to describe Rabbi Dovid Kratz, of blessed memory, mashpia of the Chabad community in Afula. He passed away on the 23rd of Adar Sheni.

By Shneur Zalman Berger

Translated by Michael Leib Dobry



**R**ebbe, mitzvaim, and Chabad minhagim — these were the three concepts that filled the life of the Chassid, **Rabbi Dovid Kratz**, of blessed memory. Known to many by his nickname — Radak — he passed away on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of Adar Sheni.

R' Dovid *a"h* didn't like to talk about himself and certainly didn't like when people praised him. That just was not his style. It gave him great joy and satisfaction when he heard that more and more Chassidim were going out on mitzvah campaign activities and being more scrupulous in their observance of Chabad customs. "It's not so important to speak about our father's milestones in life," the family members said during Shiva. "What is of primary importance is to tell about his constant involvement in the Rebbe's mitzvaim, in order that people will hear and take action."

Rabbi Dovid Kratz, son of R' Aryeh, was born in Haifa on the 12<sup>th</sup> of Sivan, 5701/1941. When he came of age, he went to learn in the Kfar HaRoeh Yeshiva, where he developed a close relationship with the rosh yeshiva, the gaon Rabbi Moshe Tzvi Neria *a"h*. While there, he participated in the Tanya class given by Rabbi Meir Blizhinsky. Both the shiur and the teacher had a tremendous influence upon him and several of his friends. In addition, he developed a special closeness with the mashpia, Rabbi Avraham Dunin *a"h*, who headed the Chabad yeshiva student organization in Lod.-

With the passage of time, the Chabad influence grew and intensified, and together with several of his friends, R' Dovid considered moving to a Chabad yeshiva. Rabbi Avraham Dunin gave him the final push to take this step. In 5719/1959, he moved together with his friend, Rabbi Yosef Hartman, to learn in Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim of Lod. While there, he was greatly influenced by the well-known mashpia, Rabbi Shlomo Chaim Kesselman. In Elul 5722, he along several of his friends, traveled for the first time to Beis Chayeinu, but their exit visas were valid only until after Simchas Torah. He returned immediately thereafter to Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim, which was soon transferred from Lod to Kfar Chabad.

In Shvat 5725, he traveled to the Rebbe again, remaining in 770 until Elul 5727. His sons relate that this period was deeply engraved in his memory, and he constantly "lived" with the time he spent in Beis Chayeinu. The stay in 770 strengthened his feelings of affection for the Rebbe and his true sense of bittul towards the leader of the generation. His friends say that



R' Dovid (left) engaged in Torah study – Beis Chayeinu, summer 5726

**“If the Chabad shul becomes empty because we go out to make community gatherings,” he used to say, “The Rebbe will bring other people here to complete the minyan...”**

whenever the Rebbe was in 770, R' Dovid stayed there.

In this manner, he was privileged to experience a special moment on Sunday, the 27<sup>th</sup> of Sivan 5725. Private audiences with the Rebbe continued until five o'clock that morning. At that time, they organized a minyan for Shacharis limited to a set number of participants, comprised of the secretaries and a few bachurim who were still there, among them R' Dovid. The Rebbe led the davening, as he was still in the year of mourning for his mother, the Rebbetzin Chana, of righteous memory. R' Dovid was honored with opening the Aron Kodesh and was privileged to hand the Seifer Torah to the Rebbe.

When R' Dovid went in for his birthday yechidus, the Rebbe told him that he should deal

with shidduchim, adding that “the time has come to utilize the many strengths invested in him while in yeshiva” (not verbatim). In accordance with the Rebbe's wishes, he returned to Eretz HaKodesh in Elul 5727.

Shortly after his return, the administration of “Reshet Oholei Yosef Yitzchak” called him to request that he serve as a teacher at the recently founded Chabad Talmud Torah in Taanach.

He eventually established his home with his wife (May G-d grant her long life) **Odel**, and settled in Taanach, where they worked for the Reshet school. Afterwards, he was sent to Moshav Brosh in southern Eretz Yisroel to teach in another school that the Reshet had opened there. At the end of that assignment, he returned to the north and settled with his wife

**“He also spent much time with the Tzivos Hashem children, seeking to harness their active enthusiasm at a very young age as faithful soldiers of the Rebbe.**

in Afula. He began working for the Chabad Talmud Torah in Natrat Ilit, where he served in various educational roles. Even back then, about thirty years ago, he was a computer teacher and had done much to utilize modern technology to instill Jewish and Chassidic values in his students. To this day, many of them say that it was a unique experience to learn with a warmhearted chassidic Jew. Even when he taught different subjects, he always connected them to Yiddishkait, to which he gave central and primary importance.

### NONSTOP ACTIVITIES

Upon his appointment as mashpia of the Chabad community in Afula, he devoted himself to his shlichus and worked with great dedication to influence the community members and bring them closer to the path of Torah and Chassidus. He had a powerful effect not only upon the members of the Chabad community, but also upon all people throughout the city. He maintained regular contact with the city's rav, Rabbi Shmuel David *shlita*, the rabbinical leaders of the various local communities, and the gabbaim of the city's synagogues. In his own way, he established a personal connection with many residents of Afula.

R' Dovid skillfully adapted his approach to each individual. When he talked with Torah scholars, he would speak their language as a learned Jew with

detailed knowledge of the various halachos. He made a connection with people in the street with his great warmth and pleasant demeanor. He gave much support and assistance to all those who needed his practical advice.

His activities throughout the city of Afula varied greatly: Torah classes, community gatherings, distribution of weekly material on chassidic teachings, and many others. Every Monday, R' Dovid *a"h* gave over a shiur in the Rebbe's maamarim at the home of one of the community members. On each auspicious day of the Chabad calendar, the class was transformed into a chassidic farbrengen, which always had a great influence upon its participants. R' Dovid was extra careful about holding this class.

R' Dovid taught many Torah classes over the years, and toward the end of his life, he was giving over three weekly classes on a consistent basis. When he could not be present for the class, he asked a member of the community to replace him and make certain that everything took place as scheduled.

Every Friday, R' Dovid traveled together with several children in the community to spread copies of informational material in the synagogues of Afula and the surrounding area. Anyone who walked into the Kratzs' home on a Thursday could already see the preparations well underway. The dining room table was covered with all kinds

of brochures filled with chassidic content. Throughout the day, the bags were piled up, one on top of the other, each one designated for a different destination. The work often continued until the wee hours of the morning.

HaTamim Mendy Doron, currently studying in Yeshivas Chassidei Chabad in Tzfas, was one of those children in the Afula community for many years, and he recalled his special Friday rounds with R' Dovid:

“While it seemed to me as a boy that the activities amounted to nothing more than giving out brochures, it turned out that R' Dovid did far more than that. There were packages in which he also included Shabbos candles and others with candies to give children the opportunity to make a bracha. Some weeks he would put a seifer of Chabad Chassidus in each package with a dedication to the respective synagogue.

“Every week something new took place during the distribution. There was always another Jew who was waiting at some location to receive his weekly dosage of Judaism, or someone who just happened that week to need a small favor, and R' Dovid gladly agreed to help.

“R' Dovid was aware of the great quality of time and how time should be utilized to the fullest. While he was distributing his informational material, he would call community members on his mobile phone and remind them of the various activities that needed to be done.”

At almost every farbrengen, R' Dovid would demand that Chassidim go out to the local synagogues and give over the Rebbe's sichos. “If the Chabad shul becomes empty because we go out to make community gatherings,” he used to say,

“The Rebbe will bring other people here to complete the minyan...” Despite suffering from serious pains in his leg, he would personally go out twice each Shabbos to give over a sicha of the Rebbe in neighborhood shuls. In later years, when it became much harder for him to walk long distances, he would often ask others to take his place. After Shabbos, he would inquire about who went to the various synagogues, how people responded, and other pertinent details.

He also spent much time with the Tzivos Hashem children, seeking to harness their active enthusiasm at a very young age as faithful soldiers of the Rebbe. Each Shabbos, he would arrange group activities for them, teaching them the daily shiurim of Chitas, and most importantly, a sicha of the Rebbe from the Seifer *Mayan Chai*. He even made certain that the children themselves went out on mitzvaim each Yom Tov.

## AFULA FILLED WITH S'FARIM

The “House Filled with S’farim” mitzvah campaign was a particular favorite of R’ Dovid, to the point that it can be said that today Afula is “filled with s’farim”. He personally was a bibliophile, and knew how to appreciate their great value.

Anyone who comes into the Chabad shul in Afula, even for a brief moment, can see for himself the tremendous quantity of s’farim there. He put up numerous library shelves in every possible space, filling them with a vast selection of s’farim on every Torah subject, particularly Chabad Chassidus. He raised the funds for these s’farim, and very often he donated himself



R’ Dovid (center) during his mitzvah campaign activities



R’ Dovid (center) on Mivtza Purim

sets of s’farim in honor of family simchas.

Not only did he do this for the library of the Chabad shul, he also maintained activities on behalf of the libraries in all the other synagogues in Afula. He even sold Chabad s’farim at a low discount price. He did not wait for people to come to him,

rather he convinced them to buy the s’farim. He worked extremely diligently for the success of this important project.

As hard as worked for the “House Filled with S’farim” campaign, he toiled with even greater intensity and dedication for Mivtza Moshiach V’Geula, which filled every fiber of his



## "THEY HAVE BEEN GIVEN A SON WITH VIRTUE AND GOOD QUALITIES"

When R' Dovid went to learn in Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim, he gave up his studies towards his matriculation exams. His father, R' Aryeh Kratz, was not pleased by this development, and he was worried that it would hurt his son's chances of finding future employment. When he gave up trying to convince R' Dovid on the matter, he wrote a detailed letter to the Rebbe, laying out his concerns. In reply to this correspondence, he received a unique answer, in which the Rebbe explained that many learn Torah in yeshivos, and they manage quite well with their future livelihood. Thus, if his son was not yet interested in learning in a yeshiva, he should convince him to do so. Now that he is interested in learning in such a yeshiva, he should be thankful for that:

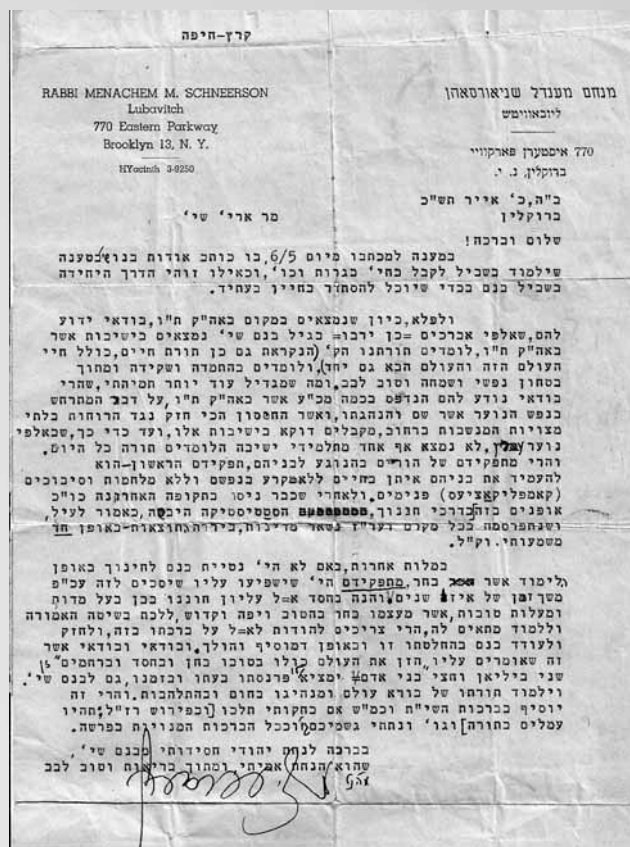
**If their son had not been inclined towards learning in a yeshiva, it would be their duty to have an influence upon him to agree to this, at least for a few years. Behold, through the Kindness of Almighty G-d, they have been given a son with virtue and good qualities who chose the good, the proper, and the holy, to follow the aforementioned approach and to learn accordingly. They should thank G-d for His blessing in this matter, and they should strengthen and encourage their son in this decision, in an ever-increasing manner.**

What about parnasa? The Rebbe replied that in this area, the One Who sustains the world is in charge:

**And most definitely the One about Whom they say "provides sustenance for the entire world in His goodness with grace, with kindness, and with mercy" – sustaining two and a half billion people – He will also provide livelihood for their son in the proper time. He should study the Torah of the Creator and Ruler of the World with warmth and enthusiasm, and this will increase G-d Alm-ghty's blessings, and as is written, "If you follow My statutes [and as in the commentary of our Rabbis, of blessed memory: You shall study Torah arduously], etc., I will give your rains in their time, etc., and as all the brachos enumerated in the parsha (Igros Kodesh, Vol. 19, pg. 307).**

As was noted in the main body of this article, R' Dovid Kratz found parnasa in the field of education even before he married and continued until his retirement. Thus, the Rebbe's promise that the One Who provides for the world will make certain of his livelihood was realized.

