



8

FEATURED ARTICLES

8 A LIFETIME OF SAYING SHMA YISROEL
Shneur Zalman Berger

18 WITH TWO WORDS
Nosson Avrohom

21 THE REBBE HEARS
Chaim Cohen

24 RETURN TO B'NEI YEHUDA
Nosson Avrohom

30 HALACHA, NOW AND FOREVER
Rabbi Yaakov Shmuelevitz

38 R' MOSHE CADANER A"H

WEEKLY COLUMNS

4 D'var Malchus

14 The Rebbe's Letters

16 Moshiach & Science

33 Parsha Thought

36 Story

40 Moshiach & Geula



26



38

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

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

BEIS MOSHIACH

744 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn, NY 11213-3409

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

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:
M.M. Hendel

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

ENGLISH EDITOR:
Boruch Merkur
editor@beismoshiach.org

ASSISTANT EDITOR:
Berel Goldberg

G-D IS WITH US, EVERY JEW, THROUGH EVERY EXILE

Since the Gemara says, “in every place they were exiled the Divine Presence was with them,” why is it necessary to specify, “They were exiled to Egypt; the Divine Presence was with them,” and “They were exiled to Babylon; the Divine Presence was with them”? * Since “The Divine Presence is with them,” then, just as one is certain that G-d goes out of exile, so too he must be assured that he will personally go out of exile. * The Rebbe speaking about the imminent redemption, on Lag B’Omer.

Translated by Boruch Merkur

IN EVERY PLACE THEY WERE EXILED, G-D WAS WITH THEM

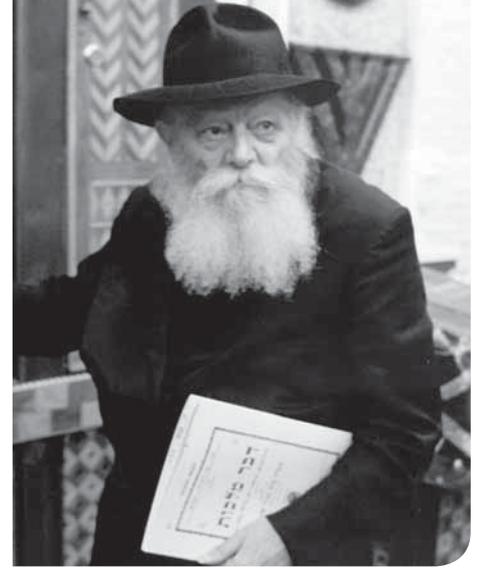
Since today is Lag B’Omer, the celebration of Rashbi, we shall draw a connection with a teaching of Rashbi in the Gemara (Megilla 29a): “It is taught in a Braisa: Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai says: Come and see how beloved the Jewish people are to G-d, for in every place they were exiled the Divine Presence was with them. They were exiled to Egypt; the Divine Presence was with them, as it is said, ‘Have I not been exiled to the house of your father when you were in Egypt’ (Shmuel 1 2:27). They were exiled to Babylon; the Divine Presence was with them, as it is said, ‘For your sakes I was cast into Babylon’ (Yeshayahu 43:14).

Even when they will be redeemed in the future, the Divine Presence will be with them, as it is said, ‘G-d, your L-rd, will return [with] your exiles’ (Nitzavim 20:3) – it does not say ‘return (*heishiv*) [others]’ but ‘return (*shav*),’ teaching that G-d will return with them, among the exiles.”

At first glance, in attempting to understand the particular wording of this Braisa, several questions arise:

1. Since the Gemara says, “in every place they were exiled the Divine Presence was with them,” why is it necessary to specify, “They were exiled to Egypt; the Divine Presence was with them,” and “They were exiled to Babylon; the Divine Presence was with them”?

2. Even if we are to say that



the Gemara wishes to bring Scriptural proof, it would have sufficed to say, “in every place they were exiled the Divine Presence was with them, as it is said, ‘Have I not been exiled to the house of your father when you were in Egypt?’ and as it says, ‘For your sakes I was cast into Babylon.’” Why is it necessary to include, “They were exiled to Egypt; the Divine Presence was with them” and “They were exiled to Babylon; the Divine Presence was with them”?

3. What is the innovation in saying, “when they will be redeemed in the future, the Divine Presence will be with them”? The whole reason for the presence of G-d to be in exile is solely for the sake of the Jewish people, who are in exile. Therefore, it is self-understood that when the Jewish people leave exile, the Divine Presence will go with them. What new information is provided by, “when they will be redeemed in the future, the Divine Presence will be with them,” to the extent that it is necessary to bring a proof from the verse, “G-d, your L-rd, will return [with] your exiles”? The inference here is that were it not for this proof

we could have misconstrued the intended meaning. But at first glance, it is obvious.

EXILED TO EGYPT, BABYLON, MADAI, GREECE, AND ROME

This topic is also brought in the Talmud Yerushalmi: “Rashbi taught that in every place the Jewish people were exiled the Divine Presence was exiled with them,” and in continuation, the details are enumerated: “They were exiled to Egypt and the Divine Presence was exiled with them. They were exiled to Babylon and the Divine Presence was exiled with them. They were exiled to Madai (which is Ilam, as it says there) and the Divine Presence was exiled with them. They were exiled to Greece and the Divine Presence was exiled with them. They were exiled to Rome and the Divine Presence was exiled with them.” And it brings Scriptural proof for each exile.

We see here that the Talmud Yerushalmi cites not only the Egyptian exile and the Babylonian exile (along with the Scriptural proofs); it enumerates all the exiles [i.e., including the exiles in Madai, Greece, and Rome].

At first glance, it is difficult to understand: Being that it says, “in every place the Jewish people were exiled the Divine Presence was exiled with them,” why is it necessary to mention all the exiles in particular?

EGYPT: THE FOUNTAINHEAD OF EVIL

The resolution of the latter difficulty emerges from

“We are told that still prior to succeeding in our service of getting out of exile, “the Divine Presence is with us”! We are not left alone. For were that the case, it is within our capacity to consider how we can possibly contend with the entire world. Rather, from the onset, the Divine Presence is already with us in exile.”

understanding the difference between the various exiles:

It is written in the Arizal’s works that the Egyptian exile was the origin and root of all exiles. Thus, in the Egyptian exile it is apparent that all aspects of the Jewish people were in exile then, to the extent that (in the exodus from Egypt) it was necessary “to take for Himself a nation from the **midst** of a nation” [i.e., the Jewish people, the Jewish identity itself, had been assimilated within the Egyptian culture]. And for this reason, the Pascal sacrifice was in a manner of “its head with its legs and with its innards” [i.e., all of it together, representing a complete emancipation from an all-encompassing exile].

From a mystical perspective, the concept of the Egyptian exile [at its spiritual source] corresponds to Kesser (or Crown) of the Other Side, the Side of Evil – [for a crown rests upon the head of a person, indicating that] it transcends the Seider Hishtalshlus, the Natural Order of Creation. From its transcendent source, however, the concept of exile descends, entering into the Natural Order. This process of descent begins with the Babylonian exile, which is called, “*Reisha D’Dahava*,” meaning the fountainhead of the evil of exile (as it is already manifest within the Natural Order). Next come the subsequent three exiles

– the exile of Madai, the exile of Greece, and the exile of Rome – as the unique qualities of the four exiles are elucidated in the writings of the Arizal.

After Rashbi says, “I can obviate the need for judgment upon the entire world” (which is connected with the fact that the verse, “I dwell among you,” applies to every Jew, for “the Divine Presence is with them”), he goes on to say that first and foremost, when there is a concept of “in every place the Jewish people were exiled” – meaning the general concept of Kesser of Evil, which is connected with the concept of exile – it is said that the “Divine Presence is with them,” meaning the general Kesser of the Divine Presence Itself is with them.

But since each exile has its unique characteristics and it is necessary to go on to define the details of the exiles, therefore, Rashbi enumerates all the details the concept of exile entails:

It begins with the concept of “They were exiled to Egypt” – Kesser of Evil, meaning the particular expression of Kesser within (the general) Kesser itself (the general concept of exile), which is Kesser as it is already connected with the origin of the Natural Order. From that point of origin, the four exiles emerge, the four levels of the Natural Order.

“Knowing that he will surely go out of exile and that it is clear that we are only speaking about timeframe (i.e., how long before he is actually redeemed), he throws himself into this mindset with greater vigor and greater confidence, certain that he will succeed.”

Since every aspect of exile requires a corresponding system of Divine service connected with that particular exile, Rashbi cites the verses written in the Torah that communicate that “the Divine Presence was with them” in every particular exile. The very fact that it is written about in the Torah provides strength for the individual service connected with that specific exile, for Torah changes the nature of the world.

However, the Babylonian Talmud suffices in citing two general concepts of exile – “They were exiled to Egypt,” “They were exiled to Babylon” – for the Egyptian exile is the general concept of exile as it transcends the Natural Order of Creation, and the Babylonian exile is the beginning of the descent of exile into the Natural Order, as discussed above, and it is the source from which the subsequent exiles derive.

The Talmud Yerushalmi, on the other hand, cites all four exiles. Thus, Scriptural support is brought (even in the Talmud Yerushalmi) for each exile that “the Divine Presence was with them,” for this provides strength for the particular service connected with the respective exiles, as above.

NOT ALONE IN EXILE

The practical application of this topic:

When a Jew is in exile, notwithstanding the fact that the

soul did not go into exile, the body, however, did go into exile, meaning the body in its entirety is in exile in a foreign land and is ruled by that nation’s Ministering Angel.

This is the dynamic that prevails in the time of exile. That is, since we live among the gentile nations, and in a manner of exile (not only those who live in the Diaspora but even those Jews who live in the Holy Land), then the assumption of the body is that it is incumbent upon it to behave as the body of another human being, one who isn’t Jewish.

This is the general concept of “They were exiled to Egypt, Mitzrayim” (meaning *meitzarim u’g’vulim*, restrictions and boundaries), insofar as the Jew causes himself to be limited and constrained by the conduct of “Egypt” – at least as this applies to the body.

To that extent, one is told that still prior to [succeeding in] his service of getting out of exile, “the Divine Presence is with them”! He is not left alone. For were that the case, it is within his capacity to consider how he can possibly contend with the entire world. Rather, from the onset the Divine Presence is already with them [in exile].”

The latter concept is then expressed within the context of the particular aspects of the body – how the head operates, how the torso conducts itself,

including the feelings of the heart, and how the body behaves with respect to action. These aspects correspond to the particular exiles – the exile in Babylon, Madai, Greece, and Rome – though this is not the appropriate forum to speak about the matter at length.

Further advice is offered: A Jew is told that “G-d assists him” (Kiddushin 30b; Sukka 52b, beg.), and of consequence, it sits well with him that the concept of exile is not applicable to him. And since “The Divine Presence is with them,” then, just as he is certain that G-d goes out of exile, so too he must be assured that he will personally go out of exile.

JUST A MATTER OF TIME

Knowing that he will surely go out of exile and that it is clear that we are only speaking about timeframe [i.e., how long before he is actually redeemed], he throws himself into this mindset with greater vigor and greater confidence, certain that he will succeed.

Next off, this vigor and confidence is manifest in every particular detail – in the intellect, the feelings of the heart and mind, and the feelings connected with the resolve to action, including following through with the action. Indeed, in every single matter, “the Divine Presence is with them.”

And this has the effect upon him that he will not sink (and be nullified) in exile. In fact, he will stand strong and do all that is dependent upon him in order to hasten the redemption.

(From the address of Lag B’Omer 5738, bilti muga)

A LIFETIME OF SAYING SHMA YISROEL

Rabbi Meir Varzov a”h passed away on 12 Adar I. His life’s work was reaching out to Russian immigrants. • “R’ Meir loved bringing joy to others. He truly loved people.” • His indefatigable work on so many fronts, his eagerness to hear another Chassidische story, and his tremendous bittul to other Chassidim, provide an example for the next generation to follow. • Friends and family memorialize this great Chassid.

By Shneur Zalman Berger

R’ Meir Varzov was born nearly 64 years ago on 12 Tammuz 5707/1947 in Chernowitz in the Ukraine to a barely traditional family. He related that in his childhood he saw his mother light Shabbos candles and his father going to shul. Davening in a shul at that time was no simple matter since the government kept tabs on young people who attended shul. So Meir did not go to shul often. However, on the rare occasions when he accompanied his father it was on the Yomim Nora’im, and they went to the Chabad minyan where famous Chassidim, who had gone to Chernowitz after the war, davened: R’ Mendel Futerfas, R’ Chaim Zalman Kozliner, and R’ Moshe Vishedsky.

R’ Meir knew nothing about Chabad. He knew he was davening with Jews and that’s all. It was only many years later, when he lived in Eretz Yisroel, that he found out who those Jews were with whom he davened.

It was his mother who taught him Jewish values. From the age of three she taught him to say the Shma and she would tell him that in every situation, both good and bad, he had to say the Shma. From his father he learned the power of the mitzva of tz’daka as he himself related a few years ago:

“I was born after World War II and I remember that there were many war wounded, crippled people who stood in a line and people would go by and

given them donations. There were many Jews among them. I remember my father taught me to give generously.”

R’ Meir was always curious about his Judaism and this curiosity led him to the Jewish Encyclopedia in the Russian language where he also investigated the entry on Chabad. He saw a short explanation about Chabad and there was even a picture of the Alter Rebbe, but at the time he did not know that there is a Rebbe today too.

When he grew older he was drafted in the Russian army and served in the Air Force. His commanders appointed him as an officer and he served in Saratov on the Volga River where he encountered Judaism



from another angle. He met a righteous convert named Binyamin who once invited him for supper at his house. In order not to come empty-handed, Meir bought some cheese.

When Binyamin saw the cheese he said, “We are Jews and we don’t eat things like that.” He made a cereal with oil and that is what they ate. Meir did not quite understand why Binyamin would not taste the cheese but he noted the incident away. Binyamin gave him a T’hillim which he guarded closely.

Years later Meir was able to make aliya with his wife Sarah and their children. On the flight to Eretz Yisroel he was overcome with emotion and

“R’ Meir knew nothing about Chabad. He knew he was davening with Jews and that’s all. It was only many years later, when he lived in Eretz Yisroel, that he found out who those Jews were with whom he davened.”

without thinking about why, he put on a hat and opened the T’hillim that Binyamin had given him. During the flight he met a rabbi associated with the Jewish Agency and he excitedly asked the rabbi what was the proper thing to say upon arriving in the holy land.

