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U.S.A

744 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn, NY 11213-3409
Tel: (718) 778-8000
Fax: (718) 778-0800
admin@beismoshiach.org
www.beismoshiach.org

ERETZ HA'KODESH

ת.ד. 102 כפר חב"ד 72915
טלפון: (03) 9607-290
פקס: (03) 9607-289

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:

M.M. Hendel

ENGLISH EDITOR:

Boruch Merkur
editor@beismoshiach.org

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LIGHT FROM DOUBLE DARKNESS

LIKKUTEI SICHOS VOL. 9, PG. 193-195
TRANSLATED BY BORUCH MERKUR



1. It is known that the Baal Shem Tov gives the following teaching on the verse, “I will surely have concealed My face on that day” [VaYeilech 31:18] – that the meaning of “I will surely have concealed (V’Anochi hasteir astir),” a **double** concealment, is that the concealment itself is hidden. That is, the disguise is so great that we don’t at all perceive that it is a concealment, to the extent that it can result in, G-d forbid, “They esteem darkness as light” [Yeshayahu 5:20. See Rambam Hilchos Deios, Ch. 2, beg.].

As it is explained in *Likkutei Torah* [B’Chukosai, beginning on 48a, end] regarding the matters stated in the Rebuke – that “according to the truth, they are actually blessings.” The fact that they are expressed in such a manner that they appear superficially as the opposite of a blessing is because the blessings come from such a lofty place, “from the aspect of concealment (*sasum*).” Accordingly it is understood with respect to the topic at hand – regarding, “I will surely have concealed My face on that day” – that “according to the truth” it is actually a sublime blessing.

Furthermore, from the very fact that superficially it appears as the **ultimate** expression of the opposite of a blessing—

(since when we are **aware** that it is a “concealment,” the tendency is to hope that we will discover advice on how to overcome it, however, when there is “*hasteir astir*”

[i.e., a double concealment], to the extent that we perceive darkness as light, then we are satisfied with the state we find ourselves in, which is indeed the ultimate opposite of a blessing)

—it is understood that the blessing is extremely great, for which reason it comes in an extremely hidden manner.

The disguise is so great that we don’t at all perceive that it is a concealment, to the extent that it can result in, G-d forbid, “They esteem darkness as light.”

2. This will be understood in light of a discussion of the saying of the Alter Rebbe [*Boneh Yerushalayim*, Section 120; *Maamarei Admur HaZakein*, K’suvim Vol. 2, pg 156] on the verse, “I am asleep, but my heart is awake” [Shir HaShirim 5:2] – that at the level of [G-dliness described as] *Memalei Kol Almin* (Filling All Worlds), which is called, “I,” it is possible that there should be “sleep,” whereas the level of *Sovev Kol Almin* (Transcending All Worlds), “my heart,” is always “awake.”

There the Alter Rebbe explains that when a Jew “attaches his thought to worldly desires...and he wishes to receive vitality from that, and he foregoes the vitality of ‘You enliven them all, which is [the manifestation of G-dliness described as] Filling all Worlds,’” he thereby is **separated** from the level of *Memalei Kol Almin*, whereas “it is impossible to be separated in any manner” from the level of *Sovev Kol Almin*, for the “Will of the Heart” that comes from the level of *Sovev Kol Almin* (“my heart”) “is present in every person.” And “even though it appears to him that he does

not possess it, and he does not perceive it, this is certainly false, for 'notwithstanding the fact that he does not see, his *mazal* (spirit) sees.'

At first glance, this is not understood:

Since [it is said of the level of Memalei Kol Almin that] "You enliven them **all**," the level of Memalei Kol Almin enlivens even one who "**forgoes** the vitality of 'You enliven them all.'" Nevertheless, we say that since the person "runs after his livelihood" [FN 10: wording of the Talmud (Shabbos 32b), quoted in the Alter Rebbe's maamer, *ibid*] and "he **foregoes** the vitality of 'You enliven them all,'" (in terms of **his** perception) **he** is

"**separated** from the level of Memalei Kol Almin."

Why is it that we say with regard to Sovev Kol Almin that even if "it appears to him that he does not possess it, etc.," "it is impossible to be separated in any manner"?

We must answer that since the Alter Rebbe says about the Will of the Heart that it "is present in every person," he means this not only with respect to "his *mazal*" but also with respect to the person himself (his perception). But at first glance, since "he **does not see**," the person himself is indeed **separated!**

[To be continued be"H]



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יחד אדונינו מודרנו ורבנו מלך המשיח לעולם ועד

SOUND THE GREAT SHOFAR

BY MENACHEM ZIEGELBOIM

Beis Moshiach presents a compilation of stories about the attempts by g'dolei Yisroel to hasten the Redemption on the Day of Judgment.

WHEN YOUR WELLSPRINGS SPREAD OUTWARD

When the tzaddik Rav Gershon of Kitov was in Eretz Yisroel, his brother-in-law, the Baal Shem Tov, sent him a wondrous letter describing what he experienced when his soul ascended to heaven on that Rosh HaShana.

Delivery of the letter was entrusted to the loyal disciple, Rav Yaakov Yosef of Polnoye, who also sought to make his way to Eretz Yisroel, to visit the holy city of Yerushalayim, but due to obstacles the trip was canceled and the letter remained with him. After the passing of both the Baal Shem Tov and Rav Gershon Kitover, Rav Yaakov Yosef regretted that he had never delivered the letter and decided that for the benefit of the public the contents should be published.

Here is the letter which was first published in 1781 as an appendix to *Ben Porat Yosef* [p. 128a] by Rabbi Yaakov Yosef of Polnoye:

To my beloved brother-in-law, who is dear to me and my soul-

friend, the wondrous Rabbi and famous Chassid in Torah and fear of Heaven, the honorable one, our teacher and Rebbe, Rav R' Avrohom Gershon, may his light shine forth. And to his modest wife Bluma and all their children, may they all stand upon the blessing of life, amen selah.

On Rosh Hashanah of the year 5507, I performed, by means of oath, an *aliyas neshama* (elevation of soul), as is known to you, and saw wondrous things I had never seen before. That which I saw and learned there is impossible to convey in words, even face to face.

When I returned to the lower Garden of Eden, I saw innumerable souls, both of the living and the dead, some whom I knew and others whom I did not. They were flitting back and forth, going from one universe to another through the Column that is known to those who delve into mysteries. Their state of joy was so great that lips cannot express it and the physical ear is too coarse to hear it.

There were also [the souls of]

many [formerly] wicked people who had repented; their sins were forgiven, as this was a special time of grace. Even to my eyes it was wondrous how many were accepted as penitents, many of whom you know. There was great joy among them too, and they also ascended in the manner described above.

All of them beseeched and petitioned me unceasingly: "To the glory of your Torah, G-d granted you greater understanding to perceive and know these things. Ascend with us, so that you can be our help and support."

Because of the great joy I saw among them, I decided to ascend with them. I saw in the vision that the Samech-Mem arose to accuse, with tremendous, unparalleled joy, and accomplished decrees of destruction on several souls who would be killed in unusual deaths. I was grasped by dread and I literally sacrificed my soul.

I asked my master [Achiya HaShiloni] to come with me, as it was very dangerous to go and rise up to the supernal worlds. Indeed, I had never before ascended to such a high level.

I ascended from level to level until I entered the chamber of Moshiach, where Moshiach learns Torah with all the Tanaim and tzaddikim, including the Seven

Shepherds. I saw great joy there, but I did not know the reason for it.

At first I thought that the reason for this joy was because I had passed away from the physical world, Heaven forbid. Later, they told me that my time had not yet come to die, since they have great pleasure On High when I bring about Unifications through their holy teachings down below. To this very day, I do not know the reason for that joy.

I asked the Moshiach: “When will the Master come?” and he answered: “By this you shall know:

“In the time when your teaching will become public and revealed in the world, and your wellsprings will burst forth to the farthest extremes – that which I have taught you and you have comprehended – and they also shall be able to perform Unifications and elevations as you, then all of the *klipos* (forces of impurity) will cease to exist, and there shall be a time of good will and salvation.”

I was surprised by this and felt great sorrow over the long period of time it would take for this to happen. But I learned three things that are segulos and three Holy Names and they are easy to learn and explicate, and I was appeased. I thought that perhaps through this even my contemporaries would be able to achieve a level and state like me, i.e., being able to rise up as neshamos and learn and return as I did. However, permission was not given to reveal this throughout my entire lifetime. I asked for your sake to be able to teach you, but was not granted permission. I am bound by oath over this matter...

In the seifer *Rishpei Eish* it brings that the holy Rabbi Mordechai of Neshchiz held it an obligation to learn this letter daily without ever

missing out, literally like putting on t’fillin. He said that what the Baal Shem Tov said – that he learned three Names that he has no permission to reveal – actually is alluded to obliquely, and through them one can know the Keitz HaGeula (i.e., the time when Moshiach will arrive).

A CRY FROM THE HEART

On the last Yom Kippur of his life, the Maggid of Kozhnitz joined

*I saw in the vision
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I literally sacrificed
my soul.*

in the plan of his fellow tzaddikim in an attempt to hasten the Geula. Despite his infirmity, he rose up and with superhuman strength he cried out Yom Kippur night, saying: Master of the Universe, tell us, “*salachti kidvorecha*” (I forgive you as per your words) and hasten the Geula. Lest You say there are tzaddikim lacking in the world, there is Reb Mendel of Rimanov – a true tzaddik. Lest the Urim V’Tumim are lacking – You have the

holy Chozeh, who shines like the Urim V’Tumim. Lest You lack baalei t’shuva, I, Yisroel of Kozhnitz, with my weak body, am ready to do t’shuva for all the Jewish people!

Then the Kozhnitzer Maggid cried out happily and told the congregation to sing, “And Hashem said, ‘*salachti kidvorecha*.’”

When the tzaddik Rabbi Yisroel of Ruzhin heard this, he said: I am convinced that the Maggid heard “*salachti kidvorecha*” up Above, for otherwise he would not have started to daven Maariv.

That Yom Kippur night the Chozeh said with tremendous joy: If only we hear glad tidings from Kozhnitz, for the ill one there shook up all the worlds.

SHOFAR OF MOSHIACH

The year that Rabbi Yisroel of Ruzhin passed away, his son, R’ Dovid Moshe, was not well during Rosh HaShana. He stayed in bed and prayed in his father’s room. This is how he was able to watch his father during his avoda. He later related that this avoda was “above the natural order of things.”

When the davening was over, R’ Yisroel turned to his son and with a shining countenance he said: Today I heard the shofar blasts of Moshiach!

Said R’ Dovid Moshe: The shofar that year was large and very unusual. Its sound was very powerful and the t’kios were wondrous, but immediately after Rosh HaShana the shofar disappeared.

THE SHPOLE ZEIDE’S PRAYER

Every Rosh HaShana, before blowing the shofar, the Shpole Zeide would spend time alone in his room. Nobody knew what he did there and it remained a mystery

for years.

One year, a Chassid came from a distant land and when he heard about the Shpole Zeide's practice of spending time alone before blowing the shofar, he decided he would solve the mystery. What did he do? Before the Shpole Zeide entered the room, he quietly hid and from his hiding place he peeked through a crack into the room.