In fact, he explicitly received the referral for an



eventual position in the field of education in one of his private audiences with the Rebbe. R' Dovid saw this as a direct continuation of the Rebbe's promise to his father that G-d would ensure his parnasa. The Rebbe once told him that teachers' salaries only increase... Indeed, R' Dovid noted this several times, witnessing the Rebbe's declaration as actual words of prophecy. "Over the years, they spoke countless times about various reductions, cutbacks, and budget freezes. Yet, in practical terms, teachers' wages merely increased, as did the various benefits," he proceeded to explain.

On one occasion, he was offered a position as an army chaplain with the chief rabbinate of the Israel Defense Forces. He saw this as an opportunity to spread Yiddishkeit and asked the Rebbe for his advice and consent. The reply he received was: "You already served!" Since then, he was called up several times for army reserve duty, but amazingly and most miraculously, the orders were always cancelled. This sometimes occurred before he left for the army base, and on other occasions, he found out as soon as he got there...



existence. His house and car are covered with Moshiach signs.

The last time that R' Dovid farbrenge in shul was on Shabbos Mevarchim Adar Sheni, just three weeks before his p'tira. During the farbrengen R' Dovid spoke about the importance and great quality of kashrus in animals, whether in their internal or external organs. After a lengthy explanation, he came to the practical chassidic conclusion. "When we talk about living with Moshiach, we need our internal organs to be kosher, i.e., we must learn and internalize. This is primarily achieved by taking the sichos from 5751-5752 and learning them well. Otherwise, the animal is rendered to be treif.

"However," he continued, "it is impossible to ignore the importance of the external organs, meaning that the sichos will also be perceived externally in the surroundings of every Chassid. Even from a distance, everyone ought to be able see that in a certain house, there lives a Jew who is waiting for Moshiach to come and who believes that he is literally coming today. People have to know that the Jew driving in the car in front of them is waiting in great anticipation with all his heart for Moshiach to come immediately, mamash."

### A CHASSIDIC END

Anyone who knew R' Dovid could not fail to notice the great importance he attached to the precise and detailed observance Halacha and Minhag. Similarly, he made certain that those who were open to hear his words should also fulfill the Rebbe's instructions. With immeasurable caring and true devotion, he led the members of his community to the light of the Rebbe's teachings.

Reaching one's senior years



R' Dovid (left) receiving an aliya to the Torah last winter during the Rebbe MH"M's minyan in Beis Chayeinu

**“Even from a distance, everyone ought to be able see that in a certain house, there lives a Jew who is waiting for Moshiach to come and who believes that he is literally coming today. People have to know that the Jew driving in the car in front of them is waiting in great anticipation with all his heart for Moshiach to come immediately.”**

is usually a time when people “retire” or live a more sedentary lifestyle, but not so with R' Dovid Kratz. When he began his official retirement, he dedicated himself to the “Hachanos L'Chasuna (Preparations for The Wedding)” booklet. R' Dovid understood that the period between the shidduch and the wedding, which the Rebbe referred to as “the most precious time of all,” has many specific laws and customs. To make things easier for the young couple and their families, he prepared a special booklet that included all the relevant issues for the establishment of their new home together. He clarified and investigated each detail from every possible angle,

presenting halachos, customs, and the logistical pre-wedding preparations, right down to the very smallest detail. He never considered this to be a profit-generating venture. On the contrary, he did everything possible to locate new chassanim and kallos, and send the booklet to each of them, free of charge. His only request in return was that they bring any necessary additions or changes that ought to be made in the book to his attention. In fact, because of this request made to so many couples, an abundance of new details were added, and the booklet came out with an impressive series of revisions. The book has eventually reached more than

“It’s all right,” she said. “We’re paying for it...” It turned out that the postal clerks had already been convinced about the importance of the project and decided to contribute the postage.

eighty editions!

Shortly before his p’tira he published another booklet on the subject of children turning three years old. This booklet contains a collection of letters from the Rebbeim on the subject of children reaching the age of three and leaving peios after a boy’s first upshernish. In addition, it includes the Chabad customs in connection with this event, along with a short chassidic discourse that a father can teach his son.

On the last night of his life, R’ Dovid managed to prepare about forty envelopes to send to Chabad Chassidim throughout Eretz Yisroel and the world. On that Tuesday morning, when news of R’ Dovid’s sudden passing become known, R’ Michoel Doron, a member of the Afula Chabad community, was asked to take the envelopes to the post office. When he came to pick them up, he noticed that none of them had stamps. When he asked

about this, he was told to give the envelopes to a certain employee on the premises, and “everything would be fine.”

R’ Michoel arrived at the post office branch with tear-filled eyes over the crushing loss. He looked for that specific postal employee, and a different employee noticed him walking around the building and asked why he was looking for this particular worker. When he explained the reason, the woman replied that she could also take the package, as she knew all about it. “And who’s paying?” R’ Michoel inquired.

“It’s all right,” she said. “We’re paying for it...” It turned out that the postal clerks had already been convinced about the importance of the project and decided to contribute the postage.

[G-d willing, this important project will never end. R’ Dovid’s

family has decided to continue it. Every chassan and kalla who wants to receive the wedding preparation booklet, and parents with three-year old children interested in the new booklet, can contact the Kratz family in Afula by calling +972-4-659-2724 or sending an e-mail to [hachanot@gmail.com](mailto:hachanot@gmail.com).]

Hundreds of people participated in his levaya, among them Chabad Chassidim from all over Eretz Yisroel, members of the Chabad community in Afula, local residents, friends, supporters, and family members.

He leaves behind him countless spiritual children, not to mention his own sons and daughter, all involved in the Rebbe’s work: Rabbi **Menachem Mendel** – Tzfas, Rabbi **Levi Aryeh** – Chabad House director in Givat HaMoreh, Afula, Rabbi **Yosef Yitzchak** – Crown Heights, Rabbi **Shmuel** – who, after his father’s p’tira, was appointed to his father’s position as mashpia for the Chabad community in Afula, **Devorah Leah**, and **HaTamim Dovber**.

*(Special thanks to HaTamim Mendy Doron for his tremendous assistance in preparing the material for this article.)*

ב"ה

# Anash Car Service

נה הולצמן

**Airports & Pick ups**

**From Israel Call: 072-2605770**

**Local & Long dist.**



## 1-718-756-5656

# PREVENTING ROUND THREE

The disastrous Israeli policy during the First Lebanon War caused the severe loss of hundreds of Jewish lives and left behind a political quagmire from which the Israeli government has not yet extricated itself.

---

By Sholom Ber Crombie

Translated by Michael Leib Dobry

---

## THE LEBANESE THREAT: FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

Far from the public eye and the ringing tent protests over the national housing crisis, the fifth anniversary of the outbreak of the Second Lebanon War was recently commemorated – a bloody conflict that left painful wounds and serious questions that still reverberate in the national conscience. The generals praised the bravery of their fighting men and the policymakers explained that the war's strategic importance has brought good results to the region. Those who want to justify the calamitous price paid that summer speak about the five quietest years the border with Lebanon has ever known. However, no one can ignore the fact that it is only a matter of time before the outbreak of the Third Lebanon War. The only question is: "When will the next round commence?" No one has a doubt that it will eventually take place.

Five years after the conflict, the Hezbollah is stronger and more determined. It is armed with long-range missiles from Iran and now threatens the entire Gush Dan region. While

Nasrallah—Hezbollah's chief—(may his name be erased) does not leave his bunker, he works tirelessly behind the scenes to build up the threat to Eretz HaKodesh. He warns that if the Israeli Government attacks Iran, he will respond by unleashing his long-range missiles on the Jewish state.

The Hezbollah armed forces survived the mighty blow inflicted upon it during the Second Lebanon War. Its leaders understand that when all is said and done, the Israel Defense Forces would not dare wipe them out completely. It's true that the war did reap certain short-term benefits, as there is no question that tranquility has returned to the northern border. However, in the long term, it strengthened Hezbollah, which is riding high on its successes during the war and the severe harm it inflicted upon the Israeli military.

## ONE CONTINUOUS WAR

The truth is, the Second Lebanon War is merely a continuation of the First Lebanon War. The botched Israeli policy during the First Lebanon War caused the tragic loss of hundreds

of soldiers and left behind a political quagmire that lasts until today.

Over a period of twenty-one years, the Israeli Government groped blindly through the Lebanese political morass. What began as a war designed to drive out the terrorist organizations operating in the country ended with a humiliating withdrawal that flaunted Hezbollah as the great victor in the Middle East. When the IDF initiated the First Lebanon War, its stated purpose was to restore security to the residents of northern Eretz Yisroel. As in the Second Lebanon War, this conflict began as a limited military operation that turned into a full-blown war. Nevertheless, there is a serious difference between these two wars. When the IDF fought the first war, it intended that security would be restored to Eretz HaKodesh through the imposing of order in the Lebanese jungle and a massive occupation of sizable portions of Lebanese territory. However, when the IDF fought the second war, the proclaimed objective was "to restore the army's deterrent power". Had the IDF completed their work during the First Lebanon War there would have been no need for a second round.

Throughout the years that the Israel Defense Forces fought a never-ending war of attrition against the terrorist organizations, it was clear that there was a way to restore security to the northern border. As we all know, the Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach, demanded even during the first days of Operation "Peace for the Galilee"

that the army should take over Beirut and not retreat before the war's objectives had been fully accomplished.

During the First Lebanon War, the Israel Defense Forces began operations that would have ultimately culminated with the conquering Beirut. They even took over the airport and the city's southern neighborhoods. The intention was to make Beirut terrorist-free and to put an end to the widespread terror activities in the region. However, due to intensified international pressure, the Israeli Government decided to halt plans to take over Beirut and to settle for a scaled-down operation against the terrorist organizations. This process cost us twenty-one years of war and the lives of hundreds of IDF soldiers (may G-d avenge their blood).

### **THE REBBE'S STRATEGY FOR CONQUERING BEIRUT WITHOUT SPILLING INNOCENT BLOOD**

During the war, the Rebbe frequently spoke about the events in Lebanon and demanded a swift conclusion to the military operation. In a sicha on Yud-Gimmel Tammuz 5742, the Rebbe revealed: "According to all the knowledgeable experts who understand the situation, they can finish Operation Peace for the Galilee within just a few days. However, the matter has continued for some time now. Instead of completing the operation, they are busy holding meetings, sending envoys, telegrams, and correspondences, and determining the opinions of all the 'advisors'. They have not fully completed the operation to this day. This is all in spite of the fact that each day (that they don't

finish the mission), there are more wounded, and sometimes – far worse than that *r"l*."

The Rebbe continued to say: "In connection with the argument that the ultimate completion of military operations by entering the city will lead to numerous casualties *ch"v* – it is sheer nonsense to say that there is no other way to conquer such a limited area except by proceeding into the city, step by step. They definitely can complete the entire operation from the outside, without entering the city.

"To put it simply, they are actually in the city (not forty or twenty miles away, or even a mile away), and the terrorists do not control the entire city of Beirut, only a certain part of it – and they surround the terrorists from every direction in a manner of 'enclosed...none went out and none came in'. Since the place is small, although not just four by four cubits, but a minute area in relation to the artillery, etc., ready in the aforementioned location – they can surely make a 'heap' out of this entire area, without the need to enter [the city]. In addition, when the other side recognizes the fact that they intend to use these guns – they will definitely surrender, immediately and unconditionally.

"And as was mentioned earlier, since they are within the city of Beirut, they naturally can make a 'heap' out of the entire area where the terrorists are located, without the need to place a single soldier in this area. It is enough to announce five minutes before commencing operations that anyone who wants will have the time to move over to the other side of Beirut or leave Beirut entirely.

"In such a manner, they can successfully conclude the

operation without the loss of any Jewish lives, and even without injury. Furthermore, there wouldn't be a need to cause harm to Gentiles, not even the PLO – when they become convinced that this is not an idle threat, rather they have every intention of making a 'heap' out of the area where they are located."

