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# IF G-D IS REVEALED, WHY CAN'T WE SEE HIM?

Translated by Boruch Merkur

Since every single Jew can experience [what is said in the verse regarding Avrohom Avinu], “And G-d appeared to him,” why do they not actually perceive this revelation?

To answer this question from three different angles:

1) **It is real even if it is not experienced:** First and foremost, not seeing something with one’s physical eyes does not change the reality. There is a well-known parable of the Rebbe Rayatz about scholars who travel on a horse drawn carriage. The scholars speak words of wisdom as they travel while the horses think about the hay, etc. The fact that the only thing on the mind of the horses is hay – that is their reality and all that exists to them (at least at that moment) – doesn’t change the veracity of the topic the scholars are discussing. What they are discussing is real, regardless of how abstract and irrelevant it is to the horses.

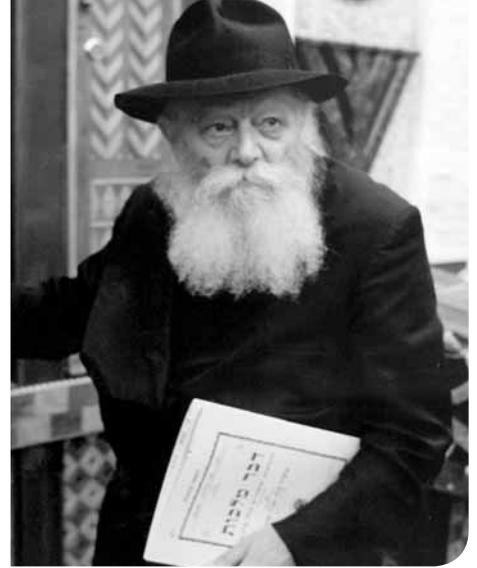
2) **It is experienced spiritually:** The concept of “although he does not see, his *mazal* sees [“*mazal*” being a dimension of the soul that transcends the body]” has many applications, one of which is our case. That is, a Jew’s *mazal* sees the revelation of “And G-d appeared to him.” And as a result of the *mazal* experiencing this revelation, it also has an impact on that part of the soul that is

invested within the body, having a practical effect on the person.

3) **It will be experienced in the simple, literal sense in the Messianic Era:** The principal manifestation and revelation of “And G-d appeared to him” will take place with the true and complete redemption through Moshiach Tzidkeinu. But this should not be seen as a remote, distant event. In fact, we have the ability to make it happen imminently, for every positive action we do (especially hosting guests, as well as doing acts of kindness regarding spiritual matters) brings the true and complete redemption closer, ushering in and hastening the advent of the time when we will experience the revelation of “And G-d appeared to him.”

## SPEEDING UP THE REDEMPTION IS OF PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE

And since this is so, there is reason to add in disseminating Torah and Judaism and spreading the wellsprings outward with greater strength and greater force, with greater alacrity and a greater sense of urgency, etc., in order to hasten the true and complete redemption. Indeed, speeding up the redemption even a single moment is of paramount importance, because we are speaking about the redemption of all the Jewish



people of all generations, as well as the redemption of the Divine Presence Itself.

“And so may it be for us,” that immediately we merit the revelation of “And G-d appeared to him,” with our physical sense of sight. There is a historical precedent for such a powerful revelation taking place in the physical word, as discussed in *Tanya* (Ch. 36, 46a), “something of this revelation has already been experienced on earth, at the time of the Giving of the Torah,” including a revelation that spanned the globe (in all 127 nations upon which Ester was queen – Ester being the descendant of Sara Imeinu, who lived 127 years), as has been stated, “King of all the land.”

May we immediately experience this revelation with the advent of Moshiach Tzidkeinu. May he come at once and redeem us and take us upright to our land, the Holy Land, to Yerushalayim the Holy City, to the Holy Mountain – “on the mountain, G-d will be seen” (22:14) – immediately!

*(From the address of Shabbos Parshas VaYeira, 18 MarCheshvan 5749, muga)*

# BEHIND THE SCENES



## *At Yeshivas Lubavitch Cincinnati*

The following interview with Rabbi Gershon Avtzon, Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshivas Lubavitch Cincinnati, and a regular columnist for the **Beis Moshiach**, gives our readers a behind the scenes glimpse of the workings of this one-of-a-kind Yeshiva.

**Beis Moshiach:** We know that it is the beginning of the Z'man and things are very hectic. We appreciate you taking the time to speak with us. How is the beginning of the new Z'man going?

**RGA:** Baruch Hashem, it is going very well! There is a big difference between the beginning of the Z'man Rosh Chodesh Elul and that of Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan. At the beginning of Elul, there are a lot of adjustments that everyone needs to make.

There are many new Talmidim, Shluchim and staff. It takes time to mold the whole group into one family. Over Elul, they become close as relationships form, and over Tishrei – those that merit spending Tishrei in 770 – the group becomes unified.

We have a boy in Shiur Aleph. It is his first time away from home. His parents wanted him home for Tishrei. When he saw the excitement of the boys returning from 770, he told me, “I wish that I had been in 770 for Tishrei!”

**Beis Moshiach:** How do you prepare the boys for Tishrei by the Rebbe?

**RGA:** To tell you the truth, I have to give most of the credit to the Talmidei HaShluchim. Each year there is a special Mivtza to learn “Kuntres Beis Rabbeinu Sh'B' Bavel,” and they show pictures and videos of the Rebbe taken during Tishrei throughout the years. It is also discussed by Farbrengens and in casual conversation. In Cincinnati, only the oldest Shiur gets R'shus to go to 770 for the entire Tishrei. The younger boys are in Yeshiva until Yom Kippur. This demonstrates to the younger Bachurim that travelling to the Rebbe for Tishrei is a serious thing that demands maturity and preparation.

**Beis Moshiach:** How do you get boys today in mesivta, all born after Gimmel Tammuz,



**excited about the Rebbe?**

RG: In my opinion, one of the most important parts of Chinuch today is educating the Talmidim that there is a Rebbe whom they can turn to and is relevant. If not, there is no reason to “buy into” the whole system.

The biggest tool we have – one that we should encourage everyone to use – is the Igros Kodesh. I see it clearly: when a bachur gets an answer from the Rebbe through the Igros Kodesh, it makes him truly aware of the Rebbe’s presence. It makes him aware that the Rebbe is *his* Rebbe.

Let me give you a mashal. A young boy gets a new cell phone from his parents for a present. The next day, he goes to visit his grandfather and shows him the new phone. The elder gentleman is used to having a phone with wires that is connected to the wall and for which the connection is visible. He laughs at his grandson and tells him that it is impossible that the little gadget is a phone. They get into an argument that seems to be going nowhere, as each person is living in his own,

“At this point, I would need 1,000.00 in cash to clear the checks and was at a loss as to where to get it from. I went to Yeshiva and hoped for the best. In middle of the day, I got a call from my wife.”

very different world.

In middle of the discussion, the father walks in and observes the scene. He asks them both to calm down and to be quiet for a moment. He takes the small cell-phone and dials a number. He puts the phone to his father’s ear and tells him to listen for a moment. When he hears a live voice on the other line he exclaims, “I don’t understand how it works, but it is definitely a phone!”.

Before Gimmel Tammuz, our connection to the Rebbe was through visible and tangible means, such as dollars, T’fillos, farbrengens, Lekach and more. Today the connection is not visible. Our children wonder if there is still a way to connect to the Rebbe.

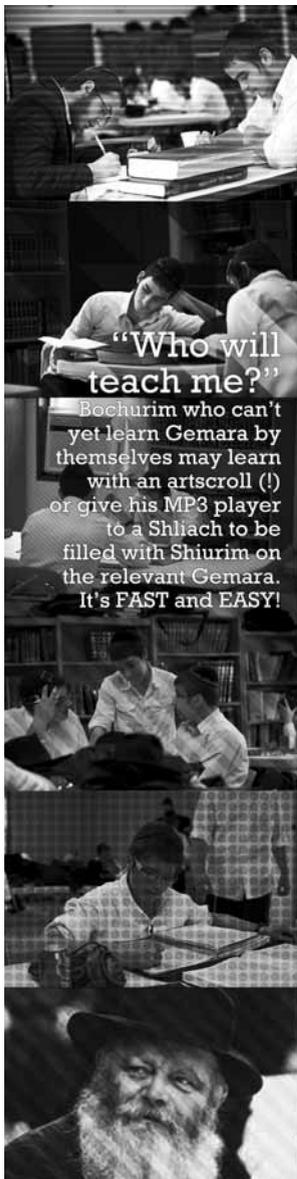
It is our job to tell our children that we live in a wireless era. The

cell phone is the biggest proof. All we need to do is “dial the Rebbe’s number” – encourage them to write to the Rebbe through the Igros Kodesh etc. – and you will hear them exclaim, “I don’t know exactly how it works, but I know that the Rebbe lives!”

**Beis Moshiach: What are your plans for the coming Z’man?**

As I tell the Bachurim, now the work really begins. We are putting a strong emphasis on Limud and Hasmadah. We already started a strong “Mivtza Torah,” and the Bachurim are very excited. The Bachurim are taught that the Rebbe wants them to be Chassidim, Yerei Shamayim and Lamdanim!

Derech Agav, I will share a little vort I heard from Rabbi Glick of Australia. He asked a question: Chazal say that “Lo Am



ב"ה

**מבצעתורה**

"לענגען כל תורה כולה בפסטותו" (ויחדות לחל' חסידים)

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EasyRED ModerateBLUE HardPURPLE X-tremeBLACK

1) Shiur aleph is learning mesechta sukkah (56 daf) - doing only 4 daf every 2 weeks.

2) There are 14 cycles of 2 weeks in yeshiva this year (without Nissan).

3) Every 2 weeks there will be an easy test on a few dafim of "new" gemara. Usually the test will be on Friday morning giving you time to chazer on "lail shishi".

4) The following מוצאי שבת there will be a "re-test" on the last two tests worth of daf (example: if a new test is on 5 daf, this will be on 10 daf - *don't forget all 10 daf were just learnt and tested on within the past week*). It is recommended to spend Shabbos chazering.

5) Get an 80% on a test to pass.

6) In addition to the written test, get tested **INSIDE** on 10-15 lines (out of 4-5 daf). You will know in advance on which amud of gemara these lines are on.

7) Every 2 weeks stand for themselves, so you can hop in for two weeks and bounce out. Just make sure to take the re-test on the dafim that you did.

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יחי אדוננו מורנו ורבינו מלך המשיח לעולם ועד

the Talmidim. We have **Rabbi Eliyahu Simpson**, whose reputation as a teacher is well known. Besides his regular Shiurim in Gemara, he gives unique Shiurim in Navi and Divrei Yemei Yisroel. **Rabbi Zalman Baras** is the Mashpia of the Yeshiva. Besides his Shiurim in Chassidus, he takes time daily to talk to the Talmidim about what is on their hearts. He also gives Shiurim in Biurei T'filla and Hanhaga. **Rabbi Eliyahu Morrison** is our super-dedicated Menahel Gashmi who ensures that the bachurim have all that they need to be successful. **Rabbi Shalom Ber Kalmanson**, the Rebbe's Shliach to Cincinnati, teaches the Bachurim many Shiurim in Hashkafa and Chassidus. He is a living example of someone who is dedicated to the Rebbe's Mivtza'im without compromise.

We also have some of the local Anash that teach and get involved in the Yeshiva. This is all aside from the Older Bachurim that teach and the Talmidei HaShluchim who also join our staff each year.

Beis Moshiach: **You mentioned that you see miracles. Can you share one story with us?**

Sure. I will share with you a story that I told over by the 13 Tishrei Farbrengen in Crown Heights. I will have to shorten it, but it is an amazing story:

There are many times that the Yeshiva is short on funds. Yet B"H, we have always managed to get help. Most times the miracle comes in a way of an unexpected check that arrives in the mail.

There was one time that I had to write out many checks to the people and companies to whom we owed money. After making the Cheshbon, I realized that for

Ha'aretz Chassid – a Chassid is not an ignoramus." So why does the Rebbe have to repeat that a Bachur should be a Lamdan? From here we see that there is a difference between someone who is merely a "Lo Am Ha'Aretz" and someone who is a Lamdan.

In addition, we are making some strong changes IY"H in the Gashmi department. The Yeshiva has acquired a 10,000 square-foot building that will be renovated into a beautiful Beis Midrash and classrooms. We are

also in the process of buying new dormitories for the Talmidim.

Beis Moshiach: **The success of the Yeshiva in Cincinnati is well known. To what do you attribute your success?**

It is obviously all Siyata D'Shmaya and brachos of the Rebbe MH"M. That's the foundation to everything. I see the miracles on a daily basis.

I have also surrounded myself with a group of amazing and young dedicated staff. They are given over "B'Lev V'nefesh" to

all the checks to clear the bank, I would need an extra thousand dollars. I wrote a letter to the Rebbe and told him that it is his institution and begged the Rebbe to bless it with his brachos.

I mailed the checks out and knew that I had two days until the checks would be deposited into the bank. I anticipated that the next day I would receive an envelope with a thousand-dollar check, which I would be able to deposit right away. This way, the funds would be available for the next day to clear the checks that I sent out. That check never came.

The next day – the day the checks had to clear – I woke up a little worried. At this point, I would need 1,000.00 in *cash* to clear the checks and was at a loss as to where to get it from. I went to Yeshiva and hoped for the best. In middle of the day, I got a call from my wife.

She tells me on the phone that we received a funny package via registered mail. She opened it and there were 1,000 dollars in cash! I was shocked. What was more surprising was the fact that I did not recognize the name of the sender. I quickly deposited the money, cleared the checks, and turned to investigate the matter.

To make a long story short: During Tishrei, I give Shiurim to the girls that come from Eretz Yisroel. Three years ago, a lady from Monsey stopped by 770 and listened to part of the Shiur. When she left, she made a silent Hachlata to raise 1,000.00 for the Yeshiva. It took three years and she got my address and mailed me the money!