The Shpole Zeide entered the room and to the Chassid's great surprise he saw him lying spread out on the floor crying and pleading:

"Master of the Universe, what do you want of your nation, Israel? If I didn't see for myself the mitzvos and good deeds that the Jewish people do, I would not have believed that in this bitter Galus, where the Satan dances among them and everything desirable is before their eyes, they could fulfill even one mitzva.

"You described Gehinom in *Reishis Chochma* (a Musar work that describes the punishments for every sin), but You place temptation and trials right before their eyes. I promise You that if you had done the opposite and had described the temptations in a book and put Gehinom in front of their eyes, not a single Jew would transgress even a minor transgression."

Then the Shpole Zeide got up, passed his hand over his eyes, left the room and began his avoda before the blowing of the shofar.

WE WILL BE AS DREAMERS

Outside the city of Mezhibozh was a special building used by the "holy brotherhood," the great disciples of the Baal Shem Tov. This is where they went after the Baal Shem Tov taught them and they would review these teachings there. Often the disciples would delve into their meaning, analyze, and clarify

them until they understood the teachings.

One year on the first day of Rosh HaShana, the Baal Shem Tov said a teaching on the verse, "Sound the great shofar for our freedom" and expounded on it. When he was finished, he went into his room and closed the door.

The holy brotherhood headed for the isolated house outside the city in order to review the holy words of their master.

He saw the holy brotherhood sitting around a large table, their faces aflame, their heads thrown back and struck speechless. They were all witnessing the same vision with a strong and clear thought that in just a little while, Moshiach would come.

A young boy was raised in the Baal Shem Tov's home who was the son of R' Yitzchok Dov, the brother of the author of *Meir HaNesivim*. He did not join the holy brotherhood because he was too young.

That Rosh HaShana, after the boy heard the teaching of the Baal Shem Tov, he remained home alone when he suddenly had the idea that Moshiach would be revealed that day and the Geula would come.

This thought grew stronger and stronger and his soul barely remained connected to his body. He wanted to speak to one of the talmidim but no one was home with whom he could share his tumultuous thoughts.

In a rush of emotion he began running down the street towards the building where the holy brotherhood were, with all the passersby looking at him in surprise. He burst into the house and what he saw astonished him.

He saw the holy brotherhood sitting around a large table, their faces aflame, their heads thrown back and struck speechless. They were all witnessing the same vision with a strong and clear thought that in just a little while, Moshiach would come.

The boy sat down with them until evening fell and the stars came out. At that moment the thought ceased in the hearts of them all and it was with a feeling of disappointment and sorrow that they returned to the city.

(K'vutzas Yaakov)

MESIRUS NEFESH AND LOVE

Erev Rosh HaShana 5658 (1898) the Rebbe Rashab told his son the story that his father, the Rebbe Maharash had told him:

When the neshama of the Alter Rebbe had to descend, they told it that aside from having a revelation of the essence of the soul down below, it would also appear as the first leader of the Chabad Rebbes. Through the avoda with mesirus nefesh and the love and kiruv that it would have for the Jewish people, they would merit the revelation of Moshiach Tzidkeinu.

(Seifer HaSichos 5701)

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Boruch Hashem, Elul 5766

Mivtza: HELPING THE NEEDY

To every member of the Lubavitcher community:

During this month of preparation for Rosh Hashonoh, the "head" of the New Year, we fondly recall our Rebbe's words that this is an especially auspicious time for strengthening our deep bond of Hiskashrus with the "Rosh Bnei Yisroel," the "head" of the Jewish people and leader of the generation.

Our Rebbeim explain that **an important way to strengthen Hiskashrus is by participating in the Rebbe's activities and concerns, consequently, by supporting an organization that brings together a number of these activities, the Hiskashrus is greater and stronger.** Such an organization is Kupas Rabbeinu, which seeks to continue many of the Rebbe's activities and concerns without change from the way he would conduct them himself.

Every year at this time, the Rebbe would call upon us to contribute generously to help needy families with their extra expenses for the coming month's many Yomim Tovim. This also coincides with the special emphasis during this month of giving extra Tzedokah, (indicated in the Hebrew letters of the word "Elul," as explained in many Sichos etc.), as a vital way of preparing ourselves for the new year and arousing Divine mercy upon us.

We therefore appeal to every individual man and woman to contribute generously to Kupas Rabbeinu, enabling us to fulfill the Rebbe's desire to help all those who anxiously await our help. The greater your contribution, the more we can accomplish.

Your generous contribution to Kupas Rabbeinu will be the appropriate vessel for receiving the abundant blessings of the Rebbe, who is its Nasi, that you may be blessed with a Ksiva Vachasima Tova for a good and sweet year, materially and spiritually. May it help to bring the full revelation of Moshiach - our Rebbe - immediately now!

Wishing a Ksiva Vachasima Tova for a good and sweet year,

In the name of Vaad Kupas Rabbeinu

Rabbi Sholom Mendel Simpson

Rabbi Yehuda Leib Groner

P.S. Of course, you may send to Kupas Rabbeinu all contributions that you would send to the Rebbe; all will be devoted to the activities to which the Rebbe would devote them.

You may also send Maimad, **Keren-Hashono** (this coming year 5767 - 355 days), Vov Tishrei, Yud Gimmel Tishrei Magbis etc. to Kupas Rabbeinu.

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HOW DO I GET OUT OF THIS MESS?

*What was the Rebbe referring to when he asked the school administration, “Why didn’t you correct me?” * Why did the Chassid ask the Rebbe, “How does one crawl out of here?” * What was the Rebbe’s response to the seeming disaster at the series of lectures on Taharas HaMishpacha? * Three stories told during the lectures at the Yemei Iyun (days of study) devoted to the topic of “parents as educators,” sponsored by Aguch in Israel, Menachem Av 5766.*

WHY DIDN’T YOU CORRECT ME?

Rabbi Yosef Hecht, shliach of the Rebbe and rav of the city of Eilat, and member of the Beis Din of Rabbanei Anash in Eretz Yisroel, told the following story:

In 5729/1969, the first day of Rosh Chodesh Teives fell out on Shabbos Chanuka. According to what is written in Lubavitch customs, we read the Haftora of Chanuka and add the first and last verses from the Haftora of Rosh Chodesh and *Machar Chodesh*.

That Shabbos, the Rebbe read

the Chanuka Haftora of *Rani V’Simchi*, but did not add the verses from the other two Haftoros. When the Rebbe came downstairs to farbreng at 1:30, he said that there was a need to correct what happened, and entered into a learned discussion about the customs in this matter, as well as the reasoning of those who do not say these verses because of the rule that “One does not skip from one book of Prophets to another,” and the various opinions on this matter.

However, the Rebbe concluded that ultimately in the Luach Kollel Chabad it says that one should add

these verses, and since lately, “*I koch zich* in Yerushalayim” as to the need to preserve Yerushalayim and to settle it, therefore, one should follow what is written in the Luach Kollel Chabad published in Yerushalayim.

The next Thursday, the administration of the yeshiva Tomchei T’mimim entered the Rebbe’s room to report on the state of the students. This time, before they could begin discussing the topic at hand, the Rebbe asked them, “How come none of you corrected me and you didn’t tell me to say the additional verses in the Haftora?”

They all remained silent, until R’ Yisroel Jacobson gathered the nerve to say, “What does that mean, to tell the Rebbe what to do?”

The Rebbe answered, “We find that Elozor the Cohen corrected Moshe Rabbeinu. There was something that Moshe neglected to say and Elozor remembered, and that is how the laws of ‘kashering gentile utensils’ was established.”

Rabbi Jacobson was not fazed and he responded immediately, “What is the comparison? There, the Sages say that Moshe Rabbeinu ‘came to anger, and thus came to error,’ but here, baruch Hashem, the Rebbe was not angry.”

The Rebbe smiled and dropped

the subject...

Despite that, the members of the administration were still in shock over the Rebbe's question, and it was obvious on their faces when they left the room. I met them at the time and heard the story from them on the spot.

HOW MANY MOTHERS DID MOSHE HAVE?

Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok Jacobson told:

I heard from Rabbi Chaim Gutnick a"h, that one year the Rebbe inquired as to the state of Taharas HaMishpacha in Australia. Rabbi Gutnick answered that the situation was not good. The Rebbe suggested that he arrange a series of lectures on the topic and promote the matter, but R' Chaim argued that the climate wasn't receptive for such an activity. However, the Rebbe insisted and he

Rabbi Jacobson was not fazed and he responded immediately, "What is the comparison? There, the Sages say that Moshe Rabbeinu 'came to anger, and thus came to error,' but here, baruch Hashem, the Rebbe was not angry."

acquiesced.

Rabbi Gutnick was a gifted speaker and outstanding orator, and he advertised a series of eight sessions for women on the subject of Taharas HaMishpacha. The first lecture, however, was attended by only one woman!

It is superfluous to describe how he felt, considering that he was used to speaking for crowds of hundreds and even thousands, and especially after he had prepared an orderly and comprehensive program. However, as he had committed himself, he gave the lecture and waited expectantly for the next week, hoping for a larger turnout. Nevertheless, only one woman arrived in the large synagogue hall, the very same woman from the previous week. This scenario repeated itself all eight weeks.

The next year, when he came to the Rebbe, the



(For illustration purposes)

Rebbe inquired as to the success of the series of lectures on Taharas HaMishpacha. Rabbi Gutnick responded that apparently he was correct in his assessment of the matter that it had not been appropriate.

The Rebbe's face took on a serious cast, and he asked Rabbi Gutnick, "How many mothers did Moshe Rabbeinu have? Did he have more than one mother?"

This is how the Rebbe looked at the matter, and we need to learn from this the importance of each mother, underscoring the importance of every single Yid, each being a "complete world" unto themselves.

AVOIDING PROBLEMS

Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok Jacobson told of another interesting episode:

R' Yaakov Katz of Chicago was a Lubavitcher Chassid who was instrumental in helping the Rebbe Rayatz get settled in America when he arrived in 1940. Due to this, he merited a special relationship with the Rebbe.

This Chassid would consult with the Rebbe regarding his business dealings on a regular basis, and he would receive detailed instructions. Once, he told the Rebbe of a certain

The Rebbe's face took on a serious cast, and he asked Rabbi Gutnick, "How many mothers did Moshe Rabbeinu have? Did he have more than one mother?"

attractive deal that he was offered, but the Rebbe expressed opposition to it.

The deal seemed so secure, with almost no risk, that R' Yaakov could not withstand the temptation and he made the investment. Sadly, he lost a great deal of money and he got out with almost nothing left.

Shortly thereafter, he went into the Rebbe for yechidus. At the beginning, there was an uncomfortable silence in the room. Finally, R' Yaakov asked the Rebbe if he could speak, and he told the following anecdote:

In a certain town in Poland there was a Jew who made his living as a burglar. One time, late at night, he

broke into the house of the local Rabbi and walked into the room where the Rabbi was sitting hunched over his holy books. When he heard the noise, the Rabbi looked up and was surprised to see the burglar. He asked the man, "What are you doing here?"

The thief responded without hesitation, "I have a question for the Rav."

"In that case," asked the rabbi, "what is your question?"

The burglar answered, "*Vi kricht men fun danet arois?*" (literally, how does one crawl out of here, meaning, how do I get out of this mess?)