### **TERRORISM SUPPORTED BY THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT**

Nearly thirty years have passed since the Rebbe made these statements, but the operation has yet to be concluded. In the meantime, we have buried hundreds of soldiers killed in Lebanon and have lost the capability for deterrence. It goes without saying that all of this would have been entirely different had the Israeli Government listened to the straightforward words of the Rebbe.

During this sicha, the Rebbe also mentioned that those who oppose the military operations in Lebanon are the same people who wanted to say after the Six Day War, "We're sorry that we won". They would then announce to the Americans that there is nothing to worry about: 'We intend to give all the conquered territories back to the Arabs'.

In the meantime, the terrorist organizations that operated in the region, such as the PLO, have moved on to become close friends of various Israeli politicians. They have received international recognition with the active support of Messrs. Rabin and Peres, transferring their activities from Lebanon to within the borders of Eretz HaKodesh. Their place in Lebanon is now occupied by Nasrallah (may his name be erased).

There is an obvious

connection between the Israeli subservience in Lebanon and the increase of terrorism throughout Yehuda, Shomron, and Gaza. The terror that originated in Lebanon brought us the intifada in Yesha, and it is no secret that the Second Lebanon War was a direct result of the expulsion of Jews from Gush Katif. Every time Israeli policymakers passively comply with the demands of the terrorists, it boomerangs in our faces later with an even greater intensity. The PLO successes in Lebanon were followed by the explosion of buses in Yerushalayim and the expulsion from Gush Katif, breathing new life into the anti-Semitic hatred spewing from the north and proving that terrorism pays.



Artillery fire during the Second Lebanon War

## SEND AN EFFECTIVE MESSAGE TO OUR FOES

As the People of Israel commemorate the fifth anniversary of this war, it would be appropriate for its leaders to make a proper accounting in preparation for the next round. It is inconceivable that we should be afraid repeatedly to destroy every last remnant of the terror threat. Today Hezbollah is strong and determined in preparation for the next conflict. This time we must pressure the government to do the right thing. We cannot wait until the last minute. Rather, we must initiate a military operation

“In such a manner, they can successfully conclude the operation without the loss of any Jewish lives, and even without injury. Furthermore, there wouldn't be a need to cause harm to Gentiles, not even the PLO...”

that will eliminate the threat from the north and “sanitize” the entire region – including Beirut.

Such action would strengthen the Israel Defense Forces and the government before the eyes of the world. When we speak about restoring the army's deterrent power, it is clear that we must

take drastic action that will change the rules of the game. It makes no difference if this is carried out on the border with Lebanon or the border with the Gaza Strip. The main thing is to convey a clear and unambiguous message that terrorism no longer pays.

## Make a “Mivtzah Kashrus” in your own computer!

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

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

*That's why J Net was created.*

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

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

*experts that will solve your problems fast.*

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

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

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

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



# My Escape from Russia

## with Rebbetzin Chana

---

In honor of the Yahrtzait of Rebbetzin Yocheved Zalmanov a”h on Beis Menachem Av, Beis Moshiach presents a translation of her memoirs in which she recounts in great detail her escape from the Iron Curtain together with the Rebbe’s mother, Rebbetzin Chana. These memoirs were written soon after the events transpired. The following is the first installment of a five-part series.

By Yocheved Zalmanov

Translated by Dov Baron

---

## INTRODUCTION

This is the story of my personal experience when my family joined a group of Chassidim escaping from Russia after World War II (during the years 1946 – 1949). Their successful escape led to the relocation of the Russian Chabad community and the spreading of Chabad Chassidus to Europe, America, Eretz Yisroel, Africa, Australia, Asia and throughout the world.

It is not easy to reveal and express my most personal and dear recollections. These memories live in my heart and mind, never lost or forgotten, spreading out like beams of light to uplift and have a holy spirited effect on many generations to come.

The great merit that Hashem gave me to have been in the vicinity of the heavenly, holy Tzidkanis, the royal mother of the Rebbe MH”M, **Rebbetzin Chana** of blessed memory, causes me to always thank and praise the Creator.

No doubt, this privilege was granted to me in the merit of my dear holy parents who were shluchim of the Friedlike Rebbe to the Crimean Peninsula. They were honest, pure-hearted tzaddikim who acted with unbelievable *mesiras nefesh* for the sake of Yiddishkait in the harshest, most terrible times of Stalin. My dear courageous parents’ constant desire and dream was to live in G-d’s beloved Holy Land, the land of the Jewish Spirit. Their every word to us, their children, was “holy of holies”.

*Mesiras nefesh* is the very base and foundation of Lubavitch. It must express itself in all actions and happenings of Chassidim in all times and in all places!

## CHAPTER I

The news of the possibility of escaping Russia came to us like a magical secret. As it spread amongst the Lubavitchers, it uplifted our hearts and minds with the hope that we would yet fulfill our long-time dream to be free to dedicate ourselves to Torah and Yiddishkait. This was a feeling that came from a great foundation of *mesiras nefesh* that knows no bounds in time, place or physical strength.

It is G-d’s Torah, Mitzvos, and the holy Rebbe’s word that are the only true guidance in the Chassidic way of life! One word from our Rebbeim is holier, stronger, more powerful and exalted than all the hardships, persecutions, troubles and sufferings of hundreds of years at the hands of our oppressors.

The arrests, persecution, hunger, and even exile to Siberia did not weaken nor delay the acts of *mesiras nefesh* of the selfless, dedicated Lubavitch foot soldiers, soldiers of G-d and of the Rebbeim! They were spread out in the many cities and villages of the huge, mighty Russian Empire. They were forced to go underground in great fear because religion, especially Judaism, was outlawed and its observance harshly punished as an anti-revolutionary act.

Immediately following the horrible years of World War II, Russia granted Polish refugees the opportunity to return to their homeland. Russia did this to show the world that it was seemingly benevolent and friendly toward its neighbor Poland and its citizens.

Polish Jews, barely alive, surviving hunger and hardships, frost and extreme cold and inhumane harsh labor in the freezing Siberian forests,

were now finally able to leave Russia. Many of their brethren had perished under the harsh conditions.

Some of these Polish Jews had settled in cities like Samarkand, Tashkent, and Tshimkent. They joined the Russian Jewish population, living there like friends and brothers. These connections created opportunities for Russian Jews to smuggle across the border together with their Polish friends, using the passports of deceased Polish Jews.

One can well imagine how this secret lit a fire in the hearts of religious Jews, oppressed and exhausted by the Russian “paradise”.

Like lightning, we Lubavitchers left everything – our homes, our employment, our relatives, our schools, and everything we knew. We traveled towards the border city—Lemberg, Ukraine (now Lvov). Children were sent off with relatives who were able to make the journey. We ran full of fear, trembling from every shadow, terrified of police, anti-Semites, and government informers. We succeeded only with superhuman divine strength.

How would we travel on and to where? We did not know. Only a few Lubavitcher leaders knew.

What we surely did know was that we must seize this great moment and opportunity!

It was unbelievable. How could this happen in Russia under the nose of the NKVD, the Soviet Secret Police? Only G-d Al-mighty, with great wonders and miracles, could blind the eyes of the government and twist their minds so that hundreds of people, young and old, should be able escape the Russian prison.



**“Two Russian police officers appeared and asked the wife in rough, angry voices, “Where is your husband?” . . . “I don’t know,” she answered meekly. Then the little girl suddenly mixed in. “That’s not true, Mommy. You always teach me that we have to say the truth. Tatty just went into the other room.” She pointed to the door that had just closed.**

---

Even a fly could not have escaped their steel *Gehinom* walls. No one could have imagined or dreamt in his wildest dreams that escape would be possible. Escaping Russia carried the harshest punishments.

How our family made it to Lemberg is a story for itself. I think that if we would collect all the stories of all the travelers, we would lack enough paper and time to read them all.

By the time we arrived in Lemberg, the first train to freedom carrying a number of Lubavitcher families had already left. The rest of the families were scattered in different corners of the city. Often, families found shelter together with Polish families to ensure security. They were trembling in fear, with broken disturbed hearts. Homeless, unprotected, and deserted, with passionate prayers, we waited and hoped for G-d’s great kindness every minute we were there. We prayed to be able to cross the border in peace.

The good news that the first train of passengers had miraculously arrived in peace brought great happiness as it spread secretly throughout the community. It carried the strength, hope and courage to continue waiting. We did not yet know about the ravages and Holocaust in Poland...

The fear of being informed upon was so great that we were careful not to say even one unnecessary word. Many were scared to go out in the streets. Only at night did people venture out, escorted, to use the outhouses. Especially the men with beards and peios sat secluded and locked inside so as not to arouse any suspicions from the neighbors and eyes of any informers. There was danger in every step. The days and nights were full of pain, dread, and hope. These heroic Jews immersed themselves in emotional prayer, filled with hope and belief.

Our family gathered in Lvov and stayed a short while in a house together with other exhausted Polish Jews. These Jews had been sent to Siberian forests and had suffered hunger, pain and cold. They had made their way to Samarkand, Tashkent, Tshimkent and other places. They were broken, fearful of the police, of anti-Semites, and of their experiences in the black-market. They were scared of their own shadows. Now, they waited impatiently together with the self-sacrificing Russian Lubavitchers for the chance to run away as fast as they could from the Russian *Gehinom*.

The difficult stressful atmosphere awakened within my dear sister Hadassah and me

a great desire to use our young courageous abilities to help the dreadful situation in any way possible.

I was attracted to the unfamiliar new sites of Lemberg. It was the first city I had been to outside of Russia. Lvov was part of Poland before World War II and thus very different from any other city I had seen previously. I never dreamed of being here in my wildest dreams, especially under such circumstances. Yet, everyone who wished to could feel and see how G-d had spread His wings in a miraculous way. My sister Hadassah (Perman) and I would explore the streets, almost without fear, acting as if we were students who had come for summer vacation. It was a good cover for ourselves, but it probably would not have worked if we had been caught by the Russian thugs.

## CHAPTER II

We were very ill informed – especially me – regarding the secret logistics of the travel. We didn’t even know who was behind the planning of this extraordinary operation. We only knew of Reb Leib Mochkin, a young yeshiva bachur nicknamed Leibke, who literally risked his life at every turn. With our own eyes, we saw how he would perform superhuman acts that no hand and no pen in any circumstance can express.

On several occasions, when he would see us in the street, he would jump out of a fast moving taxi, describe to us in one minute a mission we had to do, and then disappear at the speed of lightning, acting as if he had never known us.

Generally, riding in a taxi in those years was a big luxury. In Russia, taxis were only for

government officials or a rich people. Of course, being rich was not allowed. How could one even consider becoming rich? Everyone was supposed to be *proletariat*, equal. Being rich was a sin.

It is appropriate to recount a few of the episodes that describe the history of that period, a time of great miracles.

One day, while strolling down the street, suddenly, in the blink of an eye, jumping out of a car with the engine still running, Leibke appeared before us. He told us to quickly run to a certain address and tell the people there that they should hide immediately; the government is searching for them. Like an arrow, we ran to carry out the mission. We ran after each other as if we were playing tag, so as not to arouse suspicion.

To our surprise, the door at the address was unlocked. Normally, in those times of danger, the doors were locked at all times in order to buy time in dangerous moments like these. Happy that we did not have to waste a moment, we took the stairs two at a time. In a flash, we were at the right apartment. This door too was unlocked.

A young husband and wife sat at the table with a little girl, four or five years old. Not waiting to hear the details of our coming, the young man quickly went into the next room and closed the door.

Seemingly, from out of the woodwork, two Russian police officers appeared and asked the wife in rough, angry voices, "Where is your husband?"

"I don't know," she answered meekly.

Then the little girl suddenly mixed in. "That's not true, Mommy. You always teach me



Author's father, Rabbi Chaim Meir Grik

received the good news the next morning. The man was released by the police. A revealed and incontrovertible miracle!

Another time, my sister and I were out for a stroll in the late afternoon, and a fresh breeze was blowing. The hot sun was setting on the horizon. At the end of a tiring day, my dear sister and I were visiting a wonderful park. Flowers blossomed attractively with colorful crowns. Their charming aromas lifted every eye and heart. It seemed like the wonderful surroundings ruled

**“The scene we had just witnessed and the tragedy of that poor family kept replaying in our minds. We saw how the little girl had received the best, true, righteous Jewish education and what it had inadvertently caused.**

---

that we have to say the truth. Tatty just went into the other room.” She pointed to the door that had just closed.

