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BASI L'GANI 5712

In honor of Yud Shvat, Beis Moshiach presents a selection of the maamer the Rebbe MH"M delivered on Yud Shvat 5712, in accordance with the custom established by the Rebbe to review each year a section of the Rebbe Rayatz's maamer "Basi L'Gani" of 5710. • This year we focus on the second section of the profound and foundational chassidic discourse. • Part 4 of 5



Translated by Boruch Merkur

Of course, to whatever extent the soul serves G-d on its own, independent of the body, this service still takes place in conjunction with the body. Indeed, it is only by means of the body and with the body that the soul can serve G-d.

The necessary role of the body in the service of G-d is observable with regard to Mitzvos as well as Torah. Clearly, Mitzvos can only be fulfilled by means of the body. And this is so even with regard to those Mitzvos that are inherently emotional in nature, "the obligations of the heart," as discussed elsewhere. But also with regard to Torah, the body is a necessary component, as evidenced by the fact that the Giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai was specifically to [living people] souls invested within bodies.

NO FREE RIDE: THE BODY IS NOT JUST THE VEHICLE OF THE SOUL

However, notwithstanding the necessary role of the body in performing Mitzvos and the study of Torah, it is possible that no real connection with the body is established and that no affect upon it is engendered. To illustrate with an example: When one studies Torah or when one prays, when he is within the environment of Torah law or the environment of prayer, he is then in a refined state of being. But afterwards, when he leaves this sanctified environment, having completed his studies or his prayer, it is apparent that he remains in his former unrefined state. In fact, at times, when he delights in satisfaction with his Divine service, it

results in the further affirmation of his ego and he becomes even coarser than before.

The detachment of the body from its role in Torah and Mitzvos is reflected in the performance of Mitzvos that involve the usage of objects, items such as T'fillin, which require parchment, or Tzitzis, which use wool. There is no perceivable change in the parchment or wool after they are used for a Mitzva. Naturally, the parchment and the wool undergo changes when they are prepared to be used for Mitzvos [writing upon parchment for T'fillin, for example, or tying strings to a wool garment for Tzitzis], but these changes come about through the craftsman's role in producing the objects. Changes that come about through actually fulfilling the Mitzva, however, are indiscernible.

Now, in distinction to object-based Mitzvos, there is a second classification of Mitzvos: Mitzvos that are performed bodily [such as uttering words of Torah. Notwithstanding the fact that these Mitzvos are inherently more connected with the person himself] it is possible that their fulfillment is just as one fulfills Mitzvos with an object, something separate from the person, the body serving as no more than an intermediary through which the soul studies Torah and fulfills Mitzvos.

This approach to Mitzvos, however, when the body remains detached and unaffected, is not the ultimate intent of serving G-d. The ultimate intent, rather, is service that incorporates the body and the Animal Soul in such a manner that it transforms them from one extreme [coarse animalism, self indulgence] to the other [refined sanctity, selflessness, G-dliness], so that it is recognizable

that this is a body that studies Torah and fulfills Mitzvos, and how much more so regarding the Animal Soul.

When this refinement is achieved, not only is one free from the enticement of the forbidden, but even non-forbidden, “permissible” activities are seen as superfluous, unnecessary. Thus, he refrains from indulging in them except for the sake of his physical wellbeing and in order to serve G-d.

Were one’s service of G-d limited to his soul, the body remaining as no more than an intermediary, he would not be fulfilling the ultimate Divine intent, nor is he considered as a “*korban lirtzono lifnei Havaya* – a sacrifice that is pleasing before G-d.” It is necessary to serve G-d specifically with one’s body and Animal Soul, working on them to refine them.

The latter explanation is in line with the teaching of the Rebbe Rashab – that the soul is created from G-dly illuminations, revelations, whereas the body is created from the very essence of G-d, Whose being is of His essence, with no preceding cause or reason, G-d forbid. Indeed the soul, recognizing the primordial virtue of the body, desires to approach the essence. To that end, it desires to connect with the body and Animal Soul and refine them.

Thus, the will and intellect of the soul obligates and demands that it connect with the body – not merely using it as a medium, using it as an object, an instrument with which to serve G-d, but to become united with the body and to serve G-d together.


But the truth is that this alone is not enough to be considered “*lirtzono lifnei Havaya* – pleasing before G-d,” for all of this is service of G-d that stems from the intellect, from reason, inspired by the soul’s appreciation of the especial virtue of the body – that it originates from the Divine essence. The soul works with the body for the sake of attaining the G-dly essence.

AS A CHILD SERVES HIS FATHER

Now, although this motivation stems from reason and the intellect from the side of holiness, it is reason nonetheless. The ultimate intent, however, is not for the sake of attaining the benefit and advantage one accrues through Divine service but simply to fulfill G-d’s will, which is to have a dwelling place in the lower realms, specifically in this physical world. Thus, the soul, which is a “veritable portion of G-d Above,” feels the will of G-d, and on that basis its Divine service is specifically with the body.


In this sense, the soul can attain a Divine service that is at the level of G-d’s child – “you are children [unto G-d your L-rd]” – surpassing even the lofty service ascribed to a servant. A servant serves his master not on account of any intellectual motivation or any pleasure he derives from it but merely out of obedience. That is, he knows the master’s orders but does not feel or internalize his will, nor does he know its underlying reason. The soul, on the other hand, is like a child of G-d. That is, although its service is not motivated by rational considerations but simply to fulfill the will of its Father, it feels and appreciates the will of its Father and knows its purpose.

For this reason the verse states, “*mikem korban l’Havaya*,” and concludes, “of the livestock, of the cattle, and of the sheep.” “**From you** there should be a *korban l’Havaya*” – meaning from the G-dly soul. But since “the secret of *korbanos* reaches as high as the secret of the Ein Sof,” beyond Havaya, [reaching the essence] therefore there needs to be “of the livestock,” service with the Animal Soul and the body. And the service must also be particularized – “of the cattle, and of the sheep” – one must contemplate and delve into the details of matters pertaining to the soul and its Divine service with the body and the Animal Soul. In this manner one’s service will be “*lirtzono lifnei Havaya* – [a sacrifice that is] pleasing before G-d.”



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42 YEARS SINCE **THE FIRST** **LIVE BROADCAST**

A group of activists handled the preparations for the first live broadcast in Eretz Yisroel of the Rebbe's farbrengens for Yud Shvat 5730.

*** Rabbi Yitzchok (Itzke) Gansbourg, Rabbi Eliezer Lichtstein, Rabbi Shmuel (Mulik) Rivkin, and Rabbi Levi Yitzchok Ginsberg were the pioneers. They spent days and nights setting up the broadcast system and improving it. In this interview, they discuss with Beis Moshiach how the project got off the ground.**

By Shneur Zalman Berger

The tension was enormous. The curiosity and anticipation ran high. Everybody knew that in 770 a great drama was being played out, but nobody knew exactly what was happening. What did the Rebbe do, and above all else, what did the Rebbe say?

On Motzaei Shabbos, Yud Shvat 5730/1970, the first live broadcast to Eretz Yisroel took place. For the first time, they could hear the Rebbe's voice in

real time. Early Sunday morning, hundreds of Chassidim began streaming towards the large hall of Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim in Kfar Chabad. The muddy paths, the wintry chill, the call of warm beds – nothing could stop the Chassidim from hearing the Rebbe's voice.

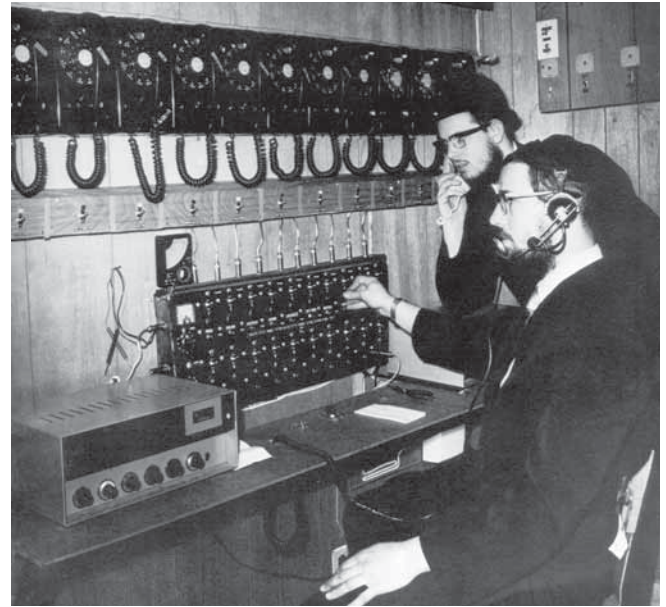
There were noises on the line and a hush in the big zal. Then the Rebbe's voice could be heard! Many a tear was shed.

Forty-two years have passed since the first live broadcast from 770 to Eretz Yisroel. Over the years, broadcasts of farbrengens were able to reach nearly every place in the world, but that was the first attempt.

I think the first initiative regarding a broadcast of the Rebbe's farbrengen was made by the Chassid Rabbi Yona Eidelkopf (see issue #775 about him) for Yud-Tes Kislev 5720. Rabbi Yona, who was always coming up with



Kfar Chabad



New York

original ideas, asked the Rebbe for his consent, but the Rebbe wrote him (5 Kislev 5720): "Transmission to Kfar Chabad via radio or telephone from here of the Yud-Tes Kislev farbrengen is not possible because of technical reasons."

Ten years had gone by since then. On Erev Rosh Chodesh Shvat 5730, the Rebbe announced that he wanted to complete Moshiach's Seifer Torah. Many people made a mighty effort to buy tickets to fly to New York from Eretz Yisroel even though it cost a fortune. There were many others who yearned to go but could not; one of them was Rabbi Itzke Gansbourg (since deceased, a"h).

He related:

"Back then, I worked in chinuch and could not take a leave of absence. However, I wanted very much to hear the Yud Shvat farbrengen. I called the secretary, Rabbi Binyamin Klein and suggested that they broadcast the farbrengen to Eretz

Yisroel via telephone. I urged him to ask the Rebbe.

"When I got a positive answer, I began looking into how to arrange a broadcast like this and quickly discovered how complicated it is. I found a relative of mine who guided me through the technical aspects for the broadcast."

Rabbi Yosef Hartman of Kfar Chabad describes how excited Anash in Eretz Yisroel were about the upcoming broadcast:

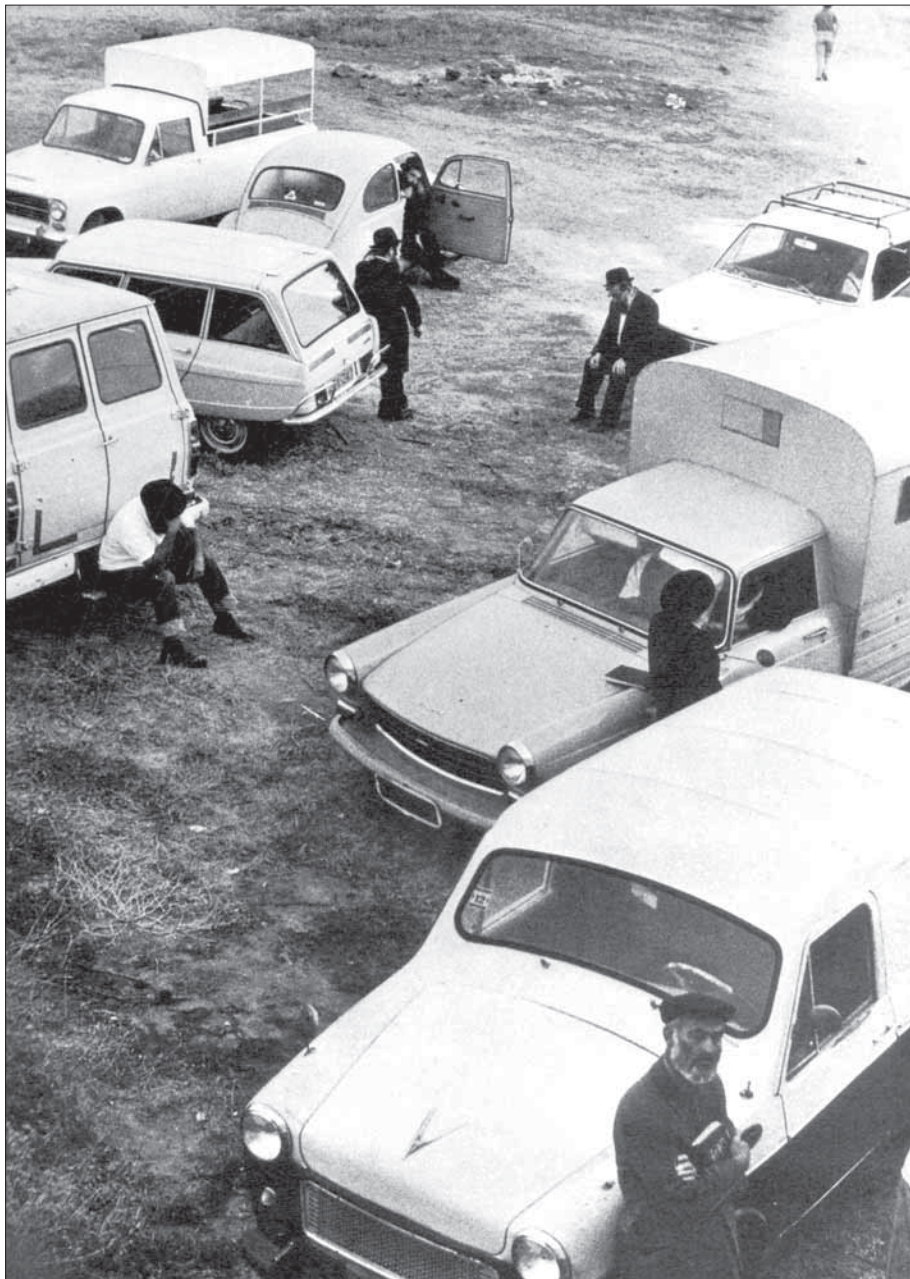
"We all waited impatiently to find out what was happening in 770. On Friday, Erev Yud Shvat, there was a siyum of the Torah L'Kabbalas P'nei Moshiach. In Eretz Yisroel it was already Shabbos. Before Shabbos they had said the broadcast would take place on Motzaei Shabbos in the yeshiva's new hall in the center of Kfar Chabad. When Shabbos was over, relatives who were staying the night with me until the broadcast would begin, came to my house. One special guest was a reporter from *HaTzofeh*, Simcha Aharoni, who

came to cover the first broadcast.

"It is hard to explain our feelings in words. We were very excited since we knew that in a short while we would be hearing the Rebbe's voice, in real time, in Kfar Chabad."

The other part of the broadcast, originating in New York, was arranged by Rabbi Shmuel Rivkin and Rabbi Chaim Boruch Halberstam. Rabbi Mulik Rivkin tells us about the broadcast:

"Chaim Boruch and I decided that the broadcast would take place in the room of the Rebbe's secretary, Rabbi Moshe Leib Rodstein. This room had the necessary elements for a broadcast, a phone line and a window that overlooked the shul. Technically, the transmission of the broadcast was simple. We extended a long cord with a microphone out the window and down into the shul. The other end of the wire was in the room and connected to a tape recorder with a loudspeaker next to two phone lines, one to Eretz Yisroel and



Many people remained outside due to lack of space and listened to the broadcast while leaning on the cars parked outside.

one to Montreal. And that is how, without any special equipment, we transmitted the broadcast to those two locations.”