The rabbi said, “Do you know how to say Shma Yisroel? Do you know how to say the SheHechyanu blessing? That’s what you should say.”

When Meir disembarked with his family he stood them in a row and said the Shma with them, word by word followed by the bracha.

THE PROFESSOR CAME TO VISIT

From the airport they went to the absorption center in Teveria and his longing for Judaism grew and grew. He looked for a shul nearby. While walking down the



With the Rebbe



12 Tamuz 5750 - Speaking at a Chamah event when the Russian aliya had just begun

street he stopped near a mitzva tank that had a big picture of the Rebbe on it. The tankist asked him whether he had put on t'fillin already. To Meir this was a peculiar question since he hadn't put on t'fillin since his bar mitzva. He put on the t'fillin and emotionally said the Shma and then he inquired about the picture on the vehicle. He was told that if he ever had problems

in the course of his settling in the country, this was the man who could help him. "Write him a letter and tell him the problem and you will get an answer."

R' Meir took this seriously and he wrote down the address. By amazing divine providence, that same day he found a book in Russian called *Return*, in the Ulpan, written by Professor Herman Branover. He enjoyed the book, especially the fact that he was both a professor and he believed in G-d. He also read fascinating material about the Rebbe. He figured that if he ever needed help, he would ask Professor Branover for he lived in Eretz Yisroel.

He spent hours working on a letter, nearly an entire day, in the course of which he wrote many drafts until he completed a letter in which he asked for clarification regarding faith, about being both a professor and a believer, and how to keep Shabbos when family members wanted to go together to the beach.

He mailed the letter, but Professor Branover was abroad at the time and in the meantime,

another Lubavitcher Chassid who was in the absorption center at the time, opened a shul there. Meir was one of the people who exerted pressure on those who ran the center to gain their approval for a shul. Erev Rosh HaShana 5740/1979 he thought of his mother lighting candles and he resolved to convince the immigrants at the absorption center to light candles for Rosh HaShana.

He bought hundreds of candles and put a notice on the bulletin board. His idea was very successful and soon a long line formed near the Varzovs' room and by the time Rosh HaShana began, hundreds of candles had been lit by people who had just recently been behind the Iron Curtain. The sequel was even better. The shul was packed on Yom Kippur with recently arrived immigrants. On Sukkos a sukka was built and the Varzov family, together with some other families, sat in the sukka that Yom Tov.

During Chol HaMoed he was surprised to get a phone call from Professor Branover who had returned home. As soon as he saw Meir's letter he called him and said he was coming to Teveria. Professor Branover and his wife traveled from Yishuv Omer in the Negev all the way north to Teveria that Chol HaMoed in order to meet the Varzovs. They hit it off and the professor clarified many difficult issues having to do with religion and faith. He invited the Varzovs for Shabbos.

Shabbos with the Branovers strengthened R' Meir and his wife in their religious commitment and they began consulting with the professor and Rabbi Auerbach of Teveria about where to live. They suggested Yerushalayim or Kiryat



R' Meir Varzov (center) with friends R' Levi Pressman and R' Michael Mishulovin



R' Meir Varzov and R' Sholom Ber Garelik, working together for Chamah

Malachi but he was considering B'nei Brak. It was Rabbi Aharon Chazan a"h, the man who did so much for Russian olim, who took him to visit Kiryat Malachi and that finalized their decision – they moved to Kiryat Malachi.

R' Meir sent a letter to the Rebbe in which he asked whether he should move to the Nachalat Har Chabad section of Kiryat Malachi and after receiving a positive response they moved to Nachala with the help of R' Chazan.

AN ARDENT CHASSID

R' Meir eventually became a full-fledged Chassid and he wrote to the Rebbe regularly. He went to see the Rebbe for the first time for Tishrei 5745/1984.

R' Meir was a genuine Chassid. His fervor for all aspects of Chassidic conduct was outstanding. Over twenty years ago, when he worked as an engineer at Telrad, he wanted to put up a menorah which proved to be very difficult. His son Mendy relates:

“My father wanted to put a giant menorah on the roof of the company but the administration did not like the idea. My father recruited his friend Shimon, a

kibbutznik who had gotten more involved in Judaism through him, in the effort. Together, they were able to get the administration's permission to put a menorah on the roof, half a meter high. The employees of the maintenance department built a menorah, but as per my father's request it was a lot taller than half a meter. A picture of the menorah lighting on the fifth day was sent to the Rebbe but my father did not receive an immediate response. A year later I was born on the fifth day of Chanuka and this was after several years of davening for a son. My father considered this a response from the Rebbe.”

FOCUSED ON THE GOAL

For over twenty years, R' Meir worked on behalf of Anash in Nachalat Har Chabad on various projects, along with R' Avrohom (Bumi) Friedland. The projects included: activities with children on Shabbos and special days in the calendar, Simchas Beis HaShoeiva on the nights of Chol HaMoed Sukkos, farbrengens, public Kiddush Levana ceremonies, publishing Torah booklets, as well as special attractions for the Lag B'Omer parade. R' Meir was ready to help with his energy and talents and he operated with his characteristic

modesty and bittul.

R' Friedland lost a dear friend who worked closely with him:

“In every which way he used all his abilities and connections to accomplish what we needed to do. The Kiddush Levana, which he did every month and seemed routine, was something he arranged with care for every detail. Even this year when he was sick, he made numerous phone calls and made the Simchas Beis HaShoeiva arrangements easier for me.”

R' Meir was also involved in making special floats for the Lag B'Omer parade in Kiryat Malachi:

“He would find out where and how to build these huge floats. He would go to those places where they come up with ideas and if necessary, he would go many times. Sometimes I would join him until the float was completed. To R' Meir, all the details were important; he saw things through to the end even when he did not stand to benefit at all.”

Whoever saw R' Meir running around at a Simchas Beis HaShoeiva or Lag B'Omer parade, organizing everything with youthful vigor like a camp

HE TRULY LOVED PEOPLE

His dear friend Reb Avrohom (Bumi) Friedland related:

R' Meir Varzov existed to bring joy to others, to do a favor for another Jew, materially or spiritually. He truly loved people. When I went to visit him in his final days during which he suffered greatly, he made me feel good because that's what he wanted, for everybody to be happy under all circumstances.

He was completely devoted to the welfare of others and did favors nonstop. He never considered whether he could or could not do a favor, but just did it. I know that he helped many in his community in numerous ways and it was all done modestly, without saying a word.

We were true friends and we traveled together to various places, including to mashpim from whom we got so much. We often visited the mashpia R' Mendel Futerfas. When we went to see him, he would come out to his living room. We spoke about communal needs and he would tell us Chassidic stories.

The last time we saw R' Mendel was shortly before he went to London where he passed away. When we went to his house, we were told that he did not feel well and could not come out of his room. When he was told who had come, he asked that R' Meir be brought into his bedroom where they spoke for a while. About what? I have no idea.

counselor, knew that this was a Chassid who was focused on the goal and it made no difference whether it was big or small, more important or a mere technical matter. His goal was to carry out the Rebbe's wishes and to give him nachas.

NO LIMITATIONS

When *perestroika* began and immigrants began arriving in Eretz Yisroel, even before they began pouring in, the directors of Chamah in Kiryat Malachi met and discussed reaching out to them. R' Meir Varzov was assigned to this task. He wasn't unemployed and he wasn't looking for additional work. His job as an engineer was a good one, but he left it, taking a long unpaid vacation for several years, and began working with new immigrants.

He first started working for Chamah in 5748. Dozens of olim attended small events that

took place on the western side of the main shul in Nachalat Har Chabad. As the work expanded, a beautiful building was built in the center of Nachala.

On Chanuka 5751 a minyan for new immigrants was founded at the Chamah center, a minyan which exists till this day. R' Meir and his friend R' Sholom Ber Garelik, founded the minyan and were involved in running ever since. R' Garelik relates:

"R' Meir was in from the beginning. Shortly after we started, he went to the Rebbe and received a special letter of blessing for the minyan of immigrants. He was a very special person. When an event had to be organized, the night before he could be working until the wee hours. He took part in every event, big and small, on Shabbos and Yom Tov. He arranged Pesach s'darim and chuppos for immigrants, brissin, everything! Whatever they will write about him is true."

The work done with elderly Chassidim in the neighborhood and new immigrants had a special place in his heart. His son Yosef, shliach in Moscow, relates:

"It's hard to understand when my father found time for everything but he had a personal relationship with many senior citizens in the neighborhood. He would visit them, worry about them, and if necessary he would knock in a nail for them or do other repairs. Every year, Erev Rosh HaShana, he bought lots of honey cake and he went from house to house giving the seniors honey cake along with his good wishes. There was an elderly Chassid in a wheelchair whom my father would bring to our house for Shabbos meals over a period of many years."

Even when he moved on to work under other auspices, he did not abandon Chamah. On weekdays, as well as Shabbos and Yom Tov, he always took part in their work.

LEADING THE CHARGE

For a period of time R' Meir worked with new immigrants under the auspices of Aguch under the directorship of R' Shlomo Maidenchek. Afterward, he considered returning to his job at Telrad but then he got an offer from Tzach to work with new immigrants. On the one hand, he had a good job at Telrad; on the other hand, he was being offered a job that would give him much joy and satisfaction. He wrote to the Rebbe and received an unusual answer: Decide on your own.

R' Meir sat down with his family and after serious discussion he took the job with Tzach. He sent his decision to the Rebbe and the answer he received was: Bracha and



Appearing with his klezmer musicians



Appearing before new immigrants in Arad. Rabbi Benzion Lipsker a"h is sitting second from the left

success. Since then, for nearly twenty years (5752-5771) he was mekarev Jews to their Father in heaven.

Hundreds of thousands of immigrants arrived in Eretz Yisroel from the former Soviet Union. It was an enormous wave of aliya and they all needed housing and employment. Many kiruv organizations began working with the new immigrants and there was work enough for all of them and more. R' Meir undertook this huge task of teaching them about Judaism. He is most famous for his concerts before holidays. He and his klezmer group would travel all over the country, from city to city, from yishuv to yishuv, to perform at Chabad houses. These were impressive performances with well-known Russian tunes with Jewish messages. If you never attended one of these concerts, you won't understand. They went way beyond a musical performance with a charismatic lecture. It was all neshama ... Every word he uttered was for the purpose of being mekarev as

many Jews as possible to their Father in heaven and to give nachas to the Rebbe.

At every one of his klezmer performances he made sure to say the Shma, as his mother had taught him. He would say the Shma with great *kavana* and in an emotional tone and all would recite it after him.

These performances were a sacred part of his life. For twenty years, before every holiday, he would travel the country and perform. How many times a day? How much did he invest in this? His daughter Tzipora Garelik, shlucha in Moscow, relates:

"It was routine for him to do four performances a day. Even though this was a grueling schedule, he didn't think about himself and his energy level but wanted to do more and more hafatza. We hardly saw him before holidays and during holidays. On Chanuka he would come home after midnight. Only my mother waited for him to light the Menorah and I would light the Menorah for my younger

sisters (when my brothers were in yeshiva).

"I got engaged to my husband Zushe on Chanuka. Many guests came to wish mazal tov and drink l'chaim but my father was not home. He was at a performance with immigrants somewhere or other. He returned home late at night and really raised the level of joy."

His son Yosef remembers that his father would say, "After four performances I crawl home [in exhaustion] but you have to give it all you've got. There's no other choice."

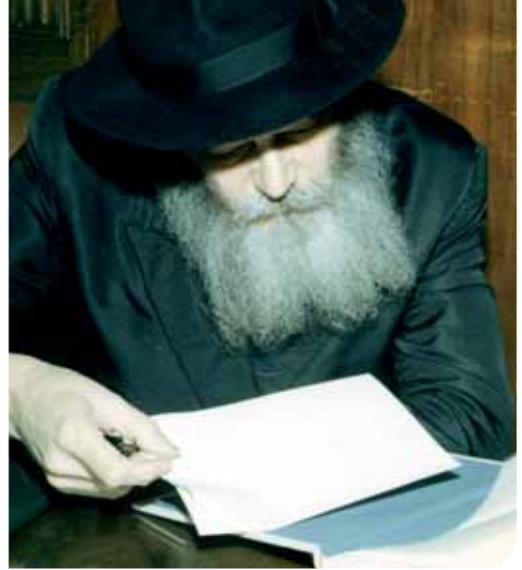
Directors of Chabad houses who work with immigrants consulted with R' Meir a lot. Many immigrants were referred to him for help on an individual level.

R' Meir worked as director of the division of Absorption and Aliya for Tzach. He edited and published a calendar in Russian, *Sichat HaShavua* in Russian and brochures about Judaism in Russian. These brochures

Continued on page 35

A THOUGHTFUL RESPONSE TO DEEP QUESTIONS

The Rebbe's letter, published for the first time, from the t'shura of the wedding of Simpson and Stock.



By the Grace of G-d
29th of Tammuz 5713 [1953]
Brooklyn 13, N.Y.

Sholom u'Brocho:

Your two letters duly reached me, and I wondered why you did not mention anything in the second letter about your cousin Debbie, either with regard to a Shidduch (the best thing for her), or what progress she has made towards greater Yiddishkeit.

Referring to your questions regarding several points in Chassidus,

1-Re the five "faculties" of the Soul (nefesh, ruach, neshomo, chayo, yechido), which you find difficult to grasp, I will endeavor to throw some light on the subject with the aid of analogy, but such explanation must, of necessity, be somewhat sketchy in the course of a letter. Nevertheless, I hope it may be hopeful to you.

The soul, as a "part" of G-d above, is essentially "unknowable"; we do not know what it is, but it manifests itself in various ways, and it is in the revealed area of the soul that we distinguish five "faculties."

Nefesh is that faculty of the soul which manifests itself in natural life, similar to the life spirit manifested in every

living thing. Reason or emotion do not enter here, except in a rudimentary way, and not only higher emotions born of the intellect, but even the lower emotions born of the "heart" play no part.

Ruach corresponds to the manifestation of life where in addition to the above the emotional aspects of the soul are manifested.

Neshomo (in a particular sense, as different from the meaning of "soul" (MaH) in general) is still a higher faculty of the soul, where the influence of the intellect is in evidence.