We were all in a state of shock and unable to speak. The wicked people were not counting on such a revelation. In their great enthusiasm, they burst into the room and we quickly turned to escape. My dear sister and I instinctively flew back down the steps and ran like a windstorm through side streets away from the scene.

For hours, we circled the streets of the city hoping to find Leibke. The scene we had just witnessed and the tragedy of that poor family kept replaying in our minds. We saw how the little girl had received the best, true, righteous Jewish education and what it had inadvertently caused.

It was a miracle and salvation before our eyes when we

the world! Quietly and calmly, the over-stressed soul lifted itself above the difficult daily dose of pain, fear and worry.

Suddenly, interrupting our trance-like thoughts, Leibke appeared before us as a proud Shliach with his cheerful heroic spirit. Jumping out of a car, he quickly said, “This evening, you must meet a family at the train arriving from Moscow.” The father of the family had just been released from prison with a guarantee. Leibke gave us the address of the location where to bring the family as well as a prearranged code, and then quickly disappeared.

We knew well what it meant to take a Jew out of prison on a guarantee. We knew the danger of them coming here when the whole city of Lvov was a dangerous prison for every

**“My heroic sister was also shaken, but with a determined voice, she told me, “If you are going to sit and cry, go home right now. You must always remember the holy words of our dear righteous parents, ‘A Jew must never feel down. One should always hope for G-d’s help.’”**

---

Lubavitcher Jew.

The members of this family were our good friends! That is a story for itself, for another time.

Despite not knowing the city well, we did not ask anyone for directions, since we did not want to arouse suspicion. We headed toward the train station. We hiked through deserted, half-destroyed streets and alleys, barely lit and with broken pavement. My bleeding feet ached. The distance was “as long as the Jewish exile,” the hunger was painful, and the fact that our family did not know where we were weighed heavily upon us.

In order that no one should recognize us, we approached the station after the train had arrived. We ordered a taxi, and acting like other waiting people, we cheerfully awaited our expected friends amongst the big group of passengers loaded with suitcases and baggage. We soon found them and were on our way.

When we arrived at the given address, the guests stayed in the car. My sister jumped out of the car and I ran after her, not wanting to leave her at the whim of her enthusiastic self-sacrificing tendencies. We came to announce that the guests had come!

We knocked on the door and said the prearranged code.

However, we saw an angry eye looking at us through the peephole. All of a sudden, we heard from the other side of the door an angry, strained woman’s voice, “Quickly get out of here, in any direction, before it’s too late!” She continued with a flood of scolding, hostile words that came from her pained, broken heart. We remained standing there like stones, not able to reply. Only the encompassing quiet darkness was the true witness of our great frustration, anguish, and embarrassment. I could not hold back my emotions any longer, and from the depth of my wounded heart, I broke down in a fit of choked crying that could have broken through an iron curtain. It then became quiet from the other side of the door. (Years later, I still remember that angry voice. They probably did not know who the messengers or the guests were. On the other hand, maybe, they did know...)

My heroic sister was also shaken, but with a determined strict voice, she told me, “If you are going to sit and cry, go home right now. You must always remember the holy words of our dear righteous parents, ‘A Jew must never feel down. One should always hope for G-d’s help.’ We cannot lose ourselves. We must search for a solution.”

A ray of light penetrated my heart. Acting calm and cheerful, we returned to the taxi. We announced confidently, “It’s the wrong address. We have to continue driving and searching.” By this, we meant that we needed to search for Leibke. We continued driving according to my sister’s directions. We drove straight for a while on the lit streets, and then took a left onto unlit streets, then left, right, left, straight and so on. We could not seem to find the right house. The driver was getting angry and showing signs of his aggravation. We promised him a reward for his troubles.

We continued driving for a long while, right, left, straight... Suddenly, we noticed a sign with big letters on a two-story house on a lit street: “Apartment for Rent”. From the depth of our hearts, we felt it was a miracle from Heaven! For us it was not just a sign; it was the Angel Gavriel himself.

“We arrived, we arrived!” my sister shouted with delight. “Wait here for a few minutes.”

The owner of the house, a fine Jewish woman, was more than happy to welcome our fine small Jewish family to her comfortable house for a while. She spelled out a few conditions, which we did not hear due to our great excitement and insisted on lending us money to pay the driver, for which he was very grateful. Our tired guests thanked and praised G-d for His great mercies in finally bringing them to a place where they could return to themselves after their exhausting journey. The debt was later paid back in full to the owner of the house, probably by Leibke.

# REVEALING THE LOVE

By Rabbi Heschel Greenberg

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



## A CRYPTIC MIDRASH

Our Sages had two ways of teaching us how to live our lives. In most cases, their teachings are direct and unambiguous. However, there are places in the Talmud and Midrash where they deliberately couched their lesson in cryptic and often elusive language. There is a body of Midrashic lore that has been characterized as “Midrash P’lia – A Puzzling Midrash,” in which some startling connections are made between seemingly disparate themes and the like.

One of the purposes served by these cryptic Torah teachings is obviously to condition us to look more deeply into the texts of the Torah. Even when we think the meaning of a given verse is straightforward, we are inspired to delve more deeply into it to find some of its hidden messages.

One such anomalous Midrashic comment is connected to the opening words of this week’s parsha: “These are the words...” The verse there continues to list the places where the Jewish people behaved inappropriately during the travels through the desert. According to Rashi, Moses, in these opening words that he spoke prior to his passing, intended to rebuke the Jewish people in a subtle fashion, by just alluding to their indiscretions.

## PINCHAS IS ELIJAHU

The Puzzling Midrash makes the following enigmatic statement:

Whoever wants to know that Pinchas is Elijahu-Elijah will see it from the words, “These are the words [Moses spoke to the Children of Israel].”

What in the world does the identification of Pinchas as Elijah have to do with Moses’ words of mild rebuke to the Jewish people?

To answer this question let us compare and contrast the two personalities of Pinchas and Elijah and analyze how their identities are intertwined.

Pinchas, the grandson of Aaron, executed one of the Jewish Princes who cavorted with a Midianite Princess. Most of his contemporaries harshly condemned his zealotness, but it was highly praised by G-d. Pinchas was a member of a special class of zealots throughout history who responded to unconventional situations that left the nations’ leaders baffled and incapable of reacting. Pinchas is anything but subtle.

Our Sages tell us that when Pinchas acted, he had Divine assistance. Many miracles occurred that facilitated his brazen act of zealotry. Thus, our Sages tell us that Pinchas symbolizes G-d’s wonders, occurrences that are outside the

realm of nature. The first letter of his name is the initial of the word *peleh*, which means wonder.

Even his reward, given to him by G-d, was unique. Although he was not anointed as a Kohen-Priest, he earned that distinction. That clearly violated the very structure of the priesthood that is based on heredity. One can never acquire this distinction through one’s efforts. Pinchas was the lone exception to this rule.

In short, everything about Pinchas is extraordinary. He was a rule breaker in so many different ways.

Elijah the prophet is identified as the prophet who will herald the coming of Moshiach. The prophet Malachi—the last of the era of prophets—concludes the body of prophetic literature: “Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and awesome day of G-d. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers.” In other words, Elijah’s function is to prepare the world for the Messianic Age by fostering unity and peace.

Our Talmudic Sages (Mishna, end of Tractate Eidiyos) express Elijah’s major contribution as one that will be exclusively to bring peace to the world.

How do we reconcile this vision of Elijah as the ultimate man of peace who bridges the gap

## “How do we reconcile this vision of Elijah as the ultimate man of peace who bridges the gap between generations and peoples with the image of Pinchas the zealot who is known for killing a prince and princess?”

between generations and peoples with the image of Pinchas the zealot who is known for killing a prince and princess?

### SUBTLE REBUKE

The answer can be derived from the opening words of this week's parsha:

“These are the words Moses spoke to the children of Israel...” As was stated in the beginning of this essay, Rashi explains that Moses was in fact rebuking the Jewish people without saying what they actually did wrong. For example, rather than explicitly chastising them for worshipping the golden calf, he refers to a location in the desert called *di zahav*, which means an “abundance of gold.” This was an allusion to the golden calf that was created by their contributions of gold, a commodity that was not in short supply at the time.

What exactly was Moses trying to accomplish with his indirect approach to rebuking? If Moses was not interested in reprimanding them harshly, why did he change the tone of his criticism in subsequent sections of the Book of Deuteronomy? In later verses, Moses does not mince words. He chastises them in the sharpest terms possible. Why here does he couch his criticism of the Jewish people in rather mild and allusive language?

The answer is that when we are compelled to rebuke a fellow

Jew we must examine what is our primary focus. Are we just intolerant of and outraged by immoral behavior—as we should be—and therefore focus all our attention on the evil that was committed? Or is it because we know how detrimental it is to stray from G-d's ways, that we become concerned with the person's degeneration and we fear for their fate.

To be sure, in both cases we care for G-d and we care for His people. The question is which is the stronger motivator? Which is uppermost in our mind when we employ extreme and extraordinary measures to stop the straying? Is it simply indignation and anger or is it love couched in terms of outrage.

Moses demonstrated that it was the latter approach of love and consideration for the people that was the preeminent influence in rebuking his people. By showing them that he cares for their feelings—and will therefore not begin his critical words with overt and harsh language—he demonstrated that his criticism was motivated by profound love for them.

### PARALLEL BETWEEN MOSES AND PINCHAS

Pinchas too was concerned with G-d's honor. However, his primary concern was for the welfare of his people. Pinchas' zealotry was motivated primarily by his passionate love

for his people. His sole concern in doing what he did was to save the Jewish people. Pinchas, contrary to his critics' contention, was not a cruel, vengeful and sadistic person. It wasn't even just his desire to “defend” G-d's honor. He knew that unless someone took drastic measures, the plague that already claimed the lives of 24,000 Jews—as recounted in the Torah—would continue to claim even more lives. Only Pinchas' heroic response saved the day.

Thus, G-d says, “Pinchas, the son of Elazar the son of Aaron the priest, has turned My anger from the children of Israel by zealously avenging Me in their presence, and I did not destroy the children of Israel because of My zealous anger.” G-d credits Pinchas with “assuaging” G-d's anger and thereby saving the children of Israel. It is clear from this verse that the Pinchas' ultimate goal was saving the Jewish people.

And indeed, the Torah then states that G-d gave Pinchas His “covenant of peace.”

Pinchas' radical and violent behavior belied his love and devotion to his people and that his ultimate goal was to bring peace between G-d and His people just as Moses' rebuke of his people was an expression of his love for them.

Thus, the Midrash states that if you want to understand the interplay between a violent Pinchas and a peace loving Elijah study Moses opening words of rebuke that were couched in non-angry terms because he did it out of love.

### ENOUGH TOUGH LOVE

We are now in the period known as the Three Weeks and the Nine Days, which are ostensibly expressions of

G-d's anger to and rebuke of us. This period—in which the tragic events that led to the destruction of the Holy Temple occurred—were a harsh rebuke to us. However, we know that underlying that rebuke is G-d's true love for His people that will manifest itself imminently with the coming of Moshiach and the final Redemption.

To demonstrate to us that the rebuke was motivated by love, our Sages tell us that when our adversaries entered the Temple to destroy it they noticed the two images of the Cherubim—that symbolized the relationship between G-d and the Jewish people—were in each other's embrace!

Nevertheless, we cannot be content with the knowledge

**“When we are compelled to rebuke a fellow Jew we must examine what is our primary focus. Are we just intolerant of and outraged by immoral behavior? . . . Or is it because we know how detrimental it is to stray from G-d's ways, that we become concerned with the person's degeneration and we fear for their fate.**

that G-d's rebuke is a form of “tough love.” We want G-d to shower His unambiguous and revealed love on us. Indeed, we are commanded to pray to G-d and tell Him precisely that. We have had already enough “tough love.” We want G-d's overt, unadulterated and unequivocal love.

We were empowered to help make that love emerge by doing

the same in our own relationships with our fellow Jew. It goes without saying that whenever we must be critical of another it should be motivated exclusively by a sense of compassion and concern for their welfare. However, that does not suffice. We must make that feeling of love for the other break out and be expressed openly and unabashedly.