When I told her that the Rebbe prepared her three years in advance to help me on the day that I needed that exact amount of money, she said, “Now I see why Lubavitch says that the Rebbe is



“ This Simchas Torah, at about 3:00 a.m., I noticed a Bachur come to 770 looking a little melancholy. He told me that he went to a Non-Lubavitch Shul on Tahalucha, and was asked basic questions about Moshiach and he did not know what or how to answer.

alive!”

**Beis Moshiach: That is a truly incredible story. The Rebbe Rashab, the founder of Tomchei T’mimim, said that the students need to be Neiros L’ha’ir, lamplighters. How is that accomplished in Cincinnati?**

RGA: I think you can say that it is accomplished two ways. Firstly, the simple fact of the existence of a Yeshivas Tomchei T’mimim in a city elevates the city. The Torah that is learned brings a refinement to the whole city. This is especially true in Cincinnati. The capital of Reform Judaism in America is Cincinnati. Their Hebrew Union

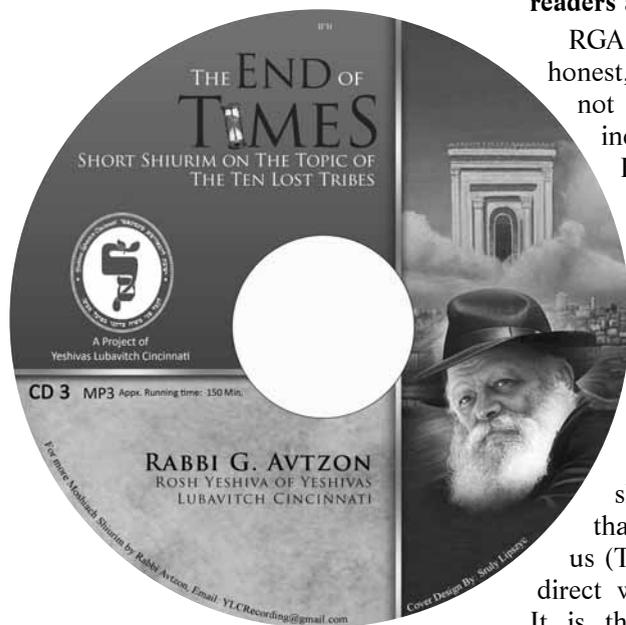
College is in Cincinnati. The way to battle Chochma D’Klipa is with Chochma D’k’dusha.

As a side point, when Rabbi Kalmanson was sent on Shlichus to Cincinnati, he was told by the Rebbe that his Shlichus was to finish the battle with the Reform. One of the Rebbe’s first directives to him was to open a branch of Tomchei T’mimim. Due to technical difficulties, it was closed 2 years later.

We see that the Rebbe really wanted a Yeshiva in Cincinnati.

Then there is the second aspect, which is the tremendous amount of activities that the

Bachurim do in the city. There is the weekly Mivtzaim on Friday and Mesibos Shabbos on Shabbos. Every Yom Tov there is a big Mivtzaim program. Whether it is Mivtza Shofar, Mivtza Chanuka or Mivtza Purim, there is always something happening.



The Yeshiva has a positive affect on the frum K'hilla as well. We have a big annual Yud Tes Kislev Farbrengen, Lag B'Omer Parade, and Tahalucha and Kinus Torah on Shavuos. This is besides the people that come to Daven and learn in the Yeshiva.

Somewhat related to this: there is a certain very prominent local rav affiliated with Yeshiva University who occasionally gives shiurim at our Yeshiva. One of his shiurim on Parshas B'Reishis is available on YU's website. In the blurb introducing the shiur they note that it was given at Yeshivas Lubavitch Cincinnati, and that the comments from the Lubavitcher bachurim reflect our unique hashkafa. If you listen to the shiur, you will hear some of the solutions our talmidim offered to the difficulties raised by

that rav, and how they are more "glaich" (perspicacious) than his proffered answers.

**Beis Moshiach: I noticed that the Yeshiva also makes CD's about Moshiach. They can be found in many homes and on IPod's as well. Please tell our readers about them.**

RGA (chuckling): To be honest, the Yeshiva itself does not produce CD's. It is an independent project of the Bachurim themselves. Let me give you some background.

When I was a young Bachur learning in Beis Midrash, I decided to see for myself what the Rebbe has to say about Moshiach. One of the things that I was shocked to find out was that the Rebbe actually told us (Tazria-Metzora 5751) the direct way to bring Moshiach! It is through learning Inyanei Moshiach and Geula. At that point, I started getting involved in learning Inyanei Moshiach.

I was sent on Shlichus to Yeshivas Lubavitch Toronto in 5762, where I also merited learning as a Bachur with Rabbi Akiva Wagner. When I got there, I saw that the Shiur on Moshiach could barely get a Minyan together. Bachurim had to be bribed with cookies and soda to come. The teacher of the Shiur would usually just ramble semi-coherently some Sicha or Besuras HaGeula.

I decided that this would change. I told the Bachurim that from now on we are not promising food or any other bribe. They thought I was crazy. I told them that the Shiur is very important to the Rebbe and that I guarantee them that if they come they will enjoy it.

For the next year and a half, I would spend a lot of time preparing the Shiur. I would make copies of all the different Marei Mekomos, and every day we learned a different topic. It took some time, but at the end nearly 80% of the Yeshiva was attending the Shiur.

**Beis Moshiach: Do you still have copies of those Shiurim?**

RGA: You know how it is with Bachurim. For many months, I did not even think of saving the sheets. Only later did I realize the importance. I ended up collecting about 75 Shiurim, which I have shared and continue to share with those who want.

To continue the history of my involvement in this inyan, when the Yeshiva opened in Cincinnati, one of the main objectives was to create an environment where Bachurim would live with Moshiach like the Rebbe wants. Many people think that I spend hours a day teaching Inyanei Moshiach and Geula. The truth is that it is only a ten-minute a day Shiur. But these ten minutes are maximized to their fullest.

Every month I take a different topic and explain all the different aspects throughout the month. We have learned topics like Bias Eliyahu, Aseres HaShvatim, Kitzin, Gog and Magog, Seudas Shor HaBar and Leviasan, and more.

Originally, there was no thought of making it public. Then, one Bachur who felt that these Shiurim changed his Hashkafa on Moshiach asked me permission to record my Shiurim for his family. That month, before 10 Shevat 5769, I gave Shiurim that explained different answers to basic questions about Emuna in Moshiach and about the Rebbe being Moshiach.

The Bachurim were so excited about the Shiurim that they made 500 CD's, and they all sold out on 10 Shevat in New York. That Bachur continues to pay a second bachur to record my Shiurim in Yeshiva. He then edits the Shiurim and makes them available to the public.

**Beis Moshiach: How can our readers get these wonderful Shiurim?**

They are available online at [www.ylcrecording.com](http://www.ylcrecording.com). In a short time our 11th CD (BE"H), on the topic of T'chiyas HaMeisim, will be made available to the public. We also just finished a series in Elul outlining the Sichos about and the Miracles of the Gulf War in 5751.

**Beis Moshiach: Is there anything you would like to add on the topic of learning about Moshiach?**

RGA: One must realize that knowledge is power. When you know the sources, you can be sure and proud of your beliefs.

This Simchas Torah, at about 3:00 a.m., I noticed a Bachur come to 770 looking a little

melancholy. It did not make sense to me. He told me that he went to a Non-Lubavitch Shul on Tahalucha, and was asked basic questions about Moshiach and he did not know what or how to answer. I told him not to worry and that I would email him after Yom Tov a series of articles that I wrote – and which were printed in Beis Moshiach – that deal with these issues.

In the words of the Rebbe (Balak 5751): "The additional study of Inyanei Moshiach and Geula is not [only] a segula to hasten and bring closer the coming of Moshiach and the Geula, but [also and] primarily in order to begin living with these Inyanei Moshiach and Geula. It is in order to live with the times of Yemos HaMoshiach through the intellect becoming full and saturated with understanding and a grasp of Inyanei Moshiach and Geula in Torah. From the intellect it spreads and penetrates even the emotions of the heart, until actual behavior is effected in thought, speech, and action, in a way that is fitting for this special time as we stand on the threshold

of Geula, and point with a finger that 'behold this (Melech HaMoshiach) came.'"

I send out a weekly email on the topics of Moshiach and Geula. It has a current subscription of **4,500** members. For those who want to join, just sign up by emailing [moshiachweekly@gmail.com](mailto:moshiachweekly@gmail.com).

**Beis Moshiach: I am sure that many of our readers would like to help you out in your critical activities. How can they contact you?**

Firstly, they can visit our website at [www.ylcincinnati.com](http://www.ylcincinnati.com) and browse and donate. I can be reached by email: [yeshivaslubavitch@gmail.com](mailto:yeshivaslubavitch@gmail.com) or phone: 513-631-2452. I am open to all ideas and suggestions.

**Beis Moshiach: Rabbi Avtzon, thank you for your time, and Hatzlacha in all your work! Also, thank you for your weekly articles in Beis Moshiach magazine. We and our readers really appreciate it.**

RGA: You are very welcome. We have a job to do. Everyone can and must do their part.

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ב"ה

# WRITING CHASSIDUS WITH THE KAISER'S PEN

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In honor of Chaf Cheshvan, the birthday of the Rebbe Rashab, we present these stories from the notes of R' Avrohom Weingarten a"h of what the Rebbe Rayatz said at the seuda on Shabbos Parshas Noach 5703 (1942). \* L'ilui nishmas his son, R' Matisyahu Aryeh Leib, H'yd.

Edited by N. Sofer

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## A GOOD PLACE TO LEARN "LIKKUTEI TORAH"

The Rebbe Rashab would sometimes laud expansiveness. One time, when we were in Holland, we entered a large hall in one of the famous palaces there, and the Rebbe my father said to me, "It would be good to learn Likkutei Torah here."

## WRITING CHASSIDUS WITH THE KAISER'S PEN

In Wurzburg [Germany] there is a hall where Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany wrote his first decree after being coronated. This room had a desk and chair, and on the desk were a pen (with which he wrote the decree) and some ink.



When I was in Wurzburg with my father [the Rebbe Rashab], I made efforts to gain permission for my father to enter this hall. He

sat down at the desk and took the pen with the remaining ink (later, he dipped the pen in the ink that was there) and took paper

that was lying there and wrote an entire notebook of Chassidus from beginning to end.

## “A NATION THAT DWELLS ALONE”

When my father saw the Jewish ghetto (when he was in Germany) he cited in praise, “They are a nation that dwells alone.”

## THE REBBE RASHAB VISITS THE HOUSE OF THE PARUSH

Near Wurzburg there is a little town where many Jews used to live, but in later years there were only a few families.

In this town there is a small, closed-off house. When we were there, they told us that a famous parush (ascetic) sat in that house.

My father wanted to enter the house, but it was difficult getting the door open. When we walked in, we saw only a wooden log that looked like a bed. The walls had holes like windows.

My father looked at the room and said: He lived his life like a mentch (i.e. a true human being)!

## THE TZEMACH TZEDEK’S BUSINESS

The Rebbe [Rayatz] told the story of the business done by the Tzemach Tzedek with his dowry money.

(The story itself is not written here – see box).

## WHY WAS THE TZEMACH TZEDEK’S MARRIAGE POSTPONED?

(Then the Rebbe Rayatz continued to relate:)

Before the Tzemach Tzedek’s marriage to Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka, daughter of the Mitteler

## OPENING THE SENSES BY WRITING WITH THE KAISER’S PEN

In this sicha, the Rebbe Rayatz says that his father praised expansiveness, and he told about how his father wrote Chassidus with the pen of Kaiser Wilhelm.

In one of the maamarim, the Rebbe Rayatz explains this topic at length. He says:

“To lofty souls, poverty of home and clothing does not affect them very much, but a nice home and a spacious living area greatly affects even tzaddikim and those with lofty souls. It opens up the senses and expands one’s abilities in a wondrous way, **as in the well-known story about one of the great Rebbeim...**”

The Rebbe MH”M comments on this:

“Perhaps he is referring to why the Rebbe Rashab, on one of his visits to Germany, made great efforts to enter the Kaiser’s palace, and when he entered the room where the Kaiser wrote, he sat at the desk and wrote Chassidus on the Kaiser’s special paper. Afterwards, he spoke in wondrous terms about the opening up of the senses that this brought about, as his son (the Rebbe, my father-in-law) who was present, related at length.”

### Another version:

We find another version of this story in Seifer HaSichos 5680, p. 1 and in Shmuos V’Sippurim vol. 2, p. 53-4 as he heard it from the Rebbe Rayatz at the farbrengen on Shmini Atzeres 5680 (in the lifetime of his father, the Rebbe Rashab):

When we were in Berlin, we once went to a park called Kaiserlichen Gorten. You have to put special cloth boots over your shoes when you walk in so as not to dirty the garden. We put handkerchiefs over our shoes so as to avoid shatnez.

In the garden was a small palace reserved for Kaiser Wilhelm. When he would visit the garden he would go inside to rest. There was a regular guard there whose job was to make sure nobody entered.

My father said he wanted to go in. I approached the guard and gave him a large coin for him to buy something to drink. When he brought the drink and the change, I gave him the change for his effort and he became friendly. I asked him to allow the Rebbe to enter and I bribed him, and he let my father enter. The guard stood outside to see if the Kaiser was coming to signal us to leave.

There was a chair and desk, and on the desk were paper, an inkwell and a pen. My father sat down and said, “A clever chair.” He then wrote the maamer, “And a Man from the House of Levi Went” (from the famous Hemshech) 5666, on the Kaiser’s special paper.

(The Rebbe Rayatz also related this story at the Yud-Tes Kislev farbrengen 5673, see Shmuos V’Sippurim vol. 1, p. 132.)

“When he had finished, the Alter Rebbe said to his son, “You see, he is worth a dowry three times the amount I told you!”