These three aspects of the soul are clearly reflected in the early life of a human being as successive stages: In the first few years after birth the Nefesh ("Sensitive," i.e. of the senses, aspect of the soul) predominates. From the age of 2 or 3, the emotional faculties begin to develop manifestly, and in due course the intellect begins to play an ever growing part in the human life.

The other two aspects of the soul are termed Makifin ("transcendental") and are more seldom revealed.

Chayo is associated with ecstasy, after one has bent all three aspects (N.R.N.) of the soul

to Divine worship. It was much in evidence with our prophets of old, and now finds expression in the worshipper who has attained

[a line is missing here]

acting, etc.), and in the sacred part of life it is the area of Chayo which expresses itself in Divine service.

Yechido is even more rarely found in evidence, when the very core of the soul, the Divine "spark" comes out into the open, diffusing throughout one's being and permeating every fiber of the soul, to the exclusion of all else. It finds expression in Mesiras Nefesh, in sacrificing one's life for Kiddush Hashem.

The above is a very brief explanation, and as you learn more Chasidus in the Kuntresim and Maamorim, you will be able to grasp it more fully.

2-Re Tzimtzum, you do not specify what aspects of it are not clear to you. But inasmuch as you mention the Derech Mitzvosecha, you will surely find a great deal on the subject, as indicated in the index, and in my notes at the end.

An illustration can be found in the following: Imagine a mathematician engaged in the highest department of math, who is to instruct a beginner in the four arithmetical fundamentals

(addition, subtraction, etc.). Inasmuch as the mathematician has spent his life in higher mathematics, it would require a tremendous effort on his part to take his mind off the higher analytical studies in order to concentrate on instructing a beginner in the elementary arithmetical rules. It would also require special efforts on his part to find the suitable terms and ways and means to make his instruction simple enough for the beginner to understand, for to him, the simple rules and terms, which he is to convey to the beginner are a gross approximation which does not convey the profound science of mathematics. The difficulty arises not from the fact that the advance mathematician does not know the elementary rules of arithmetic, but in the fact that in the profound analytical studies, the elementary arithmetical rules are completely “submerged.” The transition, therefore, from the most sublime to the most elementary, even in the human being, where there is no distinction between infinite and finite, but only a distinction of degree, requires a “withdrawal” as well as a “contraction” of “forces.” How much more so in the case of creation yesh meayin, or in the transition of the “Light” before the Tzimtzum to the “Light” after the Tzimtzum.

3-Re the Four Worlds, which you regard not as actual worlds, but different levels attainable by a person, it is not so. They are actual worlds, but not in the sense of being in different localities, but they penetrate each other, insofar as the Jew, even during life on this earth of soul in a body, can, through appropriate efforts, attain and live his life in the world of spiritual Asiya, in the world of Yetzira, and even higher

“Wishing you Hatzlacha in understanding the teachings of Chassidus, which chiefly depends upon the student himself, as it is written, “It is not removed from thee ... but very nigh unto thee.”

still.

By way of illustration: When we observe a second person with any of our senses (sight, hearing, etc.) we notice and see him as a complex of physical phenomena. This immediate sense perception is then analyzed by us intellectually, when we realize that each physical phenomenon has a corresponding spiritual and psychological movement in the heart or brain. E.g. when we see a person put on Tefillin, we are immediately aware of the movement of one hand in regard to the other, but

[afterward intellectually we understand that behind that movement there is a will, and knowledge of the Mitzvah, and that these inner aspects motivate the outer physical movements. Thus we conclude the existence of a second “man” – a complex of spiritual phenomena which is the cause and permeates the first one, the “physical” complex in the course of an action. And as in the case of the]

on closer reflection we understand that behind that movement there is a will, and a knowledge of the Mitzvah, and that these inner aspects motivate the outer physical movements. Thus we conclude that there exists a second “man” – a complex of spiritual phenomena, which is the cause of and which permeates the “physical complex.” And as in the case of the human being, the microcosm (“small world”), so we can get an idea of the macrocosm (“big

world”).

For further reference see Lekutei Torah Devorim (Biur) Sois Osis, 49a. There is also a letter from my father-in-law, of sainted memory, on the subject of the Four Worlds, which is to be found in copy among the Yeshivah students.

4-With regard to what you call the “hierarchy” of the worlds, we may refer to the illustration mentioned earlier concerning the influence of the “inner” human world on his outer phenomena, showing the action of cause and effect. It should be added that, as often happens, the effect subsequently reacts upon the cause, as we see, for example, in the case of prayer, where the very reciting of the words fans the inner inspiration and warmth to a great degree. In a similar way is the action and counter-action of the worlds reciprocal, where the lower worlds receive influence from the upper worlds, but in return also contribute light to the higher worlds.

In the Index of Derech Mitzvosecha, as well as in the index of Sefer Hamaamorim 5710, etc., you will surely find further elaboration on the above subjects from different angles.

Wishing you Hatzlacha in understanding the teachings of Chassidus, which chiefly depends upon the student himself, as it is written, “It is not removed from thee ... but very nigh unto thee.” (Deut. 30:11,14).

With blessing

ABRAHAM PRINCIPLE

Go out on the street and ask your average Joe, “What’s your opinion about ignorance and apathy?” And your average answer? “I don’t know and I don’t care.” – Part 9



By Dr. Aryeh Gotfryd, PhD

KNOWING AND CARING

I have done whatever I can; from now on, you must do whatever you can. May it be G-d’s will that there will be one, two, or three among you who will appreciate what needs to be done and how it needs to be done, and may you actually be successful and bring about the true and complete redemption.

*--The Rebbe,
28 Nisan, 5751.*

To know and to care. That was the life of Abraham.

Discovering ultimate reality was his driving passion; he stopped at nothing short of absolute truth. But as perfectly noble as that is, it was not good enough. Abraham wanted to share – with everyone.

His goal – the whole world knowing and celebrating one G-d. His problem – Most people just weren’t interested. Are things any different today?

Go out on the street and ask your average Josephine, “What’s your opinion about ignorance and apathy?” And your average answer? “I don’t know and I don’t care.”

Abraham was ultimately successful re-engineering the public mind, but even his successes may have felt a little

hollow, because after all, where was G-d in this whole picture? True, He was the ultimate reality of everything, making nature tick and all. But he remained unheard and unseen, theoretical.

Why didn’t He reveal Himself? If the purpose was to be discovered, and we discover Him, and even share that discovery, then what? Shouldn’t He come out of hiding and say Voila! Here I am!?

In a way, that is what happened. But just in a way. The Midrash relates the story of the Divine response to Abraham’s quest with the following parable:

“And G-d said to Abraham: ‘Go from your land, your birthplace, and your father’s house...’” (B’Reishis 12:2) – – To what may this be compared?

To a man who was traveling from place to place when he saw a palace in flames. He wondered: “Is it possible that the palace has no owner?” The owner of the palace looked out and said, “I am the owner of the palace.” So Abraham our father said, “Is it possible that the world lacks a ruler?” G-d looked out and said to him, “I am the ruler, the Sovereign of the universe.”

Abraham’s bewilderment is clear. This sensitive human being gazes at a brilliantly structured universe, a splendid piece of art. He is overwhelmed by the grandeur of a sunset and by the miracle of childbirth; he marvels at the roaring ocean waves and at the silent, steady beat of the human heart. The world is indeed a palace.

But the palace is in flames. The world is full of bloodshed,



injustice and strife. Thugs, abusers, rapists, kidnapers and killers are continuously demolishing the palace, turning our world into an ugly tragic battlefield of untold pain and horror.

What happened to the owner of the palace? Abraham cries. Why does G-d allow man to destroy His world? Why does He permit such a beautiful palace to go up in flames? Could G-d have made a world only to abandon it? Would anyone build a palace and then desert it?

The Midrash records G-d's reply: "The owner of the palace looked out and said: 'I am the owner of the palace.' G-d looked out and said to Abraham: 'I am the ruler, the Sovereign of the universe.'"

What is the meaning of G-d's response?

Note that the owner of the palace does not make an attempt to get out of the burning building or to extinguish the flames. He is merely stating that He is the owner of the palace that is going up in smoke. It is as if, instead of racing out, the owner were calling for help. G-d made the palace, man set it on fire, and only man can put out the flames. Abraham asks G-d, "Where are you?" G-d replies, "I am here, where are you?" Man asks G-d, "Why did You abandon the world?" G-d asks man, "Why did you abandon Me?"

Thus began the revolution of Judaism - - - humanity's courageous venture to extinguish the flames of immorality and

bloodshed and restore the world to the harmonious and sacred palace it was intended to be. Abraham's encounter with G-d in the presence of a burning palace gave birth to the mission statement of Judaism - to negate evil and assert good, making the palace fit for a King, and all his subjects, too.

(Ref's: *Midrash Rabba B'Reishis 39:1; based on an interpretation by R' Jonathan Sacks in Radical Then, Radical Now, Harper Collins, 2000, and the linked article citing it by R' Yossi Jacobson on Chabad.org*)

To read previous installments and other Torah and Science related articles, or to comment, or to contact the author, visit www.faithandscience.com.



SAVE MONEY TODAY!!

Get a **FREE** analysis on your credit Card Processing!

Call Today 888-468-3256 x 2770

Better rates guaranteed - If we can't save you money we will pay you \$100
For a limited time - get your CC Terminal or software set up absolutely FREE

It's a matter of ONE minute and ONE fax.

Contact Mendy Chanin at 888-468-3256 ext: 2770, mendy@dalmao.com
Dalmao, LLC 5th Floor 245 W 17th St, New York, NY 10011

New Businesses Welcome | Exclusive Referral Program | Organization Charities Partnership



"The quickest way to reveal Moshiach is by learning the Torah sources about Moshiach & redemption" ש"ס תוריע ומצורע היתש"א

Radio Moshiah & Redemption

1620-1640 AM around Crown Heights & Boro Park
& 1710 AM in parts of Brooklyn 24/6
worldwide live broadcast: www.RadioMoshiah.org

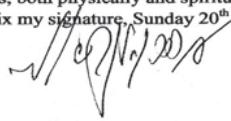
APPROBATION

Rabbi Jacob Schwei
Member of the Rabbinical
Court of Crown Heights

I strongly recommend the esteemed project of Radio Moshiah, which operates here in our neighborhood of Crown Heights, "Here has Hashem commanded His blessing," as well as in other surrounding neighborhoods. Radio Moshiah enables countless individuals to listen to the Rebbe's Farbrengens, to divrei Torah in the concepts of Geulah and Moshiah, to nigguni Chabad and more, which generates a holy, uplifted atmosphere in the homes of all listeners.

Radio Moshiah is constantly growing - and there is still room for expanding and further developing this unique project. Therefore, it is a mitzvah to support Radio Moshiah and assist its development in any way that you can. All those who assist and support this project, will surely merit to be blessed from Hashem, the Source of all blessings, with visible and revealed goodness, both physically and spiritually.

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




Please give your generous support to a special fund of \$100,000

For donations or dedications make checks payable to:
"Radio Moshiah & Redemption"
383 Kingston Ave. #94, Brooklyn, NY 11213
718 756-4530 Tel/Fax 363-1652 Email: RadioMoshiah@erols.com
יחי אדונוני מורנו ורבינו מלך המשיח לעולם ועד

WITH TWO WORDS

The Rebbe's blessing "in an expansive manner," reverberates in her ears till this day. * A Lag B'Omer miracle story

By Nosson Avrohom

Although Rabbi Eliyahu Levin does not consider himself a Lubavitcher Chassid, he has a great love for the Rebbe and for Chabad. That love grew all the stronger after he visited the Rebbe in 5751 and experienced a miracle.

R' Levin is a grandson of the famous tzaddik, Rabbi Aryeh Levin (1885-1969 immortalized in the famous book *A Tzaddik In Our Time*) and his uncle is the posek, Rabbi Yosef Sholom Elyashiv. He has served in many Torah positions including rosh yeshiva of the Premishlan Yeshiva in B'nei Brak.

He describes his first trip to the Rebbe as a tremendous z'chus (privilege). It was the first time he left Eretz Yisroel. He and his wife and son spent two weeks in Crown Heights and they received a bracha from the Rebbe. This is how he describes the circumstances surrounding their trip.

WINNING THE RAFFLE

On Lag B'Omer 5750 we went to Miron, to the gravesite

of the Tanna, Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai, to cut the hair of our three-year-old Avrohom Yeshaya. Because of the huge crowds there on Lag B'Omer, we decided to leave our other children at home in Yerushalayim. We sent them to the big parade, attended by thousands of children, that is held every year in Geula, which starts at the Beis Yaakov school and ends in Kikar Shabbos. Back then there were no cell phones and we arranged to meet at a certain location in Geula.

When we returned from Miron we met up with our other children who were waiting for us. My wife took our three year old to the barber to finish his haircut and I stayed with the other children. Suddenly, over the loudspeaker I heard that there were three winners for the raffle to 770 and one of the winners was my son Shraga Feivel Levin. At first I wasn't sure I had heard correctly and even if I had, I assumed it was another child with the same name. The emcee said that of course the child wouldn't fly alone but would be joined by his parents.



When my wife returned I told her what I had heard and together we went over to the stage where we met the renowned mechanech, Rabbi Naftali Roth, whom I know well. When his parents lived in Shaarei Chesed, our home faced theirs. He was happy to see me and when I asked him whether my son had actually won the raffle, he checked into it and found out that yes, he had. I was thrilled. We had the z'chus to travel to the Rebbe!

We always had a connection with Chabad. I remember that when I was learning in Eitz Chaim elementary school, we would go in the evenings, after school was over, to the Chabad shul in Meia Sh'arim where we would hear shiurim in Likkutei Torah and other Chabad s'farim. Over there I got to know the dayan, Rabbi Rabinowitz, as well as Rabbi Elozor Gelbstein, a good friend of my brother – they went together to learn in yeshiva in Kfar Chabad. In our family we always admired Chabad and the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

This was the first time we



“ I said to my wife that if the Rebbe blessed us that everything should be with harchava, there was nothing to worry about. “You’ll see that everything will work out. How it will happen, I have no idea, but it will happen.”



were leaving Eretz Yisroel and we were so happy to have this special reason for the trip. Most winners of the raffle went to 770 from Rosh HaShana through Sukkos but we couldn’t do that. After the Yomim Tovim we divided the children between my parents and my in-laws and we traveled with Shraga Feivel. It was Rabbi Lichtenstein who worked hard to make all the arrangements for the trip.