**Raskin's**  
*“if it grows we have*

**Consistently  
Superior**

**Fruit and Produce Emporium WHOLESALE & RETAIL**

**Michal & Aaron Raskin**

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



**Crown Travel International**



- Express service
- Fully Computerized

**331 Kingston Ave.  
(2<sup>nd</sup> Flr) Brooklyn NY 11213**

**(718) 493-1111**

**Fax: (718) 493-4444**

*Get your tickets within minutes!*

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

# THE HISTORY OF KFAR CHABAD'S 770

Twenty-five years have passed since the amazing construction of 770 in Kfar Chabad, dedicated on the 15<sup>th</sup> of Tammuz, 5746. Six months earlier, the architect, R' Mordechai Menasheh Gorelick, traveled to 770, Beis Chayeinu. The purpose of his trip was to measure and photograph the original structure in order to prepare the blueprints for an exact replica of 770. In honor of the silver anniversary of the dedication of 770 Kfar Chabad, Rabbi Gorelick shared these pictures and his personal memories with the Beis Moshiach.

Translated by Michael Leib Dobry



Rabbi Gorelick measures the height of the famous "magnet" in the entrance lobby of Beis Chayeinu

**D**uring a yechidus for international guests on the evening of the 15<sup>th</sup> of Tammuz 5745/1985, the Rebbe called for

the establishment of Beis Agudas Chassidei Chabad – Ohel Yosef Yitzchak Lubavitch in Kfar Chabad. Chassidim understood that this instruction was connected to those

given at the Yud-Beis Tammuz farbrengen just days earlier. On that occasion, the Rebbe called for the Lubavitch World Headquarters at 770 Eastern Parkway to bear





The balcony on the third floor



Building "in reverse" - doing the windows even before completing the walls ...



The balcony for the Rebbe's sukkah on the second floor

henceforth the name "Beis Agudas Chassidei Chabad – Ohel Yosef Yitzchak Lubavitch," and also requested that the name appear on the building itself. Everyone realized that this, in a way, related to the court case over the s'farim in the Chabad library, well underway at the time. The Rebbe informed the Vaad of Kfar Chabad that he would pay for all the expenses.

The members of the Kfar Chabad Vaad, headed by its chairman, Rabbi Menachem Lehrer, quickly began preparations for the construction of the building that would become the headquarters of the new organization – a copy of Beis Chayeinu. For about six months after the Rebbe's instructions,

there were no developments on the project because the Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach, had ordered not to commence building before the issuance of the necessary government permit. The long awaited permit finally arrived on the 18<sup>th</sup> of Teves 5746. The groundbreaking ceremony took place a week later, on the 26<sup>th</sup> of Teves, and the building design began shortly thereafter. The only obstacle to beginning the construction process was that a design requires building plans. However, there were none. There were those who made considerable effort to obtain the original building plans of 770 Eastern Parkway from the City of New York, but to no

avail. The structure was built in 5693/1933, and the plans no longer existed.

In Tishrei 5746, Rabbi Gershon Sudakevitch, member of the Kfar Chabad Vaad, traveled to 770 in order to measure the building. However, Rabbi Sudakevitch was not a professional architect. Thus, the need urgently arose to send an architect to Beis Chayeinu and measure 770 in a professional manner.

The Vaad of Kfar Chabad then turned to two Chassidic architects, Rabbi Aryeh Yakunt *a"h* and, (Yibadel Bein Chayim L' Chayim) Rabbi Mordechai Menasheh Gorelick (may G-d grant him long life), and asked



them to travel to the Rebbe in order to measure the Lubavitch World Headquarters building. However, the Rebbe did not give his consent. He ordered that expenses be limited as much as possible, and therefore he gave instructions that the architects should not make the trip.

Time passed, and nothing was being done. Everyone realized that a trip to 770 was unavoidable, but the Rebbe's orders were to save money on travel expenses. Then, Rabbi Gorelick simply got up and said, "If the Rebbe wants to save money, I'll make the trip at my own expense!"

Shortly before Yud Shvat 5746, Rabbi Gorelick flew to New York. He fashioned a measuring rod for himself, similar to an extra-long yardstick, with which he determined the dimensions

of the building. "Over several days, I measured 770 from every possible angle, accompanied by a photographer who took pictures from all directions. During this project, we took more than five hundred pictures, documenting every room, every entrance, and every corridor."

While Rabbi Gorelick did not discuss the difficulties he encountered, his partners in the construction process recall that he did a very fast and accurate job, despite the harsh wintry weather conditions in Crown Heights at the time. Pictures depict him standing in the bitter cold on the roof of 770, measuring the chimney and carefully examining the roof tiles. He entered every room and space in the building, except for the Rebbe Rayatz's bedroom and *Gan Eden HaElyon*.

Measurements of these rooms were made based on eyewitness testimony of the secretaries and Chassidim who had been inside and based on the building's layout.

At this visit to 770, Rabbi Gorelick measured, photographed, and documented everything. During the interview for this article, Rabbi Gorelick took out a box containing hundreds of pictures, documenting the layout of 770. There is a photograph of the chandelier in the Rebbe Rayatz's dining room, alongside a photograph of the mail slot. There are pictures of the chimney and the drainpipe, the stained glass, the decorative pillars on the roof, and hundreds of other details. This article contains a very small amount of the hundreds of photographs taken

at the time. As we were browsing through the huge stack of pictures, Rabbi Gorelick recalled various stories that took place during the photo shootings and the construction process.

## THE METHOD OF MEASURING

“When we were in 770, we didn’t have a lot of time for measurements, but there were so many things to measure there. Left with few alternatives, I prepared a measuring rod in units of ten centimeters each. I quickly made my way around 770 and then drew up a sketch of the building. As this measuring rod was not sufficient for the structure’s exterior, I used the building’s red bricks as a unit of measure. We knew that every brick was approximately seven centimeters in width, and there was a space of about one centimeter between each brick. Based on these measurements, we calculated the building’s exterior dimensions.”

“One thing that I will never forget took place in *Gan Eden HaTachton*. I had begun measuring the upstairs corridor when we suddenly heard the door of the Rebbe’s room opening. The Rebbe came out to bless a bride and groom and their parents, who were waiting nearby. We immediately proceeded to lie down on the floor, as we didn’t want to be seen before the Rebbe holding measuring tools and cameras...”

## NOT A SINGLE ERROR IN CALCULATION

“One of the more complex challenges we encountered was preparing the stained glass. For this purpose, we first had to make an aluminum frame according to



the exact measurements of the original perimeter, and place glass on the other side. Only then would it be possible to measure, prepare the stained glass, and place them within the lead holders. The measurements had to be exact within a millimeter of variance; otherwise, it would not fit. In addition, it was extremely expensive building material.

“We searched in the Old City of Yaffo which had the largest stained window company in the country. They only had fifteen employees, because generally there is not a great demand for stained glass. When I showed them the pictures I had taken of the stained glass in 770, and then explained that the work had to be completed within a few weeks, they laughed at us. ‘Even if our

entire staff would work on this all day long and for several hours at night,’ the company managers said, ‘it would take us at least six months to finish the project.’

“With no alternative, we started to speak to them about the spiritual aspect of this job. We told them that this was an order from the tzaddik of the generation, and it must be carried out, no matter what. We continued trying to persuade them, until they consented to sit together with us once more and try to come up with a viable plan of action. Eventually, they said that they would agree to do the work, on the condition that we bring the window measurements that same day. I smiled to myself. There were still no walls, and they want measurements for the windows...”

“I didn’t have much choice. I made some complex mathematical computations until I was able to provide the measurements. In my heart, I was seriously concerned that my calculations might be off somewhat. At the end of the job, all the stained glass fit the windows! This was one of the revealed miracles we witnessed in the construction process.”



“Casting the window frames was a complicated story unto itself. In order to construct the cement frames surrounding the windows, we had to use the following technique. We had a professional carpenter, a young man named Ronny, prepare a wooden frame called a positive, upon which we molded a fiberglass cast called the negative. Only once he completed this were we able to fill the cast with white cement. We produced the small windows below, and then we brought them up to affix them into the walls. However, since we were unable to do this with the two larger windows, we cast them at the building site before constructing the walls...”

### PRECISION IN EVERY DETAIL, EVEN IN THE INTERIOR DESIGN

“We made every effort to remain faithful to the interior design on the first floor. The floor and the ceiling in 770 Kfar Chabad were made with designs identical to the originals. We

even built a slot like the one in 770 Eastern Parkway where they would insert the mail and the large tz’daka pushka near the small zal.

“The construction of the ornamental design was not a simple process. We needed to bring several professional artisans – at least ten – to help in arranging the decorative patterns. We had to prepare special plaster molds, and every craftsman accepted one portion of the work in order that we could keep up the pace.”

### THE WORK IS CALLED IN THE NAME OF HE WHO COMPLETES IT

“Towards the end of the construction, I said to myself, ‘I must personally participate in the actual building process, and not just give orders.’ Thus, I saved for myself the privilege of writing the letters of the building’s name. I personally prepared the stencils, and I went up on the scaffold to write the letters. In this way, I was privileged to build, in a physical sense as well, literally with my own hands, the Rebbe’s shul in Eretz Yisroel.”

### A CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

▪ **The evening of the 15<sup>th</sup> of Tammuz 5745:** The general yechidus for the international guests is held. The Rebbe calls for the establishment of Beis Agudas Chassidei Chabad – Ohel Yosef Yitzchak Lubavitch in Kfar Chabad.

▪ **Tishrei 5746:** Kfar Chabad Vaad member Rabbi Gershon Sudakevitch travels to Beis Chayeinu to measure the building.

▪ **The 18<sup>th</sup> of Teves 5746:** The long awaited government-approved building permit arrives.

▪ **The 26<sup>th</sup> of Teves 5746:** The groundbreaking takes place.

▪ **Erev Yud Shvat 5746:** Building engineer Rabbi Mordechai Menasheh Gorelick travels to Beis Chayeinu to measure and photograph 770.

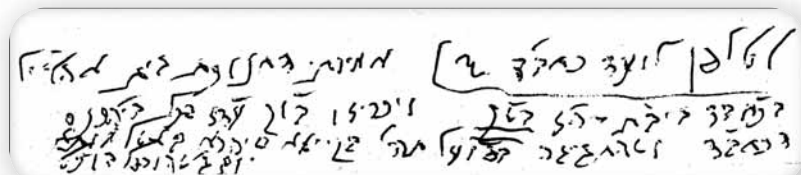
▪ **Yud-Alef Nissan 5746:** The building framework is completed.

▪ **Lag B’Omer 5746:** The Rebbe calls for the completion of the building on or close to Yud-Beis Tammuz.

▪ **The 15<sup>th</sup> of Tammuz 5746:** The dedication ceremony – the race against the clock is crowned with success.

### THE REBBE’S INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE DEDICATION OF 770 IN KFAR CHABAD

[Regarding] my statement about the dedication of *Beis Agudas Chassidei Chabad – Ohel Yosef Yitzchak Lubavitch* on Yud-Beis Tammuz – this is *Shabbos Kodesh*, and they should announce on *Shabbos Kodesh* regarding this in all the synagogues of Kfar Chabad, that the actual celebration should be when the moon is at its fullness, the third day, on which is doubled “it was good.”



# THE FIRST YECHIDUS: DIRECTIVES AND DIRECTION

By Rabbi Yaakov Shmuelewitz

Shliach, Beit Shaan

---

**I**t was not easy to convince veteran shluchim to discuss their first yechiduyos with me. Most preferred not to publicize the details of the personal instructions they received from the Rebbe in yechidus. Yechidus is the most holy moment in the life of a Chassid who had the privilege of speaking to the Rebbe privately. These are memories and messages from the Rebbe that accompany a Chassid throughout his life in the deepest way.

Thus, I feel indebted to those dear shluchim who agreed to share a few of their memories with *Beis Moshiach* readers. They are real treasures that ought to inspire us all.

## TZU GEZUNT!

Rabbi Chaim Sholom Segal has been on shlichus in Afula and Taanach for nearly 40 years. I myself started out in shlichus in Afula, and to a certain extent, I feel like a disciple and an extension of the Chabad house in Afula. To me, the Chabad house in Afula is a model of devotion

to shlichus, the source of a flourishing Chassidic community, a Chabad shul that has become a nonstop powerhouse, and more.

R' Segal had yechidus with the Rebbe several times as a bachur and then as a shliach, after he married. He received encouragement, guidance and blessings each time.

Before telling me about his first yechidus, he related an interesting episode connected with a yechidus that occurred in Tishrei 5735/1974. At the end of Elul 5734, the Rebbe announced the initiation of Mivtza Neshek, encouraging Jewish women and girls to light Shabbos candles. The Rebbe spoke about this campaign at three farbrengens in a row.