R' Yaakov turned to the Rebbe and said in his unique Yiddish intonation, "*Rebbe, vi kricht men fun danet arois?*"

Rabbi Jacobson told this story in one of his lectures on childrearing and derived the following lesson:

Sometimes, we find ourselves in a "hole" that we don't know how to extract ourselves from. However, the real question is not how to get out, but how did we get here in the first place. In chinuch, the job is to make certain in advance that we do not end up in a situation where we have to look for ways out of the mess.



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ISN'T IT POSSIBLE THAT G-D HAS HIS OWN HIDDEN WAYS FOR THE REDEMPTION?

TRANSLATED BY MICHOEL LEIB DOBRY

In response to requests by our readers, we now present the sixteenth in a series of questions and answers from the seifer Between Light and Darkness, Rabbi Sholom Dovber HaLevi Wolpo's provocative new guide for the perplexed regarding the establishment regime in Eretz Yisroel today and the tragic events they have brought upon the Jewish People.

QUESTION:

I still don't understand. Does G-d have to bring the Redemption specifically in the way that we deem appropriate? Did anyone possibly think that *Dovid Malka M'shichei* would be born specifically as a result of the actions of Lot and his two daughters (from whom there came Rus the Moabite), and the story of Yehuda and Tamar (from whom was born Peretz, the

grandfather of Yishai, Dovid's father)? Furthermore, even Shlomo HaMelech (from whose seed Moshiach must come) was born from the union of Dovid and Batsheva. Thus, we see that "My thoughts are not as your thoughts," and the kingdom of Dovid was established in ways that are not necessarily in accordance with Torah. If this be the case, maybe the Future Redemption also does not

have to come in such a manner?

ANSWER:

1. Kabbala explains that the soul of Dovid was born in the fashion that you noted in your question because the klipos interfered with a soul so sublime descending down below into a physical body, and therefore, G-d concealed this soul specifically through matches so hidden that they would never think of interfering with them. On the other hand, Lot and his daughters, along with Yehuda and Tamar, lived before Mattan Torah, and chassidus and kabbala explain that specifically those relationships that are forbidden by Torah are inwardly very lofty. Thus, for this very reason, they were forbidden, because "that which is higher falls much lower." However, the holy forefathers in the days before Mattan Torah could draw down lofty souls specifically in this manner. This is the hidden reason why the twelve

holy tribes of Israel came specifically from the two sisters that Yaakov Avinu married. (See the wondrous statement in *Daas Z'keinim*, Parshas VaYeishev, proving that everything was directed from Above.) Regarding the matter of Dovid and Batsheva, our Sages declare in Gemara (Shabbos 56b) that "anyone who says that Dovid sinned is simply mistaken," as is explained there at length. But what does this have to do with the revelation of the Redemption, which at every stage must be through Melech HaMoshiach, and not those who have broken the yoke of Torah?



2. Furthermore, and most importantly, the point of our discussion is not whether Moshiach can be born in Eretz Yisroel under a heretical regime, but whether this regime can be an actual part of the Redemption. **Based on your question**, even the house of Pharaoh, filled with pagan idols and statues, could be *is'chalta d'Geula*, since Moshe Rabbeinu, the first Redeemer, who is the last Redeemer, was raised there. In this regard, it can even be said that "the Roman gate," where Moshiach sits and suffers the afflictions of the Exile, is also part of the Redemption.

WHAT WOULD HA'RAV KOOK HAVE THOUGHT ABOUT THE "MEDINA" OF TODAY?

"With all my affection for the building of the Holy Land...I always declare and make known everywhere...that the most important thing is the holy connection, the cleaving to G-d Alm-ghty in His holy Torah, and in every thing holy in Israel, from top to bottom. However, to my great regret, many err and cause others to err, **in wanting to deduce from the words of affection heard from me on the building of the land**, both verbally and in writing, as if there is *ch"v* some compromise and some agreement on the

(spiritual) withdrawals, as many groups among those involved in building the land are retreating from the holy path, whether in large or small measure. G-d knows that my heart pains over this unceasingly...everything is against my will and against my wishes, and I protest against them, **and categorically refute anyone who *ch"v* says anything to assist these people who cause failure in my name.**"

(*Zichron R'aya*, p. 194)

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THEY WILL BELIEVE!

BY RABBI YISROEL HALPERIN
SHLIACH IN HERTZLIYA

IT'S ALL SO THAT THERE WILL BE A "PIS'CHON PEH"

In *Likkutei Sichos* volume 36, the second sicha on VaEira, which discusses the prophecy of Yechezkel (the Haftora of VaEira) on the war of Bavel and Mitzrayim, the Rebbe writes:

"When Yechezkel related the prophecy about Mitzrayim and certainly when he prophesied about Nevuchadnetzar, he had been known as a prophet for several years and most of the Jewish people believed in him as a prophet. Nevertheless, in this prophecy it says, 'and I will give you an opening of the mouth in their midst, etc.' so that the Jewish people will see that his prophecy was fulfilled, and will believe what he says. Indeed, Hashem brought about this war of Nevuchadnetzar and Mitzrayim, two mighty kingdoms at that time, a tremendous event in which thousands and tens of thousands of soldiers participated, etc., and all this was in order 'to give you an opening of the mouth' that it be beneficial to the Jewish people – not even to all the Jewish people, but to just a small group of Jews (who did not believe in Yechezkel).

This sicha was said before the Six Day War, when the world was amazed by the clear prophecy of the Lubavitcher Rebbe MH"M about a full victory which opposed the prognostications. This was a prophecy that was realized publicly like the rest of his holy prophecies

yet it was edited and was published in the weekly "likut" for Parshas VaEira 5751 days before the beginning of the Gulf War. This period was replete with prophecies that there was nothing to fear, prophecies that were fulfilled in the miracles of that war.

The point is that all the events that take place, including the biggest, especially those preceded by a prophecy, are only to intensify the belief of the Jewish people in Hashem and in Moshe His servant, the Navi HaDor!

A COMPARISON TO OUR TIMES

Drawing upon this previous experience, we can safely say that all the painful things happening in Eretz Yisroel in connection with our security are a precise fulfillment of prophecies and warnings of the Rebbe. The Rebbe told us what the results would be of not conducting ourselves according to Torah when they merely spoke about giving away land.

When right before our eyes we see the fulfillment of the Rebbe's prophecies, obviously we are expected to strengthen our emuna and the emuna of all the Jewish people in everything the Rebbe said – first and foremost, the prophecy of Geula!

To put it plainly: immediately

the Rebbe will come, neshama in a guf, with no interruption and no change, and redeem us with the true and complete Redemption.

WHERE HE LAUGHED

Regarding the Gemara about Rabbi Akiva laughing upon seeing a fox leaving the Holy of Holies – because if the prophecies of destruction came true, so too would the prophecies of Geula – why was Rabbi Akiva so happy at this point? Was he lacking in belief in the prophecy of Geula before seeing the fox?!

Perhaps we can say that the fulfillment of the negative prophecy served as an aid to the Geula itself and opened a new channel of faith and anticipation for Geula that didn't exist prior to that time. It added something, as it were, even to Rabbi Akiva.

From this we can take a lesson that it's possible to increase our own emuna and enthusiasm for the Rebbe's prophecy of Geula, and therefore, we need to publicize it all over.

To refresh the memories of our readers, the following are quotes of clear prophecies about the situation in Eretz Yisroel:

DO NOT BELIEVE IN AN AGREEMENT WITH TERRORISTS

"They run after murderers and



terrorists (and are not ashamed to do so with great publicity) and plead with them to be so kind as to take back parts of Yehuda and Shomron! ... These are murderers and terrorists who cannot be trusted, whose signature is not worth the paper it is written on. Even when the murderer sits with him at a "round table" he doesn't put down his knife but continues to stab him. Can he be relied upon?"

(Sicha Chayei Sarah 5746)

FAWNING AND CONCESSIONS CAUSE LOSS OF LIFE AND ADDITIONAL PRESSURE

"When they chase after the goyim and humble themselves before them, it causes that Jews are attacked."

(Sicha Lag B'Omer 5740)

"We see that every concession brought on additional pressure. They demand more and more and have already said that they will not give up until they receive the Old City too! ..."



"Standing strong on shleimus ha'Aretz leads to real peace ... don't take any pressure into account. Go with strength, for this sort of conduct (not only doesn't lead to undesirable results, but on the contrary, it) raises the importance of Jews in the eyes of the nations ... any sign of fear and hesitation increases the pressure ... when you stand strong, there is a promise that the pressure will dissipate."

The Arabs accept whatever they are given and continue to exert pressure to receive more and more for they see we cave in to pressure..."

(Yud-Tes Kislev 5739)

PUBLICIZING THE VIEWS OF THOSE WHO WANT TO CONCEDE CAUSES CHUTZPAH AND WILDNESS ON THE PART OF THE ARABS

“You cannot fool the goy. The goy knows quite well the fact that there are Jews who are pressuring to give goyim even more than they were promised ...and this causes the goy to have more courage and more chutzpah. He goes wild, strikes out, light fires and burns, etc., despite the Jewish army and police that are supposed to be in charge. There cannot be peace if Hashem will not give peace in the land and they don't do as Hashem wants, especially when simple logic dictates that strength is the only way to peace.”

(Yud-Tes Kislev 5739)

JUST TALKING ABOUT AUTONOMY WILL LEAD TO GIVING AWAY YERUSHALAYIM AND THIS IS PIKUACH NEFESH

“These talks about an autonomy plan are the first step towards giving away parts of Eretz Yisroel, and not just small parts but large parts like Yehuda, Shomron, Gaza, Chevron, and Yerushalayim. This is an inyan of literal pikuach nefesh!”

(Yud Shevat 5752, to Minister Moshe Katzav)

STANDING STRONG IS WHAT WILL LEAD TO TRUE PEACE – THAT'S A PROMISE!

“Standing strong on shleimus ha'Aretz leads to real peace ... don't take any pressure into account. Go with strength, for this sort of conduct (not only doesn't lead to undesirable results, but on the contrary, it) raises the importance of Jews in the eyes of the nations ... any sign of fear and hesitation increases the pressure ... when you stand strong, there is a promise that the pressure will

dissipate.”

(Chayei Sarah 5746)

THE SIGNATURE IS NOT BINDING

To those who maintain that since they already signed the contract ... you cannot back out ... the response is: the signature is not binding on anyone, for they signed to a lie, about something that does not belong to them. Since Hashem gave the land to the Jewish people at the Bris Bein HaB'sarim, Eretz Yisroel belongs to all Jews ... till the end of all generations and no individual has authority or ownership

There cannot be peace if Hashem will not give peace in the land and they don't do as Hashem wants, especially when simple logic dictates that strength is the only way to peace.”

(even with all his fine qualities) to sell or give away possessions that do not belong to him!”

(sicha ohr l'Yud Kislev 5740)

* * *

The Rebbe's opinion about the obligation and the **efficacy** of protesting is quite clear. We find numerous sichos in which the Rebbe instructs rabbanim and everybody to strongly protest these dangerous approaches. The Rebbe extolled the power of protesting even when it doesn't seem that way to us.

Some examples:

“Protesting must be in the strongest possible manner and nonstop, a step which will surely garner tangible success.”

“Previous experience has also proven that only consistent protest leads to tangible results and it would be a mistake to prioritize attempts at persuasion through diplomatic channels behind the scenes over an open and strong protest” ... “Continue with protests even if no change is apparent.”