## WHEN THE TZEMACH TZEDEK TRIED DOING BUSINESS

In this sicha, the Rebbe Rayatz refers to the business that the Tzemach Tzedek did with his dowry money, but the story is not included in the reshima. He is probably referring to the following stories:

### STORY #1

R' Yaakov Kaidaner recounts in his *Sippurim Nora'im* p. 92:

The Alter Rebbe once asked his grandson, R' Menachem Mendel, author of the Tzemach Tzedek, "What are you doing with your dowry money (which was about 2000 silver rubles)?"

TT: I plan on giving it to a trustworthy wealthy man, and I will make some profit.

AR: Perhaps he won't return to you the principle or any profit?

TT: He is very rich and very reliable.

AR: So what if he is very rich now; he can become very poor.

TT: So what should I do with

the money?

AR: My best advice is that you put it in this box where it will remain in its entirety.

The box was a pushka, and the Tzemach Tzedek thought the Alter Rebbe was joking.

Said the Alter Rebbe, "I really want you to give the money to tz'daka and it will remain complete, the principle and the profit. If you give it to the wealthy man you will lose even the principle."

When the Tzemach Tzedek saw that the Alter Rebbe meant it, he left the room because he did not want to give his entire dowry to tz'daka. Then he gave his money to the wealthy man and some months later the wealthy man had a fire and lost everything and became a beggar. The Tzemach Tzedek lost his money.

After some time, the Alter Rebbe asked him, "Tell me, did you earn anything from your money?"

The Tzemach Tzedek told him what happened and how the wealthy man's property was destroyed.

The Alter Rebbe said, "Why didn't you listen to me when I told you to give the money to tz'daka and then the principle and profit would remain in their entirety? Why don't you have faith in your Rebbeim as the people in Vohlin (Poland) do? They are big believers."

The Alter Rebbe went on, "I will tell you about the manner of their faith.

"One time, I traveled from Mezritch. It was very cold, and my feet froze to the point that the wagon driver had to carry me into an inn. The innkeeper was an old, righteous man, and he rubbed my feet with snow and schnapps until they thawed. I asked the old man how long he was living there and he said, over fifty years. I asked him whether he had a minyan, and

Rebbe, the Alter Rebbe demanded a dowry from his son, the Mittlerer Rebbe. The Mittlerer Rebbe refused, saying, "He won't hold on to the money in any case." But the Alter Rebbe insisted on dowry money, and this is why the wedding was delayed for half a year.

### THE TZEMACH TZEDEK'S SHIDDUCH

The Tzemach Tzedek's shidduch was proposed when he was nine years old.

The system was that when the Tzemach Tzedek finished learning with his melamed, the Alter Rebbe, he was supposed to review what he learned. One time, after learning with the Alter Rebbe

and leaving to go and review his studies, the Mittlerer Rebbe went to see his father the Alter Rebbe.

The Alter Rebbe began discussing a shidduch for the Mittlerer Rebbe's daughter, Chaya Mushka, and suggested his grandson, the Tzemach Tzedek. The Mittlerer Rebbe wasn't too pleased with this idea. In addition, the Alter Rebbe asked for a dowry for the Tzemach Tzedek.

As they spoke, the Mittlerer Rebbe pointed out the window at the Tzemach Tzedek playing. When the child saw two Chassidim walking together, he draped his hands around their shoulders with his feet suspended in the air, and as they walked, he swung between them.

Said the Mittlerer Rebbe to his father, "Nu, do you see the groom?"

The Alter Rebbe called his grandson and asked him, "Did you review what we learned?" The Tzemach Tzedek said he had not yet reviewed it (because he was busy playing).

The Alter Rebbe told him to relate, by heart, everything he had learned with him over the previous months. The Tzemach Tzedek closed his eyes and reviewed it all by heart word for word.

When he had finished, the Alter Rebbe said to his son, "You see, he is worth a dowry three times the amount I told you!"

he said he did not. He went to a nearby town for the Yomim Nora'im.

"I told him, 'Is it right for an old man to daven all his life without a minyan and not to hear K'dusha and Borchu? Why don't you live in town?'"

"He asked me, 'How will I have a livelihood in the town?'"

"I asked in return, 'How many householders live there?'"

"He answered, 'About a hundred.'"

"To which I replied, 'For one hundred Jews Hashem can provide parnasa, but not for you?'"

"When I told him that I am a disciple of our great master R' Dovber of Mezritch, he left the room. A half hour later I saw full wagons outside. I asked, 'What's this?'"

"He said, 'I am gong to live in town as you told me to do.'"

Concluded the Alter Rebbe: "Look and appreciate the power of such faith. I was young then, and yet when he heard that I am a disciple of our master, he immediately set about moving from a place where he had ample parnasa for fifty years. You heard me say twice that you could lose the principle and the profit, and you did not put any faith in my words."

### STORY 2

From the Rebbe Rayatz's Memoirs, vol. 3, chapter 20:

After his marriage, the Tzemach Tzedek decided to invest his dowry money in opening a factory in order to support himself by the work of his own hands, as the Mishna says, "Love work and hate rabbinical positions." He sought a partner and found R' Nechemia of Dubrovna. They decided to open a factory that would manufacture wax for wax seals. Every day, after davening and learning, they went to work in their factory while continuing to talk in learning even there. When people like the Tzemach Tzedek and R' Nechemia are under one roof, no matter what they are involved in, they only speak in Inyanei Torah.

Under the pot in which the wax would cook, there was a large fire. Therefore it needed to be constantly watched and stirred.

The Tzemach Tzedek and R' Nechemia would stir the pot while immersed in deep Torah discussions. In this way, a month went by with the two partners involved in learning and work.

One evening, the two were immersed in a particularly deep topic and they argued about the correct explanation. They completely forgot about the pot of wax. The neglected pot began to burn and the flames quickly spread.

By the time they noticed what was going on it was too late. They barely saved themselves while their possessions went up in flames. The Tzemach Tzedek remained in debt.

### WHAT IS A REAL SCHOLAR?

The Tzemach Tzedek once quoted the Alter Rebbe as saying that a true lamdan (scholar) has to be as knowledgeable in Shas and mefarshim as the Rambam

himself!

His son, the Maharil (R' Yehuda Leib of Kopust), asked him, "And you?"

The Tzemach Tzedek said in response, "My grandfather, the Alter Rebbe learned with me."

The Tzemach Tzedek then enumerated all the tractates of Shas (aside from the ones known as Masechtos K'tanos) [meaning that he learned them all with the Alter Rebbe, which is why it was no wonder that he was proficient in Shas].

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# SHIDDUCH MATCHES MADE IN HEAVEN

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Presented for Chaf Cheshvan, birthday of the  
Rebbe Rashab

By Menachem Ziegelboim

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## PART I

When R' Yosef Yitzchok (who would later become the 6<sup>th</sup> Lubavitcher Rebbe) glanced at his father's face as he rested one afternoon, he was frightened. The Rebbe Rashab was resting on his side, half reclining and half sitting. His eyes were open, but his expression was very odd. The Rebbe did not move even a fraction of an inch the entire time, and it was apparent that his spirit was not in this world.

This afternoon rest generally lasted from a few minutes to half an hour and yet, his father was lying there in that strange position for much longer than usual. He did not know what to do. He did not dare wake his father, yet he was afraid to leave him that way. He started walking about the room with firm and loud steps in the hopes that this would arouse his father from his peculiar state, but to no avail. He moved the desk this way and that, again to no avail. He grew more and more frightened and was at a loss as to what to do.

It was first at sunset that

the Rebbe Rashab woke from his trance. He looked at his son in surprise and asked, "What day is it? What is the date, and what is this week's sidra?" It was apparent that the Rebbe had come back from a very distant place. His son acted as though nothing was amiss and answered the questions.

The Rebbe's face was somber. He went to a corner of the room and davened Maariv. Even his davening was unusual. Despite it being a regular weekday, he began davening with the Chabad tune unique to Maariv on Rosh Hashanah. The mournful tune filled the room with a yearning and pleading tone. His Maariv was lengthy.

R' Yosef Yitzchok was beside himself. He realized something was afoot and that heavenly matters were being arranged with his father's involvement.

The next day too, the Rebbe Rashab's behavior was unusual, but he did not explain anything to his son. As soon as Shacharis was over, he asked his son whether he had a certain large sum of money. R' Yosef Yitzchok quickly went to

the pawn shop where he pawned his silver-tipped walking stick and gave the money he received in exchange to his father. His father left the house without a word.

Not long afterward, deliveries were made from various stores. R' Yosef Yitzchok opened the packages and was taken aback to see that they contained dresses for women and girls. When he asked who had ordered these items, the deliverymen shrugged and said a noble looking man had bought the clothes and said they should be delivered to his hotel.

R' Yosef Yitzchok realized that it was his father who had made the purchases. The events of the previous twenty-four hours were mysterious, but he knew that his father regarded every minute as holy and surely there was some hidden intent in his actions.

The next day, father and son went to Pressburg (currently Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia), taking the packages of clothes with them. When they arrived in the city, the Rebbe asked a passerby for the address of Avrohom Bick's hostel. Upon arriving there they discovered

that the lady of the house and her three daughters were sitting Shiva for their husband and father. Upon making inquiries, R' Yosef Yitzchok found out that the man had suddenly died two days earlier. He figured out that this happened at precisely the time the Rebbe Rashab was resting in that unusual manner.

## PART II

The sweet sound of Torah study rose from the yeshiva building near the hostel, and reached the room of the Rebbe Rashab and his son. The Rebbe asked his son to accompany him to the yeshiva.

The Rebbe's aristocratic bearing drew the attention of the talmidim. They soon entered into a deep discussion with him in one of the difficult areas of Shas. The talmidim were clever and sharp, but one of them stood out. His deep understanding and clear articulation of ideas impressed the Rebbe and his son. When they finished the discussion, the Rebbe returned to the hostel and paid a Shiva call to the widow and her three daughters.

Mrs. Bick told her anonymous visitor about her husband and his good deeds. The Rebbe listened and shared in her pain. The conversation turned to her need to marry off her daughters who had come of age. Mrs. Bick said tearfully, "When my husband was alive, parnasa was difficult. It was very hard to maintain this hostel. And now ... Oy! My husband has died and left us alone. Where will I get the large amounts of money to make weddings and to provide my daughters with suitable dowries? What bachur would be willing to marry my daughters in our situation?"

The Rebbe looked contemplative. There was silence



“A stranger of noble visage had come and brought an array of clothing suitable for weddings for two of the girls. Her amazement increased when she saw that the clothes were tailored to fit her two daughters.

in the room aside from Mrs. Bick's weeping. Then the Rebbe replied, "I know of two learned bachurim with fine character who learn in the nearby yeshiva. I am confident that this shidduch can work out.

"As for a dowry, I have beautiful clothing with me for your daughters, and I am positive that this detail will not pose a problem."

The Rebbe took out the

packages of clothes he had brought with him and gave them to the astounded widow. She could not believe her eyes. A stranger of noble visage had come and brought an array of clothing suitable for weddings for two of the girls. Her amazement increased when she saw that the clothes were tailored to fit her two daughters.

Mother and daughters agreed to look into the Rebbe's shidduchim suggestions. They

met the two young men and liked them. The girls became engaged that very week. Then the Rebbe went home after blessing the two happy couples with success and happy lives. The mother's joy was immense.

**PART III**

Five years passed before R' Yosef Yitzchok was in the vicinity of Pressburg again. He remembered his previous visit that had resulted from the unusual conduct of his father. He decided to change his itinerary somewhat and stop off in Pressburg in order

to see how the two women fared.

He went directly to Bick's hostel and found the third and youngest daughter. She recognized him immediately and warmly welcomed him. She emotionally told him what had occurred during the previous five years. She concluded by saying, "I have also become engaged, but there is no one happier than my two sisters who are married through your father's shidduch suggestion. The husband of the older one is a rav in a small town on the outskirts of Pressburg, and the husband of my other sister

has a fine position as rosh yeshiva in one of the famous yeshivos in Hungary."

\*\*\*

This wondrous story was related by the Rebbe Rayatz himself. The Chassidim concluded that while the Rebbe Rashab had that afternoon nap and appeared to be not of this world, he saw what happened to the soul of the deceased man. He wanted to help him and his daughters find a suitable shidduch, as they were the children of the tzaddik R' Avrohom Bick, author of *Bikurei Aviv*.

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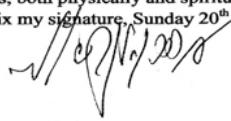
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# HOW TO SAY 'NO'

## TO YOUR CHILD

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*In this part one of a multi-part series, Rabbi Levi Goldstein, a veteran melamed at Oholei Torah, shows parents the yardstick for determining what videos are ok to display to their children, how to tell a story to a child in a way that will leave a positive life-time impression, and the only way to properly and effectively say “no” to a child. PART I*

By Rabbi Levi Goldstein

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### “KOSHER” VIDEOS - AND “WHO IS A JEW?”

In the early 1970's, at almost every farbrengen the Rebbe spoke out sharply against the terrible decree of מיהו יהודי (“Who is a Jew?”). At a farbrengen with his Talmidim, the well known Mashpia in Kfar Chabad, Reb Shlomo Chayim Kesselman, once asked the following question:

“Why does the Rebbe spend so much time at the Farbrengens speaking about מיהו יהודי. After all, isn't it a matter which pertains to only a select few of those attending the farbrengen? Why does the Rebbe want you, Talmidim of the Yeshiva, to hear about something in which you seemingly have no power or influence? There *must* be a message and Horaa for you too.”

“The lesson for you seems to me as follows: In our private lives, we are often faced with the very same question, מיהו יהודי?

For example: When we contemplate doing something which we really know we shouldn't. The Yetzer Hara comes along and gives a stamp of approval – יהודי! It's Jewish! It's Chassidish!! So, *go for it!*

And here the Rebbe is encouraging us not to fall into the Yetzer Hara's traps. One must be honest with oneself and verify whether the act is indeed “Jewish” and proper to do.

### “KOSHER” VIDEOS - REALLY?!

Practically speaking, there are many areas where this can and should be applied. For instance:



To allow a video into one's house just because it has a "Jewish" title, but is not in the Ruach of Yiddishkeit and chassidus, is the equivalent of the decree of מיהו יהודי, taking a non-Jewish object and calling it Jewish.