MOVING EXPERIENCE IN 770

We landed in New York in the morning and as soon as we left the terminal we saw a Lubavitcher bachur waiting for us. He took us to a waiting taxi. He helped us load our suitcases and we set out. Our host was Rabbi and Mrs. Chaim Boruch Halberstam who warmly welcomed us. R’ Halberstam invited me to join him for Shacharis with the Rebbe and that was the first time I saw the Rebbe. I was tremendously impressed.

We joined in the t’fillos and also attended a farbrengen. If

I had to sum up my impression of the Rebbe with one word, it would be: Malchus. The Rebbe is the commander and the Chassidim are the obedient, disciplined soldiers. They all surround the Rebbe and every move of the Rebbe makes them jump to attention. In 770 we met some visiting Chassidim whom we knew from Yerushalayim. It was all wonderful and we were very excited to be there.

One of my moving experiences in 770 was attending the Shabbos afternoon farbrengen. They arranged a good spot for us and I saw a sea of Chassidim standing crowded together, straining to hear what the Rebbe was saying. It was hard for me to hear the Rebbe but one thing I heard clearly – every time the Rebbe finished a sicha he raised his voice and said, “b’karov mamash” and the Chassidim shouted, “Aaaamen!”

On Sunday we passed by the Rebbe for dollars. Rabbi Groner told the Rebbe that we had won a raffle and I said that I was the grandson of Rabbi Aryeh Levin. The Rebbe said, “Rabbi Aryeh

Levin, zecher tzaddik livracha.” The Rebbe’s face shone and he said we should merit to continue in his ways in the generations to come and his merit should help us do so. We asked for brachos for our children and for some people who had asked us to request brachos on their behalf, but the gabbaim indicated we should leave so other people could pass by the Rebbe.

THE APARTMENT WAS SOLD IN A DAY

Before we returned home, we passed by the Rebbe a second time for dollars and this time we resolved, come what may, we would mention all those who wanted brachos. This time, my wife spoke up and asked the Rebbe to bless us that we marry off all our children easily and merit that all of them go on the right path. She spoke emotionally, as a mother would, and the gabbaim were getting edgy over the time it took. The Rebbe said to my wife two times, “*mitoch harchava*” (in an expansive way).

A woman from Eretz Yisroel went in with us and she asked for a bracha for a shidduch. The Rebbe did not respond directly to her request but blessed her that she be a good teacher. We know this woman personally and she is still single. The Rebbe sees things that we don't understand.

The Rebbe's words to us, "in an expansive way," echo in our ears till this very day, especially when we experienced it as soon as we returned home. For many months our apartment had been on the market but nobody had been interested in buying it. It was too small for our growing family and new neighborhoods were being built like the one in Ramat Shlomo. We were entitled to a grant from the Housing Ministry but in order to be able to afford a new home we had to sell the old home, which we had not been able to do.

Our old home was in Shaarei Chesed. On our way to Eretz Yisroel I said to my wife that if the Rebbe blessed us that everything should be with harchava, there was nothing to worry about. "You'll see that everything will work out. How it will happen, I have no idea, but it will happen."

On our first day back, my wife went to the local grocery store to buy some items and she met an older woman from England who told her that she had been looking for an apartment in Shaarei



Rabbi Aryeh Levin

Chesed for such a long time but hadn't found anything. Nobody is interested in selling, she said. She asked my wife whether she knew anyone who wanted to sell their apartment.

My wife was flabbergasted. "I'm interested!" she exclaimed. The woman said she was returning to England the next day and as far as she was concerned they could close the deal that day and she would pay in cash. My wife took her to our house. The woman didn't even look at all the rooms. A cursory glance from the entrance was enough for her to say she wanted it. Money was no problem for her and she was willing to pay more than we had originally thought and she also offered to pay my wife an agent's fee.

That same day we went to a lawyer and the buyer brought all the money in cash. We signed on the deal and the buyer even agreed to our staying in the apartment for up to two years for free while they finished building in Ramat Shlomo and we could enter our new home. She just wanted to own something in Eretz Yisroel and she loved the Shaarei Chesed neighborhood.

It was unbelievable how we had spent months trying to find a buyer and nothing happened and then one visit to the Rebbe and a two word bracha brought us a buyer, and not just any buyer but someone who was willing to pay more than we had dreamed of plus other benefits.

I heard this story twice, once from Rabbi Levin himself. The first time, I heard it from Mrs. Levin who related it at the Igros Kodesh stand that the bachurim set up in Miron. She wanted to make the point that just a word or two from the Rebbe is enough for a miracle.

"Boruch Hashem, we have married off all our children and as the Rebbe said, with harchava," concluded R' Levin. "I always say I don't know from where or how but nothing was lacking. I told this story many times and each time I relive it and realize how great the Rebbe is."

Make a "Mivtzah Kashrus" in your own computer!

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

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

That's why J Net was created.

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

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

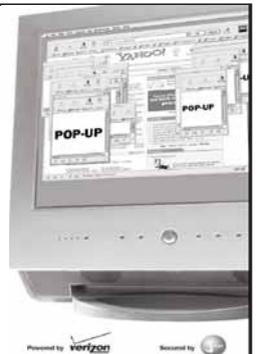
experts that will solve your problems fast.

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

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

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

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



THE REBBE HEARS

We present a compilation of four stories about the Rebbe that illustrate the theme that the Rebbe hears our requests and is involved, sometimes openly and sometimes obliquely, in helping us through our most difficult challenges.

By Chaim Cohen

NO MISTAKE

R' Zelig (a pseudonym) is a veteran shliach, one of the first shluchim in Eretz Yisroel. As was customary in the early days of shlichus, the shluchim would go to the Rebbe for Tishrei in alternate years. One year in the 80's, still in the era of the old shekel, R' Zelig took a loan from someone in order to be able to travel to the Rebbe. With a *heter iska* (a fee-based profit-sharing document to avoid interest), the cost inflated the "investment" way beyond R' Zelig's abilities to repay it.

About two months after his return from the Rebbe he didn't even have the wherewithal to buy food for the upcoming Shabbos. Thursday morning, when all options had been explored and his family wondered what would be, the phone rang. It was his mother-in-law who happily relayed the news that the Bubby abroad had sent them a check for

\$25 to mark a family celebration. "What should I do with the check?" she asked. "Should I change it for shekels and put it into your account?"

R' Zelig knew the answer to that with his eyes closed. No! The money would be swallowed up by the overdraft and he wouldn't be able to touch it. "I have another bank account. Please deposit the money there so we can enjoy the gift for this Shabbos," he said. He gave his mother-in-law the number of his other bank account.

Then he hurried to tell his wife that help had arrived, albeit on a small scale. The Rebbe does not remain in debt and takes care of his shluchim, with each one getting what's coming to them.

The money was deposited but when the mother-in-law had wanted to give her husband the other bank account number, he said he had the number written down already and he had deposited the check into the

other account. So their joy was premature. Since it was already Thursday evening when the banks were almost closing, R' Zelig dashed off to his branch to talk to the clerk and try to convince him to release the money anyway.

How surprised he was when the clerk asked him, "Do you want to withdraw all the money or do you want to put some aside in a savings account?" He didn't think the clerk was joking and time was pressing. The clerk asked him again and R' Zelig asked him what he was talking about.

It turned out that a government office had deposited a large sum of money into his bank account! Okay, we've heard stories like this and in the end it turned out it was a computer error. This is why R' Zelig said he had nothing to do with that office or with any government office. They didn't owe him any money and it was surely a clerical error. He asked the clerk to check again and to send the money to the right person. As for him, he wanted the shekel exchange for the \$25 his father-in-law had deposited.

The clerk went away for a moment and then returned with a personal check, handwritten, for R' Zelig's account. It could not be a computer error! When Zelig saw the check he knew who had sent it to him and he said so to the clerk. Although it was signed by a government office, he was sure he knew where it came from and for what purpose. However, Amalek has his ways of cooling off our excitement and he began to have his doubts. For the meantime, he refused to use the money until the story was verified. He asked for a much smaller sum so he could shop for

Shabbos, which in itself was a miracle for him.

As mentioned before, this was back in the days of the old shekel as well as the six-day workweek. The following morning, Erev Shabbos, he called that government office and asked to speak to a supervisor. After hearing what he had to say, she said: This is the first time in my life that I'm speaking to someone who received money and wants to return it! It belongs to you, the check is made out to you, and don't ask unnecessary questions!

Hooray! The amount covered the "loan" for his trip to the Rebbe with the heavy surcharges plus a bit more which gave him some breathing space for a while. Now, R' Zelig was ready to share his miracle story with his mekuravim about the check the Rebbe had sent him so he could pay for his ticket.

The Rebbe? But the check came from a government office! Yes, but it was made out for the sum of 770,000 (old) shekels!

IT HAPPENED ON YUD-ALEF NISSAN

Similar miracle stories happen in which sums of money, large and small, arrive at the last minute with a hint as to who the sender really is. To most readers, the sum of 369 shekels that arrives surprisingly at zero hour is not impressive, but when it is **exactly** the amount of money needed to get the gas turned back on and there was no other way of obtaining that money, it is just as much a miracle as a million shekels would be for someone in a high income bracket.

Aliza lives on a small, fixed income and she supports her family in dignity, although she must count and think about every

cent. It often happens that she doesn't have enough to cover her minimum needs. When it happened time after time, she thought about ways of earning more money, not to become wealthy but just to remain afloat.

Aliza is a talented woman in many areas and she advertised to work at events and simchas. In order to earn the money she needs, she needs to have people reserve her and it doesn't always happen. This is why there are months when she can breathe easy and other months when her income doesn't cover her expenses.

That is what happened one time when she needed 369 shekels to pay the gas bill and the company disconnected her. In her profession, with all the effort and desire to work she simply can't hire herself to work at an event and she was stuck. She asked the Rebbe to help her and waited, though not for long. She immediately received a call asking her to work at an event whose payment would cover her debt.

She happily called her mashpia to tell her the good news and to say that the Rebbe had answered her request. "I know that it's the Rebbe because the event is on Yud-Alef Nissan!"

ALL-CONSUMING FIRE

A few years ago, some shluchim took members of their community to a vacation spot nearby to celebrate Yom Tov together with the Jewish community. Considering that it was two days Yom Tov and the weather was unpredictable, they packed all kinds of clothing as well as plenty of food and loaded it all up. They locked the door of their home and set out in good spirits.

Yom Tov was enjoyable with farbrengens, t'fillos, and a general atmosphere of simcha. In this elevated state of mind they packed up, said goodbye and left for home.

The shlucha got out with her children while her husband unloaded their luggage. She smelled the acrid odor but did not yet realize that it was her house that had been on fire. She called for her husband and seconds later discovered that someone had set their house on fire in their absence. Words cannot describe their shock and horror. The news spread and members of the community came to help out.

The shliach went from room to room, choking on the smoke. The house had burned for the two days of Yom Tov and whatever hadn't been burned was unusable because of the smoke that permeated it. All the furniture, the clothing, the furnishings, the s'farim, all were ruined. All the windows had shattered in the tremendous heat. The pictures on the walls were destroyed except for a large picture of the Rebbe that remained intact.

Excited to see that despite the wreckage the Rebbe was still smiling at him, the shliach rushed over to the closet to check on the bundle of dollars he had received from the Rebbe. They were hidden together with all his important papers, passports, birth certificates and identity papers. He put his hand in the drawer and his heart sank. The documents were burned beyond recognition. He assumed the dollars that were next to the documents had shared the same fate but amazingly, they hadn't! They were in their original state!

It was only after firemen and the police carefully examined the house that they realized

the enormity of the miracle. The arsonist had intended on setting the house on fire with the inhabitants inside! He did not know that they had left for another city for Yom Tov on the Rebbe's shlichus. The Rebbe had saved his shluchim and had also sent them a message of consolation and encouragement by smiling at them from the intact picture and with the dollars that remained in perfect condition.

THE REBBE'S SMILE

In this last story we will sail to distant Australia and join two T'mimim, Yanky and Mendy who went on Merkaz Shlichus a few years ago to far flung towns on the continent and told the following miracle story to their friend Dovi Scheiner.

The bachurim lived on the Mitzva Tank for two months, enabling them to reach every Jew. One day, Yanky and Mendy drove up a mountain where two Jewish women lived in an isolated house. They were an old woman and her artist daughter. They moved there because of the air, which was good for the mother's health.

How surprised the bachurim were as soon as they walked in and saw an original oil painting of the Rebbe on the living room wall. They commented to the daughter who explained that she had once heard that in every generation there is one Jew who is the leader and who takes care of every Jew. She wondered who this man is in our generation and was given pictures and had painted his likeness.

She told the bachurim that some time ago she had to be away from home for three months and she looked for someone to live in the house with her mother and take care of her. A foreign



student studying there was the solution. He was happy to receive room and board in exchange for caring for her mother and she felt reassured and comfortable with her choice as she left on her trip.

Three months later she returned home and was happy to see that all was well. The student told her he planned on packing and leaving within the next few days.

A few days later, the daughter happened to mention to him that she and her mother were Jews. The student was furious and said he was from an anti-Semitic family and he despised Jews. He was beside himself for having stooped to help Jews.

She was frightened by his outburst of anger and hatred and shuddered at the thought of spending a night under the same roof as him. She knew that she had to get rid of him but since he would only be there for another day or two she let him stay on.

The student, filled with self-loathing for having helped a Jew for three months, poured gasoline all over the house, lit a match and left to watch what was to him the thrilling sight of Jews going up in flames.

The old mother, sensitive to impure air, immediately began coughing at the first smell of smoke and her daughter was woken up. That is how the two women were saved from certain death. They quickly exited the house and called the fire department. The house sustained much damage but their lives had been saved. The arsonist was arrested and sent back to his country of origin.

When the smoke dissipated, mother and daughter entered the house to ascertain the extent of the damage. Out of the blackness a face smiled at them from the wall of the living room. Yes, the painting the daughter had made of the Rebbe was intact. And they smiled back.

RETURN TO B'NEI YEHUDA

After a lengthy spiritual quest, Rabbi Yair Burstein began doing outreach activities on the Golan Heights settlement of B'nei Yehuda, close to where he was raised. He sees the help of Heaven every step of the way. An exemplary Chassid.