“Askanim in Eretz Yisroel have a special obligation to take strong action and do all within their abilities in order to exert influence that there should be no concessions.”

(from sichos Purim 5730 and others)

“...the approach is that when it comes to pikuach nefesh you may not remain silent! This is a clear din in Shulchan Aruch and it is based on a clear p'sak din (with no contrary views) in the Gemara. Namely, it is forbidden to be silent when it comes to pikuach nefesh!”

(sicha 20 Av 5739)

STARTING FROM SUMMER 5753 – WE HAVE THE REBBE'S ANSWER TO UNDERTAKE A LARGE-SCALE AND FORCEFUL CAMPAIGN

Due to the serious deterioration that led to the signing of the unfortunate Oslo Accords, the rabbanim and the Askanim of Tzach reacted to the situation and asked the Rebbe whether to initiate a strong involvement in shleimus ha'Aretz to include: **a broad information drive** (billboards, advertising in the media, brochures, etc.) **organizing mass demonstrations**, etc.

On 25 Iyar 5753 they received a response (which was given by the secretary in accordance with the

Rebbe nodding his head): *Tzach and Chabad houses should be involved in this, acting openly in the name of Chabad. Bracha.*

A committee was formed that received especially encouraging responses from the Rebbe. For reasons that are not clear, they stopped their activities and although over the years many efforts were made to get all the people who had been involved back to work, aside from some small activities, it has not happened.

“ONE CAN BUILD HIS WORLD WITH ONE PROTEST”

We see that we have reached a crossroads where we have a golden opportunity to carry out our shlichus regarding shleimus ha’Aretz. Each of us must convince

those who have influence to get busy, as the Rebbe has said we should, without any excuses or rationales to justify scaling down the size and range of the activities.

The Rebbe demands action in the inyan of shleimus ha’Aretz. Intensifying mitzvaim alone is not enough (though they certainly have a tremendous impact, as the Rebbe said, and they should be done more than ever as part of the only thing that remains in the avodas ha’shlichus) and we cannot rely on them to achieve the object in a makif kind of way. This is absolutely the opposite of all the sichos and answers cited previously and many more like them.

Especially now, after everything that the nation has been through since the start of the “second Intifada,” including the events of the

last year and recent weeks, we must keep the shocking images fresh in people’s minds, while reassuring them that there is a solution. All this must be done in a broad-based and ongoing way.

The most important thing is to publicize the Rebbe’s prophecy. There is no doubt that we have the ability to carry out our shlichus which we received from the one who “will fight the wars of Hashem and be victorious”!

Let us publicize the prophecy of Geula in a way that people will be receptive to the Rebbe being chai v’kayam with no interruption and no change, who will redeem us with the true and complete Redemption now!

Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu V’Rabbeinu Melech HaMoshiach L’olam Va’ed!

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HIS FATHER'S TIKKUN

BY NOSSON AVROHOM

*Idan Gal's story is definitely a saga in which a "circle is closed," but it was a long and winding road and Idan went through many cults and ashrams until he discovered Chassidus. Then he found out that his father was a Chabad Chassid originally and had even had yechidus and had received guidance from the Rebbe. * A fascinating life story.*

The story of the Gal family, Idan and his wife Aya, who live in Maalot in the north of Israel, is one of the most fascinating stories I've ever heard. Idan is in his thirties. He and his wife are from HaShomer HaTzair (virulently anti-religious) kibbutzim originally and have come a long way since then. Till this day, when friends from the past meet them they find it hard to digest the drastic change in the two of them. Idan and Aya, more than anybody else, each in their own way, represented pluralism and free-spiritedness along with the rejection of all moral values. Yet these two have become G-d-fearing Chassidim who are religious and are involved in mitzvaim.

Idan was born on Kibbutz Dalia and Aya is from Kibbutz Ramot Menasheh, both in the north not far

from Yakne'am. In Idan's words: "When I was a baby in the cradle I was put in the "children's house" of the kibbutz. I grew up in a dormitory in the children's house. This kibbutz did not allow Judaism to infiltrate the souls of the children. They celebrated Jewish holidays their own way. On Pesach for example, there was a special "Hagada" about sheaves, spring, and the blossoming almonds.

"When I became a baal t'shuva I realized how incredibly ignorant we were about anything Jewish. One Pesach, the children of a neighboring kibbutz visited Yerushalayim and when they ate chametz and passersby yelled, they didn't even know what they were yelling about.

"I wasn't an easy child and from

a relatively young age I didn't simply accept the kibbutz ideology. It seemed foolish to me. I would ask my teachers a lot of questions but didn't get answers.

"Some friends and I were called 'the garbage gang' because we were so disobedient and rowdy. At age 14, I began to learn drumming and over the years I became a professional at it. I began reading books about the Big Bang and similar topics. Spirituality didn't interest me at that point, though the history of spirituality did.

"My friend and I once rode a motorcycle to the nearby Gal-Ed kibbutz. On one of the turns we separated. I fell on a winding road and was seriously hurt, while my friend flew off and fell into bushes and was almost unharmed. There were hardly any cars on this road and it was Purim besides, so even if we were found, people could have assumed it was a Purim prank.

"Miraculously, someone decided to stop and I was immediately taken to HaEmek hospital. After several months I recovered, baruch Hashem.

"Exactly one year later, on Purim, I was riding a motorcycle on one of the paths of the kibbutz when a car in front of me suddenly stopped. I crashed right into it. Once again I was hurt though not

as seriously as the year before. The fact that one year after another, on the same exact date, I was injured in a motorcycle accident put the idea in my subconscious that there was something in the world called 'fate.' I didn't think at all about anything spiritual and definitely not about Judaism.

"When I was old enough I worked in the kibbutz's cooperative factory for cleaning materials. There was a department for laundry detergent and I ran it well.

"Working under me was a man who wore a knitted yarmulke. When I needed him with lots of questions about Judaism he said he would ask his teacher. One day he brought me a tape of one of his

teachers. That was my first encounter with Judaism.

"This rabbi dispelled many myths I had about Zionism and the prime minister, but I continued life as usual. I didn't absorb the inner meaning of Judaism and its depth and so I didn't think I had to change anything.

"It was at this point that I met my wife-to-be and since I was on vacation we decided to tour in India."

* * *

There are three general approaches to touring India: an organized tour for students and retirees, an adventurous tour for those who finished the army and

travel in order to "unload," and a tour which is actually a search for meaning in life. Idan and his girlfriend were in the latter category, letting their feet guide them where to go.

"We landed in Bombay and went from there to Poona, which is a huge spiritual center of klipa. In the course of my travels I learned – from Indian idol worshipers too – that this center teaches a false and decadent spirituality. My girlfriend was involved in a disappointing search for self and she urged me to enter this 'spiritual center' anyway and check it out.

"We went in and met a diplomatic, refined clerk. Despite his attempts to project a calm tone,

Idan Gal
Inset: Idan before he did t'shuva



something inside me told me to get out fast. I tried to ignore this inner voice but it didn't let up. My intuition told me that this center was bad for me. After a strong inner battle, I left with the excuse that we had only started our trip and we hadn't had enough fun yet to begin taking an interest in cults.

"From Poona we went to several cities where the English had previously ruled and had left their mark. We were impressed by the snowcapped mountains and the beautiful scenery but something inside us troubled us. During the trip I bought a book that had been written by an Indian guru in which I read about authentic Judaism! The book told of the Baal Shem Tov and his disciples and had many other Chassidic tales.

"The story about the man who dreamt of a treasure under a bridge who finally found a treasure under his stove back home, made a big impression on me. Without knowing that this story was a Jewish one, I said to myself, 'See, you are looking for meaning under the bridge. Why don't you search back home in the Jewish religion?'

"I read an ironic rule in this book that says that sometimes you close a door in the face of someone who is actually a friend. Shortly thereafter an Indian latched on to us who did various magic tricks in order to win us over. We felt that he was dangerous even though we had no specific reason for thinking so and we kept our distance from him.

"After a while, this man told us that he hates Jews because they think that G-d belongs solely to them. This incident was another act of Divine providence that was a red light for me in connection with my search for my roots.

"In general, the entire trip to India was like a chain composed of

many links which turned into a long chain of deep significance for us. At a certain point we decided to travel to a town called Toridato. We arrived at the station to catch a bus.

"Indians are known not to stand on ceremony and when a bus arrives they all run to get on. There were only two places left which were under the open roof and this is despite the fact that we were among the first in line. Along the way it began to pour and we got soaked and shivered in the cold.

"This was the first time in my life that I put on t'fillin. All the experiences I had had the previous year led me to the conclusion that a G-dly power was taking me, step by step, out from the depths of klipos and heresy and directing me towards Judaism."

After a few hours of driving the bus stopped on the highway for a break.

"We were exhausted and there were still another 17 hours left to go. We didn't know what to do because of the rain, which had only gotten heavier. We were concerned for our health.

"By Divine providence a taxi showed up and we asked the driver where he was headed. He said he was going to Toridato and he agreed

to take us for the same price as the bus. It was incredible hashgacha pratis and throughout the trip I thought about it.

"When we arrived in Toridato my girlfriend met some friends, one of whom was traditionally observant. She told us a bit about Judaism. I was very interested in what she had to say and asked her more and more. I had a tremendous thirst. She was shocked that I didn't know what Shmoneh Esrei was or about prayers on Yom Kippur and other basic Jewish concepts, but I was raised on a kibbutz and didn't know.

"From there we went to Varanasi, an interesting place where there are many courses in which you can study music. I met an Israeli who was a member in one of the cults. He told us about the avoda zara cult he belonged to. Baruch Hashem I wasn't persuaded to get involved with it.

"Additionally, the woman who lived in some forsaken village on the border of Pakistan who told me that she doesn't like Jews because they are different than everyone else, helped light an inner fire within me. Why indeed are we the chosen people? I wondered. These questions were road-signs throughout the trip.

"I decided to return to Israel for Pesach and then to go right back to India after the holiday. Seder night was a moving and interesting family get-together and that's all. I remember that at the end of the visit my father opened the refrigerator and offered me meat. I suddenly blurted out, 'If it's meat, why not kosher meat?'

"I was amazed that I said that and even more surprised by his reaction. His hand seemed to have turned to stone on the refrigerator door and without saying a word, he



Idan searching for meaning in life

began to cry.”

Idan returned to India, this time with mixed feelings. He felt something burning inside him but didn't know what. All signs were directing him towards Judaism, but what was Judaism? How did it differ from cults and why should he be a part of it? They had never taught him why – on the contrary.

“I returned to India and what happened to me then led me to understand that there is hashgacha pratis and G-dly forces active in the world. Just two days after we landed in India, my girlfriend began urging me to call home without knowing why she was doing so.

“I said I had already called upon our arrival but she kept bothering me about it. When we got to the hotel my girlfriend called her sister and that's when I learned that my father had suddenly died of a heart attack. I was crushed and dumbfounded by my girlfriend's intuition that had sensed that something was wrong.

“At the kibbutz you don't sit Shiva and no mourning customs are observed. There is just a funeral

and my family advised me to stay in India because I had missed the funeral in any case.

“If that wasn't enough, that night I had a dream about a severe earthquake in Iran. I have no idea what connection this has with my story but in the morning, when I left the hotel, I saw in the papers that there had been an earthquake in Iran. I was blown away by this. I realized that someone was trying to hint to me but I didn't know who or what.

