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ZACH ADAR: PURIFYING THE TZIMTZUM ITSELF

The letters Chaf-Zayin spell “zach – pure,” with all the connotations of cleansing, refining, and purifying said of the Era of Redemption. Indeed, the ultimate state of purification and refinement is accomplished by revealing the intent underlying the tzimtzum itself, the contraction and concealment of G-dliness associated with the Divine name Elokim.

Translated by Boruch Merkur

May it be G-d's will that the good resolutions spoken about above— Namely, increasing in faith in Moshiach and anticipating his coming, as well as speeding up the advent of Moshiach by giving additional charity and helping others with the costs of preparing for Pesach. May it be G-d's will that this immediately brings about the true reward, the true and complete redemption, on this Shabbos Kodesh, the 27th* of Adar 5750.

(*Footnote 110: To note the special quality of the 27th day of the month, whose letters, Chaf-Zayin, when reversed spell “zach – pure,” with all the connotations of cleansing, refining, and purifying said of the Era of Redemption: “Many shall refine themselves and make themselves white, and be purified” (Daniel 12:10). Indeed, the ultimate state of purification and refinement is accomplished by revealing the intent underlying the *tzimtzum* itself, the contraction and concealment of G-dliness associated with the Divine name Elokim.

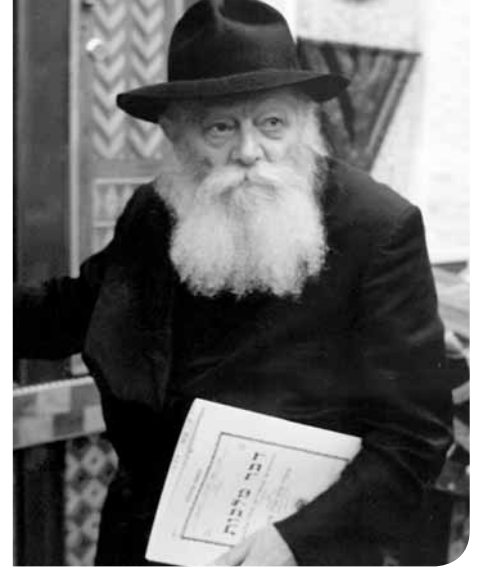
(There is added significance

in the fact that the 27th day (*zach*) follows the 26th, which is numerically equivalent to G-d's name Havaya. This progression alludes to the order of Divine service whereby first there is the revelation of G-d's name Havaya (and the purpose of the *tzimtzum* is to set the stage for this revelation), following which they reveal the intent of the *tzimtzum* itself, the intrinsic purpose of the contraction and concealment of the name Elokim.)

[These esoteric concepts are elaborated upon earlier in the Rebbe's address, as follows.]

TZIMTZUM AS AN END UNTO ITSELF

Regarding the daily lesson in Rambam on the Laws of Gifts to the Poor – the inner dimension of *Peia*, the Mitzva to leave a section of one's field for the poor, is expressed by its numerical equivalent of 86, which also equals the Divine name Elokim. Elokim signifies the attribute of Severity and Tzimtzum, which gives rise to poverty. (The revelation of G-d's name Havaya, on the other hand,



associated with Benevolence and Generosity, brings about affluence.)

Of course, the seemingly negative quality of Severity/ Tzimtzum, being of Divine origin, deriving from the Divine name Elokim, obviously has a G-dly intent. In fact, there is a dual intent to the G-dly power of *tzimtzum*: **a)** The purpose of *tzimtzum* is **for the sake of a subsequent revelation**. That is, by means of the preceding *tzimtzum*, there can be a revelation of unconstrained G-dly light within the universe. **b)** The intent of the *tzimtzum* is (not only for the sake of a subsequent revelation but) also for the virtue inherent to **the *tzimtzum* itself**. That is, the perfection of the Alm-ghty is revealed through the *tzimtzum* insofar as He is revealed as being not limited to revelation; G-d possesses the power of concealment as well as revelation [and thus He is truly perfect and omnipotent].

In accordance with this dual intent of *tzimtzum*, there are two ways to understand the name Elokim:

Regarding *tzimtzum* as it is recognized as being for the sake of a subsequent revelation, it is written, “for a sun and a sheath is Havaya Elokim”

(T'hillim 84:12) – “A sheath’ refers to the shielding of the sun, providing protection, so that the creations are able to withstand it[s powerful rays] ... Thus, the Divine name Elokim acts as a sheath to the name Havaya ... so that it is not revealed [in its full force] to the creations, which would cause them to be nullified out of existence” (*Shaar HaYichud V’HaEmuna*, beg. Ch. 4-6). In this sense, the name Elokim (*tzimtzum*) is **secondary to the name Havaya**, being solely for the sake of revealing Havaya. Indeed, it is explained in several places that the two Divine names, Havaya and Elokim, are analogous to light and the vessel that contains the light – internal and external – for the vessel and external aspect are nullified and secondary to the light and the internal dimension.

However, upon recognizing the virtue inherent to *tzimtzum*,

the name Elokim is a **Divine name unto itself**, one of the seven names that are not to be erased. From this perspective, the name Elokim is not secondary to the name Havaya. In fact, by means of the name Elokim, the full power of the Alm-ghty is revealed. [...]

THE PERFECTION IN ALL “YOUR” WAYS

To explain the above in terms of the service of G-d:

Among the differences between the two approaches to the intent of the *tzimtzum* with regard to the Divine service of man: Considering the intent of *tzimtzum* as being only for the sake of a subsequent revelation, the Divine service within the context of worldly experience (“world – *olam*” meaning “concealment – *helem*,” which was created through the name

Elokim, “*B’Reishis bara Elokim*”) is in a manner of “all of your deeds shall be for the sake of Heaven.” That is, worldly matters (*tzimtzum*) have worth only insofar as they are done “**for the sake** of Heaven,” for in this manner benefit accrues regarding matters of holiness. Worldliness/*tzimtzum* is thus tolerated or even uplifted for the sake of the revelation it can engender. On the other hand, recognizing that the *tzimtzum* itself reveals the perfection of G-d – that He has the power of limitation as well as revelation – the service is in a manner of “in all your ways you shall know Him,” meaning that “**all your ways**” (referring to non-obligatory, yet permissible activities) themselves reveal the perfection of G-d (“know Him”) through acknowledging the G-dly power of limitation.

(Seifer HaSichos 5750, pg. 376-7 and 371-2, muga)



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CHASSIDIC WARMTH MELTS FREEZING EUROPE

Europe's record freezing temperatures have claimed hundreds of lives, snarled traffic and trapped tens of thousands of residents in remote villages across Serbia and Romania. * Many of the Rebbe's shluchim have had to contend with the unusually cold weather. * Beis Moshiach spoke to a number of them about how they are managing to warm things up.

By Mendel Tzfasman

Although Europeans are used to a cold winter, the recent cold spell that hit the continent brought in its wake unusual quantities of snow and surprised the old-timers. For two weeks in a row, the warmest temperature measured in Eastern Europe was no higher than thirty below zero Celsius.

If that was not enough, snow blanketed Rome for the first time in 26 years. Colorful Europe had turned into a black, white and gray photograph.

If you were to ask the shluchim in Europe about how they deal with zero degrees Celsius temperature or running a Chabad house or a school on snow days, they would laugh.

To them, zero is nearly spring weather; when it reaches thirty degrees below zero, then some activities are canceled. In fact, although the cold wave surprised everyone, the schools and Chabad houses continued to operate (almost) as usual.

WARSAW, POLAND

Minus twelve Celsius and the sun is shining

The extreme cold spell that Europe recently experienced broke new records even by European standards. The cold began in Eastern Europe (Ukraine, Russia, Moldova, and Belarus) and soon spread to central and Western Europe,

taking many lives.

Rabbi Nechemia Segal, shliach in Warsaw, walked from his home to shul on the Shabbos before we spoke. It is a fifty minute walk which he did in freezing cold – ten degrees below zero. He did not consider this unusual.

When I asked him to describe the weather as he looked out of his Chabad house window, he said, "It's dry, no snow, and no ice, there is a cloudless sky and it's freezing, between 10-12 degrees below zero. The sun is shining as though it's the middle of the summer."

Rabbi Segal arrived in Poland five years ago. At first he worked in the yeshiva. Now he works



A chuppa outdoors in Poltava despite the cold and snow

with local people and the many tourists who visit Poland year-round.

His main role is, paraphrasing the Rebbe's words to Rabbi Groner a"h of Australia, "to conquer Poland with the power of Torah." He is responsible for the Kollel which offers shiurim for young and old, for the Sunday school, and for visits to offices and trips throughout Poland, as well as providing answers to any question related to Jewish life. He also opened a Chabad house with a shul for local Israelis.

Programming continues as usual, despite the cold. How does he manage?

"We dress warmly, get in the car, and go to shiurim and

“Not only didn't the frosty chuppa cool off the Jews of Poltava, but another eight families decided to join them in their observance of family purity and asked the shliach to marry them off properly according to Halacha.

weekday activities.”

Most of Rabbi Segal's target audience is comprised of traditional Jews and those who recently became more religiously observant. They do not seem put out by the effort required to get to shul as they too walked there on Shabbos, in order to be warmed with the light of Shabbos and Chassidus.

ULM, GERMANY

A two hour trip in minus 25 degrees weather

In Germany, in central Europe, the temperature dropped to 25 degrees below zero! Rabbi Shneur Zalman Trebnik, shliach to the city of Ulm, was in Eretz Yisroel this week for his mother's yahrtzeit. He combined this with a fundraising evening for the

building of a mikva in his city, in her memory.

In his talk that evening, he said, “When we came to Ulm twelve years ago, the head of the k’hilla asked me how I envisioned the city ten years hence. I hesitantly said that I hoped we would have a minyan on Shabbos. Nine of the people present burst out laughing and the other two managed not to laugh in my face.

“Reality far exceeded my expectations. Today, the shul is too small for the dozens of people who daven there every Shabbos. This is in addition to shiurim and a growing preschool. With Hashem’s help, we will soon be having a minyan every Monday and Thursday. More than ten women travel two hours each way, every month, to use a mikva. Yesterday, it was 25 degrees below zero. In the summer the sun sets very late. Shabbos is over after ten at night and the women return towards morning. There have also been unfortunate instances in which a woman returned without using the mikva because the place isn’t well maintained and the water was frozen.

“With Hashem’s help a mikva will be built here; the question is how,” Rabbi Trebnik concluded. “I hope that we won’t have to compromise due to lack of funds, but will be able to build a beautiful mikva as the Rebbe wants. I give this over to you – it depends on your generosity.”

VIENNA, AUSTRIA

Ships trapped in ice

Thousands of travelers, trying to escape the cold for warmer climes, were stranded in airports all over Europe. Heathrow Airport, the busiest airport on the

continent, canceled about 400 flights due to the heavy snowfall on the runways and concern over dense fog. Holland’s large Schiphol Airport canceled dozens of flights.

In western Austria, where the temperature sank to minus fourteen, a technical problem left 10,000 homes without heat. I spoke with Rabbi Yisroel Netanelov, shliach in Vienna and rabbi of the “Beis HaLevi – Chabad Community Center.” Despite the cold and the fifteen centimeters (six inches) of snow, he was relaxed and told me, “Everything is quiet and calm now. The snow actually broke the cold snap; it’s soft and nice. The snow that makes life difficult is the snow followed by rain. It turns into mud, is dirty, slippery and dangerous. People are enjoying winter sports now and we are continuing our usual shlichus schedule.”

Rabbi Netanelov and his wife arrived in Vienna five years ago in order to run Kollel Beis HaLevi and the Talmud Torah for girls. Like all shlichim, they are busy with the education of the present and future generations to Torah and mitzvos and hiskashrus to the Rebbe. The snow and ice didn’t stop eighty children from attending the “Avos U’Banim” Sunday program.

Rabbi Netanelov focuses his attention mainly on the Bucharian community which is the largest in Vienna; however, his circle of influence includes Ashkenazim and Sephardim of all backgrounds as well as Jewish students.

ALMA ATA, KAZAKHSTAN

When the sh’chita knife is frozen

Moving from west to east, I

had a conversation with Rabbi Elchonon Cohen, shliach in Kazakhstan, where they are shivering in the cold and warming up with Chassidus. In Alma Ata, where Reb Levi Yitzchok (the Rebbe’s father) is buried, the temperature reached 28 degrees below zero.

“It is not the cold that is unusual this year; what’s unusual is the length of the cold spell,” says Rabbi Cohen.

Every week, Rabbi Cohen shechts chickens and cows so that Jews will have kosher meat to eat. The car, which uses diesel fuel, takes hours to heat up before a trip (as the fuel must first be melted). While driving, despite the heat blowing on the windows, the windshield freezes and impedes visibility. Sometimes, when he is lucky, a little hole remains in the ice through which he can see.

When he arrives at the slaughterhouse, in three or four layers of clothing, he has to thaw out his hands for a while in order to regain sensation in his fingers and the ability to check the knife properly.