Before the broadcast, tickets (to cover the costs) were grabbed up like hotcakes. Anash were afraid there wouldn't be any tickets left and they rushed to buy them. Rabbi Lipa Kurtzweil, a resident of Kfar Chabad at

the time, was responsible for arranging the hall of the yeshiva and selling tickets. He worked very hard to enable as many Chassidim as possible to hear the broadcast.

About 1000 people attended the first live broadcast that took place in the yeshiva in Kfar Chabad.

“The tension preceding the

broadcast was enormous,” said R' Itzke Gansbourg. “The quality of the phone lines back then was very poor. We were very nervous. Late Motzaei Shabbos, Menachem (Manny) Wolf, who was in 770 at the time, called and briefly told us about the siyum for the Torah to greet Moshiach that took place the day before. He also told us about the farbrengen that day.

“The broadcast began a few minutes after he finished talking. The Rebbe's voice could be heard over the loudspeaker and I cried. I saw that many others were crying too. It was so moving to hear the Rebbe farbreng 'live.'”

There were problems on the line during the first minutes, but then things settled down and most of the broadcast took place without any problems. The farbrengen was transmitted over loudspeakers so everyone could hear it.

Rabbi Yosef Hartman:

“When the broadcast was over, I translated what the Rebbe said into Hebrew. When I was finished, I sat down to write the main points the Rebbe had spoken about. I gave this to Rabbi Berke Wolf who submitted it to the Israeli newspapers so the Rebbe's words could be read by everybody in the country.”

HOW DID THE REBBE REACT TO THE BROADCAST?

It was the first time the Rebbe agreed to broadcast the farbrengen (also for the first time, the Rebbe allowed a photographer to be present). People felt that the Rebbe wanted to bring about a change in the world.

After Yud Shvat, the Rebbe was given a report about the

broadcast and he asked, “Why did they broadcast to only two locations?”

The day after the broadcast, the Rebbe gave a bottle of mashke to Rabbi Tzvi Hirsh Gansbourg and told him to give it to his brother, Rabbi Itzke along with his “yashar ko’ach.”

Some time later, Rabbi Mulik Rivkin had yechidus in which the Rebbe gave him a hundred dollar bill “for the broadcasts.”

The next broadcast was planned for Purim 5730. The Rebbe’s secretary, Rabbi Klein, told Rabbi Itzke Gansbourg when the farbrengen would begin. Rabbi Itzke publicized this among Anash and began preparing for the second broadcast.

Along with the preparations amongst Anash, the journalist, Rabbi Naftali Krauss publicized “the live broadcast of the Lubavitcher Rebbe on Purim” in the major newspapers of the time. This time, the broadcast was transmitted to six locations.

In the meantime, the system was undergoing improvements in 770. A “broadcasting room” was set up. It wasn’t very modern or sophisticated, but it had ten phone lines. Apparently, it wasn’t all so simple since smoke began rising from the wires! Rabbi Chaim Boruch Halberstam and Rabbi Mulik Rivkin made the necessary repairs and the broadcast continued.

Rabbi Itzke Gansbourg tells about the Purim broadcast:

“We saw that the hall of the yeshiva was too small for the many hundreds of Chassidim who wanted to hear the Rebbe’s voice. This time, we set up the broadcast in the outdoor plaza in front of the yeshiva. However, financial concerns plagued me. The organizers needed to be



Bachurim listening to the Rebbe

“The P’nei Menachem was moved and said this was the first time he was hearing a maamer from the Rebbe. From then on, whenever we went to him, he would ask to hear a maamer from the Rebbe, saying, ‘I want to hear Chassidus.’”

paid for arranging the benches, cleanup, tickets, and mainly the cost of the lengthy trans-Atlantic

telephone call. It was very expensive. It was hard for me to carry the entire burden.

THE "P'NEI MENACHEM" REGULARLY LISTENED TO THE BROADCASTS

Rabbi Eliezer Lichtstein said that a number of distinguished rabbanim, including famous Admurim, would regularly listen to the Rebbe's broadcasts.

"I designated a special line so they could listen to the farbrengen in their homes. Even now, I don't think I can publicize their names, but I can tell you that the Admurim (who are no longer living), the P'nei Menachem of Gur (1926-1996) and the Toldos Aharon Rebbe, would listen regularly.

"I once went with Rabbi Yisroel Glitzenstein to the P'nei Menachem to tell him recent horaos from the Rebbe. Then we reported to the Rebbe that Rabbi Pinchas Menachem, then head of the Gerrer yeshiva, heard the sicha about MiHu Yehudi. The Rebbe asked why we didn't play the maamer Chassidus that was said. We went back to him and played the maamer for him. The P'nei Menachem was moved and said this was the first time he was hearing a maamer from the Rebbe. From then on, whenever we went to him, he would ask to hear a maamer from the Rebbe, saying, 'I want to hear Chassidus.'"

"In those days, people could not estimate how long the farbrengen would last, and sometimes it took seven or eight hours. After several hours of the broadcast (in which the line was lost a few times and we had to call 770 and start again), I realized that if the broadcast continued, I would not have the money to pay for it. I temporarily stopped the broadcast and said briefly to the crowd, 'I don't have money to pay for this. If money will be collected now to cover the costs, the broadcast will continue.' Within a few minutes a nice sum was raised and the broadcast continued.

"For this little 'caper' of mine, I got a 'portion' from the Rebbe. A few days after the Purim broadcast, a note came out for me which said, 'Did you consult with the elders of Anash in this regard?'"

The next farbrengen was on Yud-Alef Nissan. This time, the broadcast worked better than on the previous occasions, since a new transmission system was built in the broadcasting room and tested a few times before the

broadcast.

From then on, the broadcasts were in more professional hands when R' Mulik Rivkin returned to Eretz Yisroel and took responsibility for the technicalities.

Rabbi Itzke Gansbourg was in charge of the broadcasts for about two years:

"Today, when you make a call from Eretz Yisroel to the United States, it's not a problem. The quality is as good as a call made within Eretz Yisroel itself and the cost is very low. However, back then it was hard to get a line to the United States. In the middle of the broadcast you heard noises on the line from other phone conversations or from a radio broadcast. Sometimes, in the middle of a broadcast that lasted for hours, we did not hear the Rebbe for half an hour or more. We did not give up, and from time to time we managed to improve the quality. Much was done thanks to Rabbi Mulik Rivkin. He even bought a special machine to help with the recording.

"The broadcast was hosted in various places like Beis Rivka

and the Vocational School of Kfar Chabad. Before every farbrengen we got a call from Rabbi Binyomin Klein as to what time it would begin so we could make our arrangements."

However, they did not always know ahead of time when a farbrengen would take place, such as in the case of a sudden surprise sicha or farbrengen.

WHO WOULD NOTIFY THE RESIDENTS OF Kfar CHABAD ABOUT AN UPCOMING BROADCAST?

One of the old-timers from Kfar Chabad, Rabbi Avrohom Meizlich, answered this question:

"If there was going to be a farbrengen, the Rebbe would announce it after Maariv and they would call from 770. Then Rabbi Moshe Slonim would drive around Kfar Chabad and announce 'shidur' (broadcast) over a loudspeaker. It was usually before dawn. Lights in people's homes turned on and you would see old men and boys rushing in the direction of the yeshiva where they eagerly listened to the Rebbe's farbrengen."

Rabbi Itzke Gansbourg has letters about the broadcast of the farbrengen of Purim 5731 from which we can learn about the rest of the broadcasts. On 19 Shvat 5731 Rabbi Itzke wrote:

To my friend Binyomin Klein,

I would be most grateful if you would clarify and respond quickly to:

1 – What time will the Purim farbrengen be (day, time, etc.)?

2 – Do we have permission to publicize in the papers that the Rebbe will speak about the issues of the day and the like?

I'd appreciate if you would respond as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Itzke Gansburg

This is Rabbi Binyamin Klein's answer, dated 1 Adar 5731:

To my friend Rabbi Yitzchok Gansbourg, shalom u'v'racha!

I received your letter of 19 Shvat which the Rebbe responded to. Regarding whether you have permission to publicize in the papers that the Rebbe will speak on the issues of the day etc. – no (underlined twice in the original).

With blessings for all good always and a happy Purim,

Binyomin Klein

After the Purim broadcast, Rabbi Itzke asked his son Rabbi Yosef Simcha, who was in 770, to report to the Rebbe about the broadcast. This is what his son wrote:

B"H

25 Adar 5731

Dear parents, shalom u'v'racha

I just received a response from the Rebbe about the report I submitted regarding the Purim broadcast – the number of participants, that it was successful, and that there were excerpts the next day on the radio. The Rebbe's response was: Many thanks and surely you will write in detail.

If Feldman is going, I will give this to him as a letter. There is nothing new here. Regards to all,

Your son,

Yosef Simcha

The letter quickly reached its destination via Feldman, and Rabbi Itzke immediately wrote a detailed report as the Rebbe wanted.

B"H

Rosh Chodesh Nissan

Motzaei Shabbos kodesh VaYikra 5731



Anash listening to a broadcast early in the morning

To the Rebbe shlita,

Regarding the Purim broadcast, I was involved in arranging it this time too. Two announcements were placed in the newspapers, Maariv and Yediot Acharonot. We heard until the niggun of the Alter Rebbe (?) and it was clear the entire time without any interference.

At 3:30 in the morning there wasn't a large crowd, although afterwards it was full, about 500 men and women. The broadcast was held in Beit Shazar. Before that, I spoke on "Kol Yisroel" and at about six they came to record it so they could broadcast it on the radio on the program called "Chatzi HaYom." They recorded

a small segment about Yehuda and Yerushalayim and the future Geula. Then there were a few exchanges with the child Zelig Gopin and our daughter Freida. They recorded five minutes with Rabbi Tzvi Greenwald and it was successful. On that same program they mentioned Chabad a number of times. Before two o'clock, when there are many listeners, they broadcast the aforementioned.

Since the one in charge of maintaining order was easygoing, there isn't money to cover the broadcast. And according to my calculations, I will have to add about 1500 liras, though I have the money to cover it from the Yud-Tes Kislev broadcast which

was relatively cheaper.

All the newspapers wrote about the broadcast which could be heard for about seven and a half hours.

Yitzchok ben Doba Gansbourg

At the end of 5732, Rabbi Itzke moved to Natzrat Ilit where he ran the Chabad school under the auspices of Reshet Oholei Yosef Yitzchok. The broadcasting arrangements were then made by the menahel of the central Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim, Rabbi Efraim Wolf. He made sure the broadcasts went well, were paid for, and had his son, Rabbi Berke publicize them in the newspapers.

As the years went by, the broadcasts in 770 developed

did not have time to make it to Kfar Chabad.

At the initiative of some men, the broadcasts reached Yerushalayim too. That was arranged by Rabbi Eliezer Lichtstein. He described the early broadcasts to Yerushalayim:

"It was 5735 when Rabbi Eliezer Mann and Rabbi Yaakov Bergman bought a loudspeaker system which could have two phone lines attached to them. They asked me to be in charge of the broadcasts. We started broadcasting at the Kosel where many people showed up before dawn. Rav Getz of the Kosel was a big help. I did not know much about the mechanics, but I learned with experience.

in the lower chamber. Most of the Chabad Chassidim of Yerushalayim are there. I allowed this in accordance with the personal request of the Rebbe ..."

As a result of Rabbi Getz having approved the farbrengens, many threats were directed at him by those opposed to their transmission, and he soon found himself torn between his desire to broadcast Torah and the government order to cease and desist.

From his diary:

"Chabad Chassidim came to ask whether a farbrengen of the Admur Shlita could be broadcast tonight. I gently explained that what occurred on Monday generated much opposition within the government office ... Despite my strong desire I cannot countermand clear orders, especially when they are correct in principle — that loudspeakers are not to be used at the Kosel, and there is a clear position of the minister in this matter, although I am personally convinced that there are other hidden agendas at work here... The situation is particularly difficult because that Monday morning there was an unexpected inspection." (Wednesday 16 Tamuz 5736)

Shluchim of the Rebbe reported to the Rebbe about the problems Rabbi Getz was experiencing despite his desire to help them. The Rebbe sent Rabbi Getz a letter of support and asked his shluchim to verbally tell him the content of the letter before the Three Weeks.

Rabbi Getz continued in his diary:

"I was brought a personal letter that was dictated over the phone by the Rebbe in which he expresses his sorrow over the anguish caused me in the matter of the broadcast, which is all

“However, as expected, the eight lines did not suffice for all of Anash in Eretz Yisroel. Requests came from more and more places that wanted to hear the broadcasts.”

and improved, which enabled them to be recorded far better in Eretz Yisroel. At the first broadcast in 770, there were two phone lines; in 5733 there were twelve lines. A few years later, there were twenty-four. In 5753 a computerized system was constructed with 400 phone lines that simultaneously broadcast all over the world.

In the early years, the farbrengens were broadcast to a few other places, but aside from Kfar Chabad the reception was of a much poorer quality. Many Lubavitchers had to travel in the middle of the night to Kfar Chabad. They did not all have cars and the trip was difficult. Even harder were the unexpected farbrengens or sichos when they

"The broadcasts at the Kosel were of good quality and in order to significantly lower the cost of the calls, we contacted Chabad of London. The farbrengens were broadcast there and we got the broadcasts from them."

As in anything having to do with holiness, opposition arose with the claim that loudspeakers could not be used at the Kosel since it disturbed the people who were there. Nevertheless, Rabbi Getz helped to the best of his ability and enabled the farbrengens to be broadcast in one of the inner chamber of the Kosel.

This is what Rabbi Getz wrote in his diary on Monday, 14 Tamuz 5736:

"At dawn, a broadcast of the Chabad Rebbe's sicha is heard

about spreading G-d's Torah and mitzvos, and how he encourages me with heavenly assistance."

In his letter, the Rebbe writes: "I was very sorry to hear the news that they are causing his honor anguish because of something I am involved with, a matter that is about spreading Judaism, Torah and mitzvos. May it be very soon and in ways of pleasantness that all obstacles to any matter of Torah and mitzvos be nullified including the above ... May his honor fulfill his responsible role with peace of mind and body and with success ..."

After some time, Rabbi Getz was able, with the help of Rabbi Dolgin and Mr. Yisroel Lippel, the Director of the Ministry of Religion, to allow the broadcast without disturbing the worshipers. The broadcast became official and established practice inside the adjacent halls to the delight of hundreds of people who packed the inner hall on days of a broadcast. The broadcasts continued for two years but then, due to internal considerations, the broadcast was moved to Yeshivas Toras Emes.

Rabbi Eliezer Lichtstein described the broadcasts in Toras Emes:

"At first, we only had three phone lines, two of the yeshiva and one of the nearby cheider. Through them, we were able to transmit the broadcast to additional locations.

"Over the years we expanded and used phone lines from Lubavitcher families who lived in nearby Shikun Chabad. We had eight lines, thanks to which we transmitted the broadcast to Chabad centers around the country.

"However, as expected, the eight lines did not suffice for all of Anash in Eretz Yisroel.