Let me explain:

Audio CD's and DVD'S have made incredible progress in bringing all sorts of information to anyone who just knows how to turn on a DVD player or computer.

We must know that the messages that come across to the watcher/listener remain embedded in the young and permeable mind and heart *for a lifetime!*

When a child hears a clear message that promotes Yiddishkeit in general, and good character (middos-tovos) and Yiras-Shamayim in particular, it will have an amazing everlasting effect on him. There is however one prominent condition, namely, that the message be delivered in a 100% proper manner.

That is, in the way of Chassidus Chabad, emphasizing *only* the "good" and the positive of *good* behavior, the great nachas that Torah and Mitzvos bring about. In other words, do not portray how "bad" the opposite is.

Practically speaking:

While telling a story to a child, when part of it calls for the mentioning of an opponent of torah and mitzvos (Eisav, Haman, etc.), it must be done with extreme caution.

That is, to mention it in a very passive manner, thereby not emphasizing or portraying the negative, *and of course, not to "act-out" the "bad-guy,"* unless there is no choice, but then too, it should be done without passion.

For otherwise, during those

few moments, the child's mind and heart is totally absorbed in that act of negativity. And even though the "bad-guy" ends up as "the loser" and is totally defeated, nevertheless, the damage was done r"l!

### THE ALTER REBBE: WHEN NOT TO ACT BOLD AS A LEOPARD?

At the beginning of his Shulchan Aruch the Alter Rebbe quotes the teaching of our chachomim, that in the service of Hashem, a Jew must be "עז כנמר" "Bold as a Leopard," and not to feel humiliated from people who are "mockers" (of Torah and Mitzvos).

The Alter Rebbe warns us however, that one is not to respond to these mockers in an arrogant fashion, "שלא יקנה קנין" "בגופשו" so as not to "acquire" for oneself this undesirable character trait of arrogance, for it may result in acting arrogantly in other dissimilar situations too.

In other words, in certain instances, due to the fear of a resulting negative side-effect, one must refrain from doing an action, regardless of how praiseworthy it may be per se.

We find a similar teaching in the Hagada:

In regard to the well-known Minhag of "stealing" the Afikoman at the Seder, the Rebbe writes<sup>1</sup>, that it is not customary to do so in Beis HaRav.

To explain this, the Rebbe quotes the Gemara in Brachos (5b), "בְּתֵר גִּנְבָא גְנוֹב וְטַעְמָא טַעִים" "Steal from a thief and feel the taste [of stealing]!" This means, that even in a case where one may

"justify" his act of stealing with the "claim" that he is only "taking away" from a thief an object that was stolen from someone else, it is forbidden to do so, as it will result in giving the "taker" the "taste" of stealing.

Likewise, in order that the child should not feel the "taste" of stealing, we do not allow him to "steal" the afikoman.

From the above two teachings, we derive a fundamental lesson in chinuch:

When one evaluates a certain activity, to determine whether it is chinuch-appropriate for a child, he must not only examine whether it is permissible according to "the letter of the law," but also whether or not it may bring about any negative "side-effects."

For example, when we examine the ingredients on the label of a food product, not only do we verify that it's "kosher" halachically, but we also look out for anything that may be otherwise harmful to the child/adult, such as MSG, etc.

The same must be applied before providing our child with any sort of entertainment; we must examine all its details to ascertain that it does not contain anything negative which may bring about an undesirable side effect.

### THE PROOF IS . . .

As a 1<sup>st</sup> grade teacher I often see children imitate characters and actors that they have seen in a DVD or heard on a CD. It is to my utter painful dismay, that more often than not, I find them imitating the "bad-guys" and repeat the negative words!

Although one may argue, "It's only for fun. What's wrong with little children acting out the "bad-guy?" Here is where we

1) הגדה של פסח עם לקוטי טעמים, מנהגים וביאורים, 1) "סוף הקטע ד"יחך".

turn to the Alter Rebbe's warning, that although the person (child) is "only acting-out" a negative behavior, yet, we must be aware that שלא יקנה קנין בנפשו, the child may acquire, chas v'shalom, this undesirable character trait.

The following are several instances where the Rebbeim clearly caution us in a similar manner:

a) The Rebbe writes<sup>2</sup> that when we give a child an animal-toy to play with, we must make sure that it is only a kosher animal (or fish). One may argue "it's *only* a 'toy,' why make a fuss?" Yet, the Rebbe warns us that if it is an unclean animal, it inevitably has a negative side-effect on the child and should be avoided.

b) Another very similar cautioning comes from the Rebbe<sup>3</sup> regarding acting out at a Purim play.

The Rebbe strongly admonishes against having a child act out the role of Haman in a passionate manner, as it may have a long-lasting negative effect on the child's future behavior.

It follows to say, that playing "cops & robbers," or make-believe shooting etc. is surely to be discouraged for this same reason.

### THE SECRET OF HOW TO SAY 'NO' TO A CHILD

Chassidus teaches that our eyes are like a "camera." Whatever it sees gets recorded and deeply engraved into the Neshama of the person. Of all the five senses, sight has a much deeper and everlasting effect on the person. To be lenient in this serious matter is analogous to a

2) לקוטי שיחות חב"ה ע' 309

3) לקוטי שיחות חל"א ע' 280



“ Instead of just saying “No, you’re not going!” they replaced it with other “kosher” entertainment. “For example, while our friends went to the circus, we were treated to a visit to the airport to watch the ‘new’ planes take-off and land.”

parent who leaves a container of poison accessible to the innocent child r”l.

On the other hand, we must search for something good and proper in its place, we cannot just say “No!”

I once asked my father שליט"א, “how did your parents succeed so well in bringing up all of their seven children to be frum, shomrei-Shabbos, and G-d fearing Jews, at a time when there was hardly any Yiddishkait in America (1930's).

He answered me, that besides סעייתא דשמיא which is 99% of the answer, there were a few more factors. The number one factor was, that his parents would always provide “substitutes” for any “non-kosher” entertainment that their classmates, friends or

neighbors were enjoying.

Instead of just saying “No, you’re not going!” they replaced it with other “kosher” entertainment. “For example, while our friends went to the circus, we were treated to a visit to the airport to watch the ‘new’ planes take-off and land.”

We can surely find enough substitute material in which our precious children will be nourished with refinement of character, Middos Tovos, Ahavas Hashem and Yiras Hashem.

When a child watches videos of the Rebbe, he is absorbing a tremendous amount of K’dusha (holiness), which will have a direct effect on him and his behavior in Torah and Mitzvos, as well as in general behavior.

# PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE IN THE REBBE'S ROOM

Chernovitz, New York, Rechovos – three crossroads in the life of Hershel Tzvi Shur came before the Rebbe during an amazing yechidus, when the Rebbe saw his hidden past and predicted his future.

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By Menachem Savyon

Translated by Michael Leib Dobry

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## CHERNOVITZ, 5729

A deathly quiet pervaded the Jewish cemetery at the edge of the city as Hershel Tzvi Shur quickly made his way there. At the entrance a large structure appeared, with the Hebrew words “*Tziduk HaDin*” inscribed on its side. The building’s inner wall bore the words of t’filla in huge letters. Hershel turned away as he tried not to look at them. In those painful moments, he simply didn’t want to read any justification for the Divine judgment.

Thousands of gravestones came into view, some of which were covered in thick ivy and moss, a silent testimony to the former greatness and eminence of this once thriving community. He walked with resolve among the gravestones, until he reached the freshly dug grave of his beloved mother.

Hershel was overcome with emotion. His mother was only

forty-four years old at the time of her passing. Why did G-d take her at such an early age? Why did G-d leave him alone? Why?

He loosened his peios from his long hair, and let them wave freely in the wind. “I tried so much to go around with peios,”

he thought to himself bitterly. “I grew my hair long for only one reason: to hide my peios from people who might suspect that I’m an observant Jew. How I tried to keep Shabbos and Yom Tov despite all the difficulties...I made such efforts to daven every weekday with t’fillin...”

“And what did I get in return?”

The resentment within his heart grew, turning into deep hostility directed at Heaven. He took a small knife out of his pocket, quickly cut off his peios, and let the hair fall upon his mother’s grave. Alongside the remnants of his side locks, he placed his tallis and t’fillin bag, which he had brought with him. Then, in a fit of tremendous anger and animosity, he turned



The Jewish cemetery in Chernovitz

to his mother's resting place and said, "Mama, I'm done with it! I have no need for these things any longer!"

After another few minutes, he left the cemetery with a firm decision that he would not keep Torah and mitzvos anymore. He felt as if he had just buried his religious past, and a new young man had emerged in its place – Gregory.

Shortly thereafter, Gregory Shur received an exit visa to leave the Soviet Union, and he promptly emigrated to Eretz Yisroel.

### NEW YORK, 5737

Gregory gazed at the red building with the triangular shaped roof situated on Eastern Parkway. He found it difficult to believe that in another few minutes, he would be entering this house, which constituted the very antithesis of everything he now believed in – or to be more precise, what he didn't believe in.

He had arrived in New York City several weeks earlier as part of his work as an air conditioning engineer, staying with a friend named Farkash. A few days before,

this Farkash had asked him if he was interested in meeting the Lubavitcher Rebbe, and Gregory naturally rejected this suggestion out of hand. He had already severed all contact with G-d and His earthly representatives. What possible use could he have for a chassidic rebbe?

But Farkash was unrelenting. He claimed that the Lubavitcher Rebbe is not just "another rebbe." He is a most unique individual, Farkash explained to him, and people come from all over the world to meet with him and receive his advice and blessings. After much importuning, Gregory decided to "do a favor" for his friend and consented to go and see the Rebbe.

Farkash immediately called his Chabad friends in Crown Heights, and he managed to reserve an appointment for a yechidus in another few weeks. Time passed quickly, and they were soon standing in front of 770 Eastern Parkway.

They crossed the path leading to the building's entrance, and then went to the secretaries' office to find out the exact time of the appointment. Despite the very

late hour, the place was bubbling with activity as if it was the middle of the day. The secretary checked his list, and told them that they would have to wait another few hours.

Gregory, who had never wanted to meet with the Rebbe to begin with, simply could not accept the fact that he would have to wait several more hours before he would be allowed in. However, out of respect for his friend, he agreed to wait a little while longer. Two hours later, when it didn't appear that his turn would be coming any time soon, he wanted to leave. "Let's get out of here," he whispered to Farkash.

Just at that moment, he heard the secretary call the name "Hershel Tzvi." He was thunderstruck. How did the people here know his Jewish name? He had long since buried that name, together with his Jewish past, in the Chernovitz cemetery.

He didn't have much time to dwell on the matter. The secretary urged him to enter quickly since there were still many people waiting in line.

He walked hesitantly into the Rebbe's room. The Rebbe greeted him warmly and motioned for him to be seated.

Hershel related to us what happened during those moments:

"I don't exactly know how to give a proper appraisal of the time I spent in the Rebbe's room, but I can say that every passing minute seemed to me like a lifetime. The Rebbe spoke to me in Yiddish for several long minutes.

"At first, the Rebbe related to my technical profession as an air conditioning engineer, speaking with me about my area of expertise. I was positively astounded by the Rebbe's considerable knowledge in the



In yechidus with the Rebbe. Illustration.

field, and this helped to breach the mental iron wall I had placed between the Rebbe and myself. Then, when the Rebbe began to speak with me about my mother, the barriers simply melted away.

“Suddenly, the Rebbe stopped speaking and surprised me with an unexpected question: ‘Where do you have the right to make decisions on your own in matters pertaining to G-d?’ The Rebbe continued, with determination, ‘You are indeed a very intelligent person, but not more than G-d!’...

“I was stunned. How did the Rebbe know what happened there, in the Chernovitz cemetery?

“As if he didn’t notice my feeling of utter shock, the Rebbe then mentioned several other personal things about me, known to no one else, not even to my wife and children...

“As the yechidus continued, I got up my nerve and answered the Rebbe, leading to the following dialogue between us:

**The Rebbe:** Hershele, I am asking you: Give G-d ten minutes each morning.

**Hershel:** This is very hard for me.

**The Rebbe:** Give five minutes. This is most important to G-d as well...

**Hershel:** Rebbe, a lot of time has passed since then...I’m simply not willing...

**The Rebbe:** One minute, no more!

**Hershel:** What can I possibly manage to do in one minute?

**The Rebbe:** Put on t’fillin and connect to G-d.

**Hershel:** I can’t do anything in so short an amount of time.

**The Rebbe:** Yes, you can... Just say “*Shma Yisroel*” and “*Baruch Sheim K’vod Malchuso L’olam Va’ed.*”

“Just then, the Rebbe took a brand new pair of t’fillin out of his drawer. He asked me to take it and put them on each weekday... To my regret, I had yet to understand what a tremendous privilege it was to receive a pair of t’fillin from the Rebbe’s own hands, and I refused to accept them.

“The Rebbe continued to speak to my heart, explaining that the exile and the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash were all caused due to our sins: ‘G-d granted the Jewish People one day during the year when they could completely repent. Usually, when things are going well for a Jew in the material sense, he forgets about his Creator, and only when he is in distress does he remember to do t’shuva... You don’t have to wait until Yom Kippur or *ch”v* a time when things are going bad. You need to do t’shuva now – at this very moment!’

“I remained stubborn, and I didn’t want to go back to keeping Torah and mitzvos. Then, as the yechidus was reaching its conclusion, the Rebbe said to me: ‘The day will come when someone close to you will go to the World of Truth – and then you’ll do t’shuva...’

“Suddenly, the yechidus ended, and the secretary motioned with his finger for me to come out.

“I left the Rebbe’s room totally confused, engulfed by a flood of emotions. On the one hand, I was shocked by the revealed *ruach ha’kodesh* I had just seen, when the Rebbe spoke with me regarding things that no one knew about besides me. On the other hand, I found it difficult for me to accept what he said about doing t’shuva.