Rabbi Cohen said that due to the extreme cold, the water and blood freeze on the sh’chita knife and he has to hold it under warm water after he slaughters each chicken and cow.

When I asked him whether the schools continue to function he said, “In Kazakhstan, as long as the temperature does not pass 35 degrees below zero, it is still considered normal and schools and businesses function as usual. We haven’t had it as cold as that yet and so things continue as always. In Ust-Kamenogorsk, where the shliach Rabbi Shlomo Turenheim and his family live, the temperature dipped below 35. Although the schools, stores

and offices were closed, their preschool stayed open. It made a big kiddush Hashem."

As for the children, they learn to dress properly for the weather and they manage. When it's a "normal" cold (i.e. until it reaches minus thirty) they still go outside to play. They stay outside for half an hour and then come back in.

In Krivoy Rog in central Ukraine, despite the heavy snowfall that blanketed the city, over a hundred men, women and children packed the new "Chabad Lubavitch Ohr Avner" events hall and celebrated the opening of the new building. The preschool was founded over a decade ago and has earned a good reputation thanks to the high scholastic level and warm atmosphere. Until recently it was housed in one of the wings of the school and was very crowded. Now, it has finally moved into its own permanent home in a spacious, beautiful building which also houses a sports complex. Mr. Gennady Korban, a member of Dnepropetrovsk's Jewish community's board of trustees, was a key sponsor of the 1.5 million dollar project. The building contains separate areas for preschool classes, a modern early development center, and a beautiful school auditorium that

is outfitted with the most up to date audio-video equipment, which will also serve as an events hall.

POLTAVA, UKRAINE

A wedding in the snow

When I spoke with Rabbi Yosef Segal, shliach to Poltava, the weather in his city was relatively "mild." It was minus twelve degrees.

"We had colder days last week, when the temperature was between 20-25 degrees below zero. People could not remain outside for more than twenty minutes. However, not only doesn't the cold limit our activities, but when people come to the Chabad house, they feel the warmth and light of Chassidus."

Most of the schools in Ukraine were closed during this cold spell. In previous years, they may have continued as usual even when it was 20 degrees below zero, but lately, either people are more pampered or they have come to realize that minus 20 degrees can be dangerous. The Ohr Avner mosdos in Poltava were closed for a few days.

Despite the bitter cold, Rabbi Segal continues to go every week, 115 kilometers away, to Haditch, to the gravesite of the Alter Rebbe. Nearly two months ago,

a large group went to Haditch in order to hold a chuppa there. The couple is very well-to-do and respected among the Jews of Poltava. They had a civil marriage in Cyprus years ago and when they came to Poltava they became involved with the shliach and his programs.

With the construction of a mikva in Poltava, the couple became even more interested. They decided to observe the laws of family purity and have their wedding at the Alter Rebbe's gravesite on 24 Teves. When Rabbi Segal wondered how he could fit a grand wedding into his busy day of farbrengens etc., the couple told him they weren't interested in a grand affair. All they wanted was an authentic Jewish experience.

That is why the community went to Haditch in the freezing cold and set up a chuppa in the snow and ice. A group of Lubavitcher Chassidim from Eretz Yisroel participated in the moving wedding. Not only didn't the frosty chuppa cool off the Jews of Poltava, but another eight families decided to join them in their observance of family purity and asked the shliach to marry them off properly according to Halacha.

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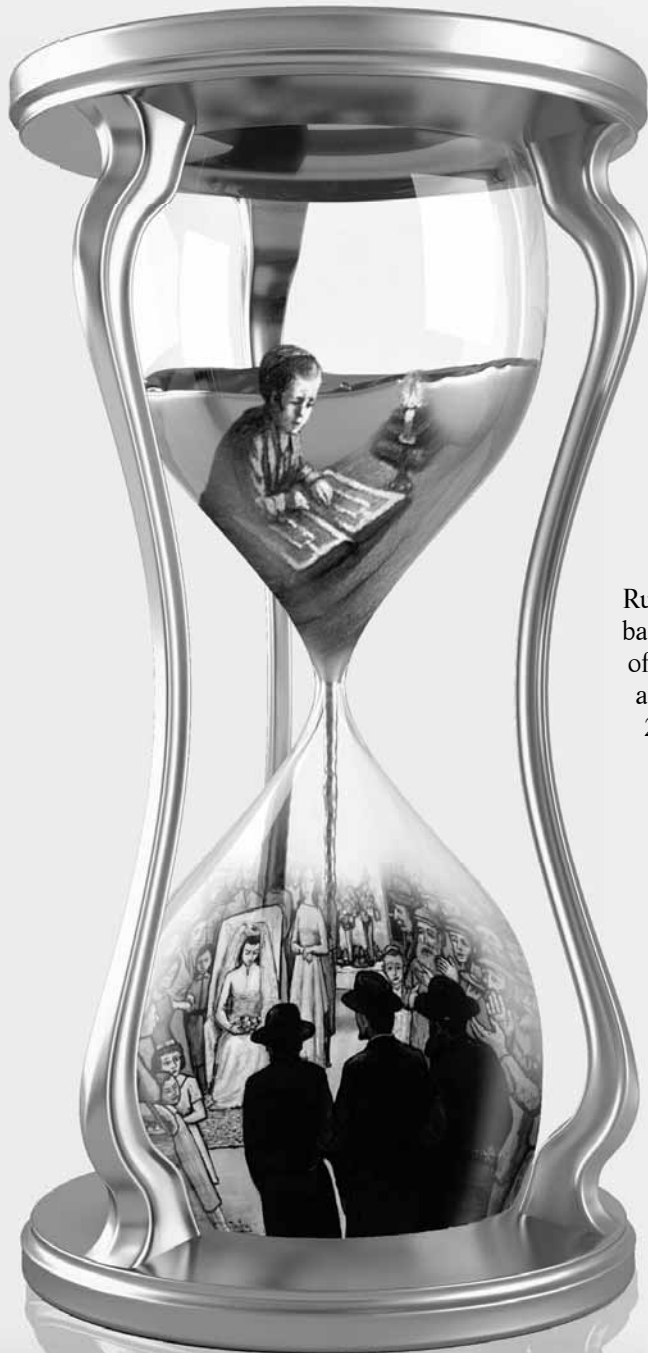
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FROM YESHIVA TO THE CHUPPA



Many people around the world, Lubavitch and non-Lubavitch alike, are talking about the “Age for Marriage Guidelines” pamphlet that they received in the mail or viewed online. * Menachem Ziegelboim and Avrohom Rainitz follow up with the story behind the story.

Two weeks ago, Anash around the world were surprised to find a thin booklet in their mailboxes that addresses a burning issue in our community. The booklet in Hebrew, translated into English, French, Spanish and Russian, urging for reform regarding the accepted age at which bachurim are currently getting married, was signed by a long list of rabbanim and mashpiim. As per their instructions, those who are no longer in the yeshiva system are told to get married at 20; those who remain in yeshiva are asked to start looking into shidduchim as soon as the structured system ends, at age 21-22.

Beis Moshiach was told that the mashpiim who signed it sat at two or three lengthy meetings at which they discussed the contents of the message as well as the wording in order to be precise and clear. Then corrections were made and all necessary additions were added until the final version was complete.

The letter of the rabbanim was written by a well-known Chabad rav who serves as rav of a large city. It was signed by a long list of rabbanim. They address “leaders of Lubavitch communities in every location,” and make it clear that this step was taken after discussion with mashpiim and educators who are familiar with the issues from up close.

THE CALL OF THE HOUR

Rabbi Yochanan Gurary, rav of Cholon and member

of the Beis Din Rabbanei Chabad in Eretz Yisroel, in a conversation with *Beis Moshiach*, said:

“The impetus came from Anash – parents of children of shidduchim age – who asked rabbanim to get involved. Boruch Hashem, there are many good bachurim who are sitting and learning, but there are also those who have finished the prescribed course of learning and don’t continue learning. Their parents are concerned about this. There is no point in bachurim just ‘hanging around,’ which leads to undesirable things.”

Beis Moshiach discussed this with a member of Anash who was the liaison between the rabbanim and mashpiim and facilitated the publishing of the call to the public. He worked behind the scenes, attended meetings, and closely followed the developments of the entire process.

“The rabbanim and mashpiim are addressing this issue in response to the situation that has arisen in recent years regarding bachurim who complete the prescribed course of learning. In recent decades, the prevalent view was that a bachur needs to be 23-24 before he can marry. The time has come to drop this way of thinking and get back to an outlook based on Torah, Chassidus and the Rebbe’s horaos.

“As was quoted in the brochure, Chazal say 18 is the age for marriage. The Gemara adds that ‘until [the age of] 20, Hashem sits and waits for a man to marry; once he reaches 20 and is not married, He says: Let his bones rot!’”

The Shulchan Aruch states: “It is a mitzva for every man to marry at age 18 ... in no event should he pass 20 without getting married. He who has passed this



“At meetings we held before sending out the letter, some marriage experts addressed the claim that twenty year old bachurim are not mature enough for marriage. They said this age is eminently suitable for marriage. They stressed that when someone is overly ‘ripe,’ he or she starts to spoil.”

age and does not desire to marry is forced by beis din to marry in order to fulfill the mitzva of *Peru U'Revu* (Be fruitful and multiply).”

Getting married at age 23-

24 has long been the age for marriage. Why the need for a change now?

“Unfortunately, until now bachurim who ended their learning at 21-22 left yeshiva

Mrs. Ruth Mifi, a therapist who helps many families with shalom bayis issues, relationships and preparing for married life, was asked:

Do you think that bachurim nowadays are ready to get married at younger ages?

“The younger the bachurim, the more connected they are to yeshiva, the more pure they are; and this is a keili for bracha. At a younger age, bachurim are more in a mindset of kabbalas ol. At this younger age, one can spare himself a lot of the potential difficulties in getting to the chuppa. There are fewer conflicts with parents regarding shidduchim and details of the wedding.

“The more distant one is from the source, the less innocent sincerity there is. The older a bachur gets, the more he loses that innocent sincerity and the title of Tamim (in its literal sense too). When these boys marry later, it becomes more complicated. I hope that this call of the rabbanim will be accepted by all of Anash with kabbalas ol for the rabbanim whom the Rebbe appointed.”

“The younger the bachurim, the more connected they are to yeshiva, the more pure they are; and this is a keili for bracha.”

and found various ways to occupy themselves, because it was acceptable to marry at age 24. They thought – I have at least another two years until I get married – what am I planning on doing during these two years?

“Of course there are many bachurim who continue to sit and learn, but there are still plenty of others who are not keeping the s’darim and are reducing their hours of learning. Some of them are not in yeshiva altogether, although they are likely to be involved in good things such as helping shluchim.

“We were taught that the moment a bachur enters Tomchei T’mimim, he is under the responsibility of the hanhala until the chuppa. The place of a Tamim is in Tomchei T’mimim and it is from there that he goes to get married, as they tell about a bachur who went to his mashgiach to ask permission to leave seider for his chuppa. Concepts such as finishing



Rabbi Yochanan Gurary

yeshiva or leaving yeshiva did not exist.”

CHANGING PUBLIC OPINION

Rabbanim consulted with roshei yeshivos and mashpiim from various Chabad yeshivos. They came to the conclusion that

it is necessary to move back the age for marriage so there will be no break between learning in yeshiva and establishing a home. Practically speaking, bachurim should start looking into shidduchim and get married starting at age 20.

In a conversation with Rabbi Shloma Majeski, well-known mashpia in Crown Heights and one of those who signed the letter, he said that when he returned from shlichus in Australia, he and all the members of the group had yechidus. In this yechidus, the Rebbe spoke to them about shidduchim and said that those who, because of their age or feelings, are ready for shidduchim should not get involved in making inquiries; their parents should take care of the details. Only when it becomes necessary to meet a girl should they go, and the meeting should take place only after s’darim.

Most of the bachurim in that yechidus were 20-21. Maybe one of them was 22, and yet the Rebbe addressed this topic. It seems, concludes Rabbi Majeski, that it is appropriate to talk about shidduchim at this age.

Rabbi Pinye Korf, mashpia in Oholei Torah, mentioned that in the sicha of 14 Kislev 5714, the Rebbe spoke about how despite the preciousness of the time before marriage, the ultimate goal is the time after marriage. This differentiates Chabad yeshivos and Litvishe yeshivos. In Litvishe yeshivos, the students don’t get married until later while in Lubavitch, in general, and especially in Yeshivos Tomchei T’mimim, the Rebbeim instituted that at age 20 one needs to look into shidduchim, since “He did not create it [the world] to be empty but to be settled.”

[It should be noted that in the

hanacha that was printed in *Toras Menachem*, it says that getting involved in shidduchim should be done “in the early 20’s,” but Rabbi Korf, who was present at the farbrengen, remembers that the Rebbe spoke of age 20 as the age for starting shidduchim in Chabad.]

In conversations we had with some rabbanim and mashpiim who signed the letter, we learned that some of them think changes should be made in the yeshiva curriculum so that all bachurim can marry at a younger age. However, not all rabbanim and mashpiim think so, and as things stand now the conditions are not suitable for such a monumental change. This is why, in the rabbanim’s letter, there is just a general call to move back the age for marriage “to an age earlier than what we are accustomed to now,” without specifying an actual age.