Purim 5742: the zal in Toras Emes full of people listening to the broadcast



The broadcasting room in Yerushalayim. From right to left: R' Yisroel Hershkopf, R' Eliezer Lichtstein - director of the broadcasting room and R' Moshe Meir Vogel

Requests came from more and more places that wanted to hear the broadcasts. Our problem was that there were no available lines

in the vicinity of Toras Emes. With the help of Rabbi Eliezer Klein (who worked for many years at the Communications

Ministry), I contacted the right people there and within a short time I got twenty-five lines. Very soon, these lines were completely busy.

WHICH LOCATIONS DID YOU BROADCAST TO?

Kfar Chabad, Lud, Rechovos, Tel Aviv, Migdal HaEmek, Afula, Natzrat Ilit, Tzfas, Eilat, Beer Sheva, Ashdod, Nachalat Har Chabad, Haifa, several places in Yerushalayim, and more.

HOW DID YOU MANAGE ON THE TECHNICAL END OF THINGS?

I learned to make small repairs on my own, but more complex problems and the system development were taken care of by two very special people who dedicated themselves to the project once they realized that this was not a for-profit enterprise. The two worked hard to make the broadcasts successful. Mr. Ilan Shalev of Eilat Tikshoret set up the entire system in the broadcasting room of Yeshivas Toras Emes. He worked for years in telephone communications and he knew the profession. When I encountered a complicated problem, even if it was in the middle of the night, I would call him and he would come in less than ten minutes to fix the problem. The other man was Mr. Avi Yaffa who ran his own broadcast studios.

With the help of these professionals, I was able, in later years, to operate the entire system on automatic. The moment a line failed somewhere, instead of getting a phone call and being told about the problem, the line automatically connected to a different line. This saved us lots of aggravation.

Rabbi Shneur Zalman Gurary donated a large amount of money for the broadcast equipment and phone lines. Covering the cost of the broadcast was divided among the branches. In theory, each one paid a certain sum, but the ones who came to my aid were the shluchim Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok Liberow and Rabbi Shmuel Greisman.

HOW DID YOU KNOW WHEN TO GET READY FOR A BROADCAST?

When the Rebbe announced ahead of time that there would be a sicha or farbrengen, Rabbi Groner would tell us and we were usually the first to know about upcoming farbrengens. Many people would call us to find out when the farbrengens would be and at what time.

As every Chassid remembers, in later years, the Rebbe often said sichos unexpectedly, mainly after Maariv. It was usually during the recitation of Aleinu that the Rebbe would motion with his finger that there would soon be a sicha. Rabbi Chaim Boruch Halberstam was always at the ready in the broadcasting room of 770 and he would call me. With the help of bachurim from the yeshiva we would call all the Chabad centers in the country and tell them the news.

As the years went by, the broadcasts improved. Translations were made for those who did not understand Yiddish. Rabbi Tuvia Blau would sit and write what the Rebbe said in Yiddish and during the singing between sichos, Rabbi Chanoch Glitzenstein would translate it. We provided the translators with special earphones to better hear what the Rebbe said. At the end of the farbrengen we played the

recording and translation of the farbrengen for those who were interested.

Aside from the thousands who listened to the broadcast before dawn, there was an effort to air segments on Israel's national broadcast network Kol Yisroel which, as a result of the efforts of Rabbi Berke Wolf, would often play them. After the broadcast, Rabbi Berke Wolf would come and take the tape with the translation and an introduction prepared by Rabbi Tuvia Blau. Then he would submit it to Kol Yisroel.

"I remember," said Rabbi Lichtstein, "two times when Rabbi Berke received an instruction from the Rebbe in the middle of the broadcast to submit portions to Kol Yisroel. He would immediately leave Nachalat Har Chabad for Yerushalayim and submit the recording to Kol Yisroel even before the farbrengen had ended.

"The portions they would play on the radio usually had to do with timely issues such as Mihu Yehudi, shleimus ha'aretz, etc.

"After every farbrengen, the Rebbe waited for a report from Eretz Yisroel. He would always want to know how many locations heard the broadcast and would encourage the broadcasting team in Yerushalayim with his responses. It is only thanks to them that I was able to continue running this costly project.

"Starting from Chaf-Zayin Adar 5752, I began broadcasting reports from 770 every day about the Rebbe's health. At the time, reports kept coming in and I didn't sleep for more than an hour or two in a row at night."

In 5740, a small radio

station was started in Nachalat Har Chabad in Yeshivas Tomchei T'mimim run by Rabbi Mordechai Kozliner. This station broadcast farbrengens and sichos of the Rebbe to people in the area. R' Lipa Kurzweil, director of the Chabad house in Kiryat Malachi, ran it.

The radio station was started and operated by Rabbi Meir Varzov. When they got word about a broadcast, someone would immediately drive around the streets of the neighborhood and announce over a loudspeaker, "shidur, shidur." Then you'd see the lights turning on along with the radios. And so, Anash of Nachalat Har Chabad heard the Rebbe's farbrengens and sichos.

Kfar Chabad also set up a radio station for broadcasts at the end of the 80's. The mashpia, Rabbi Levi Yitzchok Ginsberg set it up and ran it. He said, "There were sichos that lasted only ten minutes. By the time people got to the shul, the broadcast was over. I didn't know much about radio and electronics but with lots of kochos from the Rebbe, I was able, with the help of some others, to set up the radio station that broadcast the Rebbe's sichos as well as shiurim on various Torah topics and Chassidus.

"The transmissions could be



Translating the sichos of the live broadcast. From right to left: R' Tuvia Blau, R' Elozor Gelbstein, R' Avrohom Chanoach Glitzenstein, and R' Avrohom Yisroel Krischevsky (standing)

picked up in the areas of Kfar Chabad and Lud. Rabbi Yosef Liberow would drive around the Kfar beeping his horn loudly, and that's how people knew there was a broadcast.

"On Sunday night there was a chazara broadcast of the Shabbos farbrengen. At the end of every broadcast, I would translate the sicha into Hebrew and review it several times for anyone who wanted to know what the Rebbe

said.

"(Smiling) The drawback of radio was that you could hear the broadcast in your pajamas at home. So many people, who did not want to doze off at three-four in the morning, would run to shul in order to hear the broadcast there. The advantage of radio was that you could tape and transmit the broadcast even with short sichos."

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A JEW'S BODY IS ALSO PRECIOUS TO MOSHE RABBEINU

An otherworldly story that happened at a farbrenge of the Rebbe Rayatz. * Presented for Yud Shvat, the hilula of the Rebbe Rayatz.

By Y Ben Boruch

REVEALING THE KEITZ

The Rebbe Rayatz was in Riga for Simchas Torah 5691/1930, and before the hakafo he held a farbrenge. A large crowd was in attendance including Chassidim and other Jews. Among those present, a group of young students stood out. They said they had come to see how Simchas Torah is celebrated in Lubavitch.

It was a special farbrenge with many “giluyim.” The Rebbe spoke about the coming of Moshiach and said that this year, 5691, was a keitz (endpoint of galus).

The Rebbe said, “We need to prepare especially this year for the coming of Moshiach because there is a strong hope that Moshiach will come this year. The allusion to this is in the verse (B’Chukosai 26:34), “*az tirtzeh*” “אז תרצה.” “Az” is numerically equivalent to 8 which is the level

of Moshiach, and that is “Az Tirtzeh” – that the revelation of Moshiach, which is “Az,” will be in the year “Tirtzeh” “תרצ”.” Although “Tirtzeh” in the pasuk is spelled with a “Hei,” we want it to be with an “Alef,” and we know that the Alter Rebbe changed a Hei to an Alef (see HaYom Yom 7 Elul – Ed.) and so we hope that it will be this year, “Az Tirtzeh.”

BEWARE OF HYPOCRITES

During the farbrenge, the Rebbe spoke very sharply against the schools run by the Mizrachi movement in Riga. The Rebbe said that they uproot the holiness of the letters and the vowels and don’t learn according to authentic Jewish tradition with *Komatz-Alef-Uh*, *Komatz-Beis-Buh*.

The Rebbe emotionally addressed the parents of children attending these schools and said, “I am telling you, they are

your biggest enemies. They are making your children, heaven forefend, into heretics! They gave themselves the name Mizrachi and claim that their intentions are solely for the children’s benefit so they will know how to learn better and easier, that Jews should learn like all nations and why should they be taught komatz Alef uh as the old-time Jews learned.

“Beware of these hypocrites who outwardly look like baalei Torah but are evil inside! It might be better if they cut off their beards and peios and went to a cloister!”

“I am not referring to the Mizrachi movement in other countries. There is a country [apparently referring to Germany – Ed.] where there are also people who go by that name, but they are truly G-d fearing and truly want their children to keep Torah and mitzvos as they did in days of old.”



FOR ME, MY FATHER DID NOT PASS AWAY

When the Rebbe Rayatz referred to his father, the Rebbe Rashab, he said:

“I don’t say ‘Nishmaso Eden’ regarding my father for two reasons. First, I don’t give addresses, and second, for me, my father did not pass away. He merely disappeared; and when I want, and when he wants, we see one another.”

BLACKOUT

The lights suddenly went out in the middle of the farbrengen and the beis midrash was dark. A few minutes later the electricity was restored. It turned out to be caused by a group of wild youth as will be related soon.

The Rebbe Rayatz did not stop speaking when it was dark; he continued the farbrengen as usual. When one of the T’mimim,

“Beware of these hypocrites who outwardly look like baalei Torah but are evil inside! It might be better if they cut off their beards and peios and went to a cloister!”

Rabbi Mordechai Mentlick, who later became rosh yeshiva in 770, turned his head towards the fuse box to see what was happening there, the Rebbe said to him, “What are you looking at? You are in a foreign city and in a foreign country, *Kuk Oif Ah Atzmi, Vestu Zen Atzmus* (look at one whose entire being expresses his [G-dly] essence, that way you will see Divine Essence).”

A JEW’S BODY IS PRECIOUS TO ME

Towards the end of the farbrengen, before they held hakafos, the Rebbe Rayatz suddenly turned to the assembled

and began a very sharp speech that totally shocked the Chassidim:

“I hereby announce and warn that if there are people present who, G-d forbid, do not put on t’fillin and do not observe family purity, they should not remain for my hakafos!

“Adam HaRishon was expelled from Gan Eden after the sin because the air of Gan Eden could not tolerate sin. The same is true here; since there is a group of Chassidim here who are bound together with the ‘forefathers of the world,’ this is the air of Gan Eden!

“So I declare that those who

do not keep family purity and do not put on t'fillin cannot remain at my hakafos and cannot be with me under one roof!

"Only if they commit from today onwards to keep family purity and put on t'fillin can they remain at my hakafos and we will rejoice together on Simchas Torah."

Then the Rebbe stood up and announced in a loud voice:

"Ispashtusa D'Moshe B'chol Dara (the extension of Moshe exists in every generation) – Moshe Rabbeinu was an Ohev Yisroel. To Moshe Rabbeinu not only the neshama of a Jew was precious but his body was also precious.

"Since the body of a Jew is precious to me, I repeat: If there are people here who do not observe family purity and do not put on t'fillin, do not join my hakafos. It is dangerous and when it comes to danger you don't play games!"

I AM NOT AFRAID OF THIS

The Rebbe then referred to those who shut the lights and said, "Those who shut the electricity might think, as those who err do, that lights can be shut off and turned on, on Yom Tov, but this is an absolute mistake because it is forbidden to do so.

"What their intention was in doing this does not interest anybody, not even the one that they are thinking of deep down inside themselves. With Hashem's help I am not afraid of this. Jews are dependent on the life force of Hashem and not on the will of a human being.

"As for those who think they do not believe in anything, G-d forbid, I must say to them: Beware, because when it comes to danger to life you don't play

games! Better you should obey and leave here in peace. Those who remain for the hakafos will surely accept upon themselves the proper code of conduct to behave as one ought."

NOW WE ARE BROTHERS

When the Rebbe Rayatz finished speaking and sat down, some of the youth left the shul. Many did remain and promised that they had committed to acting as one should. The Rebbe said to them: "The youth who remained here should be given some mashke to say l'chaim and some *farbais*en (to eat with the mashke). Now we are brothers."

Rabbi Mordechai Chafetz of Riga went to the women's section and repeated what the Rebbe said, that only someone who committed to keeping family purity could remain. He returned and told the Rebbe that as the shliach of the women he announced that they had heard the Rebbe's warning and testified that they could remain for the hakafos.

Hearing this, the Rebbe said, "Tell them that I bless them that they and their husbands raise their sons and daughters to Torah, chuppa, and good deeds. As for those who do not, as of now, have children, Hashem should make their hearts rejoice with healthy children."

The Rebbe also said to tell them that they should found a women's league to strengthen the observance of family purity.

The Rebbe then went to lead the hakafos that took place with great joy.

THE COMMUNISTS TRY TO DISTURB THE HAKAFOS

The crowd was stunned by the Rebbe's sharp words

before the hakafos, especially considering the Rebbe's usual kind and compassionate conduct. They were all convinced that something lofty lay behind what he said.

Indeed, after Yom Tov the Chassidim found out that a group of young men from the communist club "Peretz" had attended the Rebbe's hakafos for the purpose of creating a disturbance.

Their plan was to cut the electricity of the beis midrash so they would not be able to hold hakafos. They had made an attempt in the middle of the hakafos and put out the lights. Among them were some violent youth who planned on striking anyone who tried to prevent them from carrying out their plans.

When they heard the Rebbe say it entailed danger to their lives, they knew what the Rebbe was referring to and their frightened leader motioned to them to leave.

Two men insisted on remaining in the beis midrash, despite not committing to putting on t'fillin every day. A few days later they died.

All these details were related to one of the Chassidim by the brother of the leader of the group.

The Rebbe's secretary, Rabbi Chatshe Feigin, had yechidus Erev Shabbos Parshas B'Reishis. He told the Rebbe what the Chassidim heard from the brother of the group's leader. The Rebbe said, "When I said it at the farbrengen, I did not know why I had been compelled [from Above] to do so, but now all is clear."

From notes written by Rabbi Avrohom Weingarten a"h; the writings of Rabbi Chatshe Feigin; Likkutei Dibburim vol. 2 705, and Seifer HaSichos 5791 p. 166.

ONLY MARRIAGE EXPERTS NEED APPLY

Roshei yeshivos, heads of mosdos, and shluchim are often asked to be mesader kiddushin for their students and mekuravim. This is despite the fact that they know next to nothing about kiddushin. The consequences are serious. Mistakes are made that sometimes invalidate the marriage! * Rabbi Eliyahu Yochanan Gurary, rav of Cholon and head of the marriage department in his city for 28 years, has published a booklet entitled “Siddur Kiddushin Al Yidei Rav Mora Horaa Bilvad.”

By Menachem Ziegelboim

Pictures by Meir Alfasi

The guests listened as the rav recited the brachos. What an awesome moment, when a couple stands under the chuppa! Souls, that were separated when they came to this world, were united.

After the chuppa, when the couple went to the yichud room, it turned out that the two *eidim* (witnesses) who stood under the chuppa, were relatives. Someone pointed this out to the father of

the chassan, a Chassidishe man, and his heart skipped a beat. He wanted to go over to the mesader kiddushin but didn't know how to broach the matter. In the end, he mustered his courage and spoke to the rav. The rav blanched. He had forgotten to check the validity of the *eidim* before the chuppa.

The question was what do we do now? Should the chassan and

kalla remain in the yichud room? Should they enter the hall as usual for the rest of the wedding?