“I went through another few harrowing experiences in that place like the trip to Kosini, a forsaken place between Nepal and China. There's a state of war there and a few times soldiers came to our apartment to make sure we weren't spies. I got sick there and had to drag myself to Delhi, where I went to a Western-style hospital.

“After a few weeks I went out to buy two tickets to Daromsala and on the way back I encountered a religious Jew. ‘Hi,’ I called out. It was Rabi Nachman Nachmanson, the shliach there. We got into a conversation and I discovered that a

Chabad house had just opened. I wanted to tell him that my father had died and to ask him what I was supposed to do, but instead of that I blurted out, ‘I want to learn Torah.’

“I was astonished that I had said that but not completely surprised. In recent months I had learned that a hidden hand was directing my life and I was not at all in control. I had an inner desire to study Torah and apparently it surfaced with that sentence I uttered.

“We sat and learned for three hours as he poured forth more and more Yiddishkai. Before we parted he brought me a book that spoke about the special qualities of the Jewish soul.

“In Daromsala we took a course in Vifsana, which entails ten days of isolation sitting in the lotus position, giving free rein to your thoughts. Not far from me, sat a young man who one day, suddenly burst into heartbreaking tears. He was also an Israeli.

“Since talking was forbidden, it wasn't until the end of the course that I asked why he had cried. He told me that he was sitting there and thinking when he suddenly saw the image of an elderly Jew with a white beard and penetrating eyes. The man looked at him and made a motion that indicated ‘No’. He couldn't stand up to him, which is why he cried.

“His story touched me. I knew him slightly and knew that he was intelligent and not susceptible to fantasies.”

* * *

At the end of the trip to India, the pintelev Yid that burned in Idan began to burn brightly. He read the book that Rabbi Nachmanson had given him again and again. At this point he knew where he wanted to go. He mentally prepared his

girlfriend that, “just as we were in an ashram for ten days, we need to be in a yeshiva for ten days, to serve as a balance.”

At this point, Idan’s mindset was already in Judaism even though he continued to try out various cults.

“I took a course in which it was forbidden to eat for a week. Only drinking was allowed. I kept thinking of Nachmanson who said the ‘sh’hakol’ bracha on the water that he drank, and I did the same thing.”

From there Idan went to Bangkok, where his interest in Judaism came to the fore.

“When I arrived at the Chabad house which is run by Rabbi Nechemia Wilhelm, I wanted to put on t’fillin. This was the first time in my life that I put on t’fillin. All the experiences I had had the previous year led me to the conclusion that a G-dly power was taking me, step by step, out from the depths of klipos and heresy and directing me towards Judaism.

“One Shabbos before Yom Kippur I was invited to join the davening at one of the halls in the area. The ‘Lecha Dodi’ that was sung by hundreds of Israelis who had come to daven melted the rest of the anti-religious sentiments that I had felt since childhood.

“I began to cry like a little boy. I felt that the entire long trip in India was only for the purpose of my discovering the inner dimension of the Jewish people. I couldn’t stop crying.

“Before returning to Eretz Yisroel I asked Nechemia to recommend a yeshiva program for me that would serve to counteract the days in the ashram, l’havdil. ‘Go to the yeshiva in Tzfas,’ he said. ‘It’s the best place for you.’

“Since it was ‘bein ha’z’manim’

at the time and the bachurim were all at the Rebbe, I went to the yeshiva in Ramat Aviv that was just starting out. Rabbi Yossi Ginsburgh welcomed me and asked me when my birthday was. I told him my birthday was three weeks before but when he checked out the date I discovered, to my amazement, that my Jewish birthday was that day!

“After spending a few weeks in

the yeshiva in Ramat Aviv, I went back to work at the kibbutz. My wife-to-be also wanted a peek at the world of Judaism. She went to Machon Alte in Tzfas and loved it. I thought, ‘How odd life is. I constantly pushed towards Judaism and now she’s ahead of me...’

“Every Friday night at the kibbutz, a bunch of us got together and said the Kabbalas Shabbos.

MY SHLICHUS

In the three years after I married I continued to learn in the Kollel in Tzfas as my mashpia had told me to do. My wife went every morning to Maalot where she worked as a preschool teacher in a Chabad school.

One day, Rabbi Chitrik asked me why I don’t go out on shlichus. I said my mashpia told me to learn. By Divine providence, the very next morning I was asked the very same question by Rabbi Y.Y. Wilschansky. On Tuesday I met R’ Betzalel Kupchik, shliach in Poona, and he suggested that I join him on shlichus there for two months, until he returned to Poona.

I liked the idea, especially as it was my hard for my wife to travel to Maalot every morning. She told the shliach, Rabbi Yigal Kaspi that she was leaving her job. We were sure we were on our way to Poona but when we wrote to the Rebbe before we left, we opened to a long letter about someone who wanted to travel abroad and the Rebbe told him not to go because he could not know if he would acclimate there in addition to which he could be influential in Eretz Yisroel.

If that wasn’t enough, in the letter on the facing page there was a sharp letter to someone who had left his job in chinuch because of a problem of convenience. The Rebbe said he should contact the employer and see whether he could return to his job.

We were stunned by this clear answer. Of course we canceled our plans to go to India and my wife called R’ Yigal the shliach in Maalot to ask whether she could have her job back. He was also surprised and he said that he had just been told by the substitute that she couldn’t come to work.

A short while afterwards I also got a job offer in Maalot in the dormitory of the religious high school, where I had organized classes. The answer I got from the Rebbe about this was about working in chinuch in which the Rebbe noted that if the person did not do so, nobody would.

Since then, and it’s been four years, I’ve been working there, arranging farbrengens, bringing talmidim to Tzfas and instilling in them Toras HaChassidus.

You can clearly see how the Rebbe is running the show.



Idan as a clown after the reading of the Megilla at kibbutz Ramot Menasheh

Another six guys did t'shuva along with me, each one in his way. Of course this shocked the members of the kibbutz.

"I was taking small steps forward and some steps back. It was my future wife who pushed me to stop playing around and who told me to come to Ascent. I didn't go alone for my mother came along with me. I remember the fascinating Chassidus classes given by R' Amram Muell and I finally decided to learn in the yeshiva in Tzfas.

"My mother was nervous about my future and asked me to study a profession first and then to go to yeshiva but later on we had a meal with Rabbi Yaron Ne'eman. He was a former kibbutznik who explained to my mother that Hashem will take care of everything and there was no need to worry about parnasa.

"My mother found this hard to accept and it was finally decided that I'd ask the Rebbe and whatever he would say would be accepted by everybody. The answer I opened to amazed us all. The Rebbe wrote to someone that because of the state of Judaism in India which was so bad,

he had to leave immediately and as for parnasa, Hashem would supply him with all he needed.

"The very next day I quit my job at the kibbutz, gave back the keys of my apartment, and went to the yeshiva in Tzfas."

* * *

"A few months after I got involved in Chassidus and delved into the magical world of Chabad, I found out an incredible thing. For days I couldn't stop thinking about the mind-blowing discovery. I had been told that my father was originally a Lubavitcher Chassid from a Lubavitcher family that went way back!

"My father was Yitzchok Gittelsohn who was born in Charkov in 1930. During World War II, he and his father Berel who was an ardent Chassid, fled to Samarkand with the other Chassidim. Then my father left for Poland in 1946 along with many other Chassidim in the famous exodus from Russia.

"I heard that my father was the one who arranged the exit permit

for Rabbi Yehuda Chitrik a"h of Crown Heights. My father first went to France and in 1949 he arrived in Israel. At first he lived in Kfar Chabad with the Kugel family. When he became of draft age he was sent to the navy. He was one of sailors on the first ship of the Israeli navy called *Misgav*, which even sailed to the United States.

"While in the US my father had a yechidus with the Rebbe and attended a farbrengen. The Rebbe blessed him for the shidduch with my mother who was a member of Kibbutz Dalia and told them to remain in Kfar Chabad.

"Then the Rebbe wrote a special letter to the sailors of the ship, a letter that was a follow-up to the conversation with my father in yechidus. The letter is printed in *Igros Kodesh* vol. 4, p. 310:

**B"H Rosh Chodesh Sivan 5711
Brooklyn, N.Y.**

To the sailors and officers that lead them, of the ship *Misgav* upon their visit to the United States, greetings and blessings!

I was pleased to hear from your colleague the young man Mr. Yitzchok Gittelsohn about your visit to the United States, and through him I send you blessings of "come in peace" and regards and good wishes.

Obviously, one of the purposes of the visit to the US or other countries is to acquire honor and praise for the yishuv in our holy land, may it be built and established, by being an example of the development of life in holy land, and representing before everyone the finest strengths of our nation, that which is valuable and lofty.

What do we have that is valuable and lofty in the eyes of the nations?

Since the Jewish people became a nation, i.e., since the Giving of the Torah – which is celebrated on the upcoming holiday of Shavuot – they have been the smallest among the nations, the smallest in quantity. But from that very time it has served as a wondrous example to the entire world in quality, in spirituality – spreading the idea of monotheism, preserving the way of G-d to do tz'daka and justice, etc., etc.

From then until now, in every generation they rise up against us, but despite all this, the Jewish people are *chai v'kayam* when those who rose up against us – Ashur, Bavel, Yavan, and Rome – their end was destruction and nothing remains of them.

It is clear that based on the above, the secret to the existence of our nation is not dependent on quantity but on quality. Not with the strength of the arm but with eternal spiritual values which our nation has absorbed internally, becoming one with them, as the verse says, “and you who cling to Hashem your G-d are all alive today.”

Similarly, as regards the purpose of your visiting each place you come to. You want to present that which is characteristic in the life of a Jew and the main distinction of the Jewish people in which it is different, in which it excels and this is its advantage, we need to emphasize our spiritual powers, the conquest of the spirit over matter. As the prophet says, “Not with armies and not with power but with My spirit, says Hashem of hosts.”

With blessings for a happy holiday and success in fulfilling your true mission and spiritual task in this world.

“He lived in Kfar Chabad for a year after he married, as the Rebbe

told him to do, but afterwards, for various reasons, he moved to a kibbutz. The one who told me all this was my older brother who was more knowledgeable than me in the family history. When he told it to me images of early childhood came to mind of when my father took me to *hakafos shniyot* in Kfar Chabad.

“Throughout the years our home was the only one at the kibbutz that had mezuzos on all the doorposts but back then I didn't think about it. When I became bar mitzva, my father took me to a nearby religious kibbutz for an aliya, but it was kept a secret so that people at our kibbutz should not find out.

“My father told me then, somewhat prophetically, ‘If you ever do t'shuva don't think that I didn't

***“Since I have done
t'shuva I walk around
with the feeling that I
am his tikkun.”***

do this for you,’ and I didn't understand what he was saying. What was t'shuva? What had he done for me?

“My brother said that every morning my father woke up early, at five in the morning, and spent a long time in the shower. He was actually putting on t'fillin. My mother didn't know about this and she thought he suffered from digestive problems his whole life. It was only after he died that they opened his hamper and found his tallis and t'fillin.

“My mother said she once asked him about his spending such a long time in the shower and he simply said, ‘Forget about it, it's between me and Him,’ without explaining.