By Nosson Avrohom

Translated by Michael Leib Dobry

On our travels through the remote kibbutzim and moshavim of Eretz Yisroel, we come to the settlement of “B'nei Yehuda”, located in the southern Golan Heights. Most of the settlement’s residents are not Torah observant and have only one synagogue to serve them, but according to the local shliach, Rabbi **Yair Burstein**, the moshavnikim are thirsting to hear and internalize words of Torah. For the past four years, he has been involved in activities on this settlement since making his own journey from there along the path of Torah and mitzvos, thus closing a personal circle.

Today, the Rebbe’s presence is felt most prominently on this charming little yishuv, whether during Tanya classes, farbrengens, house visits, or the diverse range of activities with local children.

Rabbi Burstein was born in the central part of Eretz Yisroel, but he spent most of his early years on Moshav Neot

Golan, a settlement located near B'nei Yehuda. While living in his parents’ home, he was not educated according to the tenets of Jewish tradition, and his knowledge of Judaism was limited by tremendous ignorance. He remembers quite well the first time he put on t’fillin. It was during his military service on an engineering base with the IDF Northern Command. “My barmitzvah was a pleasant event. I learned trope and received an aliya to the Torah on Shabbos, without t’fillin of course. After the conclusion of the ceremony in synagogue, they threw lots of candies on me, and then the whole family traveled to a seaside restaurant in Herzliya.”

To make certain that other Jews don’t reach the level of ignorance and lack of awareness that he experienced, Rabbi Burstein assumed the responsibility to spread Yiddishkait on Moshav B'nei Yehuda. During the morning hours, he works as a member of

the faculty of the Ohr Menachem Chabad Talmud Torah in Tzfas, and during his free time, he performs at weddings and barmitzvahs as an organist. During the afternoon hours and on select days, he devotes himself, together with other avreichim, to the residents of B'nei Yehuda. The considerable distance from Tzfas, more than an hour by vehicle, does not deter him as he stringently maintains these regular activities, which have already met with great success. Numerous families live on the moshav who have now become quite familiar with concepts in Judaism and Chabad customs thanks to their outreach efforts.

CONTINUING ACTIVITIES

We asked to hear from Rabbi Burstein about how things got started, and he admits that this has been a progressing activity. “At first, the emphasis was placed on making farbrengens for auspicious chassidic days, such



The synagogue on Moshav B'nei Yehuda

THE EARLY DAYS OF MOSHAV B'NEI YEHUDA

Moshav 'B'nei Yehuda' was named after the old Jewish settlement of B'nei Yehuda. The first Jewish presence on the location was in 5647. Members of an association from Tzfas named 'B'nei Yehuda' purchased land from the village of Bir ash-Shakum with the assistance of Mr. Laurence Oliphant, for the purpose of establishing an agricultural settlement. The settlers were unable to endure the harsh conditions on the premises – weather conditions, the distance from other Jewish settlements, transportation difficulties, and the problems with arranging education for their children – and so they left.

In 5650, another attempt was made by ten families to return to the moshav, but they too came back to Tzfas within a short period of time. Another group of ten families arrived in 5658. Four abandoned the area shortly thereafter, while five families remained there until 5673. The last family, the Bernsteins, remained alone on the moshav. During the riots of 5680, Arabs murdered the mother of the family and one of the children. As a result, this family also left the settlement.

During the Six-Day War, the Israel Defense Forces re-conquered the Golan Heights, and in 5732, B'nei Yehuda was re-established, this time as a full-fledged moshav.

as Yud-Tes Kislev, Yud Shvat, Yud-Alef Nissan, and Chai Elul. I have already become a familiar figure in the moshav synagogue. After receiving the permission of the gabbaim, I would put up notices, call several families, bring a mashpia from Tzfas, a little 'farbaisén', and we would make a farbrengen. I found a group of Jews in B'nei Yehuda with a very warm feeling toward Yiddishkait, young baalei t'shuva or those who just want to get closer to their roots but have no one to give them some guidance.

"The activities took on considerably larger dimensions about two years ago. I brought the mashpia, Rabbi Asher Gershowitz, to the moshav for a farbrengen on Chai Elul. His words had a powerful effect upon those in attendance. They related to the messages he conveyed, and each person left with a good resolution to strengthen his connection to the teachings of chassidus. At this particular farbrengen, I also made a good resolution of my own. For some

time, I had wanted to start a Tanya class on the moshav, but the matter kept getting delayed one week after another. This was largely due to various difficult logistical reasons, fundraising, organizational needs, etc.

"I decided to take the plunge, and the shiur has taken place on a weekly basis ever since. During the week after the farbrengen, I put up a notice in the 'Heichal Levi Yitzchak' Synagogue of Kiryat Chabad – Tzfas, requesting anyone who can give over a Tanya class to join this shlichus. Rabbi Nitzan Garzi approached me and agreed to teach a regular Tanya shiur in B'nei Yehuda. I put up announcements all over the settlement, collected the necessary funds, and we were on our way. We started with ten participants, five coming to the class on a regular basis, and in terms of this moshav, that was a pretty respectable turnout. During the initial period, Rabbi Garzi traveled there by himself, while I raised the money until I



Rabbi Yair Burstein engaged in Tzivos Hashem activities with the local children

decided to join him. Thus, while he gave over his Tanya class, I conducted house visits.

“I came equipped with informational brochures on mezuzos, Moshiach, and concepts in chassidus, and I started going door to door. In this manner, I established connections with families, and I didn’t rest until I reached every house on the settlement.

“I had the privilege of spending the Shavuot holiday two years ago in 770 with the Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach, and I wrote via ‘Igros Kodesh’ about our activities. The answer I received dealt with work in education with children. At first, I didn’t think that the Rebbe was talking about the children on the moshav, as this would be no simple matter. I started working with children in the Tzfas community, but I quickly realized that I was not

fulfilling the Rebbe’s instructions.

“Then one day, a woman living on the settlement came to me with a question/suggestion: ‘Why do you conduct activities only with the adults? Come and work with the children, and I’m prepared to let you use my home for the activities!’ I felt that Heaven was pushing me in this direction. Thus, the first activity I did with the local children was the Lag B’Omer parade, and it proved so successful that people spoke about it for days afterwards. Later, we organized a series of children’s activities for the holiday of Shavuot.

“Exactly one year after the bracha and direction I had received from the Rebbe, things really started to fall into place. We held a big Shavuot rally with many participants, where we announced the weekly activities taking place in this woman’s

home. The resulting schedule was that when Rabbi Garzi gave over his Tanya class, the children and I gathered together for activities with a touch of Jewish creativity, practical meaning from the weekly Torah portion, and stories about the Rebbe. In addition, on special chassidic dates, we based the activities on the essence of the auspicious day at hand. Don’t be surprised if you ask a child on the moshav about the Rebbe Rayatz or the story of his imprisonment and redemption, he gives an answer as if he was from a Chabad family receiving his education in a Talmud Torah.”

CLOSING THE CIRCLE

Rabbi Burstein’s activities on the B’nei Yehuda settlement represent a marvelous example of personal closure. He was born in Raanana, moved with his family to Kfar Saba and Ariel, and eventually settled in Moshav “Neot Golan”, not far from B’nei Yehuda.

One of the strongest Jewish memories from his childhood was his bar-mitzvah. Not because it was such a powerful experience, but because it was the only Jewish experience he had during his youth. “My father paid someone to teach me the trope and I had an aliya to the Torah.

“But even at my bar-mitzvah, I didn’t have the privilege of putting on t’fillin. The first time I put on t’fillin was during my military service on an engineering base in Tzfas. R’ Rafi Shoval, a Chabad chassid who was staying on the base as part of his army reserve duty, ‘hooked on’ to me and two other good friends of mine. We would pass the long hours on our shifts doing guard duty asking various questions on Judaism, and he would answer them simply and directly. I felt

that I found someone who spoke from the heart. I was used to hearing cynical and phony talk, and here I met a Jew who could look at me straight in the eye and say what he thinks and what he believes without politicizing the issue. At our very first encounter, he discussed the Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach, and his leadership, and this really spoke to me. While I did have some previous knowledge of the Lubavitcher Rebbe from all of his pictures that I had seen at virtually every junction in northern Eretz Yisroel, this marked the first time that I understood about him a bit more in depth.

“He asked me if I would like to put on t’fillin, and I agreed to do so – for the first time in my life. I was very moved by the experience. Eventually, my two friends and I became Chabad chassidim, but I would need to go through another couple of episodes before coming to the path of truth.

“Upon my release from the IDF, I took my discharge grant and bought a car. One night on an Erev Shabbos, near the Tzemach Junction on the southern shore of the Sea of Galilee, I veered off the road, and the car traveling from behind hit me with such force that my car was totally wrecked. It was only by a miracle that I escaped the accident without a scratch. My friend with me in the car was slightly injured. When I looked at the car, I couldn’t believe how I got out alive. The traffic inspector who surveyed the accident site also responded with amazement, determining that I had been saved by a tremendous stroke of good fortune.

When I reached home late that night, my mother asked me to go to the synagogue at the nearby



Rabbi Nitzan Garzi gives over a class in Tanya in the moshav synagogue

“I came equipped with informational brochures on mezuzos, Moshiach, and concepts in chassidus, and I started going door to door. In this manner, I established connections with families, and I didn’t rest until I reached every house on the settlement.

moshav of B’nei Yehuda and say *‘Birkas HaGomel’* to thank G-d for the miracle. What was *‘Birkas HaGomel’*? I didn’t have the slightest idea, but my mother urged me and I walked the next morning to the synagogue. All the way there, I was deeply embittered and heartbroken that my car had gone to the junkyard and my friend had been injured – all because I should have more careful. When I arrived at the synagogue, they explained to me when I am supposed to make the bracha. I did and then headed back to Neot Golan.

“In the synagogue, I thought about the marvelously calming feeling I experienced there and decided to return several more times, which I did. While I was not Shabbos observant, I went each Shabbos morning to the synagogue and prayed according to my level of knowledge and understanding. Not long afterwards, I moved to Raanana, the city of my birth. I rented an apartment and entered the working world.

“In addition, I joined a rock band, making public performances and recording

songs. My time was quite full, and there was never a dull moment. However, it didn't take long before I realized that this just wasn't it. There must be something deeper and more profound, something to satisfy my inner thirst and feeling of spiritual emptiness. The last person to provide this real feeling of calm and genuine tranquility, and spoke about things in their truest sense, was R' Rafi Shoval, with whom I continued to remain in touch from time to time. It was quite natural for me to call him and let him know that something had awakened deep within me, so deep that I failed to understand it.

"He heard me, knew what I felt, and invited me to spend Shabbos at his home in Tzfas. I accepted without hesitation, and I arrived in Tzfas on the following Friday afternoon. That Shabbos changed the course of my life.

"I took part in the davening and farbrengens in the community. The feeling of brotherhood and friendship truly amazed me. For the first time in my life, I participated in a farbrengen with the mashpia, Rabbi Ofer Meidovnik, who greeted me warmly and enthusiastically. I didn't immediately grasp the strong connection that existed among the people there. I came from a place where if a person displayed a feeling of affection for someone whom he doesn't know, he obviously has some sort of problem... Here, I saw that while he didn't know me, I still felt that he really loved me, without any deception. Thus, yet another aspect in the world of the Chassidim had been revealed to me and captured my imagination.

"After that Shabbos, R' Rafi connected me with the Chabad

House in Raanana, run by Rabbi Eliyahu Shadmi, where I joined Rabbi Yair Calev's Tanya class and participated in the last shiur given by Rabbi Reuven Dunin before his passing. I'll never forget how Rabbi Dunin asked Rabbi Shadmi in my presence, 'So where should we send him?' The two of them decided that the yeshiva in Ramat Aviv would be an appropriate place for me, and they did so without even filling me in or asking what I thought... However, at this stage, I was like a freight train that would stop for nothing. I soon met other Chassidim such as R' Yitzchak Simantov, R' Liraz Benisti, and they had a tremendous influence on me, each in his own way. That year on Shabbos B'Reishis, I came to the yeshiva in Ramat Aviv for a visit – which lasted two years.

"In 5765, I went to learn for a year on 'k'vutza' in Beis Chayeinu. After my return to Eretz Yisroel, I got married, and my wife and I established our residence in the Chabad community of Tzfas.

"Similar to most other Chabad couples, we looked for a place to go out on shlichus. Initially, I thought that I would engage in activities on Moshav Neot Golan, the place where I was raised and where my parents still lived, but for various reasons, this proved difficult. I started my activities in B'nei Yehuda, and today they are concentrated in the very synagogue where I recited 'Birkas HaGomel' and began the process of my journey to traditional Judaism."

PEOPLE SEARCHING FOR TRUTH, DEPTH, AND INNER MEANING

Rabbi Burstein describes the

great openness through which people hear about Yiddishkeit and chassidus. It seems that in recent years, all the stereotypes have vanished, and many people search after the truth, depth, and inner meaning. "If just a few years ago, I could be embarrassed to suggest to people, for example, that they should write to the Rebbe via 'Igros Kodesh', today it's a trend. Many people hear about this, and they ask without the need for you to suggest anything," says Rabbi Burstein. "This year on Chamisha-Asar B'Shvat, I made my regular weekly visit to the home where we conduct our activities with children, and while the children were busy drawing, the owner of the house came over and asked if she could write to the Rebbe.

"Ever since we first became acquainted and she became exposed to the whole concept of Igros Kodesh, she has bought several volumes. She had a question that was troubling her, and she asked me if I could help her write a letter to the Rebbe, which I gladly did. At the beginning of her letter, she mentioned Chamisha-Asar B'Shvat and her assistance to local Chabad activities. Naturally, she gave tz'daka and made all the necessary spiritual preparations. When she opened the volume of 'Igros Kodesh', we stood there positively astounded. The letter was dated the 15th of Shvat 5733. The Rebbe wrote about the importance of a Jew making a vessel to contain the spiritual blessing that G-d gives us with His holy and open hand. At the conclusion of the letter, which was addressed to a woman, the Rebbe wrote that she should tell her husband to check his t'fillin and the mezuzos of their home.

"She was absolutely stunned by the Rebbe's strengthening

words, and no less by the fact that the date of the Rebbe's reply was identical to the date of her own letter. Her husband was at the Tanya class in the moshav synagogue, and when the shiur was over, I told him about the Rebbe's answer and how he had to check his t'fillin and the mezuzos. His response was so straightforward that it moved me deeply. 'If that's what the Rebbe said, then I'll give everything over to be checked right away', he said quite simply, despite the fact that he had just bought new mezuzos only a few months earlier.