A quick phone call to a knowledgeable rav informed them that the chuppa and kiddushin had to be repeated and the k'suba rewritten. It wasn't pleasant, but the error could be rectified.

That night, after all the guests left, the waiters had gotten



MISTAKES WITH THE K'SUBA

Rabbi Eliyahu Yochanan Gurary, rav of Cholon and head of the marriage department in his city for 28 years, member of the Beis Din Rabbanei Chabad in Eretz Yisroel, published a booklet entitled, *Siddur Kiddushin Al Yidei Rav Mora Horaa Bilvad* (Siddur Kiddushin only by a practicing rabbi).

"I am not the type to publicly rebuke people," Rabbi Gurary said apologetically, "but I made an exception here in order to call attention to the egregious errors that have arisen due to mesadre'i kiddushin who are not knowledgeable in this area. Unfortunately, I can give firsthand testimony about a number of such occurrences."

Are we talking about intentional deviations?

"Heaven forbid! These are mistakes that are made by rabbanim, roshei yeshivos and shluchim, around the world, who are invited to be mesader kiddushin."

What are the problems that have prompted you to raise a hue and cry?

"I have had to rewrite K'subos that were originally written by talmidei chachomim who are knowledgeable in the laws of Shabbos and kashrus. They were mesader kiddushin without knowing how to write a k'suba. They do not know what is written regarding a divorcee or widow or convert, and what to write when someone is remarrying a woman he divorced, or what amount is written into the k'suba of a besula and what amount for a divorcee, widow, or convert. He has never learned to discern the situations when witnesses are invalid and other important basic

their tips and departed and the owner of the hall had his finger on the light switches, a new siddur kiddushin was held in the presence of two, non-related, kosher witnesses. Mazal tov!

This story is not fictitious. It actually happened to two Chassidishe families in the US whose children married one another in a Chassidishe wedding. The father of the

kalla, with the consent of the chassan's father, had asked the rav of his k'hilla to be the mesader kiddushin. The rav agreed; he overlooked the fact that he hadn't studied the laws of chuppa and kiddushin. He was unaware of all the halachic issues that can arise during that half hour of the chuppa, with eternal repercussions.

halachic questions that a mesader kiddushin must ask before he conducts a wedding.

It's an unfortunate phenomenon that has become routine in recent years. Roshei yeshivos, heads of mosdos, shluchim and sometimes even parents who have some knowledge of Halacha, want to be mesader kiddushin for their children despite not knowing anything about kiddushin. Consequently, serious problems arise that sometimes invalidate the marriage from the outset!

"I know about a Lubavitcher rosh yeshiva who was mesader kiddushin for one of his talmidim. The chuppa was going fine and nearly all the brachos had been said. Then the kalla's aunt whispered to her husband, 'I don't think the chassan put a ring on the kalla's finger.' The husband thought she may have missed it, so he asked someone else whether he had seen the chassan give a ring to the kalla. The man said he had not seen that take place. He asked a few other people, and they all said they did not see it. Someone brought this to the attention of the rav and shockingly, this detail had been forgotten! Not only that, the chassan had left the ring in his room at the hotel. The chassan, kalla, and all the guests had to wait a long time until the ring was brought.

"Another story happened with a shliach who was mesader kiddushin for one of his mekuravim. The rabbi wrote the k'suba and found two bachurim, who were friends of the chassan, to be eidim. He asked them their names to have them written on the k'suba. The chuppa then took place.

"Afterward, one of the bachurim returned to Crown

Heights and pondered the fact that he hadn't actually signed the k'suba. His name had been written in the blank space by the mesader kiddushin. He spoke to one of the rabbanim in Crown Heights to find out the Halacha. The rav quickly called the shliach and told him to rewrite the k'suba."

This problem that Rabbi Gurary describes is growing, both in Eretz Yisroel and abroad. It started with the Litvish-Yeshivish crowd where chassanim honor their roshei yeshiva with siddur kiddushin. The man may know how to resolve a difficult Ketzos but is unfamiliar with the laws of kiddushin.

Now it has spread into the Chabad world among shluchim and mashpiim. The families of the chassan and kalla see these people as influential spiritual figures and ask them to be mesader kiddushin. And as mentioned above, not all those who know how to learn know how to arrange chuppos.

"It's a field that absolutely requires expertise," explained Rabbi Gurary. "You have to sit down and learn the halachos and thoroughly familiarize yourself with the topic. You also need experience to know how to respond to the many problems that can arise at the last minute."

Rabbi Gurary compared it to a question in a Torah scroll that comes up in the middle of the Torah reading on Shabbos morning. "You can't stop everything and start looking into s'farim. You have to pasken on the spot – is it pasul or kosher – and move on. At weddings too, you can't stop the chuppa and say, 'Wait a minute, I have to look it up.'"

It seems rather straightforward. We've all been

to dozens of chuppos. What problems can suddenly crop up?

"There are numerous examples. There's the simple matter of the location of the hall which is physically in one city but is legally associated with another city. What are you supposed to write in the k'suba? What is the location? Under whose jurisdiction does the wedding hall belong? The general principle is that the determining factor is to which municipality the wedding hall pays taxes. If I wrote the wrong location, it would call the k'suba into question.

"For example, there was a wedding recently for a baal t'shuva couple at the yeshiva in Morristown. In the k'suba it said Morristown. But this was a mistake, because the name of the place is Morris County.

"In a k'suba there are three basic aspects in which if you make a mistake, the k'suba is invalid: location, time, and date. Many problems could arise with the date like in the event the chuppa takes place *Bein Hash'mashos* (twilight – between sunset and full night) or in the months of Adar I and Adar II. What do you write if the wedding takes place on Rosh Chodesh?

"Mistakes are also made with the names of the chassan and kalla when, for example, there are non-Jewish names or nicknames by which they are known. At a recent wedding I attended, the chassan's name was Sasha. The question arises, do you write Sasha in the k'suba or the proper name, Alexander? Or in the US, many have the name Jack or Jake, do you write it like that or as Jacob/Yaakov? There are numerous problems and questions that can arise.

"I haven't even mentioned

problems with the eidim to the k'suba and eidim for the kiddushin who do not always see the giving of the ring or who don't quite know what they are seeing or hearing. Sometimes the eidim are related to the families of the chassan or kalla. You have to make sure the eidim are kosher to testify and are shomrei Shabbos. At weddings with few guests, this is a problem.

"There are many halachic details about the ring, such as the ring must be the property of the chassan. Last minute problems are known to arise when the chassan forgot the ring at home – can he take a ring from someone else? What happens if the chassan got the ring from his parents? In that case, you have to make sure that the father properly transferred ownership of the money for the ring to his son. There are many details about the yichud room too that mesadre'i kiddushin ought to know backwards and forwards."

GENTILES AMONG US

"Shluchim have told me that they prepare the k'suba ahead of time. Then they show up at the wedding and suddenly discover that the chassan or kalla has an additional name and there is no room to add it on the k'suba; or he realizes that he did not write that he is a Kohen or Levi."

The stories Rabbi Gurary experienced personally are scary!

"I was invited to be mesader kiddushin for a couple. The chassan's father is a baal t'shuva for decades and the kalla's father is a Lubavitcher Chassid for generations. When I started writing the k'suba, the father whispered to me that he isn't actually the chassan's father, and it was possible that the chassan is pasul for marriage. The hall

THE REBBE SETS FORTH CONDITIONS

The Rebbe responded to the question as to who should be mesader kiddushin as follows: If he has smicha for rabbanus and he learned the halachos that pertain to siddur kiddushin and he also learned (at least) one siman in Hilchos gittin so he earned the title "one who knows the nature of gittin and kiddushin," then he can be mesader kiddushin.

The Rebbe wrote to Rabbi Chaim Gutnick of Australia:

"As to your question about siddur kiddushin, since you have smicha for rabbanus, and surely you occasionally review the halachos, if the wedding is a proper one, i.e. it meets the condition you wrote, you can do it."

The Rebbe clearly sets forth a number of requirements for siddur kiddushin – smicha for rabbanus, proficiency in the laws of kiddushin, and at last some knowledge of the laws of gittin.

was lit up, the guests had begun to arrive, the music was playing, and he dropped this bombshell."

What do you do in such a case?

"I wrote the name of the chassan and the name of his mother. There is a solution; if you know it, you can move on quickly without having the guests stand around and wait for the chuppa to begin.

"After the wedding, additional inquiries were made and the chassan was found to be fine, boruch Hashem.

"I'll tell you something else. A young man came to me from the north whose name is Jewish. I registered him for marriage and asked him where he worked. He told me he worked at the Israeli embassy in one of the European capitols. I said I have a friend who lives in that city (the local shliach) and asked him to deliver a book as a gift to this friend of mine.

"The fellow knew the shliach and was happy to do it. I went to New York and found out that the shliach in Europe was looking for me frantically. He finally located me and said he knew the young man from his childhood and he is a goy! I immediately made a



call to cancel the wedding which I had registered myself. It turned out the kalla had no idea her chassan was not Jewish.

"Problems come up often. A shliach once called me and said he had forgotten to say 'Borei P'ri Ha'gafen' – was the kiddushin valid or not?"

So what do you recommend?

"You cannot take a rav to be mesader kiddushin when he knows nothing about gittin and kiddushin. Let me ask you: Would this same person take a mohel who is a fine person in every way but never learned mila? Just as a shliach wouldn't circumcise a baby without studying and practicing, the same is true for siddur kiddushin, and he can explain

EXTRA CARE WHEN REGISTERING SOMEONE FOR MARRIAGE

Registering people for marriage, which is a prerequisite for marriage in Eretz Yisroel, is also problematic. This is especially so following the immigration of hundreds of thousands from the former Soviet Union. In many instances, a great deal of research is needed in order to determine Jewish status. Many new immigrants come to Eretz Yisroel (and the US) with forged documents and you can't know who is Jewish, who is a Kohen, who is divorced and who is single. Many of them are mekurav by shluchim who want to marry them off, but the shluchim are unaware of how complicated this can be.

There are also cases of mamzerim (offspring of relationships prohibited by the Torah) who are very restricted in their marriage options. I know of a case of a shliach who made inquiries about a chassan, one of his mekuravim, and found out he is a mamzer. What now? There are times when you can do nothing.

In one of the baal t'shuva yeshivos in Eretz Yisroel there was a young man who learned diligently and knew he was a mamzer. He was brokenhearted by this because he wanted to marry but was not allowed to. I tried to help him. I went with Rabbi Telsner to his mother who lived in London in order to interrogate her about her marriage in the hopes of finding a way out and permitting her son to marry. We sat with her for hours and pleaded with her to help us, but she said, "I don't care if my son is a mamzer."

They say about the gaon Rada"tz Chein that once his son Rabbi Avrohom went to his room and saw him sitting with someone and both men were crying. Later, when he asked his father why he had been crying, the gaon shared with his son that the man told him he was a mamzer, and he cried. Why did he have to suffer for something he didn't do? Why did he deserve this?

"What could I do," the rav said to his son. "I could only cry with him."

this to the family. The shliach can run the chuppa, say brachos, give a speech and explain the wedding process. However, when it comes to kiddushin, you need an expert rav. It's no shame to take someone who is learned in the subject."

What should a shliach do when he lives faraway in Russia, for example?

"The same thing he would do when he needs a mohel, i.e. bring in an expert. Some people tell me they are mesader kiddushin while being in close contact with a rav, but this is not the proper solution."

Why is this treated lightly?

"There are shluchim who

feel that they must do the chuppa; they were mekarev the chassan, kalla, or both of them, or their family, for years. And the families look at their shliach as the rav who couldn't possibly be ignorant when it comes to marriage. To the mekurav, the shliach is the distinguished rabbi and the rabbinic figure that is closest to him. A shliach said to me: It's not pleasant for me. I was mekarev him and he thinks I'm a big rabbi, and I'm suddenly 'importing' someone else!

"I said to him: What's wrong with that? Do the whole chuppa, explain and make announcements while the expert rav does what he has to do in the proper way. There are times that

problems arise and *the couple is not married!*

"There is a very distinguished rav in B'nei Brak whose name is well known, who is sometimes invited to be mesader kiddushin for his talmidim where I live in Cholon. There were years when he would tell me to be mesader kiddushin since he simply had not learned the subject in depth and he had no experience. He forwent his honor and with yiras Shamayim he refrained from doing things in which he was not proficient. He ran other aspects of the chuppa in honor of his talmidim, but the siddur kiddushin itself he left to someone in the know. There is nothing to be ashamed about."

Can't an expert rav make mistakes?

"Of course! Even expert rabbanim can make mistakes, but at least they know they made a mistake and how to correct it. If it can't be corrected they will do the kiddushin over again or will rewrite the k'suba. But what will someone do if he doesn't know?

"In addition, a rav mora hora'a has a special siyata d'Shmaya (Heavenly assistance) to save him from mishaps, like dayananim in a din Torah."

Can you give us an example?

"A fellow came to register for marriage at the rabbinate offices. I looked at him and compared him to the picture on his ID card and went over his personal information. He brought two witnesses to testify that he is Jewish. When I saw that everything was fine, I registered him.

"Two or three days later, I got an anonymous phone call from someone telling me the man is an Arab. I called him down to the rabbinate office and checked his information again. I asked

him questions and everything looked fine; and he did not have a foreign accent. I thought maybe someone was jealous about this shidduch and had called to sabotage him.

“When I got the third phone call telling me he is an Arab, I began to do more serious research. I called his father and said, ‘Mazal tov, I heard that your son is getting married.’ The man stammered something angrily and slammed down the phone. I called back and introduced myself, and once again wished him mazal tov. The man shouted that he did not have a son who was getting married. I began to suspect that something was amiss.

“It turned out that the guy was an Arab who worked in a restaurant. He had stolen the ID of the landlord’s son and went to the Interior Ministry and said his ID had been lost. They made him a new ID under the name of the son of the landlord and with his picture.

“Then he was able to bring eidim. How did he do that? He drove his car beneath the house of the kalla’s parents and yelled up, ‘Ima, Ima’ to the kalla’s mother. She took it as a big compliment, and he immediately took two people who were standing there and witnessed this and asked them to testify on his behalf. The girl didn’t even know he was an Arab. This story was publicized in the papers.

“It was definitely a case of siyata d’Shmaya like in the famous story about the gaon, Rav Meshulam Igra (d. 1801), the rav of Pressburg. He was mesader kiddushin for a widow. When he read the k’suba under the chuppa, instead of saying the word for ‘widow’ he mistakenly said the word for ‘divorcee.’



The people present corrected him, and he went back to reread it and made the same mistake. The same thing happened a third time. Then he asked the kalla directly: Tell me the truth, were you divorced? She burst into tears and admitted that she had been briefly married and then divorced. This tzaddik was helped by Heaven.

“Sometimes I am sent K’subos made by shluchim, and I can see that they are unfamiliar with this topic. There are many mistakes, yet Chazal say you cannot live with a woman without a kosher k’suba. Over the years, hundreds of couples, without exaggeration, have complained about the lack of shalom bayis or problems with parnasa or chinuch etc. and they associate it with mistakes in the kiddushin or k’suba. It’s really unbelievable how many K’subos I’ve seen which are pasul! When I see a k’suba that is not done according to Halacha, I am wary about the kiddushin; after all, I wasn’t

there. I’ve seen videos of chuppos in which you can see confusion in the order of brachos etc.”