In the mashpiim’s letter too, even when they cite 20 as the proper age for marriage, they quote the Shulchan Aruch which says, “If a person occupies himself in Torah study, doing so assiduously, and fears to get married for he will then be preoccupied in earning a living and thereby desist from learning Torah, he may tarry.” They qualify what they say and note, “If they are truly sitting and learning assiduously, there is reason to delay marriage for another year or two.” In other words, someone who wants to continue learning within the yeshiva environment can delay marriage until 21-22. However, **as soon as he finishes his yeshiva learning**, he should look into shidduchim.

One of the mashpiim who signed the letter explained that aside from the general encouragement to move back



Rabbi Shloma Majeski

the age for marriage, there are two kinds of bachurim that the letter is addressing. One type consists of good, Chassidishe bachurim who don’t have the head for learning and have a hard time continuing their learning on a post-graduate level. For their own good, it is preferable that they marry at age 20, rather than continuing in yeshiva simply due to societal expectations. The other is the bachurim, 20 and up, who left the environment of the yeshiva. The way things are now, they don’t consider marriage because it is not usually done. So they look for something with which to occupy themselves and end up traveling the world or even going to college, r”l. Certainly, for their spiritual and material welfare, these bachurim should marry earlier while still under the influence of their time spent in yeshiva.

IT ALL DEPENDS ON PUBLIC OPINION

Many of Anash who saw the letter of the rabbanim and mashpiim wondered whether the status quo can be changed or if it’s a lost cause. The mashpiim

believe things can definitely be changed. In their letter, they maintain that it all depends on the community’s stance. “As soon as parents realize that there is no valid reason to delay the time of marriage and they will begin urging their sons to listen to shidduch suggestions, marriages will begin taking place at an earlier age.”

Rabbi Yochanan Gurary says this is only the first push. “It will take time until matters are fully corrected, but this is definitely a start. Everybody understands that there is a problem that requires a solution. I believe that with time, it will work its way into the Chabad community.”

Rabbi Yosef Yeshaya Braun, *mara d’asra*, member of the Crown Heights beis din, who also signed the letter, thinks the situation can definitely be changed. It all depends on a few “Nachshons” who will get married younger and people will see that it’s possible.

“After 27 Adar 5754, when the Rebbe no longer responded to questions, bachurim were unwilling to get married without the Rebbe’s answer. For a long period of time there were no weddings in Chabad. It was an abnormal situation, because from a halachic perspective, perhaps one should not refrain from marrying under such circumstances. However, this was the situation because of Chassidishe hergesh.

“This is the way it was until one bachur decided not to delay anymore and he became a chassan. At first, everyone was shocked by this. He had done what nobody else was doing. But everybody else began doing shidduchim soon after.

“The same is true for getting married at younger ages. As

RESERVATIONS

One of the advanced Gemara teachers in a Chabad yeshiva in Eretz Yisroel with whom we spoke accepted the “call of the hour,” but not fully. He has some reservations.

Rabbanim and mashpiim are asking Anash to start looking into marrying off their sons at a younger age. What’s the problem with that?

“I think it’s too universal. As someone who knows the inner world of bachurim, I think each case should be assessed separately. I definitely agree with the basic idea, since nowadays there is a widespread belief among bachurim that it is unnecessary to marry young. This is why the first bachurim in every class hesitate to make the decision. Bachurim must drop this negative attitude about early marriage. If just one bachur gets married earlier because of this call of the rabbanim and mashpiim and doesn’t just hang around, it would be worth it. In fact, I have no problem with this becoming a new trend.

“However, that’s a far cry from turning this into a ‘mitvza’ and a governing policy in Chabad that we have to implement. There are enough bachurim who definitely have what to keep them busy until age 23. Some bachurim prefer to stay in 770 another year after K’vutza. We know that this year is an ‘absorption year’ even more than the first year. There are bachurim who go on shlichus to various yeshivos. They keep in touch with their mashpia and their time is used well.”

So what do you think?

“I believe that it’s not right to tell a bachur who just finished K’vutza to return to Eretz Yisroel and get married right away. A bachur who knows he can still be productive while under the guidance of his mashpia should not rush back and get married.” (In every K’vutza there are about 200 bachurim, sometimes more).

“The dozens of bachurim who do not continue in a yeshiva setting should get married, but at least 100 of them are very serious bachurim for whom there

is good reason for them to remain and continue learning. They should study for smicha and learn plenty of Gemara and Chassidus or even go on shlichus to yeshivos.”

But the Rebbe writes explicitly in his letters in favor of early marriage!

“True, and yet the Rebbe never turned this into a shita. The fact is that throughout the years, many groups of bachurim learned in 770 well past the age of 22-23. They sat and learned and the Rebbe never asked them to leave yeshiva and get married.”

“Furthermore, the Rebbe himself sent bachurim on various shlichuyos, and not only in the summer months on Merkos Shlichus. Groups of bachurim were sent to Australia, Eretz Yisroel, and other countries. It wasn’t a commonplace occurrence, but neither was it that infrequent. Take, for example, the bachurim who were sent to Australia for two years. Upon their return, they stayed another two years in 770 and learned. If remaining single at this age is forbidden, why was it allowed?”

How would you address the situation today?

“Today, too, most of the bachurim don’t go on shlichus to exotic locales as many think. They go to yeshivos and are active among the local talmidim in learning, Chassidishkait, and creating a Chassidishe atmosphere.”

This Gemara teacher, like the other rabbanim and mashpiim, absolutely agrees that if a bachur feels he wants to marry, or a bachur is not utilizing his time well, he should get married. The general consensus seems to be that this also applies to bachurim who go on shlichus and try to acquire a resume that includes as many countries as possible.

...In conclusion?

“I am not familiar with what is going on with bachurim in other places; I know what is happening here in Eretz Yisroel. The guidelines for earlier marriage are basically positive. I just think it need not be a ‘one size fits all’ panacea and each individual case should be assessed separately. The main thing is there should be joyous celebrations in Jewish homes.”

soon as some bachurim will get married at 20, it will change public opinion. A bachur who gets married at 20 will no longer be an aberration.

“When Chazal established 18 as the age for marriage, they certainly knew the inner

workings of the psyche of man, and they assessed that at that age he is mature enough and ready for married life. By the way, it’s interesting that according to Rashi, Chazal’s edict is hinted at in the Torah. From the beginning of the Torah until the pasuk, ‘for

from man this one [woman] was taken,’ the word ‘Adam’ appears eighteen times.

“When you look at all this with a Torah perspective, what we are talking about here is a mitvza (Peru U’Revu) in which a man is obligated from the age of

13, like all mitzvos of the Torah. That is why it says in Shulchan Aruch: ‘One who marries earlier at 13 is performing the mitzva in the best possible way.’

“What is the reason that we don’t marry at 13, but from age 18 and above? The Alter Rebbe explains that ‘in those days [the days of Chazal] they would learn Mishna for five years with boys aged 10-15 and then five years of Talmud, which covers the reasoning of the rulings in the Mishna. If he was not married by the age of 20, he would be transgressing a positive mitzva of the Torah of Peru U’Revu. The reason that the beginning age is 18 is because even after marriage he can learn for two or three years without excessive distractions before many children are born.’

“That means that actually, we should get married at 13, but Chazal allowed us to postpone fulfilling this mitzva until 18-20 because of Torah study which generally supersedes the fulfillment of other mitzvos.

“In order to show how clear it is from Chazal that one should marry by age 20, I will cite an interesting question that appears in the poskim. What is the Halacha regarding someone who vows not to marry until he is over 20? Many poskim hold that this vow is void since he vowed not to do a mitzva!

“Those who are interested in hearing the opinion of marriage experts will be surprised to find out that many of them are of the opinion that the age for marriage should be earlier than commonly accepted. At meetings we held before sending out the letter, some marriage experts addressed the claim that twenty year old bachurim are not mature enough for marriage. They said



Rabbi Braun

this age is eminently suitable for marriage. They stressed that when someone is overly ‘ripe,’ he or she starts to spoil. Older bachurim become very picky, which makes it hard for them to marry. We know that shidduchim are from Heaven and we need a lot of simple faith. Of course, you have to make inquiries so that the shidduch makes sense to you as well, but you need to leave a lot of room for faith. As far as that goes, it is far more preferable if the bachurim are young.”

Rabbi Braun referred to bachurim in the Chassidische communities surrounding Crown Heights in order to prove that 20 year old bachurim are ready for marriage:

“Most of those bachurim are married by 20. Despite their young age, they have good marriages (the divorce rate is much lower than the population at large), and they are also successful when it comes to parnasa. What’s good for them is good for us, and there is no reason why a Lubavitcher bachur should be less mature for

marriage than his counterpart in a nearby community.

“Improvements can always be made, and along with this call for getting married at younger ages it would be a good idea for someone to take up the challenge and arrange for the necessary guidance in preparing the bachurim for marriage.”

LEARNING FOR SMICHA

The Rebbe wants bachurim to receive smicha for rabbanus before getting married. It says in *Seifer HaMinhagim* (p. 75): “The chassan should try to arrange his learning so that he receives smicha for rabbanus before marrying. Questions arise in a Jewish home and one cannot always ask a rav; the chassan needs to be the ‘rav of his house.’” This is what the Rebbe said in a sicha of 24 Teves 5712, “This practice is an instruction for the public – they need to receive Smicha L’Horaa before the wedding.”

We asked Rabbi Y. Y. Wilschansky, rosh yeshiva of the Chabad yeshivos in Tzfas, Chaifa and Natzrat Ilit what he thinks of the idea of combining learning for smicha within the yeshiva curriculum so that those bachurim who finish the yeshiva track can marry right away. His response was:

“This suggestion is outrageous. It is not meant to be part of the yeshiva curriculum. We seek to establish bachurim who are lamdanim, who will focus on Nigleh and Chassidus, Gemara and mefarshim. Even a bachur in shiur Gimmel in yeshiva g’dola is still lacking a great deal in terms of developing his spiritual image. Learning for smicha will adversely affect lamdanus both in Nigleh and in Chassidus. Bachurim have

NOT TO DISCONNECT FROM TOMCHEI T'MIMIM

The following story appears in *Reshimos Yemei HaT'mimim*, written by Rabbi Moshe Rosenblum a"h, secretary of Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim in Lubavitch. It shows how important it is for bachurim not to leave yeshiva:

Nissan had arrived and many talmidim submitted requests for permission to spend Pesach with their families. The menahel (later to be the Rebbe Rayatz) presented the requests to his father, the Rebbe Rashab. His answer was, "Our dealings with the talmidim are outstanding in that we seek their ultimate good. I don't refer just to learning, but straightening their paths and connecting them in the proper measure with Torah, avoda and all things that are good for their souls, until we establish them on a firm and enduring base that will not topple, G-d forbid.

"Therefore, I don't see it being beneficial for them to detach themselves – even if only for a few weeks – from everlasting life and to transport their minds to the life of the moment in that there is nothing beneficial in this for their souls etc.; to the contrary, etc. As it says, 'if you leave for one day...'"

Based on this, the talmidim's requests were denied. When they heard the words of reason and truth, they took great pleasure in it and saw clearly how everything is done based on analysis of what is for their true welfare, and they rejoiced.

to know how to learn and they must learn as much as possible. Should we trade this learning for the sake of a writ of ordination? In general," he said bitterly, "nowadays, everything has been turned into 'tracks.' So-and-so finished this track and started that track, etc. It's terrible."

Nevertheless, we heard that in certain yeshivos they are seriously considering the matter and are talking about possibly having a special seider to learn for smicha within the yeshiva g'dola/zal program. Some rabbanim and askanim are even looking into the possibility of opening a smicha program for 18-19 year olds to enable them to marry at 20, right

after receiving smicha.

Those hanhalos that want to offer a smicha program for younger aged bachurim will need to investigate and consider what we heard from a number of people who learned in 770 in the 60's and 70's. It was known that the hanhala of the yeshiva did not allow them to start learning for smicha before age 21. Bachurim who asked were refused. Even after age 21, the hanhala did not give the go-ahead right away but would first ask the Rebbe for his approval. Since, in those days, the members of the hanhala would have yechidus frequently and would receive instructions directly about how to handle their

talmidim, the men we spoke to said that surely this was a horaa from the Rebbe.

In conclusion, how do we implement this change?

We asked one of those behind the initiative this question. He said:

"Obviously, it's a process that will take time, but with Hashem's help and with our joint efforts, we will be successful. Our first priority is to delegitimize postponing marriage. When a bachur doesn't want to get married but wants to pass the time, even in good ways, that's forbidden.

"Bachurim need to know that as soon as they finish the yeshiva program, they must look into shidduchim so they will enter into marriage directly from the world of the yeshiva and not from a secular atmosphere r"l.

"Parents need to urge their sons to get married earlier. We will keep up the publicity campaign so that the roshei yeshiva and mashpiim will join forces in educating the students towards that goal.