“I eventually decided that I would at least respond to the

Rebbe’s request regarding putting on t’fillin. I went to a nearby Judaica store and bought a tallis and a stringently kosher pair of t’fillin, and then I resolved that I would give G-d at least one minute of my time each day...

“In the more than thirty years that followed, while I continued to conduct a secular lifestyle, I was stringent about putting on t’fillin each weekday morning.”

## RECHOVOS, 5770

On Shushan Purim 5770, Hershel’s grandmother, Mrs. Chaya Feyerberg *a”h*, passed away at the ripe old age of nearly one hundred and twelve years.

During this period of time, Hershel was working and making a good living, showing no sign that something was clouding his life. However, the passing of his grandmother had positively broken him, leaving him a shell of his former self. He felt that the thing most near and dear to his heart had suddenly been snatched away from him.

After the funeral and Shiva, he began to feel a strong need to do something in her memory. He was already putting on t’fillin each weekday morning (for only a minute, as mentioned in the yechidus). However, he now suddenly felt an inexplicable spiritual reawakening, and he decided to return to the pleasant days of his youth in Chernovitz...

One day, as he was walking along Herzl Street, he noticed a Chabad t’fillin stand. He stopped for a moment and began chatting with its operator, Rabbi Eliyahu Amsalem, who offered his condolences for his grandmother’s passing and some words of encouragement for his troubled soul.

This meeting put him back on

track to strengthen his observance of Torah and mitzvos. He began participating regularly in Torah classes, and scrupulously keeping the laws of Shabbos, kashrus, and family purity... In short, he did t'shuva.

"The Rebbe's prophecy from the end of the yechidus had come to pass after more than three decades," said Hershel with much emotion. "It has followed me each and every day since!"

## RECHOVOS, 5771

A few months ago, Hershel dreamed about his grandmother Chaya *a"h*. In his dream, she asked him to say Kaddish on the yahrtzait of his mother, buried in Chernovitz.

"Hershele," his grandmother said in the dream, "you made a beautiful gravestone for me, and thank G-d you have gotten stronger since then. But what about my daughter, your mother, who is buried in Chernovitz? She hasn't been privileged to have an *ilui neshama* (elevation of the soul) for many years now. I am asking you to say Kaddish for her at my grave on the yahrtzait, and afterwards, you should organize a commemorative event in her honor. I promise you that those who participate in the yahrtzait event will be blessed in all that they require."

Hershel woke up from the dream, drenched in sweat. Filled with excitement over the revelation of his beloved grandmother, he decided to fulfill the request. He went to Rabbi Eliyahu Amsalem to determine the Hebrew date of his mother's passing. Rabbi Amsalem checked the secular date of her passing – Hershel remembered it as August 7, 1968 – and found that the corresponding Hebrew date was the 13<sup>th</sup> of Av.



Hershel (left) at the gravesite of his grandmother, accompanied by his friend, Rabbi Eliyahu Amsalem

A few days later, Hershel had another dream. This time, it was the Rebbe who came to him, asking: "Did you check the Hebrew date of your mother's passing?"

Hershel, in his dream, replied that he had.

The Rebbe didn't accept this answer, and he said firmly, "**Hershele, you made a mistake in the date!**"

Hershel began to argue, telling the Rebbe that he knows exactly when his mother passed away...

"Check the death certificates carefully," the Rebbe replied.

When Hershel awoke, he immediately woke up his wife, told her about the dream with the Rebbe, and asked her to help him find his mother's death certificate.

After a few minutes, the relevant documents were found, and in fact, it turned out that Hershel had made a mistake. According to the death certificate, his mother passed away on August 1, 1969, which corresponded that

year to the 17<sup>th</sup> of Av.

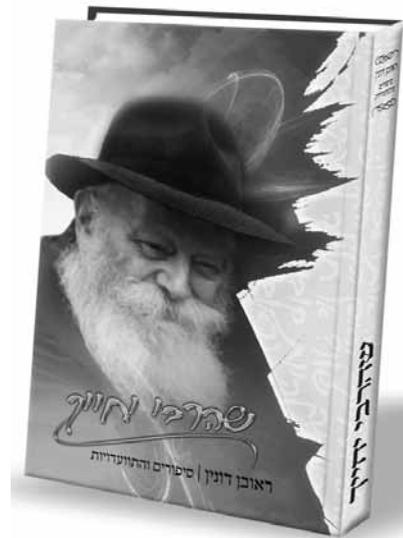
Since the date of his mother's passing was also carved on the gravestone of his grandmother Chaya *a"h*, Hershel concluded that the date there must surely be incorrect as well. He quickly went to the cemetery to ask the Chevra Kadisha to fix the mistake. Yet, when they checked the gravestone, he was surprised to hear that the date was correct...

## EPILOGUE

About two months ago, a special yahrtzait celebration was held in Rechovos, attended by hundreds of people who had heard about the promise made by Hershel's distinguished and righteous grandmother to all those who would attend. News of the story had quickly spread throughout the city, and many participants went to her gravesite in honor of the event.

(Our special thanks to Rabbi Eliyahu Gabbai, Rabbi Eliyahu Amsalem, and Rabbi Menachem Brodsky.)

# REBBE, YOU'RE THE MOSHIACH!



Beis Moshiach is pleased to present another excerpt from the seifer “So That The Rebbe Should Smile,” containing more than five hundred brief stories and recollections of the illustrious Chassid R’ Reuven Dunin of Haifa.

Collected and Arranged by Chanoch HaLevi Shachar

Translated by Michael Leib Dobry

## THE EXTERNAL APPEARANCE HAS AN EFFECT

When Reuven went in for yechidus with his eldest son, he told the Rebbe that he wanted his son to learn in Beis Chayeinu.

The Rebbe replied, “Aren’t there any yeshivos in Eretz HaKodesh? And furthermore, what about when the bachur comes home for Shabbos? He’ll be walking through the streets of Haifa, and people passing him in the street will ask: ‘Who are you, and where are you from?’ When he replies that he learns in Yeshivas Tomchei T’mimim, this will impact them positively.”

(Chanoch HaLevi Shachar)

## A FLEXIBLE YETZER HARA

Before flying together to the Rebbe in 5744, Reuven warned us: “You have to watch out for the yetzer ha’ra. He is very crafty. When you fly to the Rebbe, the yetzer ha’ra suddenly disappears before the flight. You get a good feeling that you’ve succeeded in doing t’shuva, but the truth is that he’s folded himself up and has become invisible to the point that you forget that he exists. He’s just waiting for the right moment. Then, as you’re packing your suitcases, he pushes his way into the suitcase without taking up any space. But when you arrive in ‘the land of unlimited possibilities,’ where everything is big, he comes out as soon as you open your

suitcase – and you have no idea how large he becomes there.”

(Chanoch HaLevi Shachar)

## YOUR WIFE OR YOU?

Reuven once asked someone, “Why don’t you grow a beard?” In response, the person claimed that his wife doesn’t permit him to do so.

“Just a minute, just a minute,” Reuven replied. “That’s not fair. I’m asking you why you go without a beard, and you pass the responsibility on to your wife? Rashi writes regarding Adam HaRishon that with his claim ‘The woman whom You gave [to be] with me,’ Adam showed ingratitude. This means that if the man blames the woman, he is

being ungrateful. Why? Because it is written, 'Who is a good [literally, kosher] woman? She who does her husband's will.' Since we believe that your wife is a good woman, therefore, you are the one who doesn't want a beard, and your wife does according to your will and also doesn't want you to have a beard. It's all because you really don't want a beard."

(Chanoch HaLevi Shachar)

## YOUR TURN IS UP

Reuven once spoke at a farbrengen about a very clever Jew whom Reuven had told that the time had finally come for him to grow a beard.

This Jew replied that every Chabad House has a supporter who doesn't have a beard.

"Yes," Reuven said, "but this time your turn is up."

(Rabbi Lior Rosenbaum)

## THERE'S NO TIME

In the early years, Reuven once went in to the Rebbe in a fiery emotional state and proclaimed, "Rebbe, I'm going now to Ponevitch and bringing them all to do t'shuva."

The Rebbe replied as follows, "There's no time...There are so many Jews who want to listen. Why are you always looking in places where they don't want to listen?"

(Chanoch HaLevi Shachar)

## THE ORIGINAL MOSHIACH PIN

Reuven told how once during the early eighties he davened in a Yerushalayim shtibel wearing a pin in his lapel with the words (in English, I believe), "We Want Moshiach Now."

“I once went in to the Rebbe...and in my great stupidity and foolishness I dared to tell him: I have no great desire for [learning] nigleh.”

The seifer *So That The Rebbe Should Smile* brings an unvarnished image of the colorful mashpia R' Reuven Dunin. It includes a vast collection of authentic stories and pearls of wisdom heard by his many adherents. Without detracting one iota from his characteristic style, it provides a unique opportunity, even to those who never met him, to become acquainted with this true Chassid, devoted in heart and soul to the Rebbe and his instructions, and one who helped establish a generation of baalei t'shuva.

*The author welcomes comments from the Beis Moshiach readership. You may reach Rabbi Shachar at shachar@ziv.org.il*

There was one particular Jew there who spent the entire t'filla dividing his attention between his siddur and the Moshiach pin... After davening, he went up to Reuven and asked him what was written on the button, and Reuven obligingly told him. "Nu, and we wouldn't want Moshiach without it?" the Jew queried.

"Tell me the truth," Reuven asked him. "If it weren't for this pin, would you even be thinking about Moshiach now?"

(Efraim Bernstein)

## YOU CAN'T HAVE ONE WITHOUT THE OTHER

At a farbrengen for the T'mimim, Reuven said, "I once went in to the Rebbe...and in my

great stupidity and foolishness, I dared to tell him: I have no great desire for [learning] nigleh. The Rebbe replied: 'You can increase in chassidus and increase in nigleh, but it's impossible to have one without the other. Thus, we have to know how to utilize our natural tendencies toward holiness, and we must also remember that the whole concept of obedience and kabbalas ol is the foundation for avoda.'"

(Audio transcript – courtesy of 'Kol Mevasser' Institute)

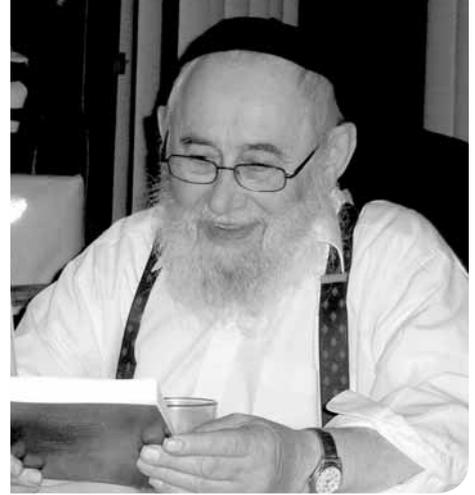
## BITTERNESS AND JOY

At a farbrengen at Chovevei Torah in 5744, Reuven spoke very harshly to the chief rabbi of a certain city. The reason was that this rabbi cried at a farbrengen, asking, "Why isn't there yechidus the way there used to be?" This was the day after a farbrengen with Reuven at which this rabbi participated, during which Reuven asked the same question. Reuven told him, "If you really cared, you would ask the Rebbe and not come crying to us here."

When Reuven stepped out of the room for a few minutes, the bachurim tried to engage the rav in conversation so that he would say something about Reuven. Despite the fact that this rav had also drunk his fair share of mashke, he replied, "You're telling me who Reuven Dunin is? I learned together with him in the orchards of Lud, and when he would say the nighttime Krias Shma, the bachurim would jump from their windows and run into

Continued on page 31

# THE ZEIDE-RAV



## PART II - A MODEL LUBAVITCHER CHASSID

Rabbi Menachem Mendel Dubrawski was an extraordinary combination of brilliant scholar and hartzige (emotive, warmhearted) Chassid. \* As an authentic Chassid, his scholarship was only displayed when necessary such as on the way to Lubavitch, for example. \* Part 2

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By Rabbi Yehoshua Dubrawski a”h

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### A VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS

When Zeide-Rav, R’ Menachem Mendel Dubrawski became the son-in-law of R’ Leib Shapiro, he was given a dowry of about 3,000 rubles, a large dowry for those days. Such an amount was surely due to the fact that he was a big lamdan (scholar), a *tzatzke* (lit. darling; in this context, a well-thought-of young Torah prodigy). By the way, I heard this term for him from the great scholar and rosh yeshiva, R’ Avrohom Eliyahu Plotkin a”h. He is the one who told me how Zeide-Rav got the position of rosh yeshiva in Tomchei T’mimim

in Lubavitch as will be related soon.

As was common practice at the time for scholarly grooms who received large dowries, they purchased a section of forest, had the trees cut down, and sent them on rafts to the fair in Leipzig or other fairs. Zeide was a very “small” merchant, but he did what many other scholarly grooms did with their dowries. He bought a section of forest, cut down the trees, and prepared the wood for transport and sale. It’s hard to know whether it was because of his business “acumen” or other reasons, but the sad ending to his business enterprise was, like many others before him, that he

lost his money.

At the time that he still dreamed of big profits, he had a small hut in the forest, his “office,” where he sat with some s’farim and supposedly supervised the cutting down of the trees. The entire office was no more than a little room where he had a bed and a larger foyer, which was busy and noisy all day with gentile woodchoppers, customers, and others.

Late at night, when it became quiet in the office, Zeide would learn, recite Shma and retire for the night. There were nights that he slept in the hut in the forest alone. When I heard Zeide describe the hut in the forest, I would be frightened, and each time a different wide-eyed grandchild would ask: Weren’t you afraid?

Zeide would smilingly say, “What was there to be afraid of ...?” And most of the time he would tell us about the one time that he was a little shaken by something that turned out to be nothing:

One night in the forest, Zeide said Shma and went to sleep.

Before drifting off he suddenly heard footsteps on the wooden floor in the large room. He took a match, lit a candle, and opened the door to the big room. It was quiet and he saw no one. He had just settled down in bed again when he heard footsteps. This time, he took a candle and a gun, which was probably from the time Russia fought Napoleon. This weapon sometimes worked and sometimes did not, but a gun was better than nothing. He went back out to the big room, looked around, and saw no one.