“It makes no difference where a Chassid is – he always remains a *yerei Shamayim*,” concludes Idan while wiping away a tear. “Since I have done t'shuva I walk around with the feeling that I am his tikkun.”

* * *

After learning in yeshiva in Tzfas for a year, Idan married Aya and together they have a beautiful Chassidishe family in Maalot.

“The day I became engaged, my mother brought me a gift that I nearly forgot I had received on my bar mitzva from her *mechutanim*. I emotionally opened the gift and saw a pair of t'fillin with a card that said *Shma Yisroel* with a picture of the Rebbe and I cried. ‘Since my bar mitzva the Rebbe has been waiting for me,’ I said to my mother.”

Those who know Idan know that he isn't satisfied with just working on himself. He works hard to bring the light that was revealed to him to other “captive children,” i.e. his friends from the kibbutz and elsewhere.

Lately he has started Jewish programs at Kibbutz Ramot Menasheh, the kibbutz where his wife used to live. The first project was a minyan on Yom Kippur with the participation of the mashpia Rabbi Ofer Maidovnik. At first there was great opposition. The governing council at the kibbutz had a meeting and concluded that they would not allow mystical-missionary activities at the kibbutz but that's all history now. Many other activities have taken place there, such as the reading of the Megilla, programs on Chanuka, etc.

“The world is ready for Geula and is ready to hear about Judaism. We just have to open this window for the world,” concludes Idan.

A MODEL OF DEEP FAITH

BY RABBI YOSEF YITZCHOK KELLER

*Over 24 years have gone by since the passing of an amazing Chassid, one of the outstanding members of the brotherhood of Chassidim. Many characteristics were blended in this remarkable Chassid, but the one which stood above all else was his deep inner faith which accompanied him on all his journeys, starting from his youth in Tomchei T'mimim in Lubavitch, and continuing through the decades of his tumultuous life. * Profile of a Chassid – Reb Peretz Motchkin a”h. * Part 2*

[Continued from last week]

After his wedding, R' Peretz moved to the town of Semyanovka, where he learned sh'chita. He also received much Chassidic guidance from the Chassid R' Yisroel Yitzchok Lyubinski, who was a disciple of Reb Hillel of Paritch.

In Semyanovka, R' Peretz began to work on a large scale to strengthen all Jewish matters in the town. Primarily, he devoted himself to educating the youth since he had a strong influence on them. His livelihood at the time came from a store that his wife managed.

The first Rosh HaShana after his wedding, R' Peretz could not hold himself back and he traveled to be with the Rebbe Rashab, who was in Slaviansk at the time. The bachurim who had remained in Lubavitch – including R' Yehoshua Eizik Baruch, who was still single and learning in Lubavitch – traveled by train together with the mashpia R' Shilem Kuratin to be with the Rebbe in Slaviansk.

R' Peretz, who set out from the town where he resided, boarded at one of the stations and entered the car where the T'mimim sat with R' Shilem. When he saw his fellow

T'mimim, his eyes lit up, and when he noticed his old friend R' Yehoshua Eizik, he sat next to him and the two were soon deep in conversation. The other bachurim looked on so as to see what real friendship means, and they commented, “Look, Peretz is back again with Yehoshua Eizik.”

R' Shilem responded, “Whether Yehoshua Eizik will be like Peretz, there is no way to predict (since Peretz was already married, whereas Yehoshua Eizik was still single and had no distractions from Divine service), but Peretz will never be like Yehoshua Eizik.”

On the third of Cheshvan, 5679/1918, his firstborn son was born and named Shmuel. A year later, his second son Yosef was born, and two years later his daughter Gutta.

Almost all the stores in Semyanovka were Jewish owned, however in 1923, when the communist government had fully established itself, they nationalized all privately owned stores. R' Peretz's store, which was managed by his wife, was confiscated and turned into a cooperative venture, so she rented another space and opened a smaller store that sold textiles and materials. The involvement of R' Peretz was only

to the extent that he traveled occasionally to buy materials. The rest of the time he devoted to learning Torah and davening at length. Even when he did sit in the store, he learned the entire time.

Once, R' Peretz traveled to Moscow to buy goods, and when he arrived in Moscow he stayed at the home of R' Boruch Sholom Cohen. At some point, R' Peretz sent a telegram back home saying that the money was used up and to please send the same amount again. His family couldn't understand why the money suddenly ran out, and what he might have used it on.

Later, they discovered that R' Boruch Sholom had told him that there was a need for a certain sum of money for the support of Tomchei T'mimim, so R' Peretz, without hesitation, handed over all the money he had with him, even though his family's livelihood depended on it.

On the 14th of Shevat 5784/1924, his third son R' Yehuda Leib was born and he was named after R' Peretz's father.

R' Peretz sent his older sons, Shmuel and Yosef, to learn with R' Shimshon the melamed of Semyanovka, where they learned Chumash and Tanach together with other children of Anash. When they reached Gemara age they switched to the Chassid R' Chaim Ber Yudasin, their uncle.

Throughout those years, R' Peretz invested himself into the local youth, teaching them in an unofficial capacity and infecting them with Chassidic warmth. At some point, he merited to see the fruits of his intensive labors when he sent ten local boys to learn in Tomchei T'mimim by R' Shlomo Chaim, who was in Nevel at the time.

Many years later, during the year after the passing of the Rebbe Rayatz, when the Rebbe MH"M called for everyone to influence ten Jews to bring them closer to Yiddishkait, he told his son R'

Sholom Dovber, "I already have a quorum from long ago – in Semyanovka."

His son Reb Leib tells: Semyanovka was not far from the city of Homil, where the Chafetz

TO DAVEN WITH BAGEL AND BUTTER

When R' Peretz and his family arrived in Simferopol, there were only a few Chassidim in the city, older men who had been Chassidim of the Tzemach Tzedek and the Rebbe Maharash.

The father of one of these men had been a Chassid of the Tzemach Tzedek, and in his later years he became a Chassid of the Rebbe Maharash. The father was a Chassid who davened at length every day. One day, he collapsed during davening, and the shamash of the shul managed to help him up. Concerned for his health, the shamash asked him if he wished to eat anything, but he refused and only asked for some water and then continued his davening.

When the Chassid finished davening, the shamash accompanied him to his home to make sure that he got there safely. His wife was surprised to see the shamash walking her husband home, which was most unusual. After much importuning, the Chassid finally told his wife what happened in shul.

As a devoted wife, she decided that her husband needed to see a doctor. After checking him out, the doctor told him that he should eat a bagel with butter each day before davening. Despite the doctor's instructions, the Chassid refused to eat before davening. One of his friends heard about the situation and advised him, "Soon you will be traveling to Lubavitch, and you should ask the Rebbe about the matter."

When he came to Lubavitch, he told the whole sequence of events to the Rebbe Maharash, who told him, "One must listen to the doctor." The Chassid exclaimed in surprise, "A bagel with butter?" The Rebbe Maharash said, "What do you care that the bagel and butter will daven along with you?"

The Rebbe Maharash, who told him, "One must listen to the doctor." The Chassid exclaimed in surprise, "A bagel with butter?" The Rebbe Maharash said, "What do you care that the bagel and butter will daven along with you?"

Chaim lived for a few years following WWI. My father was still a young married man and his reputation had reached the Chafetz Chaim. Impressed by what he had heard of the young man, the Chafetz Chaim took the time to send him Mishloach Manos on Purim. R' Peretz, of course, sent Mishloach Manos in return. The Chafetz Chaim even expressed a desire to meet him, but it never materialized.

* * *

In 1925, R' Peretz moved with his family to the city of Simferopol, the capital of Crimea. Even before they left Semyanovka, R' Peretz began to work in dyeing shoelaces to satisfy the Soviet authorities that he was an official worker and not a parasite. He needed a certificate that he had an officially recognized job in order to be eligible to get travel papers.

R' Peretz took the remaining shoelaces in his possession along with him to Simferopol, where they sat in the cellar for a number of years. (Interestingly, when the time came to leave Simferopol, his son Yosef went down to the cellar to get the shoelaces and he sold them to one of the local shoe stores. A competitor of that store decided to report this to the authorities, who quickly arrived and arrested Yosef. He was released a short time later.)

During that period, many Jews settled in the villages around the city of Simferopol, and worked in farming. The Rebbe Rayatz sent R' Peretz to the city in order to



Reb Peretz Motchkin

strengthen Judaism among the Jews of the city and outlying areas. R' Peretz arrived in the city and immediately went to work strengthening Jewish life in the area. He also served as a shochet for the local Jewish population.

Simferopol had a number of large synagogues, such as Eitz Chaim, which davened Nusach Ari, Ner Tamid, and others. Most of the local Jews were very simple people who worked hard all week to provide for their families. Only a small number participated in the Torah classes that were given.

If that was the situation with the Jews of the big city, the situation was far worse among those who lived in the small Jewish enclaves in the surrounding towns and villages, which were fairly

distant from one another. These Jews got up early to work their farms until late at night, and so the spiritual decline was precipitous. Without a spiritual guide and mentor, no rav or mohel, and no shochet or teacher, the situation declined more and more.

R' Peretz saw reaching out to the villagers and guiding them on the proper path as his first priority, while concerning himself with the needs of each individual. In practice, R' Peretz devoted the weekdays to these village Jews, and he dedicated Shabbasos, Yomim Tovim, and special days to the Jews of Simferopol. He would farbreng with them, look into their material and spiritual needs, and share with them the light and light-source of Torah, the teachings of Chassidus.

His schedule was quite unusual. Each Motzai Shabbos, he would leave home and set out to travel among the small settlements. In each place, he did his holy work and provided for the spiritual needs of the local Jews. He established Torah classes, circumcised the newborn boys, slaughtered chickens or a calf, and especially encouraged them to strengthen their commitment to Torah and Mitzvos despite the difficult times and persecution of the government.

Regarding those travels, his son R' Yosef (a"h) recalls, "Each week, after Shabbos, my father would pack a bag and set out on his travels. Sometimes, I would accompany him. My father would



hide the ritual slaughtering knife in my clothes, because no one would suspect a young boy of carrying “forbidden” implements, whereas he could be searched at any time.

“On Motzaei Shabbos, we would board a train and embark at the first settlement. When we would

arrive at the station, one of the villagers would be waiting with a horse and buggy and bring us to his house. The other rural farmers would be gathered there, and my father would speak to them words of Chassidus and inspire them to Torah and Mitzvos.

“Afterwards, he would be available for anyone who wanted to speak to him privately. Any disagreements between friends or spouses would wait for my father to arrive, and both sides would happily respect his rulings and decisions.



Farbrengen with R' Peretz

THE LEVEL OF A CHASSID

Some time had passed since his wedding and R' Peretz still had not merited to have children. One of the Chassidim, whose name was R' Chaim Yona was known to be an amazing person, beyond nature. They would say about him that after he would visit the Ohel of the Rebbeim in Lubavitch, he would tell over that he heard there true explanations of the maamarim being said at that time. R' Peretz and R' Shlomo Chaim decided to check him out, and they saw that the explanations were indeed correct, and they realized that this was not a simple matter.

One time, they asked him to mention them for children at the Ohel. When he returned from the Ohel, he told them, "Shlomo Chaim no longer needs a bracha, whereas Peretz will have soon." And that is exactly what happened.