"I brought everything to be checked, and the results came soon afterwards. The mezuzos were borderline kosher, and the parchments of the t'fillin shel rosh were smudged, i.e., pasul. When I called him with the results, he was overcome with emotion. He told me that as of late, he had been suffering terrible headaches, and now he understands why. Naturally, I bought him a kosher pair of t'fillin and new mezuzos, and from that moment on, his nagging headaches completely disappeared."

STORIES OF THE SOUL

When we ask about the successes he has had in his shlichus, Rabbi Burstein tells us about an incident that occurred just this past Shabbos. 'Rabbi Nadav Cohen, one of the more prominently active members on the staff of the Ascent Institute in Tzfas, was at our home. He told me about a family from Moshav B'nei Yehuda that had been their guests for a recent Shabbos. He looked at them and knew that they looked familiar to him, but he didn't remember from where. Then, it suddenly hit him: Three years ago, I had invited him to make a farbrengen

on the moshav, and the father of this family, Tamir, had come to take part. At the time, he was not considered Torah observant, but since then, he has become a regular participant in all our activities. Today, the family has come much closer to traditional Judaism, and their daughter has enrolled in a school on the religious Golan settlement of Chispin. Rabbi Cohen was overwhelmed when he realized the great change that had taken place in the family, but as a shliach who is on the moshav each week, I don't always see things from such a perspective.

"There's a young man named Asaf who doesn't miss any of our Torah classes. He works as a schoolteacher in Katzrin, and whatever he hears and learns in these shiurim, he gives over to his students. On several occasions, he described the thirst these children had for Torah and mitzvos. Another teacher once sent me regards from him, revealing that Asaf had recently begun wearing tzitzis. Nu, after so many Tanya classes, it's clear that it should have some practical effect upon him..."

"As I mentioned, there exists an intense longing for spirituality under the surface, even if people don't admit it or refer to it as some sort of trend. Today, there's no real opposition. I've personally never encountered any signs of resistance. On the contrary, people whom I previously thought would not display any interest, now do so without any embarrassment.

"Recently, I experienced an amazing case of Divine Providence. There was a family whose home I entered on one of my standard house visits. They didn't know a thing about Judaism. When I came in, the



The upshernish of the shliach's son

“I can assure you that no one on Moshav B'nei Yehuda will be surprised when the Rebbe comes and redeems us.

mother called out, 'Did you come for the mezuzos?' At first, I didn't understand what she wanted from me. When she realized that I didn't know what she meant, she asked if I was from Chispin. 'No,' I replied, 'I'm a Chabad chassid.' She then told me that she had been in touch with the religious settlement of Chispin for some time in search of mezuzos. They always promise that they will send someone, yet no one ever comes, and here I come in at just the right time..."

SO THAT THEY TOO WILL UNDERSTAND

Rabbi Burstein calls upon his fellow Chassidim not to worry or to wait, but to go out on shlichus. He promises that in the field of

Continued on page 35

HALACHA, NOW AND FOREVER

In a sicha from Shavuot 5751, the Rebbe explains that even in the Time to Come, when commandments for mitzva observance won't be necessary, halacha won't change. We present shlichus stories that illustrate the positive results of careful mitzva observance.

By Rabbi Yaakov Shmuelevitz

Shliach, Beit Shaan

Rabbi Eliezer Shmuelevitz, shliach in Ohr Akiva for over 20 years, relates:

In the years 5750-5752 it was common practice for shluchim to suggest to the mayor of their city that he send a "key to the city" to the Rebbe. The municipality of Ohr Akiva was also willing to do so. I was the one who presented the key to the Rebbe at "dollars," on behalf of the city. The Rebbe told me that "when you give a key, you are conveying ownership of the city and from now on, all matters concerning the city must be run as I say. And whatever I say is according to Shulchan Aruch and when everything is according to Shulchan Aruch, this brings bracha and success in all matters of the city."

CELEBRATING A BAR MITZVA ON A WEEKDAY

Sometimes, the shluchim need

to invent takanos and customs so that things go according to halacha. R' Sagi Har Shefer, shliach in Nes Tziyona, told me:

When we came to Nes Tziyona 20 years ago, nearly all bar mitzva celebrations took place on shul on Shabbos with relatives coming from all over the country, apparently not on foot ... To my shock, professional photos were taken of the family outside and inside the shul! Every so often, during the davening, you could hear the clicks of cameras.

In order to prevent mass Shabbos desecration, we convinced all bar mitzva boys and their parents to make the celebration on Monday or Thursday and not on Shabbos (some rabbanim recommend postponing a Shabbos bris to Sunday since otherwise, there is no room in the shul parking lot for all the guests). Today, more

than half of the boys celebrate in shul on a weekday.

R' Har Shefer and the Chabad house staff's approach is to explain to the parents that it is much nicer to celebrate on a weekday because then they can photograph the entire event and more relatives can attend, etc.

One time though, it didn't work out too well, at least at first. The parents of a bar mitzva boy asked R' Har Shefer to prepare their son for the big event. He explained to the parents that it was preferable to celebrate on a weekday. The uncle got involved and he told the father that the rabbi didn't care about how nice the event is; his only concern was to prevent chilul Shabbos. When the boy's father heard this he began to shout, "No way are we doing this on a weekday. It will take place on Shabbos!" His wife managed to calm him down and to arrange the event as R' Har

Shefer wanted it.

In the end, it really was very nice. The father thanked R' Har Shefer for his idea of celebrating on a weekday and till this day he is considered one of the closest friends of the Chabad house in Nes Tziyona.

R' Har Shefer tells us another anecdote about being careful regarding halacha which led to favorable results:

A few years ago there was a dynamic guy in Nes Tziyona who worked for the Chabad house and guided and taught all the bar mitzva boys and their families. In my opinion he went a little too far. He taught every boy to prepare negel vasser near his bed, to say Modeh Ani, not to talk before saying Modeh Ani, not to speak after HaMapil, and so on and so forth. At a certain point I told him that I think it's too much.

One day a father of a bar mitzva boy called and yelled at R' Har Shefer. "What are you doing to my son? You've made him crazy! Suddenly he's not talking at night, not talking in the morning, preparing water near his bed ..." Apparently, R' Har Shefer knew what to say because today the boy is learning in a Chabad yeshiva!

WHEN TZITZIS SAVED THE DAY

A fellow traveled to India and being from a well-to-do family, he rented a spacious apartment, bought furniture and appliances and anything he could possibly need. One day, he returned to his apartment to find it had been burglarized and emptied out. There was no food, no clothes, no furnishings, no pots, no money, no documents. They had brought a truck and carted



The Rebbe told me that "when you give a key, you are conveying ownership of the city and from now on, all matters concerning the city must be run as I say. And whatever I say is according to Shulchan Aruch and when everything is according to Shulchan Aruch, this brings bracha and success in all matters of the city."

everything away.

He called his father and told him what happened and asked him what to do. His father said – in India there is a Chabad house and the Chabadnikim are known to be hospitable so go there for a few days until I arrive. I'll bring money and we'll buy whatever you need.

So the guy spent a few days at the Chabad house. Having nothing else to do, he joined the t'fillos and some shiurim. One of the things he learned is that every Jew ought to adopt a mitzva that is special to them and do it regularly. He liked the idea and he committed to wearing tzitzis. He didn't display them but he wore them, day and night.

His father arrived a few days later and was astounded to see his son wearing tzitzis. His son explained what the Lubavitchers had taught him. As arranged, they shopped for whatever he needed and the father returned to Eretz Yisroel and the son went back to his activities.

One day, in the middle of work, he realized he wasn't wearing his tzitzis. Without thinking twice he told the workers that he had to go home and get something he forgot. As he approached the house he saw a truck parked nearby and a band of thieves loading it with everything his generous father had bought him. He immediately called the police who came and

arrested the merry band. It was assumed these were the same men and the same truck as in the first robbery. The police went to their hideaway and found all the stolen goods, returned it all to him and even thanked him for his help in apprehending them.

He called his father and told him about what happened thanks to his commitment to wearing tzitzis. His father was very happy but that is only the beginning of the story.

One day, he called his mother (who in the meantime had gotten divorced and married a member of the virulently anti-religious HaShomer HaTzair kibbutz movement, and lived on the kibbutz and didn't exactly keep all Chabad customs, if you know what I mean ...) and told her he had met a girl, a local non-Jew, he wanted to marry. His mother was adamantly against the marriage and warned him that if he married her, she and his father would cut off ties with him.

His mother called her ex-husband and told him the terrible news. "What do you care if she's not Jewish?" asked her former husband. "You're living on that kibbutz where they aren't exactly religious, you know."

The son called his father to ascertain whether he really would excommunicate him. His father said he wouldn't actually cut ties "but what do you need this gentile woman for?" That

A LITTLE HOT AIR NEVER HURT

As I wrote not long ago, every Chabad house looks for some attraction or surprise for Lag B'Omer to excite the children and bring them en masse to the parade. One year, we held a raffle for a ride in a hot-air balloon. The owner of the balloon lives on a kibbutz near Beit Shaan. Every morning, when I drive my children to the Chabad schools in the area, I see him up in his balloon. One day it occurred to me that it would be a great gimmick for Lag B'Omer. I looked up the address of the man and met with him and got a price. I designed fliers and all of Beit Shaan was excited. The kids were looking forward to winning the raffle and riding up in the sky.

The hot-air balloon was not part of the parade. We arranged that whoever won the raffle would have to go to that kibbutz the next morning at 6:30 AM for his ride. On the colorful flier the balloon was prominently positioned so that if someone didn't read the text clearly, he could think that the balloon would be part of the parade.

Someone asked me – you don't think people will be angry at you? You are advertising a hot-air balloon and in the end, hundreds of kids won't even see it. Just one child will win and even then, it will be the next day, in the morning, at some kibbutz.

I told him a story that I had just heard the week before. A man wanted to sell a donkey and he found someone who was interested in buying it. The customer paid 500 coins and the seller told him, "Tomorrow, you will get the donkey." The next day the buyer came for the donkey but the seller sadly said that it had died. "So give me back my money," said the man.

"I can't do that because I already spent it."

"So at least give me the carcass."

"What do you need the carcass for?"

"That's none of your business. I paid, at least give me the carcass."

A week later the seller and buyer met. The seller asked the buyer, "Nu, what did you do with the carcass?"

"I made a profit of 4490 coins!"

"Really? How did you do that?"

The buyer told him that he had advertised a raffle for a donkey and each ticket cost 10 coins. 500 people bought raffles and that's how he got 5000 coins.

"Weren't they mad at you for raffling off a dead donkey?"

"Not at all, because they didn't win. Only one person won and he was a bit angry so I returned his ten coins and all was well.

But at Beit Shaan nobody became angry. They all enjoyed the wonderful parade. They saw a video of the Rebbe, received Jewish books, marched, got ices, and watched a puppet show. A girl won the raffle along with five other children who won raffles in Chadera, Kfar Tavor, Afula and Beer Sheva.

did nothing to dissuade his son but then the father remembered the tzitzis. "What are you going to do when this woman sees you wearing tzitzis?"

The son said she would never see it and if she did, she wouldn't understand what it was anyway, and even if she did understand, he would tell her that it was from Lubavitchers who had helped him.

In India, as you might know, it's very hot and humid. One day, it was hotter than usual and our wayward fellow took off his shirt, leaving the tzitzis on. Just then, the woman walked into the room and asked him what was that garment with the threads. He tried to explain that it was nothing, just a Jewish garment.

"What?! You're Jewish? Why didn't you tell me before? All you told me was that you are from Israel. You didn't say you are Jewish!"

She was mad and she left the house and never came back. So the tzitzis saved him.

The father told this story to a Lubavitcher in Tzfas and that is how we all know yet another story that illustrates the impact of the Rebbe on every Jew.

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

UNVEIL YOUR EYES!

By Rabbi Heschel Greenberg,

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

ZOHAR AND ULTIMATE PEACE

This week's parsha describes in vivid detail all of the great blessings G-d offers us for our devotion to the study of Torah and the observance of its commandments. One of the blessings that stands out is, "I will grant peace in the land, and you will go to sleep with nothing frightening you. I will eliminate wild animals from the Land and swords will not pass through your Land."

Rashi explains that the last blessing implies that an army will not even pass through our land to wage war elsewhere. So pervasive will the peace be that even the mere image of war will be removed from our sight. This is reminiscent of the famous Biblical prophecy of "turning swords into plowshares."

This Torah reading always coincides with the Festival of Lag B'Omer—which we will be observing this Sunday—marking the passing of the great Sage Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, the author of the Zohar, the principal work of Kabbalah.

WAR AND PEACE WITHIN TORAH

The connection between the Zohar and the emphasis on absolute peace that we read about in this week's parsha is that in Torah there are also two dimensions. There is a dimension

of Torah that is engaged in war and a dimension of Torah that is entirely peaceful.

There are the legal aspects of Torah that deal with the realities and exigencies of life in an imperfect, discordant and even violent world. Torah addresses the world, the way it is now and not the way it will be in the future Messianic Age. Torah speaks to human frailty and decadence. In doing so, it serves a dual purpose. First, it teaches us how to avoid getting ensnared into the impurities and vagaries of the material world and its vices. The laws of the Torah are meant first and foremost, to guide us through the labyrinth of undesirable paths that lead to self-destruction.

Secondly, as explained in Kabbalah and Chassidic teachings, engaging our minds in these Divine teachings that discuss worldly affairs and even evil, has the capacity to improve and refine the world. The Torah, by design, is commissioned by its Divine Author to "enter into" the lowliest precincts of life to help release the sparks of holiness that are held captive by the physical world. These sparks, we are told, emanate from a higher reality, but have "fallen" into and become trapped by, the constraints of the physical world. Indeed, the most potent of these sparks are deeply embedded in those things that are associated with evil and cannot ordinarily be liberated.

When dealing with neutral



objects and experiences we can liberate the sparks by simply utilizing them for a higher purpose. We liberate the sparks of holiness in food by eating kosher food, with a blessing recited before and after, utilizing the energy to do good. The question, however, can be raised, how can we access and liberate the sparks in those objects and behaviors that are proscribed by the Torah?

THREE METHODS OF MINING

There are actually three ways that enable us to "mine" and harness the incredible and explosive power that is embedded within evil.