Who are you trying to reach with your public outcry?

“First, I am trying to reach couples and their parents. Don’t take a rav who is not proficient in the laws of gittin and kiddushin. Take a rav mora horaa with experience in this area.

“Second, I am targeting the rabbanim and shluchim, roshei yeshivos and mashpiim, with all the honor due them. Do what you know how to do; teach halacha, be mashpia, uplift, be mekarev, but when it comes to siddur kiddushin – let someone who knows what he’s doing, a rav who studied it in depth and reviews the halachos regularly and is often a mesader kiddushin, do it. Otherwise, **it can lead to damage that cannot be undone.** From the negative, one can deduce the positive – that when done properly, the couple will be blessed.

‘OCCUPY’ THE WORLD!

By the end of most events that you attend, you ask yourself, “What did I get from this event?” When you join the revolution here in the 770 underground, you must ask, “What did I give tonight?”* An excerpt from Rabbi Gershon Avtzon’s farbrengen last year, Yud Shvat, in 770.

By Rabbi Gershon Avtzon

Yud Shvat is a time for reflection, introspection and self-evaluation. As such, I will begin with a story of two very successful psychoanalysts who occupied offices in the same building. One was 40 years old, the other over 70. They rode on the elevator together at the end of one unbearably hot, sticky day. The younger man was completely done in, and he noted with some resentment that his senior was fresh as a daisy.

“I don’t understand,” he marveled. “How can you listen to drooling patients from morning till night on a day like this and still look so spry and unbothered when it’s over?”

The older analyst smiled and simply said, “Who listens?”

WHERE ARE YOU TONIGHT?

“Who listens?” These are the words that I have been hearing a lot these past two weeks. When I told my family and friends that I would IY”H be speaking at the 770 Farbrengen, they wondered to whom I would be talking. “You are preaching to the converted!” they claim.

While there is a certain

element of truth to the above statements, there is another element that we don’t think about initially. With technology today, so advanced as it is, there are many people watching online – from Chabad and non-Chabad circles – who can hear and watch the recording. I want them to understand why we are here and what we are celebrating tonight.

It is no secret that there are many other Farbrengens happening in Crown Heights tonight.

Many look at these different Farbrengens as a sign of conflict and division in Lubavitch. I don’t.

There are four events that took place on the special day of Yud Shvat: Rebbetzin Rivka’s passing, the Friedike Rebbe’s passing, the Rebbe’s acceptance of leadership and Chassidim’s acceptance of the Rebbe’s sovereignty.

There are those celebrating in a place named in memory of Rebbetzin Rivka; some are Farbrenging at the Ohel of the Friedike Rebbe; some, who are reminiscing about the time the Rebbe accepted leadership and remembering 5711, are gathered



upstairs in 770. After all, it was there that the Rebbe assumed the leadership of Chabad.

For those brave few, who want and are willing to accept the Rebbe today, we are gathered in the center of the “Lubavitch Underground,” here in the basement shul of 770!

REVOLUTIONARY POWER

There is a story that I want to share. [In the story, Nikolayevich referred to the Rebbe by his last name. Obviously, I am not going to repeat the story in that way.]

Alexander Nikolayevich knew Chabadniks very well. He was the senior agent of the KGB in charge of their persecution.

Betzalel Schiff is an Israeli Chabadnik. He came to Nikolayevich looking for records of Chabad-Lubavitch heroes and heroines that Nikolayevich had thrown in prison.

Schiff had chutzpah. He walked in and handed Nikolayevich a gift: four large photo-albums of Chabad-Lubavitch families doing Jewish outreach work around the globe.

He leaned forward on his desk, furrowed his grey brow and spoke directly to Schiff. “I was in your headquarters, you know? And not just as a tourist. I had a mission. Without much difficulty, I found it, even though you hide it in a basement.”

“Why do you think Rabbi Schneersohn has his synagogue in a basement?” the old spy asked, tightening his wrinkled eyes. “Rabbi Schneersohn doesn’t have money?” Nikolayevich continued, “I was inside that synagogue. There were many people, very busy. But this is America, I thought. Where are the plush chairs? Where are the fancy crystal chandeliers, the deep carpets? Nowhere! It is a basement and it looks like a basement!

“I saw the Chassidim sitting on the hard wooden benches and eating on wooden tables without even a tablecloth. And what did they eat? Tuna fish and bread with vodka! I thought: this is what you have to eat in America? Why? Why does Rabbi Schneersohn have his Chassidim live this way?

“It was then that I confirmed my suspicion of many years. It was then that I realized that which I should have always known.”

Nikolayevich leaned forward once again. “You people are not just another religious sect. You are revolutionaries. You are partisans. All revolutions begin in a basement!”

Nikolayevich is correct. The Rebbe is a revolutionary.

There are five brief rules for leading a revolution:

1. Invest in the children – they are the future.
2. Have your eye on the big picture but appreciate the small steps taken.
3. Live as if the revolution could happen today, but plan and strategize as if it could happen in many years from now.
4. Live it! Eat it! Sleep it! Be consumed by the revolution.
5. Allow the soldiers of the



“I saw the Chassidim sitting on the hard wooden benches and eating on wooden tables without even a tablecloth. And what did they eat? Tuna fish and bread with vodka! I thought: this is what you have to eat in America? Why? Why does Rabbi Schneersohn have his Chassidim live this way?”

revolution to be happy with their accomplishments, but never let them be satisfied with their accomplishments, until the ultimate goal is reached.

Let us examine the Rebbe’s leadership and witness the above-mentioned rules played out to perfection.

THE REBBE’S CHILDREN

The Rebbe has invested himself completely in the youth. In addition to starting the world-wide Tzivos Hashem organization, the Rebbe took a personal interest in all Bachurim.

Our Rebbe treats Bachurim as his own children – just watch a video of Birkas HaBanim – and shows tremendous trust in their energy and abilities.

It is not coincidental that the following is one of the Minhagim of 10 Shvat: “In the course of the day, people (who are fit for

the task) should visit centers of observant youth and, in a neighborly spirit, should make every endeavor to also visit centers for the young people who are not yet observant, in order to explain to them the warm love that the saintly Rebbe constantly had for them. It should be explained to these people what he expected of them; they should be told of the hope and the trust that he placed in them, that they would ultimately fulfill their task of strengthening the observance of Judaism and disseminating the study of Torah with all the energy, warmth and vitality that characterize youth.”

Rabbi David Edelman, a senior Shliach in Springfield, Massachusetts testifies that he heard the Rebbe tell an Israeli army general the following: The reason the Israeli army is faltering is because many of its members are old. My army, says



“If the Rebbe sent you here, you must be like the Rebbe’s son. Just as I wouldn’t charge the Rebbe anything, so too I will not charge you!”

the Rebbe, is successful because it is made up of youth!

The following story was told by Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Pevsner, Shliach in Paris, France:

In 1978 I was a Bachur in 770, after Shmini Atzeres when the Rebbe suffered a terrible heart attack. I too was having problems with my health; it was so bad that the doctors said that I needed surgery. Seeing that the situation was bad, I decided to write to the Rebbe the whole situation asking for a blessing and advice. (I hesitated to do so at first, since I didn’t want to inform the Rebbe sad news, especially when the Rebbe was recovering from the heart attack).

Upon receiving the letter, the Rebbe called in his personal doctor, and instructed him to arrange a doctor to do the surgery. The Rebbe also gave a few instructions on how to do the surgery. This is obviously not the normal thing the Rebbe does when he gets a letter from

someone who needs surgery... but listen in, it gets better...

Sure enough, the Rebbe’s doctor arranged for me an appointment with a doctor he knew, in Beis Yisroel Hospital in Manhattan. Upon arriving at the hospital, and after a short exchange of words with the doctor, the doctor asked me, “How are you planning to pay?” So I pulled out my Medicaid card. He said, “I don’t take Medicaid!”

At that point I wasn’t sure what to do. On the one hand I really needed this surgery; on the other hand, I had no way

of paying it in cash! I sat there nervous... then something strange happened, as I saw how the doctor started to think to himself. He thought for a few minutes, and then he turned to me and said, “If the Rebbe sent you here, you must be like the Rebbe’s son. Just as I wouldn’t charge the Rebbe anything, so too I will not charge you!”

I couldn’t believe what I just heard, but it was true! He did my whole surgery in the best manner, just like the “Rebbe’s son” deserved.

When I finished my stay in the hospital I rushed back to 770. Only a few minutes past and Rabbi Binyomin Klein, one of the Rebbe’s secretaries, walked in. It looked as if he was searching for someone. Surprisingly, he was looking for me! He approached me, and said, “The Rebbe wants to know how you are feeling...”

THE FOREST AND THE TREES

The Rebbe always has his eye on the big picture, yet never underestimates the power of an individual act or deed. The following story illustrates this point:

Mrs. Cohen lives in Pennsylvania. When she was a child, she lived in Crown Heights near where the Rebbe lived. As a child, she would see the Rebbe every day. He introduced himself as Mister so-and-so (using his first name).

These are her words that she wrote to Rabbi Simon Jacobson:

Mr. So-and-so always asked me what books I was reading. When I was seven I discovered Science Fiction in the library on Schenectady. I loved it. I gave him rave reviews of two authors, Robert Heinlein and Isaac Asimov. He was intrigued by the idea of teaching children science through fun-to-read novels. I always told him he should read them, and that he would certainly love them.

He told me that he only read Jewish books. Then one day, after a year or so, I told him about Asimov’s book “Foundation.” If you haven’t read Asimov’s Foundation Series then I should tell you it’s about a secret foundation set up by a psycho-historian named Hari Seldon. The purpose of psychohistory and the Foundation was to perfect the Universe, which is basically what I told him.

Then he asked me what I thought of the idea of setting up a foundation. He then told me he was setting up a foundation. I was so excited I started jumping up and down, telling him I wanted to join, “Please, please, please!” He said I could.

NEAR AND FAR-SIGHTED VISION

The Rebbe believes that Moshiach should and can come at any minute. Yet, that did not stop him from laying the groundwork and setting up the International Chabad Network.

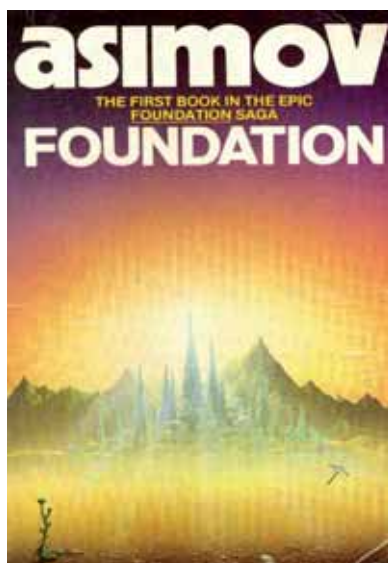
On the contrary: The Rebbe believes that the way we show that we believe that Moshiach can come any moment is by using the moment. Therefore, the closer we come to his arrival, the more significance should be attached to the observance of Mitzvos, individually as well as collectively. This is, in fact, the best time to initiate extensive, new, imaginative projects. The way to bring Moshiach is through action not inaction.

LIFE FORCE

To the Rebbe, bringing the Geula is not just a wish and a dream. It is his life mission. He was consumed with this idea his entire life. He testifies on himself (Igros Vol. 12): "From the day I went to cheider [primary school] and even before, the picture of the final Redemption started forming in my mind – the Redemption of the Jews from their last exile, Redemption in such a way that through it will be understood the sufferings of exile, the decrees and the destruction... And all will be in a way that with a complete heart and full understanding it will be said on that day, 'Thank you G-d for chastising me.'"

In his famous Sichah of 28 Nissan 5751 – the Sichah when the Rebbe empowered us with the obligation of bringing Moshiach – the Rebbe expressed: "Since we are still in exile, everything that I have done is LeHevel V'la'rik!"

To the Rebbe, Moshiach is not just a slogan or a bumper-



sticker; it is the driving force to every Mitzva and activity of Dor HaShvii. The Rebbe believes that each and every Mitzvah can be the Mitzvah to tip the scale and bring Moshiach!

To the Rebbe, at the end of the day, Moshiach's not coming B'poel makes all the accomplishments of that day LeHevel V'la'rik.

RICH SOLDIERS - HIGH EXPECTATIONS

The Rebbe has a lot of Nachas from his soldiers – the Bachurim. Yet, he always shows them that he has higher and bigger expectations.

I want to share a story that I heard from my uncle, Rabbi Gershon Avtzon from Israel. He was a Talmid in the Yeshiva in Miami for a few years.

At one Farbrengen, the Bachurim all took a Hachlata to learn a Perek Tanya by heart, and wrote this good B'sura to the Rebbe.

The reply they received was shocking: "Harei Zeh Ashir Sheheivi Minchas Ani!" (It is like a rich man that brings a poor-man's sacrifice!)

Some bachurim got very discouraged by this. The shluchim got excited and explained: "The Rebbe is not telling us that he is not happy, he is telling us that he looks at us as Ashirim! If that is the way he looks at us, we must react accordingly!"

YOUR SAY

By the end of most events that you attend, you ask yourself, "What did I get from this event?"

When you join the revolution here in the 770 underground, you must ask, "What did I give tonight?"

"Tonight is a night of giving!" Rabbi Shlomo Cunin screams at the Chabad-Telethon. Tonight is a night of commitment!

Tonight, we must commit to devote our entire self to the Rebbe's mission, to the Rebbe's vision and surely to the Rebbe's prophecy. We must leave this Farbrengen with the determination to spread the Nevua that "Hinei zeh Moshiach Bah!" and getting everyone around us involved with learning and knowing about Moshiach.

And we will be zocheh to the Hisgalus of the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach, and he will personally and fearlessly lead his revolution and revolutionaries into the era of Moshiach Now!

VeHu Yigaleinu.

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



TWO GUNSHOTS AND ONE MIRACLE

The doctors gave him no chance of survival. He lay in the hospital in a comatose state after a robber fired two bullets into his body. But in an amazing and miraculous turn of events, the Rebbe's bracha changed everything. Today this diamond merchant from New York lives in California, where his business continues to thrive.

By Nosson Avraham

Translated by Michael Leib Dobry

The central figure in this very unique story is Rabbi Baruch Kahana, mashpia of the Chabad yeshiva in Kiryat Gat and compiler of the "Beis Chayeinu" Tamim diary series. The story took place in

5749 when he was studying in 770:

"For a lengthy period of time, I and a fellow bachur from the Central Lubavitcher Yeshiva in 770 would go out for T'fillin Campaign activities on Pitkin Avenue in Brooklyn,

not far from Eastern Parkway. While this was largely a black neighborhood, we would go to a street where all the stores were under Jewish ownership. There were several businesses there owned by Israelis, and other jewelry stores owned by Jews who had recently emigrated from Iran. We regularly visited these proprietors, put on t'fillin with them, and gave them a weekly D'var Torah.

"The atmosphere in the street was not pleasant. Unlike today, crime then was rampant throughout New York City streets, and at a particularly high level on the streets of Brooklyn. Local residents, Jews and Gentiles alike, were afraid to walk through black neighborhoods. As mentioned, this street was unique in its prominent contrasts: All

the residents, including the local customers, were African-Americans, a fact that invited much tension. We often heard from those businessmen about their fears of injury to themselves and their property.