It is told about this extraordinary Chassid, R' Chaim Yona that he once heard a maamer from the Rebbe Rashab after he had already passed away. The Chassidim were amazed by this and they asked the Rebbe Rayatz how a young man not on the level of a Rebbe could merit such a high level as to be able to speak with the Rebbe Rashab after his passing. The Rebbe Rayatz answered that through a deep hiskashrus, it was quite possible...

The Chassidim were amazed by this and they asked the Rebbe Rayatz how a young man not on the level of a Rebbe could merit such a high level as to be able to speak with the Rebbe Rashab after his passing...

"The next day, we would move on to the next place, and so it went. On the trips from one village to the next, my father would travel with a wagon-driver who lived in the next village he was going to visit, who would hurry to pick us up and bring us there, and so on

from one village to the next throughout the week. Only after we visited the last village at the end of the week, would we board the train back home for Shabbos.

"One time, one of the drivers and my father were sitting in front,

and I, only six or seven at the time, was sitting in back with three very sharp knives hidden on my person. Suddenly, the wagon shook and I fell off and was dragged along the ground. I grabbed onto the bottom board of the wagon and the wheel scraped the skin off my back. Due

to the noise of the wheels, they couldn't hear my screams. It was a big miracle that it didn't end in tragedy..."

* * *

As mentioned, on Shabbos and Yom Tov, R' Peretz remained at home in Simferopol. He used these times to guide the local residents and to teach them Chassidus. In those years the Communists had not yet closed all the shuls, and he organized classes in Nigleh and Chassidus in each shul according to the level of the members. He invested great effort in trying to expose the Jews of the city to the teachings of Chassidus. He instituted ongoing classes in *Tanya*, *Torah Ohr*, and *Likkutei Torah*.

Just about every Shabbos or significant date in the Chassidic calendar, R' Peretz would hold farbrengens in his house. Crowds of Jews would come to hear his words, which were said with great verve, excitement, and were well-spoken. They were deeply influenced by what he said as well as by the atmosphere generated by the Chassidic niggunim, stories, and aphorisms. This led to a revolution in the lifestyles and daily conduct of many Jews.

Occasionally, R' Peretz himself could not be in the city during Shabbos, but he always made certain that someone would deliver the regular classes in his stead. It is

He was a model of a "light to illuminate," as the Rebbeim defined the role of the T'mimim. He himself gave off the light of Torah and Avodas Hashem, and his light illuminated all those around him.

not surprising then that in the years that he lived in Simferopol, he brought between thirty and forty Jews close to Chabad.

He was a model of a "light to illuminate," as the Rebbeim defined the role of the T'mimim. He himself gave off the light of Torah and Avodas Hashem, and his light illuminated all those around him.

* * *

R' Peretz Motchkin was also known for his greatness in acts of kindness. Whenever there was a need for money to support Judaism and Chassidus, he was always the first to give, even if it entailed great difficulty for him. At times, he even took loans in order to give tz'daka.

The Chassid R' Shmuel Barzin once recounted how R' Peretz approached him for an urgent loan of 500 rubles, a large sum at the time. Only later did he discover that R' Peretz took the loan to give it to tz'daka for an important cause.

On Yud-Tes Kislev 5687/1927, there was a farbrengen in the house of the Chassid R' Hillel Frankelich. This was during the NEP years in Russia, when even prominent businesspeople were in difficult financial straits. Many Jews attended the farbrengen, even those who did not identify themselves as Chassidim. R' Peretz sat and farbrenged for many hours. Towards morning, he took a hat, turned it over, and singing the niggun that was being sung at the time, he walked among those present and everyone donated as much as he could. At the end, the amount collected totaled 800 ruble, a huge sum under those conditions.

It was in that period that R' Peretz became very sick with typhus, as mentioned at the beginning of the article. He lay ill for a few months and spent part of that time in the hospital. That is why he did not have the opportunity to travel to Leningrad to be with the Rebbe Rayatz before he left Russia. However, he had a miraculous recovery and he was able to return and continue his holy work.

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CHAYA MUSHKA ETTIA A”H

Eulogies aren’t made in Chabad, especially for a child and anyway, how can one speak in the face of such a tragedy? Nevertheless, her neshama was a special one and sometimes this is discovered later, too late ...

Chaya Mushka was born on the special day of Beis Nissan 5758 to her parents, shluchim, Rabbi Victor Avigdor and Devorah Nechama Ettia, their seventh child.

Mushka a”h and her two sisters, Chana and Yehudis, went every day, with mesirus nefesh, to the Chabad school in Beitar Ilit. At 6:15 a.m. they were on their way and this was despite days in which rocks and Molotov cocktails were thrown on the Chevron-Yerushalayim road. They traveled in rain and in the heat and waited a long time until the school building opened, all this in order to learn in the Rebbe’s mosad!

“Mushka was careful to say the entire Krias Shma from a Siddur,” says her mother, “although sometimes it was late and I would tell her, ‘Mushka, you have to get up at 5:30!’ She wouldn’t give in though but finished it all in her Siddur.”

Every Shabbos she went to three (!) T’hillim groups, diligently and focused on her goal. She often shared her prize with her friends. Girls in the neighborhood said that this past summer Mushka gave them lots of “good things” and they all

wanted to be her friend. After her passing her parents discovered that she had happily given away most of her material possessions to others.

“It was one of the signs that she felt that she was about to leave us,” says Mrs. Ettia in tears. “She gave us signs but we didn’t understand.”

“The night before the tragedy Mushka cleaned the house, something she almost never did. She

said to me, ‘Ima, I want it to be good for you. I want all the guests who come to our house to see it clean and neat,’ as though she sensed that many people would be coming.

“During vacation we covered the children’s notebooks and books but Mushka didn’t want hers covered, as though she sensed that these books wouldn’t be used by her but by another child.”

On Monday, Chef Av, Mushka and her brother Mendy left the house for a few minutes and then six-year-old Mendy came running back shouting, “Ima, come quick! Mushka is on fire!”

Mrs. Ettia ran out but it was too late. Afterwards, Mendy said that he had yelled to Mushka, “Mushka,



“I DECIDED TO TAKE ALL THE PAIN TO SPUR ON MY WORK”

When the tragedy took place, Rabbi Ettia was consoling a family in Ramat Gan whose oldest son had been killed in Lebanon. The father was heartbroken.

Rabbi Victor Ettia: I tried to console him and I explained about our emuna in eternal life and in reincarnation and how we can't always know why Hashem does what He does. As I spoke, I got a phone call from my friend on shlichus in Chevron, Danny Cohen, who told me there was a fire near my house and did I hear about it? I told him that I was in Ramat Gan, at nichum aveilim, and asked him to keep my posted.

A few seconds later the phone rang again and it was my wife yelling, “Victor, come home quick, Mushka was burned!” My world collapsed. I left together with my son Shneur who had accompanied me and we raced home.

Throughout the long trip my thoughts were racing. I felt that now I was being tested to see whether I really believed what I had said to encourage the bereaved father in Ramat Gan. I had an inner feeling that my daughter was no longer alive.

With all the enormous pain, I felt that I was being given the emuna so I could be strong and strengthen others. In my heart I said, “Thank you Hashem for giving me the strength to withstand this test and not break.”

Later, during the Shiva, I decided to take all the pain to accelerate our shlichus work beyond anything it had been until now. I thought to myself, we Chassidim who believe in hashgacha pratis learn in Chassidus that a Jew must maintain his faith when tested but when we are actually tested there is no guarantee that we will stand strong. I felt that I could, and I pray that I receive continual new strength so that I can be strengthened and strengthen others.

If at first I thought it was my personal tragedy, during the Shiva, when I saw thousands of people who came and felt the pain, along with thousands of letters that came from all over the world, I realized that this wasn't a personal tragedy. Many people took on positive resolutions, starting shiurim, programs for children, etc., and then I realized that we merited a special neshama who grew up among us for nearly eight and a half years.

you're burning, take off your skirt!” but Mushka yelled back, “But then I won't be *tznuva* (modest)...”

During the Shiva, thousands of people came to console the Ettia family. Many of them took on good hachlatos to add in inyanei k'dusha and yiras Shamayim. “We decided to intensify our work in her memory,” said her father.

“Many of the people who came wondered about the name ‘Mushka’ and we explained (based on the Rebbe's sichos) that it refers to spices, a good scent,” said Mrs. Ettia. “That's when we realized that a day before the tragedy Mushka brought home fragrant branches so that there would be a good fragrance in the house.”

Rabbi Victor Ettia says, “I pray that Hashem give us the strength to rise above the pain for the sake of my family and for the sake of our shlichus here.

“We committed to bolster the work that we do as well as take on new projects in her memory. There are programs that are routine everywhere else but here in Chevron it's complicated and they demand tremendous resources. This is why we hope people will contribute towards expanding our work l'ilui nishmasa for Mushka was also a shlucha, in the full sense of the word.”

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180 DEGREE CHANGE

He fought Lubavitch and its ideology for decades until he was confronted with the Rebbe's incredible shlichus movement, at which point he completely changed his views.

The late Arthur (Avrohom) Hertzberg was a prominent Jewish leader in the US who had an interesting relationship with Chabad that had its ups and downs. His sharp attacks against Lubavitch were later replaced with words of admiration and appreciation.

This Conservative rabbi was one of five children born in Poland to a religious family. They immigrated to the US in 1926 when he was five and settled in Pennsylvania. The family's roots were in Belz Chassidus, many of whom perished in the war. He was descended from Rabbi Elimelech of Lizhensk and Rabbi Tzvi Elimelech of Dinov. Arthur Hertzberg decided in his youth "to establish myself in modern Judaism."

Hertzberg had relatives who lived on Kingston Avenue near 770 whom he visited in the 50's. He had a yechidus with the Rebbe Rayatz.

LEGACY FOR THE REBBE'S LIBRARY

For over thirty years Hertzberg



served as rabbi of Temple Emanuel in Englewood, New Jersey, which is one of the largest Conservative synagogues in America.

"His work as a historian and the reputation he earned thanks to his books about the history of Jews in America and his research on the Zionist movement overshadowed his rabbinic side," was written in his obituary.

Jacob Neusner, professor of Judaic Studies and an esteemed intellectual called Hertzberg, "the

most outstanding intellectual of American Jewry." In addition to his being a historian he was the Bronfman Visiting Professor of the Humanities at NYU, he wrote articles and authored many books on Jewish topics, Zionism, and the Holocaust.

Hertzberg was also known as a passionate activist for Jewish causes and human rights in his position as vice president of the World Jewish Congress and president of the American Jewish Congress.

His Chassidic roots and the noble image of his father were ever-present in his thoughts and he davened with t'fillin daily.

At his office in Columbia University, Hertzberg had cartons full of notebooks of divrei Torah and Torah thoughts that he inherited from his father, Rabbi Tzvi Elimelech Hertzberg z"l, who was a rav in Baltimore.

In 1947 he published *Tzaddik B'Emunaso*, which contains articles and commentary from his father. As per his request, his father's extensive library was given to Agudas Chassidei Chabad's library after he passed away on Chol HaMoed Pesach this year.

SHARP CRITICISM

To many, Hertzberg was a

maverick. No subject was immune from his criticism. For example, he attacked the directors of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington DC for downplaying Jewish identity.