"With all of us making an effort we can advance the age for marriage and bring about all the positive benefits that accrue, thereby giving nachas to the Rebbe."

The signed documents are viewable online at: www.chabad.info/index.php?url=article_en&id=26083

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לכל אחד ואחד מאנ"ש והתמימים שיחיו,

מועתק בזה קטע משיחה קדושה שמדבר לעצמה, ואין מזרזין אלא למזרזין

"אין ישראל נגאלין אלא בצדקה.. ובפרט בהענין שהזמן גרמא - מעות חטים, כולל כל צרכי החג.. שההתעסקות בזה צריכה להיות באופן דרצוא ושוב, שאינו ממתין לבואו של גבאי צדקה, אלא רץ בעצמו ליתן מעות חטים, ולא עוד - אלא שגם לאחר שנתן מעות חטים, מוסיף ונותן עוד יותר.. שהרי נתברך מוסיף לפי הברכה, וכל המוסיף.. מוסיפין לו שכר, ואין לתוספת זו שיעור " (משיחת כ"ק אדמו"ר מה"מ, ש"פ ויקרא תש"נ).

Excerpt of a Sicho Kedoisho, which speaks for itself

"The Jews will be redeemed solely through *tzedakah*... In particular, this applies with regard to the matter relevant at present, *maos chittim*, *tzedakah* given for Pesach that includes all of the needs of the holiday.

Our involvement with this must be in a manner of *ratzo* and *shov*, i.e., **one should not wait for the *tzedakah* collector, but instead, rush to give him *maos chittim* on his own initiative (*ratzo*)** Moreover, even after he has already given *maos chittim*, **he should go and give a second time (*shov*)....** For one who has been blessed should increase his gifts according to the blessing he has been given, And whoever increases will be given additional reward, Indeed, there is no limit to this additional reward", From the sichos of Shabbos Parshas Vayakhel-Pekudei, 5750

בברכת שבתא טבא וחג הפסח כשר ושמח

בשם ועד קופת רבינו

הרב י. ל. גראנער

הרב ש. מ. סימפסון

נ.ב. כמובן, כל אחד ואחת יכולים להוסיף ולשלוח גם עבור "מגבית יו"ד שבט" "מגבית פורים", ועבור שאר המגביות וכו', עפ"י הכתובת הרשומה למעלה.

הכתובת באה"ק: קרן קופת אדמו"ר ת.ד. 1247 קרית מלאכי.

'EVERY PLACE WHERE THE WORD OF THE KING REACHES'

The lady from Rishon L'Tziyon who was surprised to discover her grandchildren learning about Purim in Delhi, India * The Indian police officers who discovered mashke at the Purim seuda * The sand artist in Russia who kept the children quiet and enthralled at the Megilla reading and the Moroccan architect who was no longer angry. * A round-up of Purim stories from shlichim around the world.

By Menachem Mendel Tzfasman

GRANDMA'S PURIM SURPRISE

R' Shneur Zalman Kupchik, shliach in New Delhi relates:

We recently opened a new Chabad house in southern Delhi. Most of the outreach work is done with children whose parents were sent from Eretz Yisroel by various government agencies and organizations such

as embassies, the Jewish Agency, and the Education Ministry. Most of these children even when in Eretz Yisroel do not receive a traditional Jewish education and are completely estranged from Torah and mitzvos. They lack even basic knowledge of the holidays.

We have Lubavitcher girls working with us who teach our

children and do programs with the local children. A drama played itself out at one of the houses that the girls visited. At this particular home, there was a grandmother visiting. When she received mishloach manos from the Chabad house, she said emotionally, "A few days ago, before I came here, I was walking with a friend in Rishon L'Tziyon. A large vehicle drove by us which



was decorated in the Chabad style and playing lively Purim tunes. I was very excited to see it and began to cry. My friend did not understand why I was so moved by Purim music.

“I said to her, ‘In two days, I will be flying to see my grandchildren in India. When I see this Chabad vehicle I wonder how my grandchildren will know about Purim. Who is looking out for them in India?’

“I landed in India and when I arrived at my son’s house and did not see my grandchildren, my daughter-in-law told me they were at the Chabad house learning about Purim. Now, here you are with mishloach manos...”

BOOZE AND BAMBA

There are places where even drinking a l’chaim is a major hurdle. That’s the way it is in Pushkar, India. It is considered a “holy” city by the natives and one is forbidden to eat meat, fish

and eggs. As for alcohol, don’t even mention it. This poses much more of a dilemma since these prohibitions don’t pertain to one religion or another but apply equally to all who live there.

However, if you thought that due to the illegality of drinking alcohol the simcha of Purim would be diminished, rest assured that the shliach, R’ Shimi Goldstein, demonstrated that every problem has a solution. The results? A Purim experience that is deeply branded into the awareness of the tourists who do not visit the Chabad house, those who are mekuravim, and even among the bachurim-shluchim who go to help out. All of them can divide their lives into “before Purim in Pushkar” and “after Purim in Pushkar.”

In the weeks leading up to Purim, the shluchim import Israeli candy and all sorts of nosh like Bamba, which the tourists haven’t seen in ages. The tourists work together to prepare

mishloach manos which include a Moshiach card and a Purim brochure.

“Secret agents” go to the neighboring city where it is legal to buy vodka and load up the precious merchandise on a rickshaw, covered with blankets and other forms of camouflage. The silence of the rickshaw driver is bought and paid for and somebody else is assigned the job to “occupy” the guard at the Chabad house. Upon arriving at the Chabad house, the contents of the bottles are emptied into empty water bottles.

On Purim, right after the reading of the Megilla at the Chabad house, the Purim parade begins. Loudspeakers attached to a portable stereo playing Purim songs are mounted on a rickety rickshaw along with plenty of mishloach manos. Of course, the Goldstein children, dressed in costume, lead the way.

It’s interesting that the Indians celebrate a holiday with



L'chaim with members of the Jewish community in Marrakesh. Center: R' MM Arad

costumes and colors on that same day (l'havdil elef alfei havdalos). In the course of their celebration, they pour paint and water on one another and dance and make merry.

When the shluchim reach the center of the city with their pure simcha, nearly everybody joins in. The parade, which begins with those at the Chabad house, grows and grows with every guest house they pass. The shluchim walk into the guest houses with song and dance, pour a l'chaim (from the water bottles), enable people to give mishloach manos, read the Megilla for them, and invite them all to join the parade and the Purim seuda.

It is hard to describe the powerful feelings generated by this display of Jewish pride. Even those who up until that point were distant and even hostile are caught up in the joy of Purim. Every tourist gets excited by something else. Some are thrilled with the Israeli Bamba, some are drawn by the music and simcha. There are some who are struck by the awareness that

all the religions are copied from our Torah and when it comes to simcha – there is no comparison between Jewish simcha and non-Jewish revelry.

In order to reach the guest house rooms on the third and fourth floors, you need to climb narrow staircases. In order to reach all the tourists and provide them with the full experience, some Indians are enlisted to bring the amplifiers and mishloach manos right up to those rooms.

One time, an Israeli who had formerly been in the exclusive Sayeret MaTKaL unit and had taken his first steps towards Jewish observance at the Chabad house, decided to do something daring. In front of all the cynics and apathetic people standing around he announced, "I am willing to climb to the fourth floor and jump from there into the pool on the first floor, if ten tourists agree to put on t'fillin."

He ignored those who tried to dissuade him including the shliach. He gathered ten commitments from friends, some of whom had never put on

t'fillin before, climbed to the top floor and jumped into the pool. Today, this bachur is learning in the Chabad yeshiva in Tzfas. He made his final decision to change his life during the Purim farbrengen at the Chabad house.

On Purim of two years ago, there was stepped up security at the Chabad house because of the large gathering of tourists and mainly because of what had happened in Bombay shortly before that. Consequently, it became that much more difficult to say l'chaim. Somehow, they managed to say l'chaim on "water" at the Purim seuda as the police stood guard outside. Then suddenly, in the middle of the seuda, as they were in a state of *ad d'lo yada* – not knowing the difference between bottles of water and bottles of vodka, a delegation of senior police officers walked in to ensure that all was in order.

R' Goldstein, who was tipsy, experienced firsthand the play on words of the aphorism in Gemara, "harsh wine is tempered by fear." The commander, who didn't need to see the bottle in order to realize that alcohol was present, yelled at the shliach, "So much vodka and you couldn't call me?"

Of course, the surprised R' Shimi handed him a cup of vodka and the commander left the Chabad house happy and with gladness of heart and the city of Pushkar exulted and rejoiced.

WHY DID THE CHICKEN CELEBRATE PURIM?

R' Menachem Mendel Arad relates:

On the first Purim that we were on shlichus in Marrakesh, Morocco, we decided to invite the entire community to a Purim

party. We thought it would be easy to get people to come together and celebrate, but it turned out that it took effort to change people's habitual way of doing things, i.e. Purim is celebrated at home with family. We were successful and many people, including those who are not connected with the k'hilla most of the year, showed up for the Purim seuda. Many of them developed a connection to the k'hilla and the Chabad house from that point on.

The k'hilla is not that big, just 50-60 families in all. We prepared mishloach manos for every family which thrilled them and got them involved in the atmosphere of Purim.

At the seuda, which was abundant in the best of Moroccan tradition, my son and I were dressed in Moroccan clothes and after l'chaim, we spoke about the need to be proud of being Jewish and to learn from Mordechai who did not bow to Haman. I remember that when I translated what I said into English, someone asked me to continue speaking in Hebrew so the non-Jews would not understand.

During the course of Purim night and the following day, we divided into teams. First, we invited everyone in the community to a Purim party and to hear the Megilla. When someone said he wasn't sure he could make it, we promised to visit him and read the Megilla.

During the phone calls and the Megilla readings that we did, two interesting things happened. In one phone call, the wife of one of the community members answered the phone. She did not quite understand me and what I wanted. When I asked her whether she speaks English, she said she no, German. I began



Purim parade in Pushkar



explaining to her in Yiddish that I wanted to invite her husband to a Purim party.

She said she understood what I wanted to say but her husband would not come. When I made inquiries about the couple, I found out something shocking. The Jewish Moroccan man was married to a German Moslem. I couldn't get over the fact that intermarriage had infiltrated even among Moroccan Jewry.

That year, we went to the home of someone who is a descendant of many distinguished rabbanim. He had gone downhill spiritually to the point that he married a Christian with whom he had children. His non-Jewish wife died two days

before Purim and he wanted her buried in the Jewish section of the cemetery. Of course the k'hilla refused and so he refused to attend the Purim party in the shul. He was angry at everyone.

In incredible hashgacha pratis, we went to his house, gave him mishloach manos, and read the Megilla for him. He was very moved to see how Lubavitcher Chassidim care about everyone without considering their actions and behavior, and his anger about Judaism and its adherents dissipated.

The following year, we made another round of phone calls and invited ourselves to the homes of people who were not planning on attending the Purim party. One of the people we called was a Jewish architect who had previously attended the Simchas Beis HaShoeiva and thoroughly enjoyed it. I told him (in English) that it was Purim, "la fête de Purim" (the Purim celebration in French). He said he was too busy to show up but he would be happy to have us come to him.

I took a taxi to his house together with one of the bachurim from Brunoy who came to help out. When we met, I related the Purim story and said we had come especially to read the Megilla for him and to

give him mishloach manos. He got mad and shouted, “Today is Sunday, my day off. It’s the only time I have to spend with my son and you come here to talk to me about mitzvos? You know it doesn’t interest me!”

We were taken aback by this attack. I tried to explain that we had said from the outset why we were coming and he was happy about it and had welcomed us.

“You took advantage of the fact that I don’t speak English well and I didn’t understand you. I invited you because I thought you wanted to do business with me regarding ‘le poulet’ (chicken in French). If I had understood that you were talking about the Purim holiday, I would not have spoken to you.”

I didn’t know how to respond. When I saw that he had calmed down, I murmured an apology. He agreed to take us back to the shul in his car. He was annoyed the entire time and muttered to himself in French. To my surprise, the bachur who was with me did not give up. He addressed the man with utmost sincerity, saying, “Listen, the Lubavitcher Rebbe sent us especially to you to make you happy on Purim.” The architect got even more red in the face and said, “I don’t know who the Rebbe is and Purim and mitzvos don’t interest me. I am not religious and you know that!”

The bachur did not back down. “The Rebbe loves you; the Rebbe cares about you. It makes no difference whether you are religious or not. You are a Jew and that is why the Rebbe sent us especially for you.”

I could see the man relaxing and he agreed to forgive and forget, but the bachur still didn’t relent and asked him to put on t’fillin. The bachur’s pleasant manner finally got through.

He put on t’fillin, accepted the mishloach manos and even fulfilled the mitzva of gifts to the poor.

Right before we left, the bachur said, “And now, the mitzva of Purim is to rejoice. Let’s dance.” I stood there astonished and waited to see what would happen.

The man ended up joining in the dance and he thanked and blessed us with a “Chag Purim Sameiach.” I could see how as much as a shliach knows the people and mentality of a place, it’s the t’mimus (sincerity) with the power of truth “without cheshbonos – calculations” that gets you where you want to go.