Others would no doubt have trembled in fear of the unknown. Maybe it was a ghost? But Zeide persisted in trying to figure out what was going on. He decided to sit while leaving the door somewhat ajar and go out quickly when he heard footsteps.

That is what he did. As soon as he heard footsteps, he immediately opened the door and saw a creature crawl under the fireplace. It was a hedgehog that one of the workers had brought to the hut. This creature has claws, and when it walks on a wooden floor it sounds like a person's footsteps. I remember other instances in which Zeide was fearless.

## ALMOST A ROSH YESHIVA

While still a young rav, Zeide was offered the position of head rosh yeshiva in Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim in Lubavitch after the outstanding previous rosh yeshiva died. Obviously, to be appointed rosh yeshiva in Lubavitch the candidate had to present a shiur. Zeide did so successfully. The Rebbe Rashab and R' Yosef Yitzchok (later to be the Rebbe Rayatz) gave their full approval.

After several months in which he gave a shiur, he stopped because of family reasons; what

those reasons were, I don't know. The Rebbeim were not pleased by this and Zeide and his family felt this immediately. A huge fire broke out in his house after a series of smaller disasters. Zeide would relate this with great sorrow and regret and I would listen with tremendous childlike sadness. "Remember, you must listen to the Rebbe..." Zeide would often add after recounting this story.

Zeide said that on one of the first days that he gave a shiur to the older talmidim in Lubavitch, the Rebbe's son, later to be the Rebbe Rayatz, who was the acting menahel, came in and listened to the shiur. In Tomchei T'mimim, the Rebbeim themselves wanted firsthand knowledge of the

For example, he would say about himself, even with a smile, that he had very little in the way of *hadras panim* (resplendence of visage). How did he know that when he refrained from looking into a mirror? Nu, it's a question.

He said about himself that he definitely did not envy anyone, not for their money, not for their honor and so on, but he was envious of a *baal menagen* (someone musical). He assessed himself as being unable to sing even a simple niggun, while he had a great love for Chassidic niggunim. When he referred to someone like himself without any musical ability, he said he sang "like a cat having difficulty in labor."

 **The Rebbeim were not pleased by this and Zeide and his family felt this immediately. A huge fire broke out in his house after a series of smaller disasters. Zeide would relate this with great sorrow and regret. "Remember, you must always listen to the Rebbe..."**

scholarship of the rosh yeshiva. By all indications, he was very pleased with Zeide's shiur.

After Zeide finished the shiur, he sighed. The Rebbe asked him why he sighed and Zeide said he needed strength. The Rebbe said that it says in the verse, "Those who hope to Hashem have their strength exchanged" – you need to make an exchange of strengths with Hashem. If you give Hashem your finite essential strengths, He gives you back infinite strength.

## UNTIL EXPIRY OF THE SOUL

Zeide spoke about himself openly without hiding his flaws, without any pretenses of humility and self-consciousness of "who am I and what am I."

And yet, he loved music. Every so often he would daven at length and with a niggun, "*Chabad'n zich*" (engaging in the practice of Chabad), and he had three "clauses" of a hartzige Chabad niggun that he would actually hum quite nicely. Zeide had the practice to learn late at night. I don't remember precisely what he learned, but I remember the great delight I had in hearing the tune that he used while he learned. Night after night I would sleep sweetly to the tune of his learning as though his learning was a lullaby. Zeide would learn in the dining room and my bed was there too. It was an old sofa with a straw mattress that was porous from age (throughout my childhood I practically never

slept in a real bed). My desire to hear Zeide learn was confounded by the drowsiness the niggun induced in me.

What I will now relate will certainly bring a smile to those smart fellows who feel strongly about dismissing everything and everyone else, but this is the story Zeide told:

He once saw in a Chassidic book that if you review a maamer Chassidus a hundred times in a row, you merit great giluyim (spiritual revelations; I don't remember which giluyim he mentioned). Zeide decided to do it and he chose an appropriate time. Once, when he traveled by train for several hours, he lay on the top bunk, the place furthest away from the noise and commotion. He decided this would be the best time to delve into a maamer one hundred times. He mentioned which maamer it was (of the Rebbe Rashab) but I forget the opening words.

It wasn't easy to do but as Zeide said, "By nature I am a bit stubborn" and that helped. He did not stop but kept reviewing it as he overcame another difficulty, keeping track of how many times he had said it.

This went on until somewhere after 70 times he had to stop. Why? Because he began feeling a strange delight that melted his heart. He felt as though he was fading away and passing on, literally experiencing *kallos ha'nefesh* (expiry of the soul) from so much spiritual pleasure. Zeide was quite removed from being the delusional sort, for those people who might want to convince themselves and others that this was a fantasy or his imagination. He was also far from being someone given to bouts of trepidation. I heard him recount this episode a few times

and each time he did, there was a peculiar smile on his face, a sort of nostalgic ecstasy.

### POP-QUIZ ON THE ROAD

Zeide-Rav, like all other Lubavitcher Chassidim, would travel to the Rebbe in Lubavitch. The word "travel" is imprecise. He could not afford a train ticket. Every so often, he would pay a modest fee to join the wagon driver who traveled from town to town for his parnasa, but sometimes he just walked. The main difficulty was the walk back from Lubavitch.

He would often make the trips to the Rebbe with the "assistant rabbi" who was also a big lamdan. The two big lamdanim would traverse forests with empty pockets and would go to each local rabbi to ask him for some rubles for the expenses of the journey. Most of the time, the Jewish communities were small and poor with Misnagdishe rabbanim, and many times the local rav could not collect the few rubles. It sometimes happened that the Litvishe rav would say, "What proof is there that you are Torah scholars? First, let us talk a bit in learning."

If that occurred, to the rav's misfortune, the two guest rabbis would heartily agree to talk in learning with him. He would regret it as the Chassidic rabbis ripped apart his "scholarship" to bits and pieces.

Zeide told about one such instance. The rav of a town told them that before he tried to collect some rubles for them he had to know whether they were actually scholars. He settled comfortably in his armchair, without slippers, and began testing them. Apparently Zeide and his assistant were a little offended. They attacked him with

sharp questions until the rav left his slippers under the table and fled for the kitchen to his wife for some consolation.

That is when Zeide told his assistant, "Nu, enough, it is not our job to show Misnagdishe rabbanim that they don't know how to learn."

### A LESSON IN ZEALOTRY

Zeide had an unusually sharp way with words and the truth is that he rarely refrained from censuring important balabatim (householders) and askanim (communal activists). This seems to be the main reason that he was unsuccessful in getting a rabbinic position in a large Jewish community. I'd like to give you one example of his sharpness even in his old age when "his head was gone."

It happened many years ago. A big *kana'i* (zealot) came to a Chassidic town who planned on "teaching Balak" (Yid. expression – meaning to humiliate a public figure) – giving rebuke to some great Chassidim who, in his view, had veered off the path. The zealot planned on doing this at a large Chassidic gathering at which Zeide was present. I don't know whether Zeide knew ahead of time what this Chassidic zealot had planned, but apparently he felt something in the air. Zeide was a fervent Chabad Chassid yet he opposed the extremism of the young Chassidim.

The zealot stood not far from the dais where Zeide sat and he began to speak: "What is the difference between the sin of the Golden Calf and the sin of the Spies ...?" Apparently, he was setting the stage to "stick it" to those "heretics."

Zeide's hearing was poor, but he heard what the zealot

had to say and responded, “Do you know what the difference is? I’ll tell you. If you remain

silent, that’s the “cheit ha’egel” and if you speak up, that’s the “cheit ha’meraglim.” The zealot

burst out laughing together with the crowd and his plan came to naught.

**Continued from page 27**

the orchard in search of a quiet place.” Reuven used to say Krias Shma out loud, and his sobs would continue until the morning.

When Reuven was asked about this, he said, “I was holding then according to a certain approach in bitterness. However, when I went into yechidus, the Rebbe told me: ‘While this is also a proper approach, if you replace the bitterness with simcha, you will reach far higher spiritual levels.’ I changed direction in my personal avoda from that day forward.”

(Chanoch HaLevi Shachar)

**REBBE, YOU’RE THE MOSHIACH!**

Once when we were sitting with Reuven, several avreichim from Anash, with a somewhat different viewpoint than Reuven on the issue of Moshiach, came in and also made certain to explain their position to everyone present.

Reuven then proceeded to relate how during the early years, he went in to the Rebbe and told him, “Rebbe, you’re the Moshiach!”

With tears in his eyes, Reuven continued his story, “The Rebbe, *zahl gezunt zain*, gave me such

a big smile...but he didn’t answer me. It was obvious to me that the answer was yes, except that the Rebbe remained silent due to his great modesty. So what can I tell you? Silence is tantamount to an admission, and it’s clear that the Rebbe would not allow a Chassid to make such a mistake, particularly since the Rebbe is a man of the Shulchan Aruch. Now, a few roosters come along here to crow for me, as they try to explain that I don’t understand what the Rebbe meant...”

(Chanoch HaLevi Shachar)

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# TRANSCENDENTAL LAUGHTER

By Rabbi Heschel Greenberg

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



## EVERYONE IS LAUGHING

Yitzchak, or Isaac, is the name given the second of our forefathers. In last week's parsha, G-d tells Abraham that he will father a son, and he should be named Yitzchak. In this week's parsha, where we read about his miraculous birth—Abraham was a hundred years old and Sarah was ninety!—the Torah seems to give the reason for the choice of the name Yitzchak which translates as “he will laugh.” After mentioning that Abraham named him Yitzchak, the Torah relates that Sarah exclaimed: “G-d has made me happy. Whoever hears will be happy with me.” It seems that his name is related to the idea of laughter and joy.

It seems that everything about Yitzchak's birth revolved around laughter. Abraham laughed when G-d told him he would father a child. Sarah laughed when the angel told her she would have a child. And now Sarah speaks of how everyone will laugh when they hear about her miracle of having a child.

The name Yitzchak is written in the future tense. It implies that there will be laughter in the future? And the question has been raised, why name him “laughter” because of the future? Weren't there already peals of laughter emanating from the principals? Abraham and Sarah laughed heartily and so did all

the people who heard about this incredible miracle. Moreover, Rashi explains, citing the words of the Midrash that “Many barren women were remembered with her, many sick people were healed on that day, many prayers were answered with hers, and there was much joy in the world.”

The question that arises is actually a double one: First, why was his name in the future tense when he already evoked the laughter? His name should have therefore been *tzchok*, which simply means laughter. Second, why did Sarah seem to suggest that the laughter associated with the birth of Isaac was the laughter of all those who would hear about his birth and the miracles they would experience? Why wouldn't it suffice that his name Yitzchak was justified and appropriate due to the laughter of his own parents?

## TWO TIERS OF LAUGHTER

One could suggest an answer to these questions based on the definition of true joy and laughter. There is relative laughter and joy based on the moment's good news and there is the enduring laughter that transcends the moment.

In an earlier section of the Torah, Rashi records a heretic's argument to a Sage: “Why did G-d create man if He knew that he would eventually be destroyed in the Great Flood?” The rabbi

answered with an analogy of the birth of a child. “When the child is born the parents rejoice even though they know that he will eventually die. The rationale is that ‘when it is the time for joy there is joy, when it is a time to grieve one grieves.’ Similarly, G-d knew that they will sin and be destroyed; nevertheless He did not refrain from creating them because of the righteous that will arise from them.”

Rashi's answer to the heretic should have ended with “similarly, when G-d created the world it was a time of joy and when He destroyed it, it was a time to grieve.” Why does He conclude with the reference to the righteous?

It seems that Rashi is drawing a distinction between human joy and laughter and G-d's. A human being, who is finite, must live in the moment. His joy is based on what happens at that specific time. Human joy—and conversely human sorrow—is based on the here and now.

G-d, however, who is infinite and transcends the bounds of time and space, sees the ultimate future. G-d sees the righteous who will emerge from humanity, and therefore He can rejoice in the present not only because there is reason to rejoice because of the good of the moment. He can rejoice even as He knows the future destruction because

G-d knows the ultimate future as well. His joy is based on both the temporal and the eternal.

When Isaac was born, there was no question that it was a source of great joy for his parents. However, this joy was not the ultimate joy since nothing in the physical world lasts forever. G-d therefore named him Yitzchak, not for the present joy which is fleeting, but because Yitzchak points to the distant future—in the Messianic Age—when there will be only unmitigated and unadulterated joy.

### **YITZCHAK: A PORTENT OF THE FUTURE**

Abraham and Sarah, however, were not privy to G-d's vision of the ultimate future. So when they heard that G-d wanted their son named Yitzchak, which implied that the real joy would come in the future, we might presume that they had to be puzzled as to what future event could justify calling him Yitzchak. If his name was tzchok/laughter in the present tense, they would have had no problem in understanding that a child is a source of joy, especially one who was born miraculously at their ripe old age. However, to name him based on the future baffled them. What future event justifies calling him Yitzchak more than any other person?

Sarah therefore concluded that the joy of the future would be the joy shared by all the other people who would experience their own private miracle of bearing children, as mentioned in the above cited comment of Rashi. To Sarah, the joy that will be experienced by others explained why his name was in the future tense. It indicated that his birth will continue to bring joy even after he was born. Sarah was not aware, at that time, that



**It takes a tough prosecutor who probes to find the person's guilt but who can also probe even deeper to find exculpatory evidence that will exonerate the accused.**

Isaac's association with laughter was connected with the much more distant future: the Messianic Age about which it is said, "Then our mouths will be filled with laughter." Yitzchak, more than Abraham and Jacob, was a portent of the ultimate future.