“One Friday, we were delayed in our arrival for mitzvaim, as studying the Rebbe’s maamer and davening Shacharis took longer than usual. Subsequently, we headed out on our route rather late.

“When we finally reached the row of Jewish storefronts, we saw that the police were closing off the entire area. As we inquired about the reason for this unusual event, we discovered that a foiled robbery attempt had just taken place. The police officers did not offer much information, and we were forced to leave the area and get our facts from other sources.

“It turned out that an armed robber had entered one of the jewelry stores where we regularly visited and had demanded a large quantity of the shop’s merchandise. When the store worker, a non-Jew, took his time in fulfilling these demands, the robber took his gun, fired several shots in the direction of the store’s employees, and quickly fled the scene. The non-Jewish worker was struck by most of the bullets and died instantly. The Jewish owner, an immigrant from Iran with whom we were well acquainted, had been critically wounded and was rushed to a nearby hospital.

“When we inquired about his condition, we were first told that the man had apparently succumbed to his serious injuries and had passed away in the hospital.

“Since the rumors regarding his condition were not definite, we decided to call the Rebbe’s



“When we finally reached the row of Jewish storefronts, we saw that the police were closing off the entire area. As we inquired about the reason for this unusual event, we discovered that a robbery attempt had just taken place.”

mazkirus. Rabbi Binyomin Klein answered the phone, and we proceeded to tell him the whole story, asking him to submit a request to the Rebbe for a bracha for the man’s complete and speedy recovery.

“I was in a state of heavy dejection that entire Shabbos. The story had deeply touched my heart.

“On Sunday, when I spoke with one of the local businessmen who also knew this Jewish merchant, he told me that the rumors were untrue and our mutual friend was still alive, but in very critical condition. He then provided more detailed information: ‘He’s lying in the hospital unconscious and in a comatose state, sedated and

breathing on a respirator after sustaining two gunshot wounds – one in his neck and another in his lungs.’

“When I heard that he was indeed still alive, I resolved that despite the fact that bachurim generally do not pass by the Rebbe for regular dollars distribution during the year, here was a clear case of pikuach nefesh. Thus, I made the decision to go for dollars and ask the Rebbe for a bracha on behalf of this man.

“The date was the 5th of Menachem Av. My friends advised that I shouldn’t just give his name; rather I must also mention to the Rebbe that he had been shot.

“I was very embarrassed to do this. How could I possibly speak at length to the Rebbe, when he knows everything and doesn’t need my personal input as a reason to give a bracha? I decided only to mention his name and request a bracha for him to have a complete recovery. During the hours that I was standing in line, I practiced saying the man’s Persian name. When my turn finally came and I was standing before the Rebbe, I was filled with a feeling of tremendous awe and dread. I managed only with great difficulty to say his name, and the Rebbe said ‘Amen’ without even hearing the whole name. I was very surprised because the Rebbe usually hears the entire name and only then gives a bracha.

However, in this instance, the Rebbe cut me off and gave a bracha before I had finished.

“Just then, I thought that I should do as my friends had suggested and tell the Rebbe that the Jewish merchant had been critically wounded in a shooting, which I then did in Yiddish. The Rebbe leaned towards me and said, ‘Vahs?’ I repeated that the man had been shot and I again mentioned his name. The secretary, Rabbi Leibel Groner, asked for the merchant’s Jewish name, but I replied that I didn’t know it. The Rebbe listened and said that when I know his Jewish name, I should give it in to the secretaries.

“The truth of the matter is that I left the Rebbe in a state of total confusion. At first, the Rebbe didn’t pay any attention to the name I had said, but now the Rebbe has sent me on a mission to gather some very accurate information.

“As soon as I left 770, I called

several people and found out his Jewish name – *Yitzhak ben Malka*. Determined not to waste any precious time, I quickly wrote out his name with the whole story of what had happened to him and submitted everything to the mazkirus. The Rebbe’s answer followed shortly thereafter: ‘*I’ll mention it at the Tziyon.*’

“The merchant’s condition then amazingly began to improve, although a complete recovery was still a long way off. Throughout this period, I stayed in touch with his family who remained close to his bedside. They said that while he was getting better, his condition was still quite serious, and he needed a miracle if he was going to recover.

“I wrote all this to the Rebbe and gave in the letter to the secretaries’ office. An answer from the Rebbe came out that same day: ‘*Check the t’fillin and mezuzos.*’ I quickly informed the family about the answer, and they immediately arranged to have his t’fillin and mezuzos checked.

Within a few months, this Jewish businessman was standing tall and erect on his own two feet, despite the doctor’s prognosis to the contrary.”

*

“This merchant didn’t continue living in New York. He eventually sold his store and bought another one in California, where he moved with his family.

“Not long afterwards, at the wedding of one of my friends celebrated in New York, I met a member of the medical staff that treated the Jewish merchant in the hospital. He told us in great detail about all the miracles that accompanied his recuperation – miracles he defined as ‘above and beyond nature.’ I later learned that on the day that I passed by the Rebbe for dollars, his friends also went by the Rebbe and requested a bracha for him. They received a dollar and placed it under his pillow until he had recovered sufficiently to be released from the hospital.”

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ADD IN ACTS OF GOODNESS & KINDNESS
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CAUTION: DON'T FALL FOR FOOL'S GOLD!

By Rabbi Akiva Wagner

A CASE IN POINT

A shliach, we'll call him Chaim, went out to a city to establish a Chabad House. Slowly but surely he built himself up, organizing all the usual programs and events.

After a while he had established enough contacts and experienced enough successes to decide that he was ready to plan his first "major" event: a Chanukah party in a rented hall (yes, this is a *different* story, and it is a *true* story). Immediately, his staff became involved in the myriad details involved in preparing an event on such a scale. From advertising to inviting, from designing to budgeting, they were up to their ears in work.

Slowly things began to take shape, and the team was filled with cautious optimism. While countless last minute details were being attended to, there was ample reason to anticipate a smashing success.

Finally the big day arrived. The chairs had been rented, the food was delivered, and the hall was decorated. The sound-system was set up, special gifts for the children were purchased, a clown was on the way, and finally, well before zero hour, the family and staff went to get dressed for the celebration.

Chaim came back with plenty of time to spare and made some last minute arrangements in the

parking lot to ensure that they could handle parking for extra cars should it become necessary. Then, having done his part, he went inside to prepare to greet the guests.

The program was only called for 8:00, and it was 7:30, so Chaim was finally able to relax slightly while he waited. He conversed calmly with one of his colleagues about some of the details of the evening.

After a while he glanced at his watch. It was 8:07. He had intended to start seven minutes ago! Oh well, Jews (especially those who – he hoped – were heading towards becoming affiliated with Lubavitch) weren't known for their punctuality. But, although not (yet) overly concerned, he relocated to the window, where he would glance towards the parking lot periodically.

8:20: Chaim was starting to get frantic. Where is everybody?! Chaim, by now, had moved to the outdoors, and was peering up and down the street in all directions. Where are the hundreds of guests we were expecting?

8:30: Everyone is getting panicky. The adults are saying T'hilim fervently, hoping against hope that there will still be an eleventh hour breakthrough (after all, the program was supposed to last at least until 10). The children are sampling the food from the vast containers (that appears now to be – for the

most part – headed to waste).

8:45: A car pulls into the parking lot, and everyone holds their collective breath. It turns out to be one of the waiters.

9:00: The hall is starting to look and feel like a funeral parlor. Chaim feels like digging a hole and burying himself. How could things have gone so wrong?! The few staff members are alternating between feelings of mourning and pity for poor Chaim. Someone cracks a joke about them not needing to cook food for the foreseeable future. Nobody smiles.

9:23: Somebody, a stranger, wanders into the building and walks over to Chaim. "Excuse me Rabbi, but I heard there's supposed to be some Hanukah party here tonight?" Chaim is too embarrassed to look the guest in the face, and mumbles something about the event having been cancelled, while pointedly steering him towards the door. He sighs in relief when he hears the car drive off.

Somehow they survived the awful evening, cleaned up the hall, and got off to bed. The next day, a very disheartened Chaim wrote a depressing d'var to the Rebbe with all the details about the grand Chanuka extravaganza that wasn't, and how hundreds of expected attendees ended up being one hapless latecomer, whom they had no choice but to send away.

The Rebbe responded (according to another version, I heard it was Rabbi Chadakov



who made this point to him): “When you make an event, if you’re very successful, you may attract 1000 guests. In the course of the evening, you may manage to personally greet 100 of them. Of those, 10 may display enough interest to continue their connection with you. Of those 10, you may actually succeed in convincing one to change his life, to become a Shomer Torah and Mitzvos, which was the ultimate goal of the entire event. Here, the Eibeshter sent you that one person directly, the ultimate goal of your program, so that you can get directly to your objective without having to go through 999 nudniks en route, and you actually *sent him away*??!!”

Rebbe to be involved in business, obviously that is merely an outer shell. The inner goal is to spread Yiddishkait. But that, too, is merely a “shell,” a means, to a more inner goal. Even in matters of Torah and Mitzvos, the good things that we do may be only a bridge to a more important achievement.

Reb Hillel Paritcher was extreme in his hiddurim in the fulfillment of mitzvos. He once explained that his sole objective with all of his hiddurim is “Az Ess Zol Zich Opleigen A Vort Chassidus” (that he should truly grasp the ideas of Chassidus).

It is important for us to try to focus on and identify the inner goal, the ultimate objective

All else is a means to this all-important end.

What is the path towards achieving this goal? There are undoubtedly many steps and many details. But one thing is certain: we can’t possibly expect to rely on our own reasoning to determine what will achieve this. We can (possibly) use our common sense to figure out what will be effective as fundraising tactics (and when you figure it out let me know). Experience might teach us which approaches will bring more Yidden closer to Yiddishkait. But the ultimate goal – having the Sh’china drawn down into this world – only the Eibeshter can tell us what will cause *that* to happen.

And He tells us that it is through carrying out Ratzon HaElyon, and as the maamer states, through iskafia and is’hafcha.

[In our history, there were factions of Judaism who permitted r”l driving on Shabbos in order to bring more people to shul, and to get (and keep) more Jews affiliated with Judaism. Rationally, their position may seem to have much merit, but besides being against Halacha, it is fundamentally flawed. This is because the goal of Judaism is not to have more Jews in shul, or even to have more Jews that are affiliated with Yiddishkait.

The ultimate goal is to transform the world we live in into a Dira Lo Yisborach. And the only way that that can possibly be achieved is the way prescribed by He for Whom we want to create this dwelling place.]

A SHORT HISTORY LESSON

When the Yidden left Mitzrayim they had to be forcibly driven away from the

“In our history, there were factions of Judaism who permitted r”l driving on Shabbos in order to bring more people to shul, and to get (and keep) more Jews affiliated with Judaism. Rationally, their position may seem to have much merit. But besides being against Halacha, it is fundamentally flawed. This is because the goal of Judaism is not to have more Jews in shul, or even to have more Jews that are affiliated with Yiddishkait.

EXCHANGING FOOL’S GOLD FOR THE REAL DEAL

On Yud Shvat 5711, during the farbrengen at which the Rebbe formally accepted leadership of our generation, the Rebbe quoted the Zohar that says that in everything there is a superficial shell and a more superficial shell, an inner core and a more inner core: דא מוחא נדא והאי קליפה להאי. Much of what we do is not the ultimate goal, the end itself, but merely the means to an end. And that end, in turn, is a “shell” for a more basic goal.

If someone is sent by the

of what we’re doing. For example, someone may bring an acquaintance to a Chanuka party, with a deeper goal (by his Nefesh Ha’bahamis or Nefesh HaElokis) to solicit money from him; the fundraising, in turn, is with the ultimate goal of spreading Yiddishkait, the spreading of Yiddishkait is with the aim of drawing G-dliness into the world.

The ultimate goal of all of the ultimate goals is *Basi L’Gani*, to complete the dira ba’tachtonim, through bringing the Sh’china back down to this physical plane in a concrete and revealed way.

Yam Suf. While there, they saw an unprecedented opportunity for serving the Eibeshter, a great chance to transform the world to the way He wanted it to be, through elevating the countless nitzutzim contained within the Egyptian possessions, which were scattered on the banks of the river. But they were instructed – forced (because it didn't make sense to them) – to do otherwise. At that point in time (although they couldn't know it then), the only way to further the goal of dira ba'tachtonim, to move forward towards Basi L'Gani, was through going away from the river (and what appeared to be a chance-of-a-lifetime for spiritual achievement) and towards Mattan Torah.

Had they followed their instincts or their intellect and continued amassing wealth (L'sheim Shamayim), not only would they be transgressing

the Ratzon HaElyon (which at that point was for them to move on), but they would be undermining the very goal that they were hoping to achieve!

If someone were, ch"v, to disregard halachos of Torah in order to be a more successful shliach, not only is it wrong from the perspective of halacha, but it is contrary to the ultimate objective of the shlichus!

Or, if someone were to get involved ch"v in a machlokes with a fellow Jew, fighting the fellow Jew, because through this he sees the possibility of doing more for Yiddishkait, it may be that he is misguided (not only because his own conclusions are usually wrong, but) because he is missing the point. Perhaps the iskafia of backing down from the machlokes (along with the fact that that is usually the requirement of Torah and halacha) may be accomplishing infinitely more for Yiddishkait –

for the ultimate goal of revealing G-dliness down here – than anything else he planned!

This is why we have to now get to work: At learning and davening, farbrengen and working on ourselves, understanding and internalizing, and making Yiddishkait and Chassidishkait an integral part of our life and of our mindset.

So that what we *should* do and what we *would* do will be one and the same!

L'chaim! May we all take advantage of Yud Shvat to refocus and renew our efforts to achieving our ultimate goal of dira ba'tachtonim (through iskafia and is'hafcha) and the *immediate* revelation of Moshiach Tzidkeinu Teikef U'miyad Mamash!!!

From a written farbrengen directed towards alumni of Yeshivas Lubavitch Toronto



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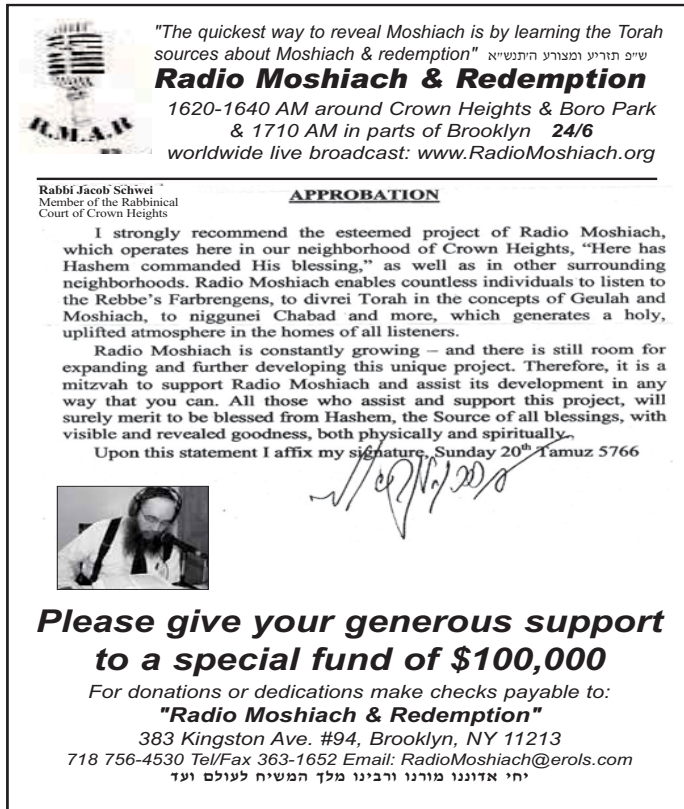
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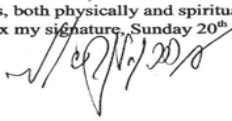
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APPROBATION

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





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MAKE THE REBBE'S REALITY YOUR REALITY

The Rebbe states that the true reality today is that we have eternal life and “Hinei Zeh Moshiach Bah.” We don’t see it, but in the conflict between what we see and true reality, we need to believe what the Rebbe told us and to look at reality that way. By doing so, we merit to see true reality. • From a speech given at a “Shabbos Shekulo Moshiach” that was organized by the Matteh Moshiach in Eretz Yisroel.