When R' Segal had yechidus with his wife and oldest daughter who was a year and a half, the Rebbe spoke for several minutes on the topic of Neshek. The Rebbe pushed off the topics of where to live, the shlichus in Taanach, etc. He first asked Mrs. Segal how old her daughter was. When she said a year and a half,

the Rebbe said that in another half a year she would be able to light with a bracha. After that, the discussion of the yechidus turned to brachos and horaos about the shlichus in Taanach.

The toddler began crying, apparently because she wanted to play with the telephones on the Rebbe's desk and her mother would not allow her to do so. When the Rebbe saw her crying, he took a silver half dollar out of his drawer, tapped on the table, and the girl stopped crying. The Rebbe gave her the coin, and the girl said, "*Toda*," and the Rebbe replied, "Tzu Gezunt (to health)."

The family took this wish as a segula that the Rebbe assigned to the coin, and for thirty years, they used the coin as a segula for all illnesses, births and problems.

Before the family left the United States, the Rebbe informed them that – contrary to their plans – they would arrive in Eretz Yisroel on Rosh Chodesh. This actually took place, in a



Chassidim waiting to enter the Rebbe's room for yechidus in a painting by Chassidic artist, R' Zalman Kleiman

miraculous display of the Rebbe's foresight, because of unexpected delays.

### **DECIDE - AND YOU WILL BE SUCCESSFUL!**

Rabbi Segal continues: "One point from the first yechidus I had with the Rebbe still stays with me, guides me, and gives me the strength to overcome all difficulties on shlichus till this very day. It was my birthday, 5 Teves. This was the first time I was with the Rebbe, when I was on K'vutza 5730.

"In those days, the hanhala of the yeshiva in 770 would write reports about each talmid. Once a month, the roshei yeshiva went to the Rebbe and reported to him in detail about each bachur, his attendance at s'darim, t'fillos, conduct etc.

"The reports about me were fine. I made sure not to miss a t'filla with the Rebbe, and I was never late, and did not miss

any s'darim. I rarely left 770. The Rebbe and 770 were my entire world, and no one had to convince me to keep the s'darim. Yet I was not one of the great scholars. I sat and learned to the best of my ability.

"I prepared for my birthday yechidus, making a spiritual accounting and writing to the Rebbe that apparently I wasn't cut out for learning. The Rebbe took this very hard and let me know that I could not continue this way. On the one hand, the Rebbe received good reports about me from the hanhala; on the other hand, I was writing that learning was not my strong point. The Rebbe let me know in very strong terms that it all depended on what I decided. 'If you decided that you are not cut out to learn, then you have no halachic reason to be outside of Eretz Yisroel. If you resolve that you *can* learn, you will be successful, and you can remain here.'

"The Rebbe's words were

strong and full of emotion, and after a few hours of deep thought I wrote the Rebbe a note that I would commit myself to learning with full devotion. The Rebbe noted that this decision had to be made unconditionally. In the end, the Rebbe accepted my commitment, and I tried to prove that I was deserving of the Rebbe's trust.

"I learned in that yechidus that in all aspects of shlichus, it all depends on the shliach and his decision. In other words, the kochos are given, the path is clear, Hashem helps, and all that is needed is to resolve that one be committed to shlichus and mitvzaim.

"Forty years have passed since then, and Hashem has provided me with many challenges, but I always recall that yechidus and the clear message that the Rebbe gave me: if you commit, you will be successful. I can look back with satisfaction on different things that we accomplish that

we hadn't even dreamed were possible."

Thus, the Chabad shul in Afula is a success story. Before Chabad came to Afula, there was one shul with an aging and dwindling membership. Thanks to the Rebbe's shluchim, this shul is now full of activity, and residents across the city are aware of its powerful presence. There are minyanim around the clock, shiurim, big farbrengens, and more. A dynamic k'hilla continues to grow in Afula, with dozens of Chassidishe families. The accomplishments demanded much effort, but when a Chassid makes a resolution, then he is successful.

### THREE LESSONS FOR LIFE

Rabbi Yigal Pizem, shliach and rav of the Chabad community in Kiryat Shmuel, relates:

The first yechidus is unforgettable and has an impact on the Chassid's entire life. In my first yechidus, 38 years ago, I received three horaos, which are with me every day. They influenced my work and involvement in the community throughout the years.

I did not grow up in a Lubavitcher home, so when the time came for my yechidus, my friends in 770 guided me as to the accepted procedures and behavior. I went into the Rebbe's room with several pages. The first pages contained details of my life, details of my present circumstances, and a list of questions, all in an orderly way. I also wrote some not so pleasant things of a depressing nature. In the following pages I wrote some

more, in a less organized way, things I had forgotten to include in the first pages.

The Rebbe read it, and when he finished he immediately told me the following three important things: 'Firstly, the Torah prohibits Atzvus (sadness, depression). Secondly, it is forbidden to say Lashon Hara (derogatory talk) even about yourself. Thirdly, you asked whether it is preferable to teach mekuravim Nigleh or Chassidus. That is not a question, since one must teach both Nigleh and Chassidus.'

The Rebbe went on to respond to other things I had written, and when he reached the end of my papers he said, "In response to the questions and topics that are written in a disorganized way at the end of the letter ..." and he responded to them.

I have repeated those instructions from the Rebbe to myself, and I try to implement them in my daily actions. In every shiur that I give, I allocate time for both Nigleh and Chassidus. I also learned that one needs to be organized.

R' Pizem adds:

"I received the most significant guidance for yechidus from R' Mendel Futerfas who was in 770 at the time. He advised me that right after the yechidus I should write down everything the Rebbe said. Only after that could I share "news" from the Rebbe's room with my friends.

When I left yechidus, I wrote down what I heard – I still have the paper – and then I went to R' Mendel. He said a powerful line that rhymes in Yiddish, "*M'darf*

*gein mit a niggun, ober nit mit a ligen*", which means that after yechidus you need to dance and sing, but the niggun has to be sincere. In other words, the messages from the Rebbe have to be internalized with simcha and with an inner strength so they will last forever.

That is another message that remains with me because of that first yechidus.

### A LESSON FOR LIFE

Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok Chitrik, shliach to Eretz Yisroel and dean of the Chabad girls' seminary in Tzfas, was the recipient of a very special gift at a very young age. The Rebbe was the sandak at his bris! Shortly after the bris, the Chitrik family left on shlichus to Brazil. The second time that R' Chitrik saw the Rebbe was on Erev Yom Kippur 5721/1960, nine years later.

R' Chitrik retold that his parents had moved their family back to New York, and on Erev Yom Kippur his father took him to receive lekach from the Rebbe. There was tremendous crowding at the entrance to 770. His father inched his way forward with his son behind him, and at a certain point the young boy burst into tears.

When R' Chitrik reached the Rebbe at the entrance to *Gan Eden HaElyon*, the Rebbe immediately noticed that he had been crying. The Rebbe asked him if this was the first time he had been pushed among the Chassidim. He nodded. The Rebbe was satisfied and said, "Nu, it should be in a good and successful time."

When I asked R' Chitrik if he remembers a message from his first yechidus, he told me that from this story he learned that it is an advantage and great

**“It is an advantage and great privilege to be pushed among Chassidim.**



privilege to be pushed among Chassidim.

## SHLICHUS SUGGESTION IN YECHIDUS

At one of the farbrengens that took place in 770, Rabbi Shimon Lazarus, shliach in Texas, said:

I had yechidus in 5732/1972. I was looking for a place to go on shlichus. I suggested a certain city, which I knew needed a shliach, and asked the Rebbe about it. The Rebbe looked at the note I submitted and said, "In this city, there is a rav who has been there for many years now. If he feels a connection with Chabad, then he himself does the work of a shliach. If he is not an admirer, he will interfere with what you do, and for what purpose do you need to fight with him? It would be better if you went to Texas, because there is no rabbi there whom the residents consider the baal ha'bayis (boss) of the place, and you will be able to operate without interference. Go to Rabbi Chadakov and finalize this with him."

I left the yechidus ecstatic that the Rebbe himself had picked my place of shlichus. I went to R' Chadakov, and to my surprise he was not impressed. He heard me out and then said indifferently, "Okay, I hear. Come in tomorrow and we will talk."

When I went the following day, I was tense with anticipation. I knew that often the Rebbe

carried things out unofficially through R' Chadakov, and one needed to be careful to act wisely in order to not miss an opportunity.

I sat facing him, and he began by telling me that he had three shlichus suggestions. Aside from Texas, he mentioned two other states. He explained at length the advantages of each one of them. I found myself in a dilemma. The Rebbe had told me Texas without my even thinking in that direction, and now, two other places were being suggested. Surely R' Chadakov was not doing this on his own. What should I do?

I thought for a moment, and thank G-d I realized this was a test to see whether I was willing to go to Texas or whether my interest in it was only because the Rebbe mentioned it.

I replied, "The Rebbe told me Texas, and that is where I want to go! In addition, of all the choices I am inclined to go to Texas. However, my wife does not know there are other choices, and I will ask her what she chooses."

I said that because I knew that the Rebbe always wants the Chassidim to consult with their wives. R' Chadakov gave me time to do that, and I rushed back with the answer that she also preferred Texas. When he heard this, R' Chadakov said that Merkos appointed me as shliach in Texas.

I never asked him to explain

things to me – why he offered the other two locations – but I am sure it came from the Rebbe. The Rebbe wanted to be sure that my going to Texas would not be by way of a "decree from Above," but by my choice and consent.

## A THOUSAND TIMES OVER

One of the shluchim, a dynamic personality and successful lecturer, told me that he grew up near 770 and had yechidus on a number of occasions – when he was a child, a young boy, and a bachur – and the Rebbe had apparently already designated a shlichus for him in spreading Chassidus by giving shiurim to individuals and groups.

"At one of the yechiduyos," the shliach relates, "I was a young bachur, and I asked the Rebbe for a bracha for success in understanding Chassidus. The Rebbe told me that the Alter Rebbe writes in Torah Ohr that when one helps another Jew 'his mind and heart become refined a thousand times over.' The Rebbe added that the Tzemach Tzedek writes that 'a thousand times over' is not an exaggeration."

The Rebbe was telling this future shliach, who was still a young boy at the time, that if he would also try to explain ideas in Chassidus to others, this would help him understand Chassidus, a thousand times more than he already did.

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



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

# KINGSTON HOTEL



## 718-473-5937

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



# A GEULA PERSPECTIVE OF TISHA B'AV

---

Rabbi Shimon Weitzhandler, mashpia in Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim in Rishon L' Tziyon, and Menachem Ziegelboim discuss the Rebbe's revolutionary view of Tisha B'Av in this week's D'var Malchus. • D'varim 5751

**O**ne of the unique qualities of a Rebbe is that he views things so differently and in such an uplifting manner ...

On that Tisha B'Av that fell out on Shabbos, in the afternoon, shortly before the day of mourning, the Rebbe spoke to the Chassidim. He did not speak about the churban nor did he explore just how deep and dark the galus is, as most other speakers do. Instead, he spoke of the greatness of the ninth of the Av, how elevated a day it is, how much good lies within is, how it is a "yom ratzon la'shem."

The Rebbe went so far as to devote two whole sections of the talk in a comparison of Tisha B'Av to Yom Kippur. If we had not known that Tisha B'Av is a day of mourning, we would

have practically started dancing in joy and in honor of this great day.

It is reminiscent of the story about a group of Jews, not Chassidim, who went to the Tzemach Tzedek and said, "We are interested in Chassidus, but there are things that trouble us; we have questions." The oldest among them asked, "We saw one of the great Chassidim cry on Simchas Torah while on Tisha B'Av he sang! How is this possible?"

The Tzemach Tzedek answered, "To a Chassid, a niggun isn't simcha and crying isn't sadness. Crying is bitterness. On Simchas Torah, when he thought of the revelation of the light of Torah on this day, how the holy Torah rejoices with him, and how far he was from it, this led to a feeling of bitterness. On Tisha

B'Av, the time of churban, when he saw that the churban had taken place, he held on to his deep faith in the fulfillment of the prophecy of Geula. This led him to sing...

"Yes, indeed," says Rabbi Shimon Weitzhandler. "You are reminding me of what Rabbi Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev said about the major fasts of the year. On Tisha B'Av – who can eat? And on Yom Kippur – who needs to eat!"