### **DIGGER OF WELLS AND DEFENDER OF ISRAEL**

The close connection of Isaac and the future redemption is echoed in the Talmudic discussion (Tractate Shabbat 89b) that cites a Biblical verse (Isaiah 63) that in the future the Jewish people will single out Isaac for recognition because he will find ways of vindicating the Jewish people. Isaac, despite his association with the Divine attribute of g'vura/judgment—in contradistinction to Abraham, who personified kindness and Jacob who epitomized compassion—was the Patriarch who wanted to bless his son Esau. And in the future he will find ways of defending and exonerating even the most sinful Jews making them all worthy for the future Redemption.

How can we explain this anomaly? Abraham and Jacob, the Talmud relates there, could not find the means to defend their children, but Isaac could?

One way of answering this question is to reflect on the difference between the trait of kindness and the trait of judgment. Conventional thinking has it that a judgmental person will be harsher in judging a sinner than a person imbued with genuine kindness

and compassion. However when one reflects on the true nature of judgment we can discover the opposite to be true.

Isaac is known for his digging wells. Chassidic thought explains that digging wells is also a metaphor for digging deeply within one's own character, probing the inner recesses of one's heart and soul. When one digs deep they will discover hidden traces of negativity that may not show up on the surface. A person with this personality of g'vura, severity, will generally be more harsh and demanding because they can detect even small traces of imperfection and insincerity.

However when we deal with a person who is a personification of the Divine attribute of g'vura coupled with the Torah's admonition to judge everyone favorably there is a dilemma. If one were a chesed personality it is easy to see how he/she may not see the negative lurking beneath the surface of the other or may choose to ignore it. But nothing can elude the g'vura personality. He sees even the slightest hint of impurity. How then could this g'vura oriented individual be tolerant and see the good in others?

The answer is that a human being is made up of multiple layers. There is the surface layer and the subconscious, or subliminal, levels of our character. And while one may be a decent person on the surface he/she can be rotten to the core without even knowing it. However there is also a third level, one which is the very core of

“The true g’vura individuals, while they can see all the underlying flaws, can also see the goodness that is latent within the innermost precincts of the person.”

our souls that is even more deeply embedded within our psyche.

Who is most qualified to see that core, not just know of its existence? The answer is a g’vura personality, the well-digging Isaacs of the world.

### ISAAC’S X-RAY VISION

Isaac therefore is able to see a more fundamental and deeper aspect of a person’s psyche. Thus, he was able to see the good in Esau that others could not see. Similarly, Isaac was also able to see farther into the future at which time the core goodness of each and every one of us will be fully revealed.

We can now understand why Abraham and Jacob will not be able to defend us the way Isaac can. When the surface and even the subterranean layers of the lowliest Jews becomes so sullied, then even the kindest and most compassionate person could not find a way to justify their actions and be a good defense lawyer for them. It takes a tough prosecutor who probes to find the person’s guilt but who can also probe even deeper to find exculpatory evidence that will exonerate the accused. Likewise, the true g’vura individuals, while they can see all the underlying flaws, can also see the goodness that is latent

within the innermost precincts of the person.

Yitzchak is thus the symbol of the future. Just as he can see beneath the surface of personalities where no one else can penetrate, so too Yitzchak will be able to see beyond the surface layers of time and space.

He exclusively sees beyond the here and now.

Yitzchak’s birth introduces laughter; but not the temporal laughter associated with every other birth. His was the laughter that transcended all bounds. His laughter affected everyone and did not cease. Yitzchak’s laughter is the symbol of the Messianic Age about which the Psalmist says: “Then our mouths will be filled with laughter.” At that time we will all experience the genuine joy that can never be muted or diminished.

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# AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SLIPPERY SLOPE

Once Rabbi E. Yalles asked the Rebbe what would happen if they gave back the territories . . . would that spell an end to the country? The Rebbe replied that it would continue to exist, but it would be a most wretched country. The State of Israel today is indeed a wretched country, without pride, without hope, without any future.

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By Sholom Ber Crombie

Translated by Michael Leib Dobry

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**T**he Israeli left-wing has a new mantra: We must strengthen Abu Mazen. Yes, the very same Abu Mazen who just a little more than a month ago submitted a request to wipe out the Jewish settlements of Yehuda and Shomron and install a terror state in their place. Now, they're asking us to strengthen him. They claim that since Bibi has made Hamas stronger when he gave it renewed momentum with the release of more than one thousand terrorists, we are compelled to strengthen Abu Mazen (may his name be erased). If we don't, there will be anarchy in Eretz Yisroel – so they say. All this is happening as thousands of missiles are pointed towards Israeli cities on both the northern and southern borders, and while a rocket attack on Kiryat Malachi

seems to be the most logical thing we can expect to see in the headlines. This is also happening while Iran continues to develop atomic weapons, Syria threatens the Golan Heights, and Turkey threatens to incite the whole Middle East against us.

In the insane situation prevailing today, everything appears logical. It seems normal that the strongest army in the region is unable to stop a few amateur terrorist cells firing rockets towards southern Eretz Yisroel. At night, they go out to one of the former Gush Katif settlements destroyed by the Israeli government, find a comfortable spot among the bulldozed Jewish homes, and then proceed to send instant panic throughout Sderot and Ashkelon.

Recently, they have even

managed to do more than that: children in Beersheva now run in fear from the color red. As a token of generosity, the government of Israel has also given the terrorists symbolic assistance in the form of three settlements on the northern edge of the Gaza Strip. From this location, they don't require much effort to put another half a million Jews within the crosshairs of their murderous missiles.

Yet, no one asks the question: How did we come to this absurd reality? How can the army that vanquished the combined military powers of the Arab states in a war lasting six days stand in utter bewilderment before a terrorist organization situated just twenty minutes from Kiryat Gat? Instead of dealing with these pertinent questions, Israelis are debating the question of whether we should strengthen the "Palestinian" Authority or Hamas. It's as if the citizens of Eretz Yisroel have been out of the country for the past several years and haven't the foggiest idea who's been blowing up children on buses.

The Israeli left has succeeded in instilling the country with the belief that yesterday's enemy is today's partner for peace – no matter how many terrorist attacks it continues to unleash against us. At times, the public simply turns a blind eye; sometimes it just lacks the strength to face the truth. Only yesterday, everyone was taken aback by the release of murderers with blood on their

hands. But today, no one sees any connection between the Shalit deal and the new wave of terror.

### **THE MOST WRETCHED OF COUNTRIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

Once Rabbi E. Yalles asked the Rebbe what would happen if they gave back the territories liberated during the Six Day War? Would that spell an end to the country? The Rebbe replied that it would continue to exist, but it would be a most wretched country. The State of Israel today is indeed a wretched country, without pride, without hope, without any future. This is what the left says, not the “sommnambulates” from the nationalist camp. The government ministers – those entrusted with making decisions affecting the security of millions of Jews – have been too preoccupied with bribery and other crimes. We encounter the government’s weakness at every turn. It severely lacks the inner strength to handle the crisis of a kidnapped soldier in Gaza, just as it has no power to repel the missile attacks that have brought the bustle of southern Eretz Yisroel to a standstill.

This wretched country is simply too weak, with no strength for anything. In today’s situation, any transient organization can pose a threat to the stability of the regime in Eretz Yisroel. Our prime minister isn’t ashamed to declare a ceasefire along the southern border, while Grad missiles can be heard whistling by as entire families flee into the bomb shelters.

This state of affairs has already become a permanent fixture: The terrorists fire missiles, the government declares a ceasefire, and everyone waits for the next time. As successive Israeli defense

ministers have continued to speak only in terms of “restraint,” it’s no wonder that there’s no need to crush terrorism. According to those responsible for our security, if just a few hundred missiles fall within the next couple of weeks and that’s it – we should be thankful. So why shouldn’t the terrorist organizations regularly demonstrate their strength at our expense?

During an emergency conference in 770 at the end of Tishrei, one of the participants called Operation “Cast Lead” by its more correct name of “Distressed Lead.” He was right. The extensive military operation that took place in Gaza during Chanukah three years ago concluded with tremendous hardships, and the day after the operation was called off, the terrorists came out of their hiding places and went back to prepare for the next war.

This lowly country – once the mightiest in the Middle East – hasn’t been able to protect itself against the terrorists. It goes out on military operations where the end results are known in advance. It prepares the ceasefire agreements even before heading out to battle in order to say, “We went to war and took action, and the operation was successfully concluded, having attained a diplomatic triumph.” The political leadership doesn’t really strive to crush terror. After all, Netanyahu, who implemented the Oslo II agreement and supported the expulsion from Gaza, couldn’t bring himself to call for a reconquest of the Gaza Strip.

What concerns the policymakers is the important question of how to silence the public. What must be done to give them the feeling that the Israel Defense Forces are

actually working to combat the rocket threat? In practical terms, however, missiles have been regularly falling on the cities of Eretz Yisroel for more than a decade, and there has yet to be a leader here who has managed to stop these recurring barrages.

### **THE COUNTRY’S LEADERSHIP HAS WEAKENED THE PEOPLE**

Even a blind man cannot ignore the state of deterioration taking place on every front. Just as it is impossible to separate the recent wave of terror from the disgraceful Shalit prisoner swap, and just as we can’t overlook the connection between the Second Lebanon War and the withdrawal from Gaza, similarly, it’s impossible to disregard the lessening of our political clout caused by the self-degradation of Israeli leaders who have consistently yielded to terrorism for decades.

Right after the Six Day War, the Rebbe was already saying that instead of offering thanks to Almighty G-d for the great miracles He had wrought for the Jewish People, they only speak about “my power and the might of my hand.” The Israeli leadership ran to the Arabs and the Americans to say “Sorry that we won.” Then, on the night following the IDF’s re-taking of the Western Wall in Yerushalayim, after the entire Jewish People watched with tear-filled eyes as our soldiers said the “Shma Yisroel” near the remnants of our Beis HaMikdash, the government of Israel presented the keys for the Temple Mount to the Moslem Wakf.

Not long afterwards, the capitulation and shame began. Left-wing politicians thought that since the Palestinians had

been living for nearly nineteen years in Yehuda and Shomron under Jordanian rule, this was sufficient reason not to settle Jews in these former bastions of the kingdom of Israel. They agreed to give away the gravesite of our Patriarchs in Chevron and Kever Yosef in Sh'chem. It was only thanks to the self-sacrifice of good Jews such as Rabbi Moshe Levinger that several families managed to erect Jewish outposts in Chevron, and the government waged war against them as well. When Chanan Porat *a"n* came to Sebastia for the purpose of establishing a Jewish settlement on the premises, people thought that he was a crazy dreamer.

The Israeli leadership has weakened Jewish pride among the people dwelling in Tziyon. For years, they have brainwashed them into believing that there is no connection between our historic bond to the land of our forefathers and the fact that Jews can today live in all parts of the country. They invented a new formula, according to which the right of the Jewish People to return to their homeland applies only in places such as Caesarea and Haifa – but not regarding Ariel and Maale Adumim.

Instead of authentic Jewish teachings, they have instilled an entire generation with a distorted education. They told young people that we came to Eretz Yisroel because there had been a Holocaust in Europe. It's no wonder that today's youngsters don't understand what we have to look for in Yehuda and Shomron. If we were merely searching for a small plot of real estate to put an army to protect us against the Nazis (may their name be erased), then what's so bad about Tel Aviv?

Years passed, Jewish

**“ It has reached the point that if terrorists fire missiles from a school in Gaza and strike a school in Sderot, we have to go all the way to the Supreme Court to find out whether or not we're allowed to bomb the source of the rocket fire. The answer is usually . . . no.**

awareness eroded, and the connection to Eretz HaKodesh became secondary in nature. Suddenly, people started to hear all kinds of ridiculous claims that we have to leave the territories due to problems of demography and democracy. Jews from highly respectable families, whose grandfathers were prominent rabbanim, began saying that we can't stay in the land where our forefathers are buried because there's no way to control the refugee camps without giving their inhabitants blue identity cards...

All these claims – and others like them – began to sound logical and reasonable and suddenly the IDF was no longer permitted to defend itself. These repeated claims forced the military to relent, and it started restricting its operations to “targeted killings.” It has reached the point that if terrorists fire missiles from a school in Gaza and strike a school in Sderot, we have to go all the way to the High Court of Justice to find out whether or not we're allowed to bomb the source of the rocket fire. The answer is usually no.

### **TO SEE REDEMPTION**

Dear Jews, it is forbidden to give up! Just as we see the realization of the prophecies connected with the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash, we must also see within them the prophecy of the Redemption. The Rebbe, who foresaw decades ago that

the country with the strongest and most determined military forces would turn into a wretched country, is the same Rebbe who informed us of the prophecy that “*Hinei Zeh Moshiach Ba,*” and that we are now living in the days of Moshiach. The Rebbe gave us a spirit of encouragement and a true vision amidst the sea of terrible falsehoods and confusion in which the People of Israel find themselves today. In the face of this subservience and humiliation, we must continue to spread the Rebbe's message of Jewish pride and his constant encouragement that the Redemption is due to happen at any moment.

Together with our avoda during these final moments in exile – to bring the Rebbe's holy words to Jews throughout Eretz Yisroel and the world at-large and to raise a great outcry against the government's dangerous policies, we must look upon all the events taking place in the world today with the eyeglasses the Rebbe provided us – the eyeglasses of Redemption. The Rebbe taught us that we must look at everything happening in the world from the aspect of the Redemption and see how it all brings us closer to the days of Moshiach. There can be no other explanation for the existing reality among the people of Eretz Yisroel except that the end of the exile is fast approaching, and we shall soon merit the True and Complete Redemption through Moshiach Tzidkeinu, immediately, mamash, NOW!

# THE REBBEIM'S PREPARATION OF THE WORLD FOR MOSHIACH

THE REBBE RASHAB \* PART VII



By Rabbi Gershon Avtzon

Dear Reader sh'yichyeh:

In this week's issue, we will discuss the activities of the fifth Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Shalom Dovber Schneersohn, also known as the Rebbe Rashab.