WHERE ART THOU?

R’ Zalman Deitsch, shliach to Perm, Russia, came up with a plan to duplicate the success he had the previous Purim, by sharing the fruits of his experience with Chabad houses around the world.

The previous year, he had wracked his brains to come up with a way of countering the lack of concentration on the part of children and even adults, during the long Megilla reading. About 600 Jews show up for the Megilla reading thanks to massive advertising in all the media, but the children become bored and start disturbing and making noise even when Haman’s name is not mentioned. Adults find it hard to be quiet for more than ten minutes even though they have Russian Megillas, since the Baal Koreh is reading in a language that is foreign to them.

The terrific idea that solved the problem entailed commissioning a Russian artist who draws in sand to depict the Megilla as it is read. As he works,

it is not clear to the viewers what image or person he is drawing, but slowly, the form takes shape.

The preparations for the unique Megilla reading were tremendous. A huge hall that contained thousands of seats was rented. The media, both written and broadcast, advertised invitations to the Purim gathering and even the main local newspaper, which has a circulation of about 300,000, had an advertisement that rocked the city.

When the Baal Koreh began to read the Megilla, a Jewish artist who had studied the Megilla for three months prior to the event, began his work. He used an illuminated board and with sweeping movements of his fingers, he shaped scene after scene and figure after figure.

A videographer stood behind him and filmed everything he did on a closed circuit system that played on an enormous screen before the fascinated audience (aside from those who were able to follow in the Megilla and who could give free rein to their own inner artist).

Not surprisingly, this year most of the tickets for the Megilla reading followed by a Purim seuda were already sold a week before Purim.

PURIM EARLY BIRD SPECIAL

Speaking of gimmicks, here is another creative endeavor from Chabad on Campus of Portland which is directed by Rabbi and Mrs. Dov Bialo. The Bialos host Jewish students for Shabbos meals. They are the people to whom hundreds of students turn, in all sorts of situations. It could be a student who is hospitalized whom they look after or teaching

Torah and Chassidus and conveying the message of Geula.

They don't wait for students to come to them. They use gimmicks to draw the students in. Three weeks ago, with the advent of the month of Adar, they decided to use the idea of costumes in the spirit of "V'nahapoch Hu" throughout the month and to promote the idea of "time travel."

Before Purim, they had a special evening in the course of which the students were "taken back" in a "time machine" to the Golden Age of Spain. Their apartment was decorated like a Spanish home of that period. The shluchim provided students with period costumes, prepared a festive meal with a Spanish flavor, and discussed that period and the attempts to (Heaven forbid) stamp out the observance of Torah and mitzvos through the most barbaric means.

With Pesach coming up, the shluchim are planning on taking students back to Ancient Egypt. R' Bialo explains that Jewish history comes to life for the students with these programs.

G. I. JACK

The following story will be told with a pseudonym due to its sensitive nature.

Yanky, a bachur from a Chabad community in the US had dropped out of Jewish observance. He even went so far as to join the US army as a complete break with his past. Before enlisting, he changed his name to Jack and when he was asked what religion he belonged to, he said Catholic. He lived life with no indication that he was Jewish. Military training kept him busy.

Having completed his



R' Deitsch with the sand art Megilla

training, he was sent to go and fight in Afghanistan. One day, he was sitting in the mess hall with hundreds of gentile soldiers when the door opened and a priest walked in and asked, "Who knows what I am holding?" He held out a kosher Megillas Esther.

"There is a Jewish young man here and this was sent to him in one of the packages – can someone explain to him what this is?"

Jack said nothing. Although the priest was unsuccessful the first day, he decided to ask again the next day, thinking that maybe someone had been absent from the mess hall the day before. The next night, which was Purim, the priest said once again, "We were sent a package for one of the soldiers from the Aleph Institute. He is happy to receive the package and happy to know that Jews care about him but he simply does not know what to do with this," and he held out the Megilla.

Jack couldn't take it anymore. He got up and went over to the priest and introduced himself as a Jew belonging to the same movement that had sent the package. He explained the significance of the Megilla to the Jewish soldier who had received it in the package. He even read the Megilla for him with moist eyes.

That night, Jack had a hard time falling asleep. He felt that the Megilla was meant for him too and that despite the distance and estrangement on his part, the Rebbe did not forget him. Even in this place that was far away physically and spiritually, he was sent a Megilla along with a message: Reveal that which is hidden, liberate your G-dly soul.

The following day, he wrote a letter to his parents in which he described what had happened and asked their forgiveness and announced his decision to return to his family and a life of Torah and Mitzvos.

THE FEMININE MYSTIQUE

By Rabbi Heschel Greenberg



FIRST RESPONDERS

When the Torah relates in this week's parsha the way the Jewish people responded to Moses' call to contribute to the building of the Mishkan, the portable Sanctuary in the desert, it places a greater emphasis on the role of the women: "The men came with the women." According to our Sages, it implies that the women were the first to respond to Moses' initiative and brought their husbands with them.

A few verses later the Torah again describes the superior nature of the women's skill in fashioning the goat hair for the covering of the Mishkan. The phraseology employed, Rashi says, implies that they were able to spin the goat hair while the hair was still on the goat.

To buttress the importance of the role of women, our Sages contrast the women's behavior with respect to the contributions towards the construction of the Mishkan with their adamant refusal to contribute anything for the construction of the golden calf.

ROSH CHODESH REWARD

That the women had a unique role in the construction of the Mishkan was not overlooked by G-d. The women were rewarded with the observance of Rosh Chodesh, the Head of the Jewish months, as their special

holiday. According to Jewish tradition, women desist from certain domestic chores, such as doing laundry, on Rosh Chodesh as their way of observing this holiday that was given specifically to them.

Three questions arise here:

First, why did G-d reward them specifically with the observance of Rosh Chodesh?

Second, in what way does refraining from certain chores on Rosh Chodesh express the tremendous dedication and zeal with which the women distinguished themselves? Shouldn't women have been given something more dramatic, positive, and celebratory as a reward?

Third, *Baal HaTurim* cites a verse in the Book of Esther with a similar beginning to the verse in our parsha concerning the role of women. In this parsha it says, "**All the women** whose heart inspired them with wisdom spun the goats' hair." In the Book of Esther it says, "**All the women** will give honor to their husbands."

What connection can there possibly be between the phenomenal dedication and wisdom of the women with the advice given to the Persian monarch Achashverosh by his pagan advisor Memuchan, whom our Sages identify as none other than the wicked Haman?

One can offer the following

resolution to all of these questions:

FEMININE CHALLENGE

According to the teachings of Kabbala the spiritual feminine attributes are more powerful than the masculine powers; they derive from a transcendent dimension of G-dly light. To be sure, both men and women possess both masculine and feminine spiritual qualities; it is just that women generally have a greater preponderance of this superior energy.

This dynamic—where the feminine quality is superior to the masculine quality—was in effect before Eve partook of the forbidden fruit and fed it to Adam. From that time onward the challenge that was given to both women and men has been to restore this spiritual feminine quality to its rightful position. In the Messianic Age, when we will realize that goal, evil will cease and all the negative effects of the eating of the forbidden fruit will be removed, thereby allowing the feminine dynamic to once again be in the ascendancy.

When Eve partook of the forbidden fruit and then gave it to her husband, it caused the concealment of G-d's transcendent presence in the world. When Eve was "cursed" as a result of her involvement it should not be taken, G-d

forbid, as a curse, but rather as a challenge to women in particular to help restore the feminine spiritual dynamic to its original position. One of the so called “curses” enumerated by the Talmud is the traditional role of women to perform domestic chores, thereby serving the needs of their husbands and families. By this form of “subordination,” which helps foster domestic peace and tranquility, they are instrumental in restoring the spiritual equilibrium that was upset by Eve at the beginning of time.

There were exceptions to

tells him to address the women first. This was an affirmation that the world was to be given the potential to overcome the decline that relegated the feminine spirituality to a lesser degree of importance.

This reminder of the superior role of women and the feminine dynamic was given to us once more with the construction of the Mishkan. While only a select group of men were motivated to contribute, all the women participated, and all of them acted with the same zeal, ingenuity and creativity. This was their way of demonstrating

permanently. Rosh Chodesh, with the birth of the moon—the feminine celestial body—is the symbol of the feminine dynamic which is on the decline in our day and age, but which will eventually shine with the light equal to that of the sun.

To avoid any confusion, this does not mean that there will be, nor should there be, a reversal of our distinct physical roles and distinctive gender differences between men and women. Indeed, the Torah strongly prohibits men and women from wearing each other’s attire. The ascendancy of femininity in the Messianic Age is entirely a spiritual one. The feminine quality, among other aspects, is one of greater sensitivity to spirituality and of less resistance to the internal faith and connection to G-d we all have embedded within our psyche.

Spiritual masculinity is the ability to conquer “the foreign” and to bring it under G-d’s sovereignty. Spiritual masculinity is fighting the enemies of decency and G-dly morality, including the physical need to defend ourselves from those who would attempt to harm us, as in the days of Purim. The six days of the week when we struggle to earn a living and survive is referred to by the Kabbala as “masculine days” because they are dedicated to preparing the world for Shabbat, the ultimate day of feminine peace, spirituality, and tranquility. The weekdays are days of battle and conquest. Shabbat is victory and a taste of the future Messianic peace

Feminine spirituality, by contrast, is neither about conquest nor waging defensive wars. Rather, it is to reveal and nurture the treasures we already possess. When conquest is no

“In what way does refraining from certain chores on Rosh Chodesh express the tremendous dedication and zeal with which the women distinguished themselves? Shouldn’t women have been given something more dramatic, positive, and celebratory as a reward?”

this general rule of women. The Matriarch Sarah is cited as the one who did the most, before the Torah was given, to rectify Eve’s denigration of the feminine spiritual position. Thus G-d tells Abraham, “Whatever Sarah tells you, listen to her voice.” Sarah’s reversal of the decline caused by Eve manifested itself in G-d commanding Abraham to follow Sarah’s dictates even when Abraham felt uncomfortable with it.

This “reversal” of the respective masculine and feminine roles occurs again at Mount Sinai. The Torah is the ultimate power that rectifies the decline of the relationship of G-d with the world that commenced with Adam and Eve’s transgression. And when G-d tells Moses to prepare them for the giving of the Torah He

that they understood their role of reversing the darkness which was introduced with the sin of Adam and Eve and then again with the construction of the golden calf, an act which our Sages tell us was, in reality, a reenactment of the sin of Adam and Eve.

To show the women that their superior role has “registered” with G-d and has begun to change the world and prepare it for the Messianic Age, women were relieved of their domestic chores on Rosh Chodesh. Why?

MOONLIGHTING

Rosh Chodesh, which coincides with the birth of the moon, is understood by our Sages as a metaphor for the emergence of Moshiach’s soul into this world which possesses the potential to change the world

longer necessary because all of the “foreign” territories will have been “liberated” in the Messianic Age, we each will still need to probe more deeply into the inner precincts of our soul to discover even deeper spiritual feelings, to cultivate and nurture them. In the time of peace that will exist on all levels that will occasion the Messianic Age, and when all of our physical and spiritual enemies will be either eliminated or transformed into allies and supporters, the need for the masculine dynamic will recede and the feminine ideal will arise and dominate. It will be a permanent Shabbat.

Every Rosh Chodesh we get a taste of this future. The Messianic energies are then more pronounced, and women—who personify the feminine spiritual dynamic—are therefore relieved of their domestic chores. This is not an insignificant way of rewarding women. It is our way of ever so subtly hinting to the world that we are on the cusp of the future Redemption. We

are beginning to experience the time when the “curse” of Eve’s subordination and its concomitant relegation of the feminine role to the background is about to end. We will no longer be living in a world that requires aggression in our attempts at self defense and conquest. It will be a world of Shabbat—a feminine day—where all of our needs are taken care of, and we do not need to perform the domestic chores, a time when we no longer have to feel the subordination of the feminine to the masculine.

UNDERMINING HAMAN’S PLAN

We can now understand the connection of the verse that speaks of the women donating to the Mishkan and, similarly, that it was the women who were told by the Persian monarch to give honor to their husbands.

When we, men and particularly women, contribute to the construction of the Sanctuaries in our own homes,

we remove the curse of exile that is associated with the Persian monarch Achashverosh. Memuchan, or Haman, wanted to enshrine the idea of the subordination of the redemptive feminine dynamic and institutionalize exile. Instead, Esther, the symbol of Jewish femininity that is concealed—as the word “Esther” itself is etymologically related to the word “concealed”—becomes the dominant force over the entire Persian Empire. And it is precisely this power of the feminine which dictates how this empire should conduct itself. And although the Jews still remained subjects of the Persian Empire, the Purim miracle serves as the catalyst in exile for the unleashing of the ultimate Redemption when we will see the fulfillment of King Solomon’s declaration, “A woman of valor is the crown of her husband” through the feminine quality which will unleash the full revelation of the infinite Messianic G-dly light.