He was in favor of a Palestinian state and expressed his fears that the Oslo Accords would engage the Jews of Israel with Middle Eastern culture with the same devastating results as the Jews who assimilated into American culture. However, the latest Intifada has made this an infinitely remote possibility.

Nor was Chabad off-limits for him. It was 5750, when Moshiach awareness was growing and Chabad Chassidim went public with "*hinei hinei Moshiach ba.*" Hertzberg blamed and attacked the Rebbe's "bizarre messianic ideas." He compared Chabad Chassidus to the Sabbatean movement, l'havdil.

Surprisingly though, after 3 Tamuz 5754 and after encountering the Rebbe's incomparable and unprecedented spiritual revolution, Hertzberg changed his tune. In 5760 he was interviewed in the media and declared that the Lubavitch movement "made a tremendous difference in worldwide Judaism," which left him "totally stunned with admiration."

He said that Lubavitch gave Orthodox Judaism a more open relationship with the world. "If nearly all the streams in Judaism and the ultra-Orthodox groups got involved in kiruv, Lubavitch is the reason," said Hertzberg.

"Chabad has the largest army in worldwide Judaism that is ready to live on the edge of poverty," Hertzberg said regarding the economic hardships that the shluchim deal with on a daily basis. "Wherever I go I meet young couples who are busy over their heads with work. They live on nothing and remain that way."

He saw this devotion in his hometown in New Jersey, where he met and kept in close contact with the shluchim and the local directors of Chabad houses. He was even a Trustee for the new building that was recently bought for the Chabad house at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, his alma mater.

He said that Lubavitch gave Orthodox Judaism a more open relationship with the world. "If nearly all the streams in Judaism and the ultra-Orthodox groups got involved in kiruv, Lubavitch is the reason," said Hertzberg. "In a certain way, they were the ones who played on the feelings of shame in all of us."

"A HOLY GROUP"

One of his two daughters lives in Fresno, California and is involved with the local Chabad house which is run by Rabbi Levi Zirkind. Hertzberg's daughter sends her children to the Chabad school in Fresno which is something he took pride in.

"These 3500 shluchim are the holiest group in Judaism worldwide today," he is quoted as saying in *The Rebbe's Army* by Sue Fishkoff. He also warmly recommended the book.

"They are involved in sanctifying G-d's name every day. I may disagree with their ideology but I can only admire them."

Hertzberg supported the work of Rabbi Velvel Gopin's Chabad house at John Hopkins and was going to participate in a special event planned for 29 Shevat of this year but could not do due to his illness. He passed away on 20 Nissan 5766 at the age of 84.

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REMEMBERING THE DISENGAGEMENT: THE PERPRTRATORS AND THE VICTIMS

BY ALIZA KARP

A year has passed, and the victims of the devastating Disengagement of 5765 are at different stages of recovery. It took a full year, and finally all the refugees are out of the hotel rooms and tents. But none are in real homes. Rather they have been placed in Caravillas, a mongrel breed of housing representing a cross between a caravan and house. The unemployment rate has gone from 85% to 50%, but many of those employed have taken jobs well below their true earning capacity, bringing home insufficient salaries to support a family.

Negotiations with the government to take responsibility for the Disengagement fiasco, has been long, hard and frustrating. Moral is low. One group of families has picked up and gone to Australia.

A woman from Gush Katif pulled herself together and made an effort to start over and move forward. Talented with languages she took a course to train as a translator. When she finished the course, she applied

for a job – what else?

Her job application was turned down... because she has a police record!

For years the Kissufim Junction, the single access road used by Jews leading to Gush Katif had one guard

“We must realize that there is constantly an opponent, Amalek, challenging us, and ‘There will be war between G-d and Amalek from generation to generation,’ i.e., at all times, we must confront this challenge... He commanded us to remember what Amalek did to us...”

(Sicha, Adar 5750)

house with one guard, who would smile at all Jewish travelers and wave them through. The guards knew who was who and there was no need to show ID. In the last weeks before the Disengagement, all that changed.

Barricades were set up and drivers were stopped at frequent intervals, their ID was scrupulously examined.

The residents of Gush Katif, already under tremendous psychological pressure, found this procedure to be frustrating and demeaning.

The woman who was unable to find work as a translator has a police record because one year ago she had refused to show her ID for the ‘umpteenth’ time in a row while driving into Gush Katif. Her case, with its ridiculous charges, was never brought to court where it could be resolved and closed. Meanwhile, this woman has a police record!

The evil Disengagement lives on. For individuals – like the woman with the police record. For communities –struggling to rebuild what was lost. And for the nation – which suffered in the Re-engagement War this past summer.

Just recently the Parsha reminded us not to forget Amalek.

The Chumash says, “He did not fear G-d.” Rashi comments, “Amalek did not fear G-d, to prevent him from harming you.” Amalek showed the other nations that it is OK to fight the Jews. The Disengagement showed the world that mass deportation of Jews and destruction of their property can still be done in the post-Holocaust era.

Over the course of the year, many films have been made depicting various aspects of the Disengagement.

At the Jerusalem Film Festival this past summer, one such film received an honorable mention. The director and producer is Ziv Alexandrony. He himself is not (yet) observant, and was pro-Disengagement when he began filming.

Eight months before the scheduled Disengagement, Alexandrony found two families in two cities of Gush Katif who agreed to be filmed. At the beginning of the film the threat of the Disengagement was an issue but it was still easy for a clear minded person to believe that something would change and it would not actually happen. There had been so many threats on areas in Yesha in the past and never had a complete evacuation actually been carried out.

This film shows the changes that the featured individuals and their families go through – until the day actually comes.

The characters in the film reveal the beauty of their quality of life in Gush Katif, and at the same time the viewer sees the stress they have been put under, as the threat of losing everything looms closer and closer. There are scenes of a mother washing dishes, a father managing

his green houses where he grows bug free herbs, and a Rosh Yeshiva living through the Disengagement process while doing his best to guide his students.

The film shows the concrete slabs being placed near Kissufim junction and the frustration of the residents being asked for their ID. The very humiliation and injustice that led to the police arrest of the woman mentioned above. It shows a father taking a look at the temporary housing being built for the refugees. He laughs – where would he put his Shabbos table? His Shabbos table seats fifteen people!



Women in Crown Heights gather to view Gush Katif documentary and to support the efforts of Nshei Chabad in Kfar Chabad

This film, which is entitled “Behold There Came a Great Wind,” was recently shown to a group of women in Crown Heights. The discussion following the screening focused on the philosophy of the religious Zionists who are in a quagmire of belief that Geula comes through the secular state. This philosophy, in a subtle way, assisted in the Disengagement. For instance, you see the Rosh Yeshiva crying as he introduces a commander from his own Yeshiva who is carrying out the evacuation. The Rosh Yeshiva does

not criticize this commander for carrying out the Disengagement. They cry together and they embrace and they carry out the law of the state even when it contradicts the law of the Torah. According to the Torah, this commander was not allowed to enforce the retreat of a Yeshiva in Eretz Yisroel – or anywhere else... Siman 329 is not referring to Eretz Yisroel. (Siman 329 is the section in the Code of Jewish Law which requires pre-emptive defense, even on Shabbos. It does not condone staying idle and for sure not retreat.)

To actually see and hear about the mistake the Religious Zionists live with, re-enforces the need to teach these people that Geula does not come from the state, Geula comes through Moshiach, and only through Moshiach.

In Beis Moshiach, Volume 556, there is an article about a group of women from Kfar Chabad, working together with Gush Katif Shlucha Tziporah Kirshenzaft, who drew a crowd of 250 women from the Gush Katif refugees, to a Gala event his past Chaf Beis Shvat. Since then, this same group has hosted events on Yud Aleph Nissan, Yud Beis Tammuz, Chaf Av and now, Chai Elul. They plan to have a Farbrengen every month and from time to time make bigger events. On Yud Aleph Nissan, two rallies were made for children and currently plans are being made for fabulous Simchas Beis HaShoeiva for the entire community.

Being that these women have made the successful, initial connections, the women in Crown Heights who viewed the film have decided to do their part for this project by sending funds to ease the burden in hosting the events and

enabling the group to expand their activities. The funds will be sent through one of the Kfar Chabad group, Mrs. Yehudis Piamenta.

Another showing of “Behold A Great Wind is Coming” will be scheduled in Crown Heights after Yom Tov. Other cities interested in viewing the film and raising funds for this project, can contact Aliza Karp, listed in the Tzach List.

“Some of the people from Gush Katif are miserable,” explains Mrs. Piamenta. “Some have recovered but others still do not know what to do. These are capable people who were always resourceful and now they are left without a home, without a job and in some cases without a marriage, because the pressure was too much and marriages broke under the pressure.

“The Gush Katif people who come to our events are very appreciative. They feel that most of the nation has forgotten about them, and when they see us they comment that ‘Chabad is always there for us. Chabad does not forget.’”

“Every time we come we have a program. For sure we sit and enjoy ourselves but we also have a message. On Chaf Av the topic was Simcha, on Yud Beis Tammuz it was Mesirus Nefesh. We are now planning Simchas Beis HaShoeiva. There will be a band, a clown for the children, refreshments and we will have a speaker who will speak about the Rebbe’s way of looking at the world. We hope a thousand people will attend. We are working with the Kirshenzafts, it will be an evening of Gush Katif Beit Chabad.

“The Gush Katif people who come to our events are very appreciative. They feel that most of the nation has forgotten about them, and when they see us they comment that ‘Chabad is always there for us. Chabad does not forget.’”

OVER 300 PEOPLE ATTEND A SPECIAL SHABBOS FOR FAMILIES OF ANASH WITH SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN

This past Shabbos Parshas Ki Seitzei, a hugely successful “Shabbos vacation and education seminar” was held under the auspices of the chinuch committee of Agudas Chassidei Chabad of Eretz Yisroel. The seminar was sponsored by Yad L’Yeled HaMeyuchad and was held in the Aden Inn Hotel in Zichron Yaakov for 40 families of Anash who have

special needs children.

Yad L’Yeled HaMeyuchad has been in operation for over two years, and they provide assistance, support, and companionship for about 80 families of Anash throughout the country who have children with Down’s syndrome, autism, and other conditions. Their activities include group sessions for parents, day trips, weekend

vacations, material and emotional support and assistance in navigating governmental bureaucracies and more.

Towards the end of the long summer vacation and in anticipation of the beginning of the new school year, Aguch decided to hold a Shabbos vacation and education seminar for about forty families, which included lectures

and workshops for parents and children, farbrengens and shiurim, together with some rest and relaxation in the clear air of the resort. The children got a special surprise with the appearance of Dovid HaChakyan (the mimic), a well known character from many kosher Jewish videos, who performed a number of times throughout Shabbos.

Activities for the children began early Friday afternoon, when inflatable amusement rides were brought to the delight of the children and families. The pool also opened for longer hours, with separate times for men and women, and Jewish educational videos appropriate for children of Anash played in the viewing room.

Throughout Shabbos there were many programs and lectures, but it was at the meals that the families really bonded in a way that nobody could predict. Afterwards, many participants had a hard time expressing their gratitude to the organizers and conveyed their hope that such events would take place on a more frequent basis, as they saw the positive effect on themselves and the entire family.

Rabbi Menachem Mendel Blinitzky, director of projects for Aguch in Israel, who oversaw the entire event, announced to the parents that they plan to expand their activities in the coming year and he thanked the parents for their cooperation.



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