The first approach to releasing the sparks contained in evil is limited to the person who has **already** transgressed by acting upon his or her impulse or spirit of rebelliousness. When this sinner begins to experience intense remorse for having distanced himself or herself from G-d, he or she arouses unprecedented feelings of love and passion for G-d. Our Sages tell us (Talmud, Yoma 86b) that T'shuva (usually translated as repentance, but more precisely as return) that is motivated by love has the capacity to actually transform one's sins into virtues. The rationale for this given in Chassidic texts (Tanya, chapter 7) is that the very energy that they

invested in and derived from their undesirable behavior has now become the engine and fuel that transforms sinners into righteous people who now possess even greater passion for G-d than those who never sinned.

In the terminology of Kabbalah, the erstwhile sinner can actually access the heretofore-inaccessible sparks of holiness. To be sure, one may never deliberately sin so he or she can later return and acquire the benefits only available to the Baal T'shuva (the returnee to Judaism), as the Talmud (Yoma 85b) states: "One who says, 'I will sin and then repent' is not given the opportunity to repent."

THE POWER OF RESISTANCE

The second approach to liberating the sparks of holiness embedded in evil for those who toe the line and do not sin is the very act of resisting the temptations of evil. The energy required of us to conquer our own impulses and passions enables us to excavate even these ensconced sparks of Divine energy that are otherwise off limits. Each of these modes of shunning and breaking evil is the straightforward and conventional way of accessing some of the positive energy that lies latent in the objects and actions that are associated with evil.

EXCAVATION BY WAY OF TORAH STUDY

The third approach to liberating the hidden sparks of

holiness embedded in evil which is available to all is to study the teachings of the Torah that deal with these forms of evil. For example, when we learn what the Torah has to say about theft we are given the power to unleash the hidden sparks of good held hostage to evil. And when we release the sparks, the evil actions lose their potency. Little by little, evil loses its ability to hold sway over us.

This third method highlights the power of the revealed parts of the Torah that deal with the lowliest aspects of life.

TRANSCENDING EVIL AND WAR

There is, however, a higher dimension of Torah; its spiritual and mystical dimension which deals with G-dly matters. In this Torah genre there is virtually no getting into the mind of evil. Even the innocuous style of questions and answers, debates and arguments that punctuate the revealed parts of the Torah hardly occur in the teachings of Kabbalah and Chassidus. This phenomenon points to the utterly peaceful and serene facet of Torah.

These two dimensions parallel the two states of war and peace. As stated, when we study the legal aspects of Torah it gives us the strength to deal with the hardships and struggles of life. It takes us into the "war zone" and provides us with the "ammunition" and wherewithal to cope with it and even help to vanquish evil.

When we study the spiritual

dimension of Torah, by contrast, it helps us cultivate and nurture the part of our soul that is above and beyond the harsh realities of life—the peaceful and tranquil G-dly dimension of our identities. When we delve into this aspect of Torah we get a taste of the future Messianic state of peace and tranquility, in the face of which evil just evaporates. There is no need to deal with evil. There is no war. Moreover, even the image of war—represented by an armed force traveling through our land to fight elsewhere—is conspicuously absent.

This explains why the spiritual teachings of the Zohar and Chassidut are considered the means to bring about the Messianic Age, at which time we will see the fruition of the blessings of unmitigated peace. By studying these mystical teachings that help us cultivate the inner workings of our soul we help bring about the time when G-d's Essence will be fully revealed, in its wake there is only peace.

This day of Lag B'Omer, the anniversary of the passing of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, is the day that these spiritual teachings of Torah are more readily accessible to us. It was on that day over 1,800 ago that he revealed some of the most profound teachings of the Zohar and bequeathed those teachings to us.

GAL B'OMER

The word "Lag" (in Lag B'Omer) stands for the number 33 because this day is the 33rd day in our count of 49 days from the second day of Passover to the Festival of Shavuot.

However, the same number can be represented by the word *Gal*, which means "unveil,"

 **There are actually three ways that enable us to "mine" and harness the incredible and explosive power that is embedded within evil.**

and alludes to the verse (Psalm 119:18) in which King David, the ancestor of Moshiach, declares: “Unveil my eyes, that I may behold wonders from Your Torah.” King David’s prayer was for G-d to remove the obstacles that would not allow him to access the spiritual dimension of Torah—its wonders. And while King David was well versed in the laws of the Torah, he wanted to experience the spiritual

dimension of Torah as well.

Twenty years ago the Rebbe spoke to us about the need to prepare for the coming of Moshiach at which time the wonders of Torah will be fully revealed. In one of his talks, the Rebbe exhorted us to, “open our eyes” as our way of bringing Moshiach. The Rebbe seemed to be alluding—among other interpretations—to King David’s prayer and the theme

of Lag/Gal B’Omer—that we do our part to open our eyes to the spiritual teachings of Torah. This will enable us to rise above the evil associated with and dominant in galut/exile. Thereby we will usher in the Messianic Age and the true and complete Redemption, at which time we will experience eternal peace and the transformation of evil into good and darkness into light.

OBITUARY

Continued from page 13

reached hundreds of thousands of Russian immigrants. In his humility he made sure that his name was not mentioned in them.

He became sick after Pesach 5770 and suffered greatly. Nevertheless, he maintained a joyful aura which was an inseparable part of his personality.

He kept working, making phone calls and continuing to edit *Sichat HaShavua* in Russian. He worked until he was hospitalized.

In recent weeks his condition deteriorated. A few days before he died he wanted to have an event in honor of Adar in the hospital. He called his friend R’ Aharon Pruss of Tzach and guided him in how to organize a “performance” like he used to do – which microphone to use, which songs to sing, and he even asked him to bring hamantashen.

R’ Meir told his family that he would attend the event despite his condition which required him to remain in bed and said that at the event he would sit in a chair. Unfortunately, he passed away on 12 Adar I before the event took place. He was 63.

He is survived by his wife Sarah and his children Tzipora Garelik – Moscow; Yosef – Moscow; Ruth Ashkenazi – Nachalat Har Chabad; Itta Gewirtz – Nachalat Har Chabad; Mendy – Nachalat Har Chabad.

SHLICHUS

Continued from page 29

shlichus, they will find people with their minds and hearts open to Judaism. “You’ll come across many Jews who have been waiting for the moment to quench their thirst for Yiddishkai.” The feeling of satisfaction is tremendous. You don’t have to live on the settlement; you can continue your regular work while you connect Jews to the Rebbe and bring them closer to a life of Torah and mitzvos. Rabbi Burstein emphasizes that he feels how the Rebbe accompanies him every step of the way.

“Every time we hold a farbrengen and we bring a special

guest mashpia to the moshav, I call numerous residents to invite them personally. Before the last farbrengen, I felt a sense of gloominess. Why do I have to invest so much time and effort calling people who never come to our events? I considered not calling them altogether and concentrated only on those whom I knew would probably come. As the farbrengen approached, I settled somehow for leaving SMS messages. But the Rebbe thought otherwise, as many new faces appeared at this farbrengen that I had never seen before. ‘You’ve been ‘nudging’ us for the longest time, and now we’ve decided that we have to come,’ they told me. There was no doubt in my mind

whatsoever that I have to get back to work making phone calls...”

How are your activities permeated with publicizing Moshiach and the Redemption?

“I can assure you that no one on Moshav ‘B’nei Yehuda’ will be surprised when the Rebbe comes and redeems us. The subject receives a high rate of publicity. We constantly proclaim ‘Yechi Adoneinu’. At the Torah classes and farbrengens, we speak about these issues while stringently making certain that the ‘lights of Tohu’ are contained within ‘vessels of Tikkun’. It’s not enough to listen and believe. I also want them to understand.”

WHEN THE LEFT HAND IS RIGHT

By A. Shlucha

When we went on shlichus it was a given that we would go to the Rebbe every other Tishrei. You cannot stay far away from the Rebbe for too long. In the early years it went like clockwork – one year we went and the following year we stayed with the k'hilla. When the family grew, boruch Hashem, it was no longer so simple and for financial reasons too. At a certain point my husband and I began taking turns going.

When it was a Shnas Hakhel in 5741 we took the whole family. When the Shnas Hakhel 5748 was coming up, we knew what we had to do – take everybody to the Rebbe like we did the previous time. However, obstacles arose. For various reasons we were unable to travel, and not only that but we also had to cancel our tickets, to our great disappointment.

On Chol HaMoed Sukkos of that year, when we heard the sichos via broadcast, we heard the Rebbe talk about those who hadn't yet arrived for Hakhel. We ate our hearts out. We had done all we could do and way beyond that, and it hadn't helped. The bitter taste of missing out is what remained.

At this time, a group of us women from the north had occasion to travel to the south of the country. On the long trip we had plenty of time to talk and we concluded that we hadn't arranged a regional Kinus in a long time (these regional

gatherings of N'shei Chabad was our initiative and they continue till today). We began planning the program and I threw out an idea. Maybe we should have a raffle of a ticket to the Rebbe?

They liked the idea and we all got busy. The committees were picked and all worked hard to ensure the success of the regional Hakhel.

On the eve of the Kinus I was given the job of welcoming the guests, having people sign their names for the pidyon nefesh for the Rebbe, and selling raffles for a ticket to the Rebbe. When each woman walked in, I smiled and offered her a raffle. I had the nerve to ask every one of them whether she wholeheartedly agreed that I should win! They all nodded their agreement and laughed at my peculiar idea. They thought I was joking because who could say who would win the raffle? But I was quite serious about it.

You might find this hard to believe but that evening I left the hall with a ticket that I had won! My dream come true. I figured that even if I hadn't been to 770 for Tishrei, at least I would "chap arain" something in Hakhel. The ladies danced with me after I won and I floated out the door until I got into the car that took me home.

On the way home, my joy turned to sadness. Here I was about to enter my house and announce to my husband (the



children were sleeping) that I had won and was going to the Rebbe, but he also wanted to go. How could I be happy about winning when he couldn't go?

I arrived home and found my husband farbrenging with a good friend. I told him the news and as he said l'chaim he made a decision to go l'chat'chilla aribber and order tickets for the entire family.

We arranged the tickets so that we could celebrate the bas mitzva of our oldest daughter with the Rebbe and spend Yud-Tes Kislev and Chanuka there.

At that time, the Rebbe was giving out coins for tz'daka to children before davening. I decided I had to take the children every morning, a little before 10:00 and stand with them on line. This was hard to do since I had two babies and acrobatics is not one of my strong suits.

My husband left the house early for mikva and to learn



“ At that time, the Rebbe was giving out coins for tz’daka to children before davening. I decided I had to take them but this was hard to do since I had two babies and acrobatics is not one of my strong suits.

To my surprise, the Rebbe turned to his left hand (which was not ready to receive a coin) and put the coin in his left hand. R’ Leibel Groner was stunned since he knew that it is customary to put the coin in the right hand (unless the child is a leftie).

The next day, the same thing happened with the Rebbe looking for the baby’s left hand and putting the coin in it. In the days that followed I put out the baby’s left hand.

I can tell you a lot about all the *giluyim* I experienced in those three weeks. The main thing is that we returned to our shlichus with tremendous resources, which we still haven’t depleted, and with lots of energy to continue spreading the Rebbe’s teachings.

More than two years later it was time for his haircut on Lag B’Omer. Since Lag B’Omer came out on a Sunday that year, we knew there would be a parade in Crown Heights. We wanted him to get his haircut by the Rebbe, at the parade, and we quickly decided that my husband would go with our son.

The events of that Lag B’Omer – *Tehei Shnas Nissim* –

are written up in the Yomanim of “Beis Chayenu,” and much was told about the special parade, the last one in which we saw the Rebbe.

In the evening, after the parade, when our son had his haircut already with peios, the Rebbe began giving out dollars after Maariv. My husband passed by, holding our son. R’ Groner stood on the side, making sure nobody would linger near the Rebbe. When it was my husband’s turn, he helped our son hold out his right hand so it would go quickly, but the Rebbe turned to his left hand while Leibel and my husband were both preparing his right hand, and the Rebbe put the dollar into his left hand!

Two and a half years had passed since we had been to the Rebbe in 5748. My son had grown beyond recognition. Someone else was holding him and he had a haircut and peios, and the Rebbe did not forget ...

We have a picture and clearly see my husband and Leibel holding the outstretched right hand while the Rebbe puts the dollar into his left!

Chassidus and then to get a spot for Shacharis with the Rebbe, and wasn’t with me when I needed help. So every morning it was a scene and often, nice women helped me by holding one of the children.

Since every second of the Rebbe’s time is gold, I was careful to prepare the children’s hands to receive a coin – and this was from an experience that I once had with my oldest daughter (which I can tell at another time). Since the older baby is left-handed, I always put out her left hand and the Rebbe put a coin in it for tz’daka. The younger one seemed like a righty to me and so I put out his right hand.

Raskin's
“if it grows we have

Consistently
Superior

Fruit and Produce Emporium WHOLESAL & RETAIL

Michal & Aaron Raskin

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



R' Moshe Cadaner a"h



R' Moshe was born on Rosh Chodesh Teves 5695 in Yerushalayim to Rabbi Mordechai Mendel and Freida Cadaner. He learned by the mashpia, R' Shaul Brook in Yeshivas Achei T'mimim in Tel Aviv. He went to the Rebbe for Rosh HaShana 5718/1957. He

described the first time he went to the Rebbe:

"I went from Eretz Yisroel with R' Itzke Gansbourg. The flight was broken up – from Eretz Yisroel we went to Cyprus and from there to Greece, then Belgium, England and then 12 hours to the United States.

"When I arrived at 770

for the first time it was Erev Shabbos Netzavim-VaYeilech, 24 Elul 5717. My younger brother (Yaakov Yitzchok) told me that on Friday afternoon you don't sit in the small room next to the small zal. He did not explain and I didn't bother to find out why, and when I went to daven I sat down there.

"Suddenly, someone came in and lifted me up and turned me around to the small zal and the Rebbe walked in (the way it went was the Rebbe entered the small zal via that small room to the place where he sat in the small zal on Shabbos on the southeast side). But I managed to see that the Rebbe saw me for a brief moment."

R' Cadaner got married in the United States to Tzipora (Lori) Shulman and they moved to New Haven where he worked in printing.