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WHO'S WHO IN THE TIMES OF MOSHIACH

By Rabbi Gershon Avtzon



Dear reader sh'yichyeh:

This article will serve as an introduction to our new series entitled *Who's Who in the Times of Moshiach*. The goal of the series is to describe some of the people with major roles in the time of Moshiach.

This is B"H our fifth series of articles. In our first series, *Moshiach Key FAQs*, we answered many basic questions about the belief in Moshiach. In our second series, *Geula – What We Await*, we outlined the way in which the world will be transformed in the times of Moshiach. In our third series, *Mivtzaim and Moshiach*, we outlined how to incorporate Moshiach into the ten Mivtzaim of the Rebbe, and in our fourth series, *The Rebbeim and Moshiach*, we described the activities that each of our Rebbeim did to bring the Sh'china into this world and prepare us for the times of Moshiach.

Our current series is unique. Instead of focusing on the era of Moshiach or Moshiach himself, we will be discussing the characters of Yemos HaMoshiach. This will include, among others, Moshiach Ben Yosef, Gog the king of Magog, the Sanhedrin, and the role of all previous Jewish leaders in Yemos HaMoshiach.

IN CONTRADICTION TO THE RAMBAM?

You may be asking yourself

the following question:

Why is it so important to know these details? Let me just believe in Moshiach and await his coming! Does the Rambam not write (Hilchos Melachim 12:2), "There are some Sages who say that Elijah's coming will precede the coming of Moshiach. All these and similar matters cannot be definitely known by man until they occur, for these matters are undefined in the prophets' words. Even the Sages have no established tradition regarding these matters except their own interpretation of the verses. Therefore, there is a controversy among them regarding these matters."

"Regardless of the debate concerning these questions, neither the order of the occurrence of these events or their precise detail is among the fundamental principles of the faith. A person should not occupy himself with the Aggados and homiletics concerning these and similar matters, nor should he consider them as essentials, for study of them will neither bring fear or love of God."

The answer to your question is simple: True, there are many vague prophecies about what will transpire in the times of Moshiach. Attempting to reach final conclusions will not advance one's Avodas Hashem. However, knowing the different opinions and having a general knowledge of these topics enhances one's belief in Moshiach and prepares us for his arrival.

In the words of the Rebbe (Balak 5751), "The attitude towards the study of these laws should be analogous to what was discussed in the recent past, that the special increase in the study of the teachings of Torah concerning Redemption and Moshiach should not simply serve as a catalyst to hasten the coming of Moshiach and the Redemption. Rather, this study should enable us to live with and thrive on matters of Moshiach and Redemption. We should 'live with the time' of the Messianic Era. This can be attained when one's intellect is filled with the comprehension of the Torah concepts of Moshiach and Redemption. This intellectual awareness then extends to and permeates one's emotions, and then translates into thought, speech and action consistent with this very auspicious period of time when we stand on the threshold of Redemption and we are able to point with our finger: 'Behold he (King Moshiach) has come.'"

"One might suggest an additional rationale for the need and the virtue of studying the Torah's teachings concerning Moshiach, Redemption and the building of the third Temple as an entrance into the Messianic Era:

"Although our Sages have declared that Moshiach will come 'when we are distracted from his coming,' this does not contradict, G-d forbid, the need for thought and reflection of the most powerful order on matters

of Moshiach and Redemption. This means primarily thought and reflection upon the fact that we are now standing at the very threshold of the Messianic Era, that 'Behold he is coming,' since all the deadlines have since passed, t'shuva has been done and all of the different aspects of our Divine service have been completed...

"The resolution of this apparent contradiction is that the term for distraction, 'Hesech HaDaas' (literally 'removing one's knowledge') actually means 'transcending one's knowledge.' This implies that after one has allowed this matter of Moshiach to permeate his intellect (by applying one's thought and through constant reflection, etc.) one then reaches the level where this transcends his knowledge."

TRANSLATING THE ABOVE INTO PRACTICAL TERMS

"Despite the uproar associated with this matter in recent times within this year, the year of 'I shall show him wonders' and a year of witnessing the wonders which testify that this is 'the year that the King Moshiach will be revealed,' we see how difficult it is to inculcate the awareness and the feeling that we are literally standing on the threshold of the Messianic Era to the point that one begins to thrive on matters of Moshiach and Redemption.

"The solution to this dilemma is **Torah study** concerning Moshiach and Redemption. For Torah – which is G-d's wisdom, and thus transcends the natural order of the universe – has the capacity to **alter** the nature of man. Even when one's

emotions are still **outside** the parameters of Redemption – G-d forbid – (because he has not yet emerged from his internal exile), he can nevertheless learn the Torah's teachings concerning Redemption and thereby be elevated to the state of Redemption. One then begins to thrive on matters of Redemption, borne of the knowledge, awareness and feeling that 'Behold he is coming.'"

Rabbi Avtzon is the Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshivas Lubavitch Cincinnati and a well sought after speaker and lecturer. Recordings of his in-depth shiurim on Inyanei Geula u'Moshiach can be accessed at <http://ylcrecording.weebly.com/moshiach-what-we-believe.html>. Weekly shiurim on Moshiach topics given by Rabbi Avtzon can be viewed at chabad.info.

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A MIRACULOUS CHANGE

Lev Weisman's wife, who held radical left-wing views, was beside herself. She wanted to take the Rebbe's shliach, who had come to their home, and throw him out the window. Yet, one phenomenal meeting with the Rebbe changed everything...

By Nosson Avraham

Translated by Michael Leib Dobry

Lev Weisman grew up and was educated in S. Petersburg. The Communist authorities had managed to uproot all remnants of the Jewish faith from his family. The only thing he knew was that he was different from his fellow classmates. "It was specifically my peers who constantly reminded me about my ancestry. They were exposed to a great deal of anti-Semitism in their homes. They put these hostile feelings into practice, and I suffered from endless bullying and harassment."

At the age of sixteen, a few days before the Yom Kippur War, the family emigrated to Eretz Yisroel.

Divine Providence brought them to the new immigrants' hostel in Kfar Chabad. There was a good personal connection between the immigrants and the local residents, and for the

first time in their lives, the new immigrants heard about Jewish modes of conduct. However, Lev Weisman's knowledge of Judaism remained at the level of mere awareness and was not translated into practical action. The internal transformation took place years later during the time he lived in London. Despite his wife's refusal to cooperate, he decided to travel to the Rebbe, and the bracha he received during Sunday dollars produced an incredible turn of events. Today, the Weisman family is part of the Chabad community in Kfar Saba.

ASCENT AND DESCENT

"In my youth, I lost a good number of teeth due to anti-Semitic violence, as the hatred towards Jews was very great during those years. The curses and persecution were a part of my daily life. These thugs used

every means available to harass me, including violent force. While they sometimes settled for mere verbal taunts, I often had to flee for my life.

"I had been in a synagogue only once in my life, on Simchas Torah. I didn't understand a single thing that was happening there. I only knew that this was a Jewish meeting place.

"When I was sixteen years old, my family received their exit visas for emigration to Eretz Yisroel. I can recall the joy of my parents. Golda Meir was the prime minister of Israel at the time, and we traveled to Eretz Yisroel on the same flight with her, after her meeting in Vienna with then-Austrian chancellor Bruno Kreisky just two days before the outbreak of the Yom Kippur War. Jewish Agency representatives greeted us warmly at the airport. My family got into a waiting car and headed



for the immigrants' hostel. After a relatively short journey, our car stopped near an orange grove. When we asked where we were, the driver replied that this was Kfar Chabad.

"We later realized that my mother's uncle, who had emigrated to Eretz Yisroel some time before we did, had arranged a religious place for us. The only kosher immigrants' hostel in existence at the time was in Kfar Chabad. We stayed there for about a year and enjoyed our experience there very much. My father started becoming more observant following the passing of his own father. The person who was most involved in this kiruv process and also helped provide for our material needs was the Chassid, Rabbi Simcha Gorodetzky. While I still didn't know much about him at the time, I looked upon him as a very special Jew with a uniquely

“You should just know that last night I wanted to commit suicide, but my talk with you put an end to such thoughts.”

goodhearted nature. During that year, I came to understand that there was a Jewish leader called the Lubavitcher Rebbe, who had some marvelous Chassidim.

"In the meantime, my parents bought an apartment in Lud. When I reached the age of military induction, I joined the air force for a period of five years, and it was there that I met my wife. While she came from a traditional family of Yemenite immigrants, she had adopted a different way of life, devoid of all tradition. Today, I know that our stay in Kfar Chabad had an indirect influence upon me. I became very connected to the joy of Chassidim, the dancing,

and their great warmth. Deep in my heart, I knew that if I would do t'shuva one day, I would be a Lubavitcher Chassid. Yet, every time I passed a mitzvaim stand, I would refuse to put on t'fillin.

"After completing my studies in engineering at Tel Aviv University, I entered the field of hi-tech. Later, I moved with my wife to London, where I got a good job with a leading company. We rented an apartment in the Jewish neighborhood of Golders Green, but no one inquired about us. We continued along our chosen path in life, very busy in our work five days a week.

"Before leaving for England, my father, who had stayed in

touch with several chassidic families, spoke with Mrs. Sara Raskin, who had served as housemother in the immigrants' hostel. She gave him the address and telephone number of Rabbi Tzvi Telsner, the shliach in London, and said I should phone him if I require any assistance. My father gave me his number and I took it with me. In the meantime, life went on peacefully, as I continued with my work and its heavy responsibilities. I was flying somewhere every week, as my job took me all over Europe.

"Then one morning, I woke up with a severe case of viral influenza. I lay in bed on my back for a week without moving a muscle. Yet, that one week was enough time for me to raise those questions that I had been pushing aside all my life: What about my Judaism? How does it relate to me? Where is my life leading me? If not now, when? I promised that this would be the first thing I would do as soon as I recovered from the flu. I felt a great awakening within me.

"About a week later after my health had been restored, I looked for the phone number that my father had given me. I knew that if there was anyone who would have the patience to answer my questions, it would be a Lubavitcher Chassid. Once I found Rabbi Telsner's number, I immediately called him, but he said that he was on his way to perform a wedding ceremony and he had no time to meet with me. I still wanted to meet with him right then and there, and when I asked if we could meet later, he replied that Moshiach would surely come by then. However, since I was from Eretz Yisroel, he suggested that I speak with another Chassid named Rabbi Gaby Spitzer."

A CHANGE IN DIRECTION

"That very evening, I got into my car and drove to his home in Stamford Hill, urgent in my desire to receive some answers. I asked dozens of questions, and he patiently responded to all of them. I asked about the Creation, the age of the world, our purpose here on earth, and the difference between us and the other nations of the world. To my surprise, he had profound and thoughtful answers to everything I asked. For the first time in my life, I realized that Judaism had an infinite depth. I started putting on t'fillin, participating in Torah classes and farbrengens, and I began to feel something truly remarkable.

"To my great regret, my wife Yael refused to cooperate in this process of spiritual renewal. She showed contempt for the whole thing, and she thought that I had lost my mind. When Rabbi Spitzer visited my house for the first time, my wife told me later that she wanted to throw him out of the window. My wife had some very radical left-wing views in those days. Judaism for her meant religious people squeezing the country dry. She completely identified with the cause of our Arab neighbors.

"Everything I did in an attempt to get her to join me along this new journey just drove her further away. We had one daughter, and I didn't want to break up the family. This bond was extremely important to me. When I asked Rabbi Spitzer what I should do, he replied quite simply: 'Go to the Rebbe and ask for a bracha.' It was here that he explained to me the whole concept of a 'Rebbe.' I was still a bit 'green' when it came to the Rebbe and Lubavitch, a 'fresh new recruit' who didn't know

much. Yet, I did exactly as Rabbi Spitzer suggested.

"I arrived in Beis Chayeinu on Erev Shabbos VaYeishev, Chaf Kislev 5751, staying until the following Sunday. The Butman brothers, Yochanan and Yehuda, made certain to arrange all my material and spiritual needs. They were yeshiva students on 'k'vutza' at the time, and they gave me an explanation of all the customs and rituals associated with 770. Their sister and her husband hosted me for Shabbos. The sight of the Rebbe's face astounded me, and I immediately realized that the Rebbe was not just another rabbinical figure.

"On Sunday, I stood in line for about three hours for dollars. I had only one request: I wanted my wife to follow me in my path of t'shuva, something that seemed unrealistic in the face of her wall of refusal and her virulent anti-religious sentiments. However, in light of all the stories I had heard about the Rebbe, I firmly believed that he could help me. When my turn came, I chose to speak to the Rebbe in Russian, asking for a bracha that the entire family should do t'shuva – while remaining together as one unit.

"The Rebbe looked into my eyes, and I felt that he was penetrating my soul. He said, '*Bracha v'hatzlacha*,' and then gave me two dollars – one for me and one for the members of my family.

"I returned home to London that night, certain that the Rebbe's bracha would be realized. I didn't say a word to my wife about what had happened.

"Two weeks later, I was stunned by an incredible turn of events. My wife suddenly came to me and suggested that maybe we should kasher the kitchen so I could eat kosher food at home!