By Rabbi Zushe Silberstein

Shliach, Montreal

One of the elder mashpiim once said: Why is the prayer “Here I am, impoverished of deeds ...” said before Musaf (on Rosh HaShana)? The answer is, since the chazan is about to lead the service of Musaf, which is an addition to the main prayers, he might think that he can also add something of his own. This is why he begins by saying, “Here I am, impoverished ...”

They asked me to attend this Shabbaton and to speak on the subject of Moshiach and Geula. As I have done on other

occasions, now too, I asked the Rebbe for a bracha. The letter I opened to in the Igros Kodesh had to do with a Yud-Tes Kislev farbrengen and the Rebbe stresses that it should be connected to Geula. Since the Rebbe referred to a farbrengen, I will allow myself to speak from the heart as is customary at a Chassidishe farbrengen.

When we look at the sharpest words in the sicha of Chaf-Ches Nissan, “**What more can I do so that all the Jewish people will make a commotion and cry out in truth and do what it takes to**

actually bring Moshiach, after all that was done until now did not help? ... The only thing I can do is give it over to you – do all that you can ... to actually bring Moshiach Tzidkeinu ... I’ve done my part and from here-on-in you do everything you can do,” we see an amazing thing. The Rebbe describes giving it over to us as the last thing he can do. In other words, the action the Rebbe expects us to take is done **with the Rebbe’s ko’ach** and is considered as though he is doing it!

This is a very important point

because sometimes, one can think, how can we accomplish something as great as bringing Moshiach? The truth is, with our puny kochos alone, we could never reach the point where we can ask for Moshiach in truth as the Rebbe demands.

When we know that we are not operating with our kochos but with the Rebbe's kochos, we understand that we *can* want Moshiach in truth. If we don't interfere, we can actually bring Moshiach.

I once heard about the Chassid, Rabbi Aharon Dov Sufrin, who ran the Chabad mosdos in England for many years. Year after year, he undertook more work until he nearly collapsed under the burden. When he couldn't bear it any longer he decided to go to the Rebbe and to ask what job he could eliminate or delegate to someone else.

He had yechidus and told the Rebbe about the load he could no longer carry and asked what he could assign to someone else. The Rebbe said: How could you want to do less when you are still not doing enough?

Rabbi Sufrin, as a loyal Chassid, immediately asked the Rebbe: So what should I add?

The Rebbe said: Did you think that what you did until now you did with your own kochos? You did it with the kochos of the meshaleiach. You should know that with the kochos of the meshaleiach you can do much more!

This story reminded me of a Chassidic idea that I heard at a farbrengen. In the Hagada shel Pesach, in the part where the author of the Hagada describes how Hashem Himself descended to Egypt, he writes, "I and not an angel," "I and not a fiery seraph,"

and it concludes with, "I and not *ha'shliach*" (the emissary). The question is asked: Why doesn't it say "shliach" (an emissary)? The answer is, when there is "*a* shliach," a person's emissary is like himself and I (the sender) am the shliach. But when it's someone who thinks he's "*The* Shliach," then it's I alone and not *ha'shliach*.

If you've ever heard the maamer "*Basi L'Gani*" 5711 from the recording, and I assume



“This is a store and you pay for whatever you take. Period. As for being afraid to die, I wasn't afraid. The Lubavitcher Rebbe told me not to be afraid, so I wasn't afraid.”

there is no Lubavitcher Chassid today who has not listened to this recording, you must have noticed that the Rebbe cries a number of times. Since everything the Rebbe does is precise, it is interesting to see during which parts the Rebbe cries. We are small people who live in the material world with no understanding of hidden things, but as far as we can tell,

the parts the Rebbe cried at are very important; it is those things which require much effort to accomplish.

In one of these segments, the Rebbe speaks about the need to spread Judaism around the world. He says that the hafatza needs to reach even a Jew on the other side of the world who doesn't know what an "Alef" is.

At first glance, this seems strange. What is the big deal in a Jew knowing an Alef? Without minimizing the importance of the Alef-Beis, when we're talking about the Rebbe's inaugural maamer in which he sets forth his vision for the seventh generation and says the goal is to bring the Sh'china down to the world, the fact that a Jew somewhere does or does not know the letter Alef doesn't seem to be all that important.

I've thought about this a lot and I came up with a way to explain it. Since, as I said before, we are at a Chassidische farbrengen, I will allow myself to say it aloud.

Over the years, the Rebbe brought out a number of

important things that figure prominently in bringing the Geula, many of which begin with the letter Alef. Perhaps this is what the Rebbe meant in his maamer, that every Jew should be permeated with these important points that begin with the letter Alef.

Here are some examples:

EMUNA:

Over the years, the Rebbe placed a particular emphasis on the need to strengthen emuna. He spoke especially about the belief in the Moshe Rabbeinu of the generation. The Rebbe spoke about this point in dozens of sichos and emphasized that the belief in the Moshe Rabbeinu of the generation must be absolute. Even when reality seems contrary to that belief, said the Rebbe, you must believe with absolute faith in what the Rebbe says and act accordingly.

In order to understand what pure faith is, I'll tell you a story that I heard from the person it happened to. This was in the first years of the Rebbe's nesius, when masses of Jews fled Crown Heights in fear of an increase in crime. Entire streets were emptied of Jews and whoever still lived in these areas looked for an opportunity to sell his house and move to another neighborhood.

This Satmar Chassid lived on S Johns on the other side of Eastern Parkway. He was a little boy at the time and his mother told him that the owner of the little grocery store on the corner decided to stay put and not close his store as most had done. He knew the store owner, a thin, elderly man and he wondered how he had the courage to remain in the jungle.

When he voiced his concern out loud, his mother said the old man was very frightened and he consulted with the Lubavitcher Rebbe who lived nearby. He had yechidus and asked whether he should close his store and move. The Rebbe asked him why he wanted to leave. The man explained that he was very scared. The Rebbe said: So why haven't you left already?

The man explained that since

his store is the only kosher store in the vicinity, he felt that he filled a special role. The Rebbe asked him again: So why do you want to leave?

The man said the only reason he wanted to leave was because of his fear. The Rebbe looked at him and said: So, don't be afraid.

The man left yechidus feeling calm. He told everybody that the Lubavitcher Rebbe told him there was nothing to be frightened about and he wasn't leaving his store.

The person who told me the story, as I mentioned, was a young boy at the time, and he remembered how every day, on his way home from yeshiva, he would pass the man's store and buy something. He did this because his mother told him to do so, in order to keep the man's morale high.

Years went by and one day, on his way home from yeshiva, he saw that something had happened. The street was closed off and there were police cars near the old man's store. He circumvented the blockade and went into the man's store just as the man was about to tell the police what had happened.

"I was standing here at the counter when a group of black guys came in and demanded that I hand over the money. I told them that I don't give out money. This is a store and you need to pay for what you take. They tried arguing with me but I remained firm. This is a store, and you pay for what you take. When they saw that they wouldn't convince me, one of them took out a gun and threatened me."

"What did you do?" asked the detective, taken aback by the old man's nerve.

"I told them that if they threatened me, I would call the

police."

"So what happened next?" asked the detective impatiently.

"What do you mean? I called you and you came. In the meantime though, until you arrived, they were furious that I didn't give them money and they started shooting at me. See here, behind me are boxes of tuna and you can see the bullet holes. The oil is leaking out of those expensive cans of tuna."

The policeman looked at the boxes of tuna, saw the results of the point-blank shooting at the old man and was stunned. "I don't understand. Why didn't you give them the money? You weren't afraid to die? The bullets they shot in your direction could have killed you several times!"

The old man looked at him uncomprehendingly. "Perhaps you won't understand but I mean it seriously. This is a store and you pay for whatever you take. Period. As for being afraid to die, I wasn't afraid. The Lubavitcher Rebbe told me not to be afraid, and so I wasn't at all afraid."

That's an example of absolute faith. Even when reality seems the opposite of what you believe, even when all seems lost, even in the midst of gun shots, he kept the faith. That is real emuna.

The Rebbe established reality for us too. The Rebbe stated explicitly that the true reality of today is eternal life and hinei zeh Moshiach ba. It doesn't look that way to us, but in this conflict between reality as we see it and true reality, we must believe with perfect faith in what the Rebbe said and see reality that way. By doing so, we will see true reality.

ACHDUS - AHAVAS YISROEL:

The Rebbe devoted numerous

sichos to the subject of achdus and the last sicha we heard from the Rebbe on Shabbos Parshas VaYakhel 5752 mostly addressed the importance of achdus.

For some reason, it is easier to be nice and love Jews outside of Chabad. Achdus within our own camp is much harder, but the difficulty proves how important it is. If this achdus wasn't important, the *sitra achra* would not devote so much effort into neutralizing every attempt at achdus within our ranks.

ANOCHI:

This is the acronym for *Ana Nafshi K'savis Y'havis* (I have written myself into it). This is an allusion to the Rebbe's Igros, the letters through which we connect to the Rebbe and merit to see miracles.

OROS D'TOHU - OFEN HA'MISKABEL:

These represent the winning combination which will bring the Geula. It is interesting that in the same letter in the Igros Kodesh that I opened to for a bracha to come here for Shabbos, the Rebbe writes a general horaa regarding hafatza, that you need to consult with Anash and "*T'shua B'rov Yo'eitz*" (salvation comes with an abundance of counsel).

I think this refers especially to Oros of Tohu and Keilim of Tikkun. There are those who mistakenly think that the Rebbe made publicizing the Besuras Ha'Geula conditional on people being receptive to it. They would be right if the Rebbe had written that we need to publicize the Besuras Ha'Geula "if it will be accepted," but the Rebbe did not write that. The Rebbe wrote "b'ofen ha'miskabel" (in a

manner that it will be accepted), with the simple meaning being that there is no doubt that it will be accepted; we just have to find the way to make it so.

In order to find the right way, you have to consult with others. When a person does something on his own, he can have the best of intentions but may not successfully convey the message. It is very likely that if he had consulted with someone, with a mashpia or rav, he would hear another approach and be far more effective.

Along with these four points, we can't forget the fifth point:

ICH (I - EGO):

That bothersome thing which we need to set aside. It's the source of all evil and must be expelled from the Chabad camp.

I will conclude with a story that I heard from the protagonist, under very unusual circumstances. In my role as prison chaplain in Quebec, I met an inmate, an Israeli, who was sentenced to 18 years in jail. Canadian law says that after completing a sixth of a sentence, an inmate can request a pardon. His request is discussed and determined by a special panel of judges. This Israeli had submitted a request when three years of the sentence had been completed. It was denied.

Another three years went by, in the course of which he made much progress in his religious observance. When he was allowed to submit another request for a pardon he asked me to accompany him to the judges' meeting.

We went and there were two judges, one young and one very old. The older one led the discussion. He asked the inmate

to tell him why he thought he should be released from jail. The Israeli delivered an impassioned speech in which he explained that in the past he had been a prisoner of money and had done everything for money. Now, he said, after having done t'shuva, he knew that money is not the most important thing in life and he felt liberated.

The judge listened intently to this original presentation and then he asked me what I could say in his defense. I told the judge that over the years during which we had become acquainted, the man had changed from one extreme to another and I had no doubt that he would never return to a life of crime.

The judge looked through the inmate's file and then said to me: According to what it says here, all he has is \$600. If we release him, we will deport him to Israel where he has nobody to welcome him at the airport. Please explain to me how you expect a man who is alone in the world, who has a total of \$600, not to return to a life of crime.

I told the judge that he was right and that we had thought of that. Therefore, we had arranged with someone in Israel to greet him and look out for him for a few months.

The judge nodded and asked: Who will that be?

I answered: A Lubavitcher rabbi.

The judge then asked us to leave the courtroom so he could consult with the younger judge before responding. Ten long minutes went by until we were allowed to reenter the courtroom. The judge's face was inscrutable. He said to the convict, "Your speech impressed me but I don't believe it for a second. You had plenty of time to prepare your

speech and therefore, it did not convince me to release you.”

The Israeli turned white. If the judge did not release him, he would have to wait another three years before submitting another request!

Then the judge continued, “Nevertheless, I decided to release you; not because of your speech but because the rabbi here said that the Lubavitcher rabbi would take responsibility for you.”

I was flabbergasted. I realized that he thought I meant that the Rebbe himself would take the responsibility, but what did he know about the Rebbe? I asked

the judge how he knew the Rebbe. He replied that fifteen years earlier he was flipping through television stations when he suddenly saw a distinguished Jew sitting and talking to thousands of Chassidim. It was one of the farbrengens and the Rebbe’s visage captivated him. He sat there for hours, watching the Rebbe, even though he did not understand him, nor did the English translation help since, as a Frenchman, he did not know English well.

When the farbrengen was over, he called the number that appeared on the screen and asked when the next farbrengen would

take place. Since then, every time there was a farbrengen, he would sit and watch the Rebbe.

“If this rabbi, whom I so admire, takes responsibility, how can I not rely on him?” concluded the gentile judge.

If a gentile who doesn’t understand what a Rebbe is can blindly rely on the Rebbe, surely we who have a glimmer of an idea of what a Rebbe is, can rely absolutely on what the Rebbe said. We can be confident that the Rebbe’s prophecies and promises will be fulfilled, especially the true and complete Geula.

Continued from page 50

what the circumstances require, consider it all part of Hashem’s help. You may be going through the motions, but He is pulling all the strings.” Tatty took a dollar out of his pocket. “Look, even the American government admits that everything depends on

Bitachon. Read what it says here on this dollar.”

“In G-d we trust! How come I never noticed that before?” Said Nechama.

“Actually, there’s another reason that this dollar reminds us to have Bitachon,” added Tatty.

“What’s that?” asked

Shternie.

“Why do you think we call it money?” grinned Tatty. “It’s called MON-ey to remind us of the lesson of the MONN!”

The above story is fictional. The lesson is based on Likkutei Sichos vol. 21 p. 95-102.



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LIBERATION

By Rabbi Yisroel Harpaz

“Those were among the best years of my life,” Reb Mendel told the dumbfounded reporter. The famous Chassid, Rabbi Mendel Futerfas, was being asked by a reporter to describe the years he spent in the harsh Siberian exile colony reserved for enemies of the Soviet regime. He went on to explain how in all his other life experiences he had to work diligently to balance his material pursuits with his spiritual pursuits. But while a prisoner in exile he had no material concerns, so he was able to focus on the spiritual at all times.