## THE REBBE OF A SEVENTH GENERATION

The Rebbe Rashab, the second son of Rabbi Shmuel Schneersohn who was the fourth Chabad Rebbe, was born in the city of Lubavitch on the 20<sup>th</sup> of Cheshvan 1860. In 1882, when his father died, he was not quite 22 years old, and his brother Zalman Aharon was not much older. A period followed during which each of the brothers fulfilled some of the tasks of a rebbe, but neither felt ready to officially take on that title and the responsibilities it would entail. Over this period, Rabbi Shalom Dovber gradually took on more responsibilities, and on Rosh Hashanah 5643 he accepted the leadership of the Lubavitch movement. He passed away 2 Nissan 1920. He is buried in Rostov.

The Rebbe Rashab dedicated his life to bringing the Sh'china closer to this world by making Chassidic teachings more available and accessible.

By way of introduction, it is important to understand the following foundational concept. The Rebbe Rashab is very connected to our generation the Dor HaShvii, the Dor HaGeula. He was the *seventh* generation from the Baal Shem Tov, and many of his activities laid the groundwork for our generation, which is the seventh generation from the Alter Rebbe.

## MOSHIACH IN THE LIFE OF THE REBBE RASHAB

It is fascinating to note the connections between the Rebbe Rashab and the times of Moshiach. Kehos is the official printing press for the teachings of the Chabad Lubavitch Rebbeim. Each Rebbe has a special "Shaar Blatt," a bordered title page template that is uniquely his and used in all of his s'farim. These title page templates were mystically designed to express the quality of each Rebbe. The only two Rebbeim who share the same design are the Rebbe Rashab and our Rebbe. This was done as per the instructions of the Friedike Rebbe, who commented, "My father was a P'nimi (someone who is authentic and sincere), and you – the Rebbe – are a P'nimi."

Another intriguing point is

related to what the Rambam writes in Hilchos Melachim that when we enter Eretz Yisroel and when Moshiach comes we will need to fulfill three Mitzvos: 1) appoint a king, 2) eradicate Amalek, and 3) build the Beis HaMikdash.

The first maamer of the Rebbe Rashab, the Friedike Rebbe, and the Rebbe correlate to those three mitzvos. The first Maamer that the Rashab said was entitled *Kesser Yitnu Lecha*, discussing the mitzvah to appoint a king. The first Maamer of the Friedike Rebbe was entitled *Reishis Goyim Amalek*, about destroying Amalek. The first Maamer of the Rebbe is entitled *Basi L'Gani*, all about building the Beis HaMikdash.

The Rebbe Rashab's activities in bringing the Sh'china to our world in a revealed manner and in preparing us for Moshiach were obvious. The Rebbe Rashab is known as "The Rambam of Toras HaChassidus." His way of teaching Chassidus was so clear and elaborate, that on many occasions he would spend several Shabbasos explaining a single concept in order to clarify its every detail. These talks became known as "Hemshechim," series. As a matter of fact, one "Hemshech" that the Rebbe Rashab gave over lasted four years! These efforts made many of the holy, lofty

concepts of Chassidus more accessible to the human mind.

The Rebbe Rashab founded the Lubavitch Yeshiva system, Tomchei T'mimim Lubavitch. In addition to giving teenagers the opportunity to study Chassidus, which was a revolution in its own right, the Yeshiva was also made not just to raise Torah scholars, but to train soldiers who will be determined to bring Moshiach.

In the Rebbe Rashab's own words, "The soul of the Baal Shem Tov once ascended to the heavenly realms. Having reached the palace of Moshiach, the Baal Shem Tov asked him, 'Master, when are you coming?' And Moshiach answered, 'When your wellsprings will be disseminated outward.'

"When the wellsprings of the Baal Shem Tov's teachings and his paths in Divine service are spread throughout the entire world, then Moshiach will come. In plain words, the coming of Moshiach depends in large measure on the spreading of these wellsprings outward; it is our labors in disseminating them that will bring about the revelation of the light of Moshiach, the "House of David," David's descendant.

"However, the House of David (i.e., the revelation of Moshiach) faces battles. From the beginning of creation, "the spirit of G-d" – here interpreted by our Sages to mean 'the spirit of Moshiach' – "hovered over the waters." In other words, the presence of the spirit of Moshiach from the beginning of creation implies that the original Divine intent underlying creation was that this material world be guided by the spirit of Moshiach. However, the sin of the Tree of Knowledge and the sins of the subsequent generations that repeatedly angered their Maker prevented

“The other category of those who ‘have abused ... the footsteps of Your Moshiach’ comprises all kinds of people; in fact, it even includes quite reputable Torah scholars, whose faith in the imminent Redemption is nevertheless weak.”



this purpose from being realized immediately. Instead, it became necessary for the ultimate perfection of the world to come about through our divine service. And when the materialism of the entire world has been sifted and refined, the service of disseminating the wellsprings outward will serve as a prelude to the coming of Moshiach.

"Our Sages teach: 'the world will exist for six thousand years: two thousand years of Tohu (chaos), two thousand years of Torah, and two thousand years of the Messianic Era.' The two thousand years of Torah were intended to correct the two thousand years of Tohu, through the refinement and elevation of the Divine sparks which had descended into this material world following the 'shattering of the vessels' of the World of Tohu.

Following this will come the two thousand years of the Messianic Era. The revelation of Moshiach in particular and the sixth millennium in general, are called Ikvisa D'Meshicha, the 'footsteps of Moshiach.' And the fifty-year period during which Moshiach the son of David will arrive is the period described in the Book of T'hillim: 'Your enemies, O G-d, have abused ... the footsteps of Your Moshiach.'

"The fact is that I am bitterly grieved over the 'Society for the Dissemination of Enlightenment.' For years now, they have been acting as informers to the Czarist authorities concerning the Torah schools and teachers, the chadarim and the melamdin that have remained faithful to our time-honored tradition. This is the tradition which they seek to uproot, thereby polluting

the minds of Jewish children by means of their disbelieving teachers, and in particular by this dire new plague, this 'delegation of evil angels,' the teachers of the schools who endanger the faith of their pupils.

"I hate them with the utmost hatred, and hold them utterly to blame. I am certain, however, that I can see the woeful turn for the worse and the suffering that they will bring upon our people, and this will be followed by the sweet conclusion of the fifty-year period of the 'footsteps of Moshiach,' which will ultimately bring about the coming of Moshiach. But in the course of that period, the battle of the House of David must be fought.

"Our Sages teach: 'If you see one generation after another scoffing [at G-d and His Torah], be on the watch for the approaching footsteps of Moshiach. For in the above-quoted verse it is written, 'Your enemies, O G-d, have abused...the footsteps of Your Moshiach.' And what is written immediately after that? 'Blessed be G-d forever, Amen and Amen.' In other words, when one generation of scoffers follows another, we can expect the ultimate Divine blessing, the coming of Moshiach.

"The first generation of scoffers are the members of the 'Society for the Dissemination of Enlightenment,' the founders and teachers of the above-described

schools. They will educate the second generation of scoffers, who will bring on the 'birth pangs of Moshiach,' which the world at large and the Jewish people must undergo. This is what necessitates 'the battle of the House of David,' whose task is to strengthen our people's faith in the Messianic Redemption and to ease its birth pangs.

"There are two levels of evil found in the time of the footsteps of Moshiach. One category comprises 'the enemies of G-d,' the veteran apikorsim and maskilim, the above-described teachers and their disciples, who do not believe in G-d or in the Torah, and whose prime intent is to ridicule the mitzvos and in particular the faith in the coming of Moshiach. The second category includes those who believe in G-d and in the Torah, but do not appreciate the holiness of the Torah.

"[This category consists of] those who believe that they can bring on the Redemption through their own efforts, such as the new group that distorts the meaning of the verse, 'G-d will build Jerusalem and gather in the dispersed of Israel,' saying that 'when the dispersed of Israel will gather, they will rebuild Jerusalem.' May G-d protect us from them and theirs, and ensure that they do not bring about a new spiritual and material destruction.

"The other category of those

who 'have abused ... the footsteps of Your Moshiach' comprises all kinds of people; in fact, it even includes quite reputable Torah scholars, whose faith in the imminent Redemption is nevertheless weak. They may well rationalize their beliefs with explanations ostensibly based on the fear of heaven. The final word, however, is that their faith in Moshiach's coming is weak."

## THE PREDICTION MATERIALIZES

Today we see it clearly. Who fought to keep Judaism alive in the tough times of Communism? Who were the ones that moved with their families on Shlichus to the barren American deserts? Who are the ones leading the way with awareness of Moshiach?

The answer to all the above is, of course, the graduates of Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim, founded by the Rebbe Rashab!

The original principal of the Yeshiva was the Rebbe Rashab's only son, and later his successor, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak of Lubavitch. His accomplishments will be the topic of discussion in our next article IY"H.

*Rabbi Avtzon is the Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshivas Lubavitch Cincinnati and a well sought after speaker and lecturer. Recordings of his in-depth shiurim on Inyanei Geula u'Moshiach can be accessed at <http://ylcrecording.com>.*

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# PROVE IT!

By M.E. Gordon

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Shira was waiting on the corner just about to give up when she spotted Chaya bounding towards her, coat unbuttoned, schoolbag bulging with books and papers that were apparently stuffed in on her way out of the house.

“Thanks for waiting,” she managed to say after catching her breath. “Sorry I’m late, but just as I went out the door, my mother made me come back to take out the garbage.”

“Weren’t you late yesterday for the same reason? Why don’t you just make it your business to take out the garbage every day as you leave the house?” suggested Shira.

“I don’t really like taking out smelly garbage.”

“Well, someone has to do it!” Shira pointed out.

“Why does that someone have to be me?” complained Chaya. “I don’t understand my mother. On Monday morning, I set the table for supper before I left the house, so it would be ready in the evening. When I came home, I thought I’d get some sign of appreciation. Instead, my mother was upset with me, because she had asked me to take out the garbage that morning, and I didn’t. By the time I had finished the table, I didn’t have time to take out the garbage.”

“Um....Chaya, isn’t Monday when the garbage truck collects from your street? Maybe the garbage job was more urgent

than setting the table ten hours ahead?”

“You sound like my mother! Hey, is that the first bell ringing? We’d better hurry.”

Chaya sat in Chumash class, thinking about how rarely her efforts were appreciated. There was the time that she had decided to bake chocolate éclairs on Erev Shabbos when her mother had stepped out to the grocery. Instead of praising her for her efforts to make such a delicious dessert, her mother was upset that the kitchen was a mess. It wasn’t her fault that the éclairs were a flop; it was her mother who

pulled them out of the oven too early. She said that it was getting late, and the chicken needed to go in. Then there was the time that Chaya’s neighbor asked her to babysit. The children were in bed when she came, but Chaya thought that they might enjoy doing something creative. The kids were very happy to get out of bed and help build a model Beis HaMikdash from Lego. For some reason, however, their parents were not happy at all when they came home to find their children still awake. They didn’t even look at the half-finished model.

“Chaya,” Mrs. Schwartz’ voice broke through her thoughts. “Do you agree or disagree?”



Chaya looked blankly at her teacher. Agree to what?

“Chaya,” repeated Mrs. Schwartz, “do you believe that one who does a good deed that he is not commanded to do is greater than one who does what he was asked?”

“Obviously I agree. If someone has to do something, what is the big deal? If someone voluntarily does something without being asked, that is much, much greater.”

“Thank you, Chaya,” Mrs. Schwartz smiled at her, and then turned her gaze to the rest of the class. “Does anyone disagree? ....Shira, what do you think?”

Shira looked thoughtful as she answered slowly. “Actually, I do disagree. It’s easier to volunteer than to be told. When I volunteer for something, it is always my choice. I choose what I want to do, and for how long. When it becomes inconvenient or difficult, I have the option of pulling out. It’s more exciting and enjoyable than being told that I have to do something.”

“Girls, can anyone work out what is the essential difference between doing what you are told and doing something as a volunteer?”

A glimmer of an idea began to glow in Chaya’s mind. It touched off many sparks of understanding that she wanted to explore. First, however, she raised her hand.

“Yes, Chaya?”

“Maybe the difference is that when you volunteer, you do so

on your own terms. When you do what you’re told, you do it for the person who asked-on their terms. And that is much harder!”

“Very good answer, Chaya. Now let’s take this idea a bit further. How can someone else know whether you are doing something because you were told to or whether you volunteered?”

The classroom was quiet, as the girls thought this over. Chaya hesitated, and then raised her hand again.

“If someone saw me painting posters for the school carnival, they would assume, because of my obvious and apparent enthusiasm, that I had volunteered....” There was a murmur of agreement from her classmates. Everyone knew that Chaya loved to paint. “But if they saw me cleaning up at the end, they would know that I must be doing it because I was told to.”

“Chaya, once again thank you for an excellent answer. Now girls, let’s think a bit further. What if I saw Chaya cleaning up from the carnival with the same enthusiasm that she had when she was painting the posters? Would I still assume that she painted the posters only because she felt like it? Would I think that she really loves sweeping floors? What do you say, Sara?”

“I would say that either she was so excited about the carnival or understood how important it was, that she was ready to do anything to help out, whether or not she liked that particular task.”

Mrs. Schwartz nodded and

continued: “And what if during the carnival, just when everyone was enjoying themselves, Chaya stopped the music, and announced that she was instructed by the principal to tell everyone to pack up the booths and leave immediately. Let us say that she herself did not know the reason, but she made sure that the carnival ended right then, even though it was a big disappointment after all of the work she put into it.”

“That would be a real test of character.”

“Now let’s look into your Chumashim— Parshas VaYeira, perek chof-beis, pasuk beis. Rashi comments that unless Avraham passes the test of the Akeida, people will disqualify his previous tests. Why?”

“I think I get it,” said Shira. “The previous tests were hard, but people may have thought that Avraham was just following what he felt good about or understood was right. Sacrificing his son was totally against his logic, totally against his character. When he accepted Hashem’s command without hesitation, that proved that all of the previous tests were also done purely for Hashem.”

On the way home from school, Chaya and Shira were discussing Mrs. Schwartz’ Chumash class. “When I get home,” said Chaya, “I’m going to ask my mother what she needs me to help with, and I’ll do it even if it means taking out the garbage again!”

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