THE REBBE: DON'T CLOSE THE POST OFFICE BRANCH

In 5730/1970 R' Moshe suggested to the Rebbe that he move to Eretz Yisroel and live in Nachalat Har Chabad in Kiryat Malachi and the Rebbe approved the idea. In Eretz Yisroel, he supported himself with a clothing store that he ran together with R' Moshe Lasker. For some hours of the day he operated a branch of the post office that served the residents of Nachalat Har Chabad.

On 27 Nissan 5737/1977 he went to 770, and before

his trip home he had yechidus with the Rebbe, together with his entire family, in honor of the bar mitzva of his son, Zev. During the yechidus, he told the Rebbe that he wanted to close the post office branch since it wasn't profitable. He added that there was another post office branch that operated in Kiryat Malachi.

The Rebbe asked how far it was from Nachalat Har Chabad to the other branch. R' Moshe said it was about 15-20 minutes. The Rebbe asked in surprise, "What? And elderly Jews should walk for 15-20 minutes in the winter in the rain and in the summer when it's hot? No, don't close it. You should expand it!"

Of course, that was the end of that idea and the branch continued to operate. About a week after he returned to Eretz Yisroel, the person in charge of the region came to visit the branch and said that back at headquarters they decided to upgrade this branch from level 3 to level 2 (at level 3 they were opened only 3 hours a day, in the morning; at level 2 it could also be open in the afternoon which of course included payment from the main branch for the additional hours).

R' Moshe told the surprised clerk that he already knew about this. How did he know?

R' Moshe showed him a picture of the Rebbe and said, "I saw him a week ago and he told me."

THE REBBE ARRANGED FOR A LOAN

A few years later R' Moshe moved back to the United States and settled in Crown Heights. He opened a bookbinding business and many Kehot books were bound by him. His home was open to guests. Many Chassidim who came for Tishrei, bachurim who hadn't yet arranged a room for their stay on K'vutza, and many others were welcomed by him.

R' Moshe related:

"When I arrived in New York I already had plenty of experience in printing and I opened a business. I had yechidus several times during this period. The Rebbe once asked me how the business was doing. I said it was very hard and not profitable. The Rebbe told me that when I left his room I should ask Rabbi Chadakov to give me \$200 as a loan from the gemach of Merkos (in those days, this was a significant sum since the average weekly salary was \$90-\$100).

WARM HOME FOR SOLDIERS

In 5759/1999 R' Moshe

went to Eretz Yisroel for a visit. He stayed with his son who lives in Nachaliel. He liked it and moved there.

There too, his home was open to all in need. Every Shabbos, soldiers who guarded the yishuv went to him and enjoyed the special Shabbos meals. His home became the military mess hall for Shabbos meals and for years the soldiers would go to him and even take back Shabbos food for the soldiers who were on guard.

He went to visit his son in Montreal this past Pesach where his medical condition overcame him. He passed away on Acharon shel Pesach. His funeral passed by 770 and he was flown to Eretz Yisroel where he was buried on Har HaMenuchos.

He is survived by his wife and their children: R' Zev – Crown Heights; R' Sholom Ber – US; Mrs. Nechama Lichtenstein – Rochester, NY; Mrs. Sarah Fuchs – Crown Heights; Mrs. Malkie Steinberg – Tzfas; R' Levi – Eretz Yisroel; Mrs. Chani Shpindler – Montreal; R' Shneur – shliach in Davenport, Iowa. May we soon merit to see the fulfillment of the promise, "arise and sing those who dwell in the dust," and he among them.



- Express service
- Fully Computerized

331 Kingston Ave.
(2nd Flr) Brooklyn NY 11213

(718) 493-1111

Fax: (718) 493-4444

Get your tickets within minutes!

MOSHIACH NOW: MAKING IT REAL

Part 6 – Mivtza Mezuzah

By Rabbi Gershon Avtzon, Dean of the Lubavitcher Yeshiva in Cincinnati

Dear Reader, sh'yichyeh,

This week's topic is Mivtza Mezuzah. This Mitzva is mentioned twice in the Torah, in Deuteronomy (D'varim), Chapter 6, in the paragraph of Shma Yisroel (Verses 4-9) and in Chapter 9, in the paragraph of V'Haya Im Shamo'a (Verses 13-21). The Torah states in both places: "And you should write them on the posts of your house, and on your gates."

In the winter of 1974, the Rebbe initiated the campaign that every Jewish home should have Kosher Mezuzos on all of its doors. Many people, even religious people, were not aware that Kosher Mezuzos do become Pasul (unfit for use) as a result of weather-related changes (e.g. water makes the ink leak) or simply from age. One must always remember that a Mezuzah that is 99% kosher is 100% Pasul! The Rebbe brought awareness of the details of this mitzva to both frum and unaffiliated alike.

The Talmud (Shabbos 23b) teaches that "One who is careful to have kosher and consistently checked Mezuzos will merit having a beautiful home".

The Mezuzah also brings protection to the home. The Talmud (Menachos 33b) writes: "Rabba said: The proper performance of the precept is to affix it in the hand-breadth nearest to the street. Why? — The Rabbis say: So

that one should encounter a precept immediately [on one's return home]; R. Chanina of Sura says: So that it should protect the entire house.

R. Chanina said: Come and see how the character of the Holy One, blessed be He, differs from that [of men] of flesh and blood. According to human standards, the king dwells within, and his servants keep guard on him from without; but with the Holy One, blessed be He, it is not so, for it is His servants that dwell within and He keeps guard over them from without; as it is said: The L-rd is your keeper; the L-rd is your protection on your right."

The following story describes this unique quality of the Mezuzah. The Parthian king, Artaban, once sent a priceless jewel to Rabbi Yehudah HaNasi, the compiler of the Mishna and one of the wealthiest Jews at the time. The king made it obvious that he expected something of equal value in return. The Rabbi's return gift to the king was a Mezuzah. The king's reply was: "I sent you something priceless and you sent me something that can be bought for a paltry sum!?" The Rabbi answered: "You sent me something that I must hire a guard to watch, and I sent you something that will watch over you!" (Talmud Yerushalmi, Peia 1:1)

The Shaloh HaKadosh taught that a Mezuzah helps the physical

health of the inhabitants of the home and preserves Shalom Bayis (Pischei Sh'arim 285:4).

Mezuzah also inspires the awareness and fear of Hashem in all those that enter and leave the home to which it is affixed. This is evident from the following story about the covert, Onkelus. Onkelus was a member of the Roman royal family. His mother was Hadrian's sister, and his father was called Klonikas.

Onkelus was a very educated man and well-versed in both Roman and Greek cultures. He was blessed not only with exceptional intelligence, but also with a pure heart of gold and a lofty soul. He realized that idolatry was foolish and that the Jewish religion was the true G-dly religion. Secretly, he began to serve G-d, the Creator of heaven and earth, and he waited for the opportunity to formally accept the Jewish religion.

Once, Onkelus came to his uncle Hadrian and said: "For many years I have been poring over books and manuscripts, studying until I have become familiar with all the languages and sciences. But what have I gained from it all? It is time for me to go out into the world and start doing business. You know that I am not familiar with worldly matters, whereas you, the great Roman emperor, are well-versed in such affairs. I have therefore come to ask your



advice as to what kind of material I should buy and sell!”

Hadrian was greatly flattered that his wise nephew should ask his advice, and he said: “My kingly riches are at your disposal. Take as much money as you need for business. I would advise you to seek material that is extremely cheap due to the fact that people do not realize its worth; material that few people are seeking: You will be able to buy it cheaply, and after explaining its real value to people, you will be able to make a nice profit!”

Onkelus the Prince soon left the royal palace. He traveled from Rome and started out for Jerusalem, in the land of Judah. Once there, he took upon himself the religion of the persecuted Jews and converted. He became a disciple of Rabbi Eliezer ben Hirkanos and Rabbi Yehoshua ben Chananya, the great *Tanaim* who were disciples of Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakai. He gave himself over entirely to the study of the Torah. His perseverance and dedication were so great that his teachers became concerned about his health, but Onkelus continued learning day and night until he became knowledgeable in all the secrets of the Torah.

Onkelus took very much to heart the fact that many Jews during the Babylonian Exile had forgotten their holy language, and had started speaking Babylonian, Ashdodic, Aramaic and different types of dialects.

When the Jews returned from the Babylonian Exile, Ezra the Scribe translated the Torah into Aramaic so that everybody should be able to understand it, but the translation was lost. Onkelus now decided to translate the Torah into Aramaic once more, according to the explanations handed down from generation

“What does that thing on the door symbolize, and why are you so happy at being taken to Rome, where your uncle will surely have your head chopped off?”

to generation, through Ezra the Scribe and back to Moses. This translation that we have till this day is called “Targum Onkelus.”

After a while Hadrian found out that his nephew had accepted the Jewish religion and had become one of the foremost Jewish scholars. The emperor was beside himself with rage, and he sent a company of soldiers to arrest Onkelus and to bring him in chains to Rome.

When the Roman soldiers arrived, Onkelus greeted them in a friendly manner, and he talked to them about religion and knowledge. His words impressed them so much that the soldiers threw themselves at his feet and begged him to convert them to the Jewish religion, as he had done himself.

When Hadrian saw that his soldiers did not return, he sent another company of brave warriors with instructions to bring Onkelus in chains.

This time he gave orders not to have any discussions with Onkelus, but to arrest him on the spot and bring him to Rome, because Hadrian had heard what had happened to his first messengers.

Onkelus again warmly received the royal messengers. “I know that the Emperor forbade you to have any discussions with me. You must obey the royal command; I also served him. I will therefore ask you one question: you know very well what goes on in the Roman, Imperial Court. The common soldier carries the torch for the

officer, the officer carries it for the captain, the captain for the general, and the general for the emperor. Tell me, for whom does the emperor carry the torch?”

“The emperor is not obliged to serve anyone,” they answered him. “He is the highest authority in the country!”

“Take a look,” Onkelus answered them. “The G-d of Israel, the Creator of heaven and earth, who delivered the Jews from Egypt, the G-d over everything, in spite of His greatness, still deemed it fit to illumine the way for His servants, the Jews, with a pillar of fire for forty years!”

These words made a great impression on the soldiers, and they immediately gave up their mission and became faithful disciples of Onkelus.

Once more, Hadrian sent a company of troops with high officers at the head, with the express orders not to say one word to Onkelus and not to answer any questions, but to arrest him immediately.

The messengers arrived and started to carry out the emperor’s orders without delay. They led him out of his house. At the door Onkelus stopped, and joyfully kissed the Mezuza.

The messengers gazed at him in wonder, and could not restrain themselves from asking him:

“What does that thing on the door symbolize, and why are you so happy at being taken to Rome, where your uncle will surely have your head chopped off?”

“I laugh at foolish people. A

“The Alter Rebbe writes (Torah Or 42c), “By putting the Mezuzah on the door of our home, we are bringing that oneness into our homes, belongings and personal lives.”

king sits in his palace and has guards around him to protect him from danger. But the Jewish King, the Lord of the world, allows his servants to sit quietly at home while He protects them from outside. That is the Mezuzah on our door!”

The royal messengers fell entirely under the influence of Onkelus’ words, and it did not take long before they also became his faithful disciples.

When Hadrian saw that he would not be able to bring his nephew by force, he decided that there must be some special reason for all this. He had a strong desire to see his nephew, so he swore to Onkelus that if he would come to visit him in Rome, voluntarily, he would not harm him.

Onkelus started out for Rome. When he presented himself to the Emperor, he was surprised to see that Onkelus had lost much weight. Onkelus assured him that he had gained much Torah and wisdom instead. Hadrian then asked him why he had left his home and his religion, and accepted the religion of a small nation that was persecuted and ill-treated by all the other nations of the world.

“I listened to your good advice,” Onkelus answered him with a smile. “You advised me to buy a material for which there are few customers. I traveled throughout the world and I could not find anything that has fewer customers than the Jewish religion. I bought it and I found that I had made a bargain.

The holy Jewish Prophets have promised that the poor persecuted Jewish nation will become a nation of princes; that the kings throughout the world will consider themselves honored to serve them; and the Torah, which is now down-trodden, will be recognized by all nations, and Jerusalem will be the lighthouse of the whole world.”

The next story about Mezuzah happened in modern times. During the 1970’s, there was a terrible terrorist attack in the northern, border town of Ma’alot. Tens of Jewish children were cruelly murdered in their school. At the time, the Rebbe advised that the school check its Mezuzot, and a number were found not to be Kosher. The number of mezuzot that were found to be Pasul was exactly the same as the number of children who were murdered. The Rebbe explained that the Mezuzah is like a helmet. When a soldier goes into battle, his helmet protects him from the random attacks of his enemies. So it is with the Mezuzah. The Jewish people are suffering in these dangerous times. Each of us should bulk up on our spiritual armor by ensuring that we have Kosher Mezuzot on our doorposts. This helps protect us, our homes and families, the Jewish people, and the entire world.

Details of the Mitzva:

One should ensure that the Mezuzos in his home are Kosher and are affixed in their proper places. The laws are very intricate, and one should consult

a Rabbi regarding these details. For those readers that must use the internet, one may visit www.chicagomitzvahcampaign.com/mitzvah_tefillin.html for more information.

The Rebbe advised that if one is pregnant or not well, has trouble sleeping, is unusually anxious, or is experiencing any other condition that causes special concern, the Mezuzos in the home should be checked.

It is important to stress to people that the case of the Mezuzah is secondary to the Mezuzah itself. One should invest the money in a nicer Mezuzah, rather than in a nicer case.

The Moshiach connection:

Regarding the Mitzva of Mezuzah, the Alter Rebbe writes (Torah Or 42c): “In the Mezuzah, the words “Shma... Hashem Echad” are written. We are professing Hashem’s oneness in this world. By putting the Mezuzah on the door of our home, we are bringing that oneness into our homes, belongings and personal lives.”

Regarding the Messianic era, it says that “Everyone will know Hashem”. The world will be recognized as “G-d’s personal dwelling place”. The oneness of G-d, as professed in the Mezuzah, will finally be seen as a reality.

In addition, the Talmud (Megilla 29a) says that “All the synagogues in the Diaspora will be transferred to Eretz Yisroel in the Messianic era”. The famous Tzaddik, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev, explained (Pisgamin Kaddishin 21) that this includes all homes that have a Mezuzah on them!

Rabbi Avtzon’s audio classes on Moshiach and Geula can be accessed at www.ylcrecording.com