"On these two days we fast because the Halacha requires it, starting from the night before, but the truth is – who *can* and who *wants* to eat on these days when we focus on their significance?"

R' Weitzhandler took a D'var Malchus booklet for this week and pointed at the date listed on top, "From the sichos of Shabbos Parshas D'varim, Shabbos Chazon, Tisha B'Av (postponed)." He reminded me that the Rebbe said this sicha on Shabbos Chazon in the late afternoon, shortly before Shabbos was over.

I am a bit hesitant to ask, but perhaps there is no point in learning this sicha this year, or any other year for that matter,

**when the 9<sup>th</sup> of Av falls out on a weekday, since most of the sicha has to do with the postponement of the fast that year because of Shabbos.**

“Even though a literal point of view has its place and time, that’s not the right way to view the words of the Rebbe here. The words of this sicha are Torah, the Torah of Moshiach, and we need to learn it. Let us look for a moment at what the Rebbe is saying in this sicha, and we will discover the deep and illuminating message within it that can guide us every year, even every day.

“The Rebbe speaks at length in this sicha about how on the 9<sup>th</sup> of Av of that year, it was permissible to eat because the fast was postponed as the Halacha mandates. The Rebbe zeroes in on the essence of the day, namely that ‘on the 9<sup>th</sup> of Av, Moshiach was born,’ and ‘this inyan is repeated every 9<sup>th</sup> of Av.’ *‘The positive aspect of this day – on this day the savior of Israel was born – is not postponed and is not even weakened, G-d forbid, by Shabbos. On the contrary, the good aspects are more openly revealed and stronger on Shabbos.’* Other such expressions of the Rebbe in this sicha highlight and speak in praise of the ninth of Av that falls out on Shabbos.

“The Rebbe takes a lantern and illuminates the darkness of the day. The fast is only an exterior shell of the day, which conceals its true essence, which is that it is an elevated day, the birthday of Moshiach, and an *eis ratzon* (auspicious time). Shabbos Chazon is a time when every neshama is shown a vision of the third Beis HaMikdash. When Tisha B’Av falls on Shabbos, then all this is in



(twilight) is prohibited on Tisha B’Av like on Yom Kippur.’ In addition, the Rebbe spends quite some time on the connection and relationship between these two days.

“Do you know the sicha, ‘*ker a velt haint*’?”

**Sure. Nowadays, people have the words of this sicha set as the ring tone on their cell phones.**

“In that sicha (12 Tammuz 5744), the Rebbe cries out and exclaims: Would a Jew watching the Beis HaMikdash burning remain tranquil? He would turn

**“In that sicha the Rebbe cries out and exclaims: Would a Jew watching the Beis HaMikdash burning remain tranquil? He would turn the world over, even if he had a heart of stone!”**

addition to the special quality of Shabbos itself.

*“The inner meaning of the fast is seen openly when the fast falls on Shabbos, for then only the fast is postponed, but not the good aspect within it that it is a ‘yom ratzon L’ Hashem.’. On the contrary, since every Shabbos is a yom ratzon and it is a mitzva to take pleasure on it – and this is connected with the Geula – then the ‘eis ratzon’ of the fast is in greater measure and the fast is like ‘a Yom Tov and day of joy and gladness.’ This is similar to the way it will be in Yemos HaMoshiach ... “(Ch. 3)*

“The Rebbe does not suffice with this statement, but compares Tisha B’Av to Yom Kippur! *‘Of the four fasts, Tisha B’Av is just like Yom Kippur – ‘there is no difference between Tisha B’Av and Yom Kippur etc.’ The night and day of Tisha B’Av are the same in every respect, and eating in the time of Bein ha’shmashos*

the world over, even if he had a heart of stone! The Rebbe applied this to our generation, since in every generation in which the Mikdash is not built, it is as if it is destroyed. That is what the Rebbe said in 5744/1984. However, already in 5751, the Rebbe no longer discusses the terrible churban, but immediately focuses on the second lowing of the cow that heralded the birth of Moshiach, one moment after the churban.

“The day of Tisha B’Av is obviously not simply a day of churban; it is the day Moshiach is born, the beginning of the Geula.

“Suddenly, Tisha B’Av is transformed into a yom segula, a day of joy, like Yom Kippur. Who wants to eat on Yom Kippur? It is not just like any other fast day... G-dliness is revealed .... Chayus and k’dusha hover in the air ... food has no place on this day ... So too on Tisha B’Av. It is an

**“When we examine this sicha, the D’var Malchus, we see that the Rebbe is demanding that we look at things the way he does, with Geula-vision, which transcends the concealment of exile. It is as if the Rebbe is stretching out a hand and showing the way, showing how a Chassid ought to experience Tisha B’Av.”**

exalted day, completely different from the way the world perceives it.

“When Tisha B’Av falls out on Shabbos, a Chassid has the rare opportunity to live and feel what really happens on this date, this exalted day of inner joy. As the Rebbe states,

*“Based on what was said previously, that on Shabbos Tisha B’Av the inner good and greatness of Tisha B’Av is revealed (something akin to these days being transformed into days of joy and gladness and good day with the true and complete Geula), it turns out that on Tisha B’Av itself there is something like the revelation of Yom Kippur.”*

“Nevertheless, as in all the years, the Rebbe explains that there is a technical problem – “It is just that in galus this aspect is hidden when Tisha B’Av falls out on a weekday” (end of Ch. 4).

“This is how the Rebbe uplifts the day of Tisha B’Av. He is teaching us to look at the inner significance of the day; he is giving us the proper glasses with which to view it.

“In response to your previous question, this is the reason that we should study this sicha not only when Tisha B’Av falls out on Shabbos, but every single year. We must reveal the light of this day. True, every year the “light” of Tisha B’Av is eclipsed by the Kinos, fasting and crying, but do not forget the true essence of

the day as we see it, halachically, when it falls out on Shabbos. *Ker a velt!* Transform the usual negative significance with which you are familiar into something deeper.”

**You speak about focusing our attention and choosing to see the good aspect of this day. Yet over the years, the Rebbe cried out about the hardships of galus and the terrible churban. Is this a sudden change in approach?**

“In the Rebbe’s sichos, especially the sichos of 5751-2, we actually do see a radical change in perspective.

“Learning these sichos guides us to choose the right tools so we know how to correctly view the world. There are three sichos with amazing expressions from the Rebbe Rayatz about the meaning of the concept “D’var Malchus.” These three sichos were said in 5708/1948 (on Purim, Lag B’Omer, and 12 Tammuz).

“In the Purim sicha, the Rebbe Rayatz explains the inyan of beginning with a D’var Malchus, a concept that became well known over the years. The Rebbe says that just as we start the day with “Modeh Ani,” which is our submission that transcends understanding and thus forms the foundation for our avoda throughout the rest of the day, so too with the D’var Malchus. It is the word of the king to which we must submit. This is not like a

teacher and student relationship where one can ask questions. We need to accept things with kabbalas ol and bittul. The way to connect to the inyanim in these sichos is through bittul and submission of the soul.

“The Rebbe Rayatz continues to emphasize that although Chassidus Chabad demands understanding, still there are those things whose point of connection are reached only through bittul.

“In another sicha that was said shortly afterward (on 12 Tammuz), the Rebbe Rayatz explains the concept of D’var Malchus at length and with unusual terms. ‘D’var Malchus are the words of the King – Hashem. When the Jewish nation was born, Moshe Rabbeinu is the one who prepared the nation to hear the word of the King. Today, for all Chassidim, the ‘word of the king’, which was revealed through the Moshe Rabbeinu of their community, is felt through a word of Torah, an effort in avoda, or a story about the Baal Shem Tov. For Chabad Chassidim, this ‘word of the king’ is something that we have as a tradition from the Alter Rebbe and our holy Rebbeim who are the holy genealogical chain.’

“When we examine this sicha, the “D’var Malchus,” we see that the Rebbe is demanding that we look at things the way he does, with Geula-vision, which transcends the concealment of exile. It is as if the Rebbe is stretching out a hand and showing the way, showing how a Chassid ought to experience Tisha B’Av.

“We all grew up with stories of the churban and seeing people reciting Kinos in a mournful tone. Then we see the Rebbe comes in the D’var Malchus,

and introduces a revolution in perspective. It is no longer about the churban, but about the good that lies hidden within, the beginning of the Geula process which begins on this day of destruction, the birth of Moshiach. This is what the Rebbe emphasizes. Therefore, we all need the requisite bittul in order to have the ability to follow through.

“On a more individual note, Tisha B’Av, in its general sense of churban, is with us all the time. When daily life pulls us down to the point where we are overwhelmed, whether with parnasa, family matters, health concerns, etc. we are experiencing our own Tisha B’Av. Sometimes we even feel a sense of churban!

“It is as if the Rebbe is grabbing us and saying, “Listen

to the lowing of the second cow that announces the birth of Moshiach. The churban is part of the process of growth, of renewal, of development. Do not sink into your personal galus. Choose to understand what is actually going on and remember that every obstacle in life contains within it an opportunity for growth and inner Geula.” Which do you pick?”

### **Is it really our choice?**

“Absolutely! The Rebbe goes on to say another inspiring statement: *“In addition, each Jew is a baal ha’bayis (in charge) of all of reality and all the more so over his personal reality and personal avoda of ‘adam ki yakriv – from you, a korban to Hashem.’ ‘From you’ specifically, and by doing so, he sacrifices all matters of the world too (inanimate, plant, animal, human) that are*

*included in it ...”* (Ch. 9).

“A Jew is a baal ha’bayis over all strata of existence, including, of course, all aspects of his own personal existence, enabling him to bring his own personal Geula, and to that of his family and from there to all the Jewish people.”

**Please provide a practical suggestion – how should these concepts be expressed in our everyday lives?**

“We must toil in the study of D’var Malchus, because it is literally our very lives. Today, we have all the tools: we have the D’var Malchus with vowels, as well as with all the quotes cited in the footnotes for those who want to learn it in greater depth. There are even summaries for someone who cannot learn it in depth. The table is set and ready, and all one has to do is reach out and help himself.”

---

### **Continued from page 42**

the throne appears unexpectedly, with nothing in the pattern of the stones to indicate its presence in advance. It is arranged to correspond to the borders of the inheritance of Menasheh and Ephraim, the two grandsons of Rachel who cries over her children in exile.

The throne expresses our longing for the coming of Moshiach. With it, I intended to bring the subject of anticipation of Geula to the far-flung hills of the Shomron. I am sure that when Moshiach comes he will visit the hills of the Shomron and will see this throne made for him. Then he will see how we, all the Jewish people, waited for him.

**How do you view art and artisanship from the perspective**

### **of living in the time immediately prior to Geula?**

Hashem gave us the ability to express ideas that advance the revelation of G-d in the world. Every field of endeavor has its unique aspect that advances the revelation of G-d in the world, and this is what ought to be the guiding light of every person involved in that field. In the field of art we need to focus on the goal and through art, to generate greater accessibility within the public to values such as t’filla, Torah, belief in Geula, etc. Art is a tool of expression of the soul and we do not need to profane it by artistry that expresses some whim or invention that does not serve the goal. Creating something that does not serve the goal of revealing G-d in the world, is a waste. When you use art to bring the light of Hashem,

you see how you can accomplish amazing things and bring the loftiest ideas to the world.

**To conclude, what is your dream?**

I submitted a plan to the IDF, which is still awaiting approval, to create artwork to be displayed at the camp for basic training, which will provide the new inductees with a sense of connection to their heroic Jewish past. In my daily work in creating Aronot Kodesh, I feel that I am fulfilling a shlichus of igniting the Jewish spark that exists in every Jew, which connects him to Eretz Yisroel. When a Jew outside of Eretz Yisroel stands facing an Aron Kodesh built of stones from Eretz Yisroel, this certainly gives him a feeling of belonging to his roots and a sense of his identity as one who perpetuates the chain of the generations.

# A MODEL MIZBEIACH AND THRONE FOR MOSHIACH

---

Artist Asaf Kidron is immersed year round in the topic of the Mikdash and Geula through his artistic creations. His motto is a saying from the Maharal of Prague: “Beauty in creation is the spirit within the material form.” \* We met with Kidron to discuss his work and to get a behind-the-scenes look at the altar he made for Machon HaMikdash.

By Sholom Dovber Crombie

---

Asaf Kidron has created many works of art throughout his life, from his artistic depictions of the lives of the Avos to modern day Judaica and shul furnishings. He sees the creation of these spiritual pieces of artwork as a tool for the revelation of G-d's light in the world.