I didn't waste a minute, and Rabbi Berel Futerfas arrived that same day to kasher the kitchen. From that moment on, my wife's overall tone changed completely, as she began to develop a friendly relationship with Rabbi Spitzer's wife. When I was in 770, I bought several videos and audiocassettes on chassidus, and when I came home from work, I discovered that I wasn't the only one watching and listening to them. I saw the Rebbe's bracha coming true.

"After three years in London, we returned to Eretz Yisroel and settled in Hod HaSharon, maintaining a close connection with the local shliach, Rabbi Shimshon Tal.

"One day, my wife informed me that she was going to buy a sheitel, because that's what the Rebbe wants...

"The Rebbe's bracha was fulfilled in a most miraculous fashion. My wife became the driving force in our return to Yiddishkait, and within a few years, we had turned into a chassidic family in every respect. In 5759, we bought an apartment in Kfar Saba and eventually

became an integral part of the local Chabad community, headed by its energetic and active shliach, Rabbi Yoel Yemini. Today, I am employed by the Kodak Company in Petach Tikva, while my wife works for the Rami Baram communications firm. At the company where I work, we started a Tanya class, and last year, we were privileged to print a Tanya there."

STORIES ALONG THE WAY...

R' Lev Weisman winds up the interview with two stories – one from his place of work, the second from Kfar Saba, where he lives:

"Fifteen years ago, there was an employee with the Kodak Company who regularly participated in the Tanya classes. This young man was going through some serious problems at home, and there were times when I saw him in a very dejected state. On one particular day, his depression seemed to overwhelm him. I spoke with him and tried to encourage him. I told him that the Beis HaMikdash would soon

be rebuilt, and then everything would be fine. The next day, he told me: 'You should just know that last night I wanted to commit suicide, but my talk with you put an end to such thoughts.'

"The next story took place on mivtzaim during Chol HaMoed Sukkos, as part of my outreach work with the local shliach, Rabbi Yoel Yemini. A Jewish Russian émigré, about fifty years old, came up to the mivtzaim stand. Looking a bit detached, he asked if he could make a bracha on the Dalet Minim. Naturally, we were happy to oblige, but we were totally unprepared for what he said next:

"Do you know why I'm here?" he asked. "We met not long ago at a t'fillin stand on Weizmann Street," he continued. "The previous day, doctors had discovered that my wife had a tumor in her uterus the size of a baby's head! I decided that I would put on t'fillin in the merit of her complete recovery. The following day, she had another x-ray done, which revealed that everything was fine and the previous diagnosis was an error..."

ב"ה

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AND MY EYES OPENED ONCE AGAIN



Even before his mother managed to recover fully, Heishke fell sick. * The doctors were pessimistic about his chances of recovery and he felt his strength ebbing. * With the last of his strength, he managed to squeeze out a request for forgiveness. Delirious, he tried to say Vidui. Then he lost consciousness.

By Rabbi Yehoshua Dubrawski a"h

A few days after my mother returned from the hospital where the doctor saw no chance for her recovery, I became sick with abdominal typhus. I collapsed. I could no longer watch how my mother fought and won the starvation illness. I lay on my bedding on the floor with a high temperature and a splitting headache. The pain seemed to settle in my brain and it continued to get worse.

The doctor came and he was nearly certain that I was sick with a serious case of abdominal typhus. "He needs to be hospitalized, but the hospitals are

so crowded. The hospital is more dangerous than being at home." In any case, my mother was not interested in hospitalization, and I understood why.

My temperature was so high that I couldn't find a moment's peace from the fever. The pain in my stomach and bones throughout my body were nothing compared to the terrible headache. In Soviet Russia in general and Samarkand in particular, surely during wartime, there barely existed medication to bring down a fever, let alone pain medication.

I experienced the fear of death more than once in my thirteen

years, but in the delirium of the pain and the feverish body, I was unafraid of the end. Although (or because) I clearly felt that I would not withstand this, I felt that I was being emptied of life, that all my limbs were on fire and simultaneously frozen and weak.

I was delirious from the high temperature and I did not sleep, but behind my closed eyes there moved nightmares with strange creatures. In the periods of clear thinking in between nightmares, I had a fleeting thought about myself and my sins against G-d – sins in prayer, in learning, lying, etc. – though the Heavenly Court does not judge a person before the age of twenty, so I heard from my grandfather. I had also sinned greatly against my father; I had made tzaros; I had also caused pain to my sisters and had not asked them to forgive me. I was unsure about how and when but maybe, over "there," I would ask for their forgiveness.

I was very troubled about having to ask forgiveness from my mother and grandfather. This was particularly hard for me, both because I knew that my mother would not be able to handle a parting request for forgiveness, and because I felt guilty over the fact that when I died my mother would remain alone. Alone? Remain? But I had

“When I felt my life about to end, I mustered the last of my strength to utter the words, “Mother, forgive me ... Zeide, forgive me.”

to ask forgiveness! When I felt my life about to end, I mustered the last of my strength to utter the words, “Mother, forgive me ... Zeide, forgive me.”

I became disoriented and faint and yet I wanted to say something else, what Jews say, like my younger sister had said shortly before she left this world, “Master of the universe ...” but in my confused mind I mixed up the words, “Shma, Shma Ashamnu,” and I did not know whether I had uttered anything (my mother told me I had muttered: Shh, Shh, Shh a number of times).


I lost consciousness immediately afterward. I don’t remember how long I lay there with fever and writhing in pain until I lost consciousness. My mother barely moved from my bedside. She put cool cloths on my burning face, fanned me with a hand fan and gave me cups of water to drink. Late at night her sister Chana relieved her for a few hours. How my mother battled with her own starvation illness, I don’t know, and how she prevailed, I did not ask her.

Nor did I ever ask how long – how many hours, days – I lay unconscious. Obviously, I could not know, but it was a severe attack of typhus and the doctor gave very slim chances that I would survive it.

When I woke up one morning in a weakened state after the break in fever, I was so weak that I could barely raise my hand. And yet, I felt like a new man, as though G-d had brought me down from somewhere to this world. The dark room looked more luminous; the band of light from the ray of sun that shone in and the innumerable dust motes that gleamed from the light of the

one crooked window, blinded my eyes with a clarity that seemed to originate from some far off place, a place of calm and tranquility, goodness and light.

This combination of weakness and rebirth provided me with strength and rejuvenation as I saw my mother’s glowing face and her quick movements. That meant she had gotten better, she had recovered, she had won! My mouth was very dry; my body was bathed in sweat from head to toe, my head hurt, my stomach too, and yet, I felt like a new man.

 **To show you that I had a bit more Yiras Shamayim back then – I remember that the first word that left my dry mouth and my weakened body was “water.” I meant water for drinking but my mother brought me water for netilas yadayim. The second word was “t’fillin.”**

A short while later, Zeide returned from davening with his tallis and t’fillin. With a restrained and wondrous smile he looked at my recovery. It was a smile that only such a special grandfather could produce.

“Nu – enough, Heishke; enough pampering. You need to be healthy and the first thing to do is thank G-d. You were nearly ‘past tense,’ and it was only your mother’s T’hillim and tears that saved you. Nu, boruch Hashem, I’m telling you, your mother is a great woman.” (He said that many times about my mother).

Zeide wasn’t the type to kiss a child, a grandchild. I don’t remember him ever kissing me. But he could kiss with his deep, penetrating glance. For a long time, he did not remove his gaze

from me so that I had nowhere to avert my eyes. My mother kissed me, and for Zeide too, even though she wasn’t from the big “kissers” (it is possible that it’s because I hated kisses from my youngest childhood).

As I said, I did not know how long I was unconscious. I did not even want to ask my mother or grandfather. Or maybe they told me and I did not file it away in my brain. Why? For a long time I did not know the reason why. Years later, I dug deeper and extracted the reason from the crevices of my soul. I think it was

because I did not want to know whether I had missed a day or days of putting on t’fillin.

Even this conclusion did not absolutely remove the lack of certainty – did it come from excess Yiras Shamayim (is that a small thing to you, not to put on t’fillin for a day or days? And I, with all my faults, was a big Yerei Shamayim), or was it the opposite, due to my laziness in searching for a tikkun and t’shuva?

To show you that I had a bit more Yiras Shamayim back then – I remember that the first word that left my dry mouth and my weakened body was “water.” I meant water for drinking but my mother brought me water for netilas yadayim. The second word was “t’fillin.”

GUSH KATIF MUSEUM DINNER

“Why are people ignoring what looks like Germany in 1938?” — Glenn Beck

By Raanan Isseroff



On Wednesday night February 22, over 600 people gathered in Brooklyn to give honor and support to the Gush Katif Museum in Jerusalem and its director, Rabbi Sholom Dov Wolpo.

BORN OUT OF NATIONAL TRAGEDY

The museum’s story is a sad one, born out of a national tragedy. It is a tragedy recently memorialized in Israel’s educational curriculum. Today the Gush Katif Educational kit is taught in classrooms throughout Israel. Dubbed “Gush Katif Commemoration Day” by minister of Education Mr. Gideon Sa’ar, the Gush Katif Educational kit teaches the Israeli school child just what Gush Katif

was — a garden of G-d destroyed by greedy men.

The Gush Katif Museum reminds Jews that Israel should “never forget,” that Israel should strive to keep Jews safe, guarding over Jews and protecting them. This is one thought missing in the minds of those pursuing “peace at all costs,” while those costs are being carried by Jewish life and limb.

TREACHERY

The cruelty of non-Jews is terrible, but it pales in the face of the treachery of Jews who turn against their own. Ironically, it was the Israeli citizens of Gush Katif who were accused of being traitors by not giving up their homes for peace. Headlines implied that resistance to government efforts for peace

was nothing less than seditious. Overnight, Zionists from birth were vilified in the Israeli press. Overnight, the system they helped to build turned on them. It robbed them of their humanity. Their tenacity in simply wanting to live as others do became a declaration of war on the state of Israel. The full weight of Shabak and security leaders was brought to bear as they solemnly told reporters that they had “secret information” of plans by Gush Katif residents to rebel. “Milchemet Achim,” the dreaded civil war of Jew against Jew, became a national fear. Meanwhile, in Gush Katif itself, the peaceful farming residents went on with life as usual, never thinking for a moment that their own government would so deceitfully turn on them.

Today, it is clear who was the victim and who the criminal. Yet, nothing was learned. The lessons of yesterday are forgotten, as Israel embarks on more talks to give away the crown of Israel, Jerusalem itself.

While government leaders claim this is not the case, every map in the world testifies otherwise. Even the vaunted CIA maps of Israel show Jerusalem as “occupied” and the West Bank and Golan Heights as foreign countries. There, in the world of cartography, the hated Green line lives. Only in Israel is this claimed to be false. Can it be that the whole world is crazy?

GUSH KATIF MUSEUM - LIFE BORN FROM THE ASHES

Today, in the Land of Israel,

this unusual museum celebrates the theme of life born from death.

It seeks to awaken and revive the values that brought Jews to the land of Israel. It seeks to retell the efforts of those Jews when they arrived: settling the barren wastelands; brave men who fought marauding Bedouin tribes and suffered extortion from despotic Turkish rulers; paying exorbitant prices to buy swamps and deserts from the locals and turning them into arable land after centuries of neglect.

GUSH KATIF LABELED: “EMBODIMENT OF ZIONISM”

Rabbi Wolpo and his Gush Katif Museum staff seek to revive that original ideology that brought people to settle the Land of Israel after 2000 years. After much work, their efforts are bearing fruit. This month the ministry of education called Gush Katif: “The embodiment of Zionism” and put into place the Gush Katif Educational Curricula.

Despite a theme that doesn’t celebrate growth but rather bemoans Israel’s victims, it brings Gush refugees hope for life. They feel that at least their suffering will not be for nothing. “If it keeps another ‘Gush Katif’ from happening, then perhaps it was worth it,” says one.

As another former Gush dweller put it: “I lived in Gush Katif so you can live in Tel Aviv.” These are victims of the Jewish state that is fighting against Jewish ideals. They are ideals that most former residents believe to be holy, ideals that even after all they have gone through they still espouse as religious Jews. Others have different feelings. As an older man put it: “I survived the



Nazis as a partisan only to come here to the Jewish homeland and have my house taken away and destroyed by Jews.”

GATHERING TO HONOR A GREAT MAN

People gathered at the Gush Katif Museum Dinner to honor Rabbi Shalom Dov Wolpo, who, with his many programs, has succeeded in creating national awareness of the need for a safe Israel with all of its borders intact and protected. He promotes the need to re-annex all the land Israel has given away.

RABBI WOLPO'S PROGRAMS

What does he do that provokes such fierce loyalty to his cause? Perhaps it’s the reward money of \$5000 he gives to soldiers who refuse orders to remove Jews from their land. Perhaps it’s his program that enables soldiers and police to ask forgiveness for being part of the expulsion. Perhaps it’s his group’s nonstop campaign of signs on busses across Israel



that decries expulsion. Perhaps it’s his taking up the cause of the outcasts of the Zionist dream, the

residents of Gush Katif. Vilified and harassed, their homes, livelihoods and belongings destroyed, they are even charged rent for their primitive huts that the government allows them to live in. They are even forced to pay mortgages for land and property forcibly taken away over five years ago.