Most of Asaf's time is spent building artistic Aronot Kodesh (holy arks) for shuls in Eretz Yisroel and around the world.

These aronot are made from stones of Eretz Yisroel. In this way, Asaf attempts to implant the longing for the Geula in the hearts of his fellow Jews.

He is an artist through and through, yet his life revolves around the subject of Geula. In his home in the Shomron he surrounds himself with his creations that symbolize the belief in and anticipation of Geula. For example, he has a model throne of Moshiach and a monument

made of stones commemorating the stone monuments that Yehoshua erected in the Jordan River and the Galilee. He has also constructed a prayer lectern in a shul that was made to look like the Mizbeiach/altar in the Beis HaMikdash.

The masterpiece of all his Geula creations is a *mizbeiach* (altar), which is displayed at the Machon HaMikdash. Asaf did not intend for this mizbeiach to be kosher for sacrifices on the

day Moshiach comes and the Mikdash is rebuilt. Instead, he meant for it to be a model, built accurately according to the halachic criteria for a mizbeiach. Machon HaMikdash searched the world for renowned artists and concluded that Asaf Kidron was most suited for producing this item.

Asaf tells us about constructing this mizbeiach:

“About two years ago, I was contacted by Machon HaMikdash in Yerushalayim. They requested that I build a stone altar for them as a model of the mizbeiach in the Beis HaMikdash. They said that in addition to the other vessels they displayed at the Machon, they had always wanted a stone mizbeiach to add to their collection. They had decided that it should conform to the halachos as they appear in the Rambam, but they did not intend for it to meet every halachic requirement, as it would be used only as a model and not for actual use in the Beis HaMikdash.

“For example, the actual altar needs to be made out of stones that were taken from earth that was never worked, i.e. that were taken from deep underground and were never touched by human hands, and of course, were not hewn. We decided to work with stones that had not been hewn and never-broken stones; however, these stones were not taken from earth that was never tilled.

“This model’s measurements are kosher according to the Rambam – a cubit by a cubit and three cubits high. The mizbeiach that the Rambam describes is made out of stone, has raised corners, a burning stack of wood, and is meant for animal sacrifices. The mizbeiach that I built demonstrates what the mizbeiach will look like when Moshiach comes. However, it was quite difficult to make. Modern technology utilizes methods that are very different from those used in the times of the Mikdash. It is no easy task to construct a mizbeiach according to the previous method without hewing stones at all. Also, the mortar is based on a traditional, natural process and does not contain cement.”



## CONNECTING JEWS TO THE LAND OF THEIR HERITAGE

Tours to Yehuda-Shomron have become popular. Journalists, politicians and others who shape public opinion, people in the military and police, all visit the Shomron. One of the sites they visit is the Givot Olam organic farm where they see Asaf's works of art.

The highlight of the tour is the Gal-Eid Yehoshua that Asaf made out of stones collected from all the places where Yehoshua erected stone monuments, as it says, "And Yehoshua set up twelve stones in the Jordan ... and these twelve stones which they took from the Jordan, Yehoshua set up in Gilgal." Around the monument, sixty olive trees stand tall, representing the six hundred thousand Jews that entered the land with Yehoshua. The monument is made of seven circles to represent the seven circuits that Yehoshua made around the city of Yericho, the seven Kohanim who held seven shofars and the walls that fell on the seventh day of the week, on Shabbos.

Through this specific masterpiece, he conveys the message that Eretz Yisroel is a gift from G-d. Not only journalists and Knesset members, but also ordinary people visit and hear what he has to say. At Givot Olam they believe this is the only way to deepen within people's hearts their sense of connectedness to Eretz Yisroel – through the stories of Tanach – which is the only real guarantee of our existence here, as the Rebbe said on many occasions. Gal Eid Yehoshua is an impressive monument, which connects an Israeli to his glorious past and reminds him of the Torah's promise, "To you I have given [this land] and to your descendants, forever."

A leftist journalist who visited the farm recently said that the visit opened his eyes. He realized that a new generation of settlers had arisen, connected to the land in a way that is different from anything he had previously witnessed.

### A STATEMENT OF ANTICIPATION

#### How did you start making the mizbeiach?

All the work was carried out under the direction of a team of rabbis from Machon HaMikdash, led by Rabbi Yisroel Ariel. We built it by carefully following the laws in the Rambam, with R' Ariel and his colleagues carefully researching every detail. By the time we started working, we already had detailed plans to follow. Whenever a question arose, the rabbanim looked into it, and only after receiving a clear answer did we continue our work.

The first thing we did was collect the stones. We took the

stones from the area of Mt. Eival in the Shomron, the place where Yehoshua set up the first mizbeiach when the Jewish people initially entered Eretz Yisroel. We looked for stones that showed no sign of ever having been cracked. Then we had to see which stones fit the dimensions of the model we wanted to make, because we did not want to touch the stones with metal implements and they had to fit with one another.

We brought all the stones to the Machon HaMikdash and had to finish the work in three days, between Yom Kippur and Sukkos. Those were the only days of the year that we could work there while there were no visitors to the Machon. Our team consisted of three men, and we worked

around the clock for three days and nights with almost no sleep. The work began by bringing the stones to the Jewish Quarter, which was not an easy job. First, we brought them to Yerushalayim in trucks that unloaded them at the entrance to the Quarter. From there, we brought them inside with small tractors until we reached the alleyway leading to the Machon. At that point, we used a relay of men until we got them to the center room of the Machon.

#### Tell us about your experience in constructing the mizbeiach.

It was a very special experience. Because we did the work in the Machon with a Shulchan and the other vessels of the Mikdash all around us, it was an extraordinary feeling. I am a Kohen, which also contributed a lot to the special feeling I had in this holy work. The work was done with k'dusha and purity, and of course without any cell phones or other technological distractions, to ensure that everything would be done correctly and precisely.

It was a very exciting, focused time. We thought of nothing but the mizbeiach. We felt that we were making a powerful statement to Hashem, that we are ready for the Geula. Am Yisroel is doing all it can, building vessels of gold and stone, because we want the Beis HaMikdash with all our heart.

The work was also exciting because I felt a sense of mission. I felt that I, as a Kohen, am a representative of a family that is returning to work with Inyanei HaMikdash. It was a feeling of actualization, as if building the mizbeiach represented the bonding of the material and the spiritual, earth and heaven, man and G-d.





Asaf Kidron's artistry



Givot Olam plantation. Built into the fence is Moshiach's throne

When people saw the mizbeiach next to all the copper and gold vessels of the Beis HaMikdash, they were very excited. Placed in the center of the Machon, it looks as though it was plucked right out of the Mikdash and replanted here with us. You can see that it is made out of ancient stones that were exposed to the elements for thousands of years. Two people actually burst into tears. They felt that they were seeing history before their very eyes; it was as though they had entered a time machine and were in another place in history.

Although it was hard working under such time constraints and there was limited room to move around within the rooms of Machon HaMikdash as we worked, there was a constant feeling of great inspiration. Completion of the Mizbeiach did not bring with it a feeling of relief, since we still do not have the complete Geula and we do not have the Mikdash. Nevertheless, there was a strong sense that we were making a statement as soon as Moshiach comes we will be able to build a kosher mizbeiach just like the one we made.

**How did you design it?**

The mizbeiach for sacrifices needs a *yesod* (base) along two sides in order to fulfill the words in the verse “the blood he poured into the yesod of the mizbeiach,” and a hole that is lower than the body of the altar. The yesod has to be in the shape of the letter Reish; it does not completely encircle the mizbeiach. We collected stones with this requirement in mind. They had to fit with each other, because we could not cut any of the stones. It was amazing that the ones we found seemed made just for this purpose, as they fit perfectly.

When we finished constructing the mizbeiach, we were exhilarated and exhausted. I remember that it was a Friday, Erev Sukkos, and I had still not built my sukka.

**What impression did building the mizbeiach make on you as a person?**

The work left me with the feeling that I have to take action to bring the Geula. It made me feel how important it is to have a kollel or Beis Midrash for Kohanim where they can learn how the avoda in the Mikdash was actually done; how the incense pan was held, how to shecht, how to spray the blood.

Hashem wants to see us doing as much as we can do, before He does His part. Like in kiruv, chesed, Torah study, in every area of life where we do the maximum we can do, and then we ask Hashem to complete the job. Here too I felt that we have to do our utmost in order to show Hashem that we want the Geula.

## AN AMUD SHAPED LIKE AN ALTAR

**How did you get involved in working on Mikdash-related projects?**

A few years ago, I built a prayer lectern for the shul in the Givot Olam plantation in the Shomron, and I modeled it with the shape of the mizbeiach as a guideline. As I began preparing its design, I thought of how an amud for t'filla has the characteristics of a mizbeiach, because prayer was instituted in place of the sacrifices, and so I decided to make it like a mizbeiach.

Chazal say that when a couple divorces, the altar sheds tears. The question is, why the altar and not other vessels? Commentaries explain that the mizbeiach is made out of uncut

**“When you look at the various tasks necessary to construct the Beis HaMikdash, you see that all the artistry was not merely for the sake of beauty, but played a significant role in enabling the person to approach his Creator.**

stones. Each stone gets along with the others without having to be carved. They fit together and complement one another. This is why specifically the mizbeiach cries when a person cannot get along with his/her spouse. This tremendously special quality of shalom that the mizbeiach portrays is also demonstrated in the amud for t'filla.

When I began making the amud, I stood in the place where the chazan would soon stand. As I moved the old amud, I stood there and thought, “Imagine that I am the chazan. What kind of amud will inspire my t'filla and the t'filla of the congregation?”

The image that came to mind was a broad base that curved upward, tapered to a narrow waist and then expanded to a wide surface, symbolizing the internal process one experiences through davening. When a person wants to daven, he goes through stages. At first, his thoughts are scattered and he must collect them. This collecting of his thoughts corresponds to the narrow channel of the kavana “know before Whom you stand.” At that point, his t'filla rises up in a flowing and ever expanding manner that reaches heavenward.

Inside the amud, there is a hollow space, which represents, “my heart is void within me,” the lack which stimulates proper t'filla. Under the amud there is a mirror that creates a feeling that the amud is hovering in the air, to symbolize the Torah that does not

need to be supported. The Magen Dovid in the amud is made of protruding stones with the top half wider, its point reaching upward and symbolizing the “inspiration from above,” while the bottom section with its points facing downward, symbolizes “inspiration from below” – our turning to Hashem.

Every week we have many groups of visitors and soldiers who come to our farm that has become a tourist spot. Many journalists visit as well. I tell them all about how the amud ha't'filla corresponds to the mizbeiach. As a result, people start talking about the mizbeiach too. Therefore, it seemed so natural when the privilege of building the model mizbeiach for Machon HaMikdash came to me.

**Please give our readers your perspective on the Mikdash as an artist.**

In my opinion, external beauty disconnected from k'dusha is an empty, barren beauty. The beauty of the Beis HaMikdash is not merely expressed in its artistic quality, but is a beauty with great depth and connection to k'dusha. Take for example the steps leading to the Beis HaMikdash. Aside from the technical and architectural aspects of this stairway, it is a master work of art. These steps convey great depth that opens the heart of the onlooker. The same is true for other parts of the Mikdash, like the passageways between the *azaros*, the smoke

that rose from the mizbeiach, and the utensils of the mizbeiach. All of them together form a mosaic of tremendous power. It is not simply a matter of artistic talent, but something elevated to a different level altogether. This is true even if one would not fully understand the enormous k'dusha contained within those keilim.

When you look at the various tasks necessary to construct the Beis HaMikdash, you see that all the artistry was not merely for the sake of beauty, but played a significant role in enabling the person to approach his Creator.

This deeper appreciation of the totality of the Mikdash as a complete form is reflected in the laws that govern the service that took place there. Just like a physically blemished Kohen cannot serve in the Mikdash, so too, all the vessels need to be whole and all the work in the Mikdash needs to be perfect.

Thus, this k'dusha is similarly expressed in every detail of the structural design of the Mikdash, even within the construction process itself.

## MOSHIACH'S THRONE

At the Givot Olam farm there is another one of Asaf Kidron's creations that is connected to the Geula, the special chair that Asaf built for Moshiach.

**What is the idea behind this throne?**

It's a throne built for Moshiach. I got the inspiration for it from a Gemara which says “Ben Dovid [Moshiach] will only come when people forget about him.” The throne is built into an artistic stone enclosure on the farm. To the passerby,

**Continued on page 37**