INTERROGATED BY POLICE

In this spirit, Rabbi Wolpo's interrogation by Israeli police a week before the New York dinner and their anxiousness about anti-government feelings that might result from the dinner in New York further angered Israelis and New Yorkers alike. Israel has, in their eyes, taken an increasingly tyrannical and repressive stance towards its own.

This stance is felt especially amongst Orthodox Jews. Ironically, it is the religious Jew who is the main funder of Israel today. It is the Orthodox Jews who make up over 75% of Olim. Yet it is these very Jews whom the Israeli government sees as its worst enemy. They are the only force capable of successfully standing against "Land for Peace," a grave crime in the eyes of Israel's ivory tower theorists.

MESIRAS NEFESH IS IN HIS BLOOD

Rabbi Wolpo was in Yamit when it was dismantled many years ago. No stranger to mesiras nefesh, he says: "It's in the blood." He's not wrong. Himself the grandson of a four year old child survivor of the infamous 1929 massacre in Hebron, Rabbi Wolpo traces his lineage back to the Alter Rebbe, the founder of Chabad philosophy. It is a philosophy based on Ahavas Yisroel as taught by the Baal

Shem Tov.

Rabbi Wolpo was first charged with this task by the Lubavitcher Rebbe, who emphasized that the problem with Land for peace is one of safety. Agreements to give away even one inch of land put Jews in danger. Each agreement brings missiles of terror ever closer.

Last October, over 60 Katyushas and Grad rockets were fired on Israel from Gaza, with some even reaching Ashkelon.

SAFETY OF JEWS COMES FIRST

Other Orthodox groups emphasize that Israel is the land given to our fathers, and who gives away what G-d gave to us? But for Chabad this is all secondary. The life of a fellow Jew, "no matter where and no matter who," comes first. Jewish law, explains Rav Wolpo, allows one to break every law of Shabbos to save Jewish life! What greater love can be demonstrated for a fellow Jew than to save his life? What greater honor can we give the King than to care for his son, as it says: "Banim Atem LaHashem Elokaychem" – You are sons of the L-rd your G-d.

OPPOSITION TO A TWO-STATE SOLUTION

The dinner was unique.

Rabbis and politicians, Democrats and Republicans, and even a Christian minister attended. Dr. David James Manning, an avid supporter of the anti-disengagement movement, joined the event over growing concern that Israel is creating a terror state by giving away land.

It is as the Rebbe put it so many times: "Each inch of land

given away only brings more terror."

First to speak was Rabbi Yossi Jacobson. He spoke very strongly about Israel's need to distance itself from agreements that only bring death and destruction to Israel.

He was followed by the featured speaker Mr. Glenn Beck, conservative radio host, blogger, author, entrepreneur, and political commentator. He hosts the Glenn Beck Program, a nationally syndicated talk-radio show that airs throughout the United States on Premiere Radio Networks. He formerly hosted the Glenn Beck television program on the Fox News Channel.

GLENN BECK: "COMPARE IT TO 1938 - WHY ARE JEWS QUIET?"

Surprising the audience, Glenn went where Jews are afraid to tread, comparing land giveaways to the events that led up to the Holocaust. "Compare it to 1938, when the world had a madman spell out exactly what he was going to do. And they ignored him. Here we are again. Madmen are spelling out exactly what they plan to do and no one listens. Furthermore, this time around, it's with the media aiding and abetting. This is exactly what happened in 1938.

"Why is the Jewish world quiet? All the signs are in the air," referring to Israel's ignoring Palestinian and Iranian genocidal threats.

Apparently, it takes a Gentile to point out truth that Jewish leaders ignore.

Congressman Lee Terry introduced Ambassador John Bolton, who spoke about Iran's growing nuclear threat and


America's less than aggressive tone in dealing with it.

The focus of the dinner however was concern over Israel's giving away its vital resources and defense to foreign entities at the expense of its own citizens who have and are becoming victims.

USING THE ISSUE OF IRAN TO HIDE THE DANGERS OF DISENGAGEMENT

There are those who feel that Israel has championed the issue of Iran in order to hide the far more disturbing problem of why Israel gives away valuable land and resources to Nazi-trained genocidal murderers. While Israel harps non-stop about troubles with Iran, it does nothing within reach about its own "Iran" in Israel's backyard. It says nothing about rockets falling daily on Israel's land from the PA areas Israel gave away. People wonder if Israel hasn't lost sight of protecting its own people, instead preferring to curry favor with America.

As such, the question of "Should Israel attack Iran or not?" pales in light of the

 "Compare it to 1938, when the world had a madman spell out exactly what he was going to do. And they ignored him. Here we are again. Madmen are spelling out exactly what they plan to do and no one listens."

increasing military buildup in Gaza, the West Bank and Lebanon, which was left with over 20,000 rockets when Israel retreated in the last war. Shockingly, this has become a non-issue for a country historically so concerned with security.

For most attendees, the question was simply: Why does Israel ignore the dangers of Land for peace? Every military expert acknowledges the mistakes of giving away Sinai and Gaza, which today are the launching pads for missiles fired on Israel and other terroristic purposes. So why does Israel continue with talks about the West Bank, Golan and Jerusalem?

Special thanks go to Helen Friedman, Director of AFSI – Americans for a Safe Israel, and her amazing crew for really making this dinner a success.

Special thanks also to Robin Ticker. The dinner would not have been as successful as it was without the World Committee for the Land of Israel – Odelya Jacobs, Dr. Joseph Frager, and Dr. Paul Brody. And of course thanks goes out to the numerous wonderful people who worked and slaved to make this dinner a success!

Much more money still needs to be raised to support the Museum's huge budget and Rabbi Wolpo's crucial work. To become a partner with the Museum and Rabbi Wolpo, go to: www.sos-israel.com/en.html.

Checks can be made out to "Friends of Gush Katif Museum" and mailed to:

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Museum Jerusalem
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Jews in the desert were building the Sanctuary, the women used their unique talents to make the roof-coverings."

"You mean that women were actually allowed to contribute?"

"Of course. The Torah implies that the women came first, before the men. They contributed purely out of choice, not out of obligation. Their contribution of copper mirrors is singled out from among all the contributions, because Hashem appreciated this

donation more than any other."

Suri had something to add. "Before the Giving of the Torah, Hashem told Moshe Rabbeinu to first tell the women about the Torah, before the men."

Mindy added: "We learned that it was in the merit of the righteous women that didn't lose their faith that our ancestors were redeemed from Egypt."

"Well, you've certainly given me a lot to think about. Maybe I was too quick to judge something that I apparently know so little about."

"If you really want to know more about women and Judaism, I'll be happy to learn with you," Mommy said.

"Sounds good. I didn't know women are allowed to learn Torah."

Mindy had a mischievous grin. "Come learn Torah with Mommy, and you'll find out what rights *you* are entitled to. She'll be glad to help!"

The above story is fictional. The lesson is based on Likkutei Sichos vol. 16 p. 449-457, vol. 26 p. 262-271.

THE SHABBOS GUEST

By M.E. Gordon

"I hope she'll show up," Suri said to Mindy, as she arranged the gefilte fish on the platters.

"Don't worry, she sounded interested, didn't she?" Mindy was putting salads and dips into bowls.

"I hope she didn't lose the address."

"Even if she did, it would be hard to miss the big Menora in the front."

"I hope she didn't forget the time.....or the day....."

"Suri, stop worrying so much. This is not the first person that we've invited to spend Shabbos with our family. Why are you so concerned?"

"Well, usually Tatty or Mommy does the inviting. This is the first time that someone I gave a candle-lighting brochure to actually asked me for more information. I took down her number, and with Mommy's permission, I invited her for Shabbos. I hope she gets here before candle-lighting...Wait! Someone is ringing the doorbell! It must be her!"

Suri ran to the door and opened it. There on the threshold stood a tall, middle-aged woman, carrying a box of kosher chocolates. Suri rejoiced inwardly; yes, it was Monica, the lady she had invited.

Suri, Mindy, and their mother tried to make sure that Monica was comfortable while they finished their last minute preparations, but it was only after candle lighting that they had a chance to talk to their guest.



"I've travelled all over the world, and I've seen many types of cultures. I belong to a group that aids women in difficult circumstances, and we encourage them to take action to better their lives. We've taught mothers in the jungles of Africa how to read and write. We've sponsored women to study law in India, so that they can seek justice for their downtrodden sisters. Even in so-called civilized countries, there is too much discrimination against women." Her voice then dropped to a conspiratorial whisper. "If you ever want to find out about what rights you're entitled to, I'll be glad to help."

Suri looked confused.

Mindy looked amused.

Their mother was somewhat taken aback. "What gave you the idea that we don't already have everything that we are entitled to?"

"Poor thing, don't you

realize that you are victims of discrimination? I know all about it. I did some research online, and I know that men were given more Mitzvos, like putting on T'fillin, reading from the Torah, and being counted towards a minyan. Women stay home and do the housework." Monica turned towards the two girls. "Wouldn't you want to one day develop a talent, like singing, art, or drama?"

Mindy laughed. "We are already doing just that! I have the lead part in the school production this year. I've also just begun producing short films on Jewish themes. I hope to make them professional enough to be used by girls' schools around the world. Suri, tell Monica about your artwork."

Suri was a bit shy about her accomplishments, but she spoke up anyway. "I like to draw. I've taken a few lessons."

"Come on, Suri, tell her about your painting that won an award last year, the one with the mother and daughter looking at the Shabbos candles. It made such a kiddush Hashem!"

Now it was Monica who looked confused. "You're allowed to paint? You're allowed to act in plays? Make films? But I thought..."

This time it was Mommy who answered. "If Hashem gives someone a talent, obviously He wants that person to use it. Of course, it has to be used the right way and for the right purpose. Every talent can be developed in a kosher way. Every talent can be used to serve Hashem. When the

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JEWISH UTOPIOSOPHY

By Rabbi Yisroel Harpaz

Judaism's clear vision of a perfect world, a world that is free of competition, war, hunger, disease and the other ills that plague life on earth, has inspired many idealistic movements and utopian philosophies.

The common thread running through all these philosophies is that true change can be affected by humanity itself. Through the efforts of people who work hard to eradicate negativity within the world and seek out the benefit of their fellows, the sum total of all these movements will eventually (somehow) equal utopia.

Judaism, on the other hand (why is Judaism always on the other hand?), asserts that the final transformation to utopian existence will only come about through a wise and selfless leader, known as Moshiach ("the anointed one"). Our efforts, of course, are of primary importance to this plot, but our actions alone cannot, for some reason, bring about the final changes necessary to transport humanity into a utopian era.

Clearly, we are at odds with ourselves. On the one hand, those who believe that human effort can and will lead to such a transformation will be alienated by the concept of Moshiach, a G-dly redeemer – hence the flourishing of secular messianic ideologies in the past two centuries. On the other hand, those who believe in the Jewish approach could reason that if the final transformation will only come about through Moshiach, then why bother with our own

efforts to create change?

Why, indeed, is Moshiach necessary given the vast energy being exerted by sincere activists around the world?

If it were possible for us to attain a utopian existence on our own, why has humanity not achieved it yet? The simple answer is that the drives that enable us to succeed in bringing about radical change in the world are antithetical to the peacefulness of utopia. The doctor who is working to cure the disease is competing against his colleagues for a prize and recognition, the ambitious entrepreneur is the one who can feed the hungry and the aspiring politician who wants to be remembered as a great humanitarian, or serve the economic interests of his own nation, will send his troops to battle the forces of darkness.

In all of these cases, radical change is affected in the outside world with drives and intentions that are hardly utopian. Aspiration, arrogance, desire, pretension, etc. are decidedly negative qualities. But replacing them with satisfaction, lethargy and laziness would create a very nice but very pathetic human being. These traditionally negative drives, the very characteristics that enable us to affect radical change in the world, hold us back from reaching internal peace.

Perhaps, then, this is the innovation of Moshiach and the Jewish utopia: That with the leadership of a wise and selfless

sage we will transcend our normal human limitations and attain perfection both inside and outside – which will no longer contradict each other.

The truth is that we are living in a most awesome and ideal time. We produce enough food to feed every mouth on the planet – but we don't get it all to the right places. We have innovated technological advances that can potentially save countless lives every day and bring people closer than ever – but we're not utilizing them to their fullest. For the first time, the world values peace and knowledge instead of war and power.

But utopia is not characterized by the external manifestation of good in the world alone. Utopia, by definition, is a perfected existence that affects the very core of our humanity, transforming each one of us while it transforms the world we live in. In the Messianic Era, we will become infinitely more aware of life's deeper purpose, infinitely more sensitive and connected to one another, and infinitely more conscious of the infinite.

While we work together to improve and perfect the social and material world outside, we must also prepare the fundamental quality of utopian life inside us by striving to live more utopian, meaningful lives, to love and appreciate every person and to utilize the tools of the 21st Century to intensify our understanding of the infinite.

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