No material concerns? Here you have a man who was among the most distinguished members of his community, active in the mission of preserving Jewish life in communist Russia, and he is sent to prison in exile in some G-d forsaken place to chop wood in the freezing cold under the watchful eye of an illiterate drunk — and he says had no material concerns?

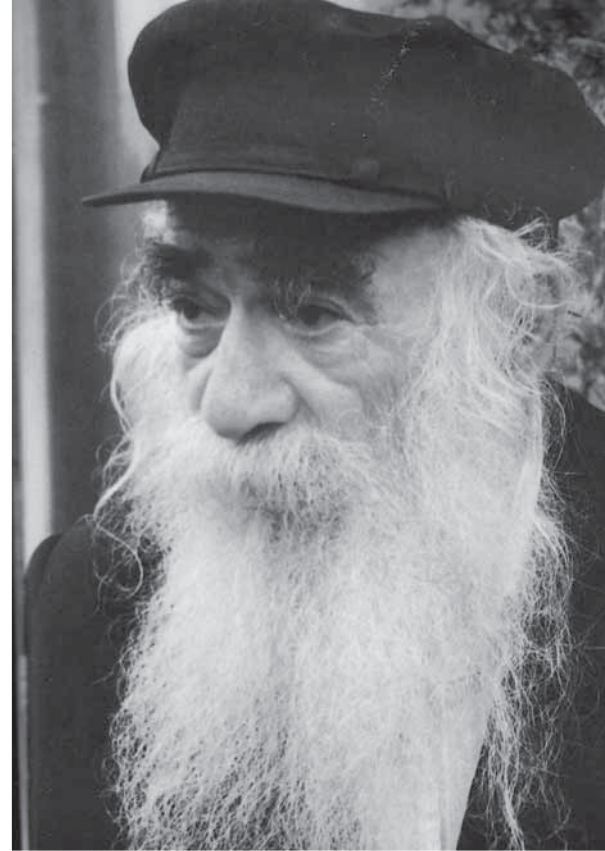
I’m not sure how the interview continued, but from what I have heard of Reb Mendel, I can imagine some of his thoughts... My job is to serve G-d. Yesterday he wanted me to be a community leader; today he wants me to chop wood. Who am I to interfere with His plans? As long as I have the opportunity to fulfill my purpose, which is to utilize every experience in life to connect to G-d, who cares what I happen to be doing externally at

the moment?

Reb Mendel’s approach stems from a deep-seeded conviction that the world is not real, or at least not as real as it seems to the rest of us. The world says that you are a prisoner if you live in confined quarters and are told where to go and what to do. Reb Mendel says that being a prisoner is a state of mind.

We live in time when, more than ever, what we do and how we live are decreed by a dictatorship that subjugates us not by brute force, but by coercion and the demand for hegemony; we are not imprisoned in cells by thugs and hoodlums, but by falsely implanted wishes and rationales that attempt daily unauthorized infiltrations of our consciousness — the only true bastion of freedom we possess.

The average person is inundated by hundreds (if not thousands) of advertisements and other commercial messages each day telling us what car we should drive, what house we should live in, where to spend our vacation, where to donate our money to, how skinny we should be, what food to eat and what kind of person to marry. They even tell you what drugs to take when you get depressed about the fact that you can’t possibly attain all these things — and you wouldn’t be happy even if you did. Their sheer volume and relentlessness seem to confirm the message they contain — that these are the things that matter — leaving



little desire or even mental space to focus on the metaphysical dimensions of life.

Our forefathers rose up against the oppressors who sought to quash their spirit and devotion to meaningful living. Today, aside from the physical dangers we face in many parts of the world and especially in Israel, we are also under the threat of a spiritual anesthesia that threatens to sedate an entire generation into the stoned age. But we too can rise up and rebel, with the ultimate subversion to coercion being the negation of the false constructs the world attempts to impose on us. Because if you firmly assert your will to live with the truth rather than the diluted, plastic reality that surrounds you, then you’ve already won. They can do what they want to your body, but the soul can never be imprisoned. And with this attitude the soul sets the body free as well.

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'IF WE SPEAK WITH A CLEAR VOICE, WE WILL HAVE THE SUPPORT OF THE ENTIRE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY'

"Fifty-four Members of the United States Congress have joined my initiative to enforce Israeli sovereignty throughout Yehuda and Shomron." According to MK Danon, the world understands that the two-state solution is totally unrealistic, and he hopes that Israeli politicians will also understand that there is no alternative except to focus upon Jewish settlement.

By Sholom Ber Crombie

Translated by Michael Leib Dobry

During the current coalition government, Knesset Member Danny Danon has become the standard-bearer within the Likud Party in the struggle to preserve the territorial integrity of Eretz Yisroel. He has earned a barrage of scalding attacks from the state-run media, which has mercilessly attacked him, even applying his name to a new political concept: "Hedanonism". Yet, Danon remains unrelenting. He continues to strengthen the right-wing stance within the Likud Party, as he acts with determination against the policies emanating from the Prime Minister's Office. These activities have accelerated, thanks in part to the support

that Danon has received from a respectable portion of Israeli politicians.

A few weeks ago, the Republican National Committee called upon Israel to annex Yehuda and Shomron. The party's highest authoritative body declared its faith in the claim of the Jewish People over all of Eretz Yisroel, as based in the G-dly promise stated in the Bible. "Members of this body support Israel in their natural and G-d-given right of self-governance and self-defense upon their own lands, recognizing that Israel is neither an attacking force nor an occupier of the lands of others; and that peace can be afforded the region only through a united

Israel governed under one law for all people," the resolution stated.

The resolution was publicized as a follow-up to a previous and lengthier declaration clarifying the Biblical connection between the People of Israel and their land – given to them by Almighty G-d. Commentators estimate that this declaration paints Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu into a corner, when the main opposition party in the United States passes him on the right and places itself in line with the ultra-right wing nationalist parties. In their estimation, this represents a step that will signal a radicalization of the party's positions, far more right wing than the policies of the Netanyahu government. This is a fact that can potentially change the whole picture, particularly if the Republican nominee for President wins the upcoming election.

Knesset Member Danon, as someone who has close relations with senior American politicians, how do you relate to this declaration?

I have already been advancing legislation to apply Israeli sovereignty in Yehuda and Shomron for a lengthy period of time. In addition, I have



Knesset Member Danny Danon on a visit to Yerushalayim. Photo: Matanya Ofir

established contact with high-ranking members in the U.S. government in order to promote similar legislation in the United States Congress. At the present time, fifty-four Members of Congress have already signed on their support of such legislation. Today, the only alternative is to put to rest the establishment of a Palestinian state, moving instead to the enforcement of Jewish sovereignty throughout Yehuda and Shomron.

The leader of your party is working specifically towards the establishment of a Palestinian state.

I know what it says in the Likud Party's platform – and it does not support the establishment of a Palestinian state. Today, the people understand that it's impossible to continue along the path of establishing a Palestinian state, and we must fight against this proposal.

The government of Israel did not approve a decision on the establishment of a Palestinian state, and the Likud Party has not adopted any policy in this direction. The last time that this matter came up for a vote was

when Netanyahu brought the issue before the Likud Central Committee, and the committee's decision was clearly against the establishment of a Palestinian state.

What policy alternatives are you proposing?

I believe that they should establish Israeli sovereignty over the Jewish settlements during the initial stage, and at the second stage, over all the barren areas throughout Yehuda and Shomron. The status of the Palestinians living there will be determined as part of a permanent settlement with Jordan and Egypt. In my opinion, there's no need to absorb the Palestinians into the State of Israel, rather the objective is to establish control over as much of the region as possible, while keeping the Arab population under these sovereign areas to an absolute minimum. We are advancing this initiative and it is moving into high gear, and I believe that we will soon succeed in making even greater progress.

What is your message to the prime minister, who is advancing the cause for a Palestinian state?

They're talking a lot about international pressure, and as a result, there is a need for steps to be taken against the settlements. However, in practical terms, we see a great deal of support, and if we convey a message of trust and confidence, we can bring many nations to stand behind us. I am in contact with senior officials in the United States, along with several of the presidential candidates, and sometimes they are very confused and uncertain as to what we really want. But as soon as we speak with a clear voice, they join forces with us and stand by our side.

Where do things stand today politically regarding the efforts to stop the destruction at the Migron settlement?

Negotiations are currently underway with the residents of Migron. While I believe that it is forbidden to cause harm to the settlers and give a sense of satisfaction to the destructive desires of 'Peace Now,' some understanding must be reached with the settlers, eventually leading to an arrangement that will strengthen the settlement. Of



MK Danon with former U.S. presidential candidate Herman Cain in the Western Wall tunnels. Photo: George Lange Studio

course, the ideal situation would be if the Migron settlement could remain where it is now and not compel us to stand at attention every time that 'Peace Now' seeks to undermine our legal right to settle in Eretz Yisroel. Negotiations are still going on and we must reach some form of agreement. I will support anything that enables increased construction and development in Yehuda and Shomron. Therefore, we must come to an understanding regarding the construction of a new settlement in this region without demoralizing the settlers.

There are government ministers within the Likud Party who support the uprooting of the settlement.

There is a built-in struggle within the governing coalition between forces led by [Defense Minister] Ehud Barak, seeking to draw the government leftward, and Knesset Members from the Likud Party faithful to Eretz Yisroel, such as myself and some of my colleagues. This is a daily struggle that takes form in a variety of ways. Thank G-d,

the winds have been shifting in our direction. At the start of the current Knesset term, we were in a far worse position, as exemplified by the Bar-Ilan speech and the settlement freeze. This problematic foreign policy approach has changed, and even if everything is not as it should be, we are succeeding in bringing the government to our position. This struggle does not carry a knockout punch, but it will lead to winning points. I have personally managed to pass more than one piece of legislation, such as the law on released terrorists, stipulating that breaking even the slightest law will immediately put them back behind bars. There was the Boycott Law, the Defamation Law, the Referendum Law, and other legislative initiatives passed in spite of heavy media pressure. The picture is not all black and white. This is a very complex situation, and we're struggling each day on a variety of issues.

Are you supporting Netanyahu in the upcoming primaries for the Likud leadership?

The results in the upcoming race for the party leadership are known in advance. My struggle, however, is to make certain that the Likud Party's list for the next Knesset elections will include more ideological candidates, and this is my main focus. We are fighting against some very powerful forces trying to drag this government in a leftward direction, and we are doing our utmost to apply our own pressure in response. I recall where we were holding at the beginning of this term and I see where we're holding now, and it's clear that the public and political pressure has borne fruit.

For example, in the struggle against freeze on construction in Yehuda and Shomron, we succeeded in putting a halt to the freeze, despite the fact that the prime minister tried to extend it.

During the previous week, there was a meeting of the Knesset Immigration and Absorption Committee, which you head, on the subject of providing greater worldwide security to Chabad Houses. Can you tell us something about the initiative?

Today, there is a wave of anti-Semitism throughout the world directed towards Jewish targets and Chabad Houses situated in volatile locations. We conducted a discussion on this matter in the committee, and we will continue to deal with security matters and other issues connected to the Chabad Houses. The government of Israel has a vested interest in working with the Chabad Houses and fortifying their presence in the world, as those who provide vital services to Jewish communities and Israeli tourists. I would prefer not to go into greater detail about our discussions, as it would be far better for them if matters be kept quiet. I would say only that we have already had considerable success with our efforts in this area, and we shall continue to work in providing assistance to Chabad Houses.

Do you have anything to say in closing?

I want to say to Chabad chassidim that they should continue their blessed work, and they should know that their activities in Eretz Yisroel are most appreciated and respected.

FROM “I CAN’T” TO “I CAN” A PARENT’S STORY

I know that the credit for my son’s incredible experience at Or Menachem goes to the loving and caring atmosphere at the Yeshiva, created by the Dahan’s and their staff of teachers and shluchim. When my son started there, his mantra was “I can’t.” This has, thank G-d, changed to “I can.”

By Dovid Feldman

A short while ago, I was invited to visit my son’s yeshiva in Naperville, Canada. Or Menachem is nestled in a small farm town an hour outside of Montreal. Our son has been there for three years, and as we embark to send a second son there, we feel obligated to share with other parents what a treasure of a school we have found.

The yeshiva invited all the parents and teachers to attend their yearly Lag B’Omer bonfire and bike trip parade. During the plane ride, I marveled at the Hashgacha Pratis that led to our finding the right place for our son. My son B”H has always been well behaved and on the chassidishe derech; however he was left extremely discouraged by his experience in the regular cheider system.

Though bright and talented in many area, book learning and languages were not his strong points – he is a “right brained learner in a left brained world.” This did not serve him well in the typical cheider system. When our son was thirteen and we were looking to send him to a yeshiva, my wife was fortunate to speak to Mrs. Cohen from Montreal, who recommended Or Menachem.

After speaking with Rabbi Dahan from Or Menachem and openly sharing with him the frustrating experiences we had in trying to educate our son in the standard system, we knew we had found the right place.

Amazingly, after an hour’s drive through the Canadian countryside, I arrived at the Yeshiva, located on acres of land in the middle of a rural farm-town. I found the boys getting ready for the bonfire, playing basketball, and preparing for the barbecue. Local parents, Jewish neighbors from the area, and the teachers all came. As a parent, it was nice to meet the warm and patient teachers like Rabbi Sheiner, Rabbi Kaufman, and Mr. Jones as well as the energetic Shluchim and the Rosh yeshiva, Rabbi Dahan. There was a warm family atmosphere of love and caring, and I was immediately treated like family. I took the opportunity to thank the staff for taking a strong interest in building the boys’ self esteem and learning skills.

I returned home with renewed energies after seeing mesirus-nefesh in action and with a lot of nachas from my son who has B”H grown in both his Yiras Shamayim and in his connection to the Rebbe. I later came

back for a visit, farbrenging with the boys well into the night, ending with niggunim and dancing around the table. The next day, after chassidus, davening and seder, I joined the boys on their weekly evening ski-trip at a local Montreal resort. The staff members at the mountain are familiar with the yeshiva, and happily allow Rabbi Dahan to take over one of their larger gathering rooms to farbreng with the kids and say words of Torah after an evening of skiing. What a Kiddush-Hashem it was to see such well behaved teenagers enjoying the sport, dressed in all their ski-boots and parkas, and taking time out to speak words of Chassidus publicly.

I know that the credit for my son’s incredible experience at Or Menachem goes to the loving and caring atmosphere at the Yeshiva, created by the Dahans and their staff of teachers and shluchim. When my son started there, his mantra was “I can’t.” This has, thank G-d, changed to “I can.”

**For more information call
Rebbetzin Dahan at
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THE ANTICIPATORY SONG OF THE FUTURE

By Rabbi Heschel Greenberg

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



THE TEN SONGS

The song that the Jewish people, led by Moses, sung when they crossed the Red Sea is one of the most powerful expressions of praise, joy, and gratitude there has ever been. According to the Midrash (Mechilta) it is one of Ten Songs that are mentioned in the Torah—the tenth being the one we will sing in the Messianic Age. Indeed, it is the first song that is mentioned explicitly in the Torah. (According to the Mechilta, the first of the ten songs was actually sung the night of the Exodus. That song, however, is not mentioned in the Torah; it is alluded to in the Biblical book of Isaiah.)

Another factor that makes this song stand out is that in it we already have allusions to the last song that will be sung in the future Messianic Age, after the Resurrection of the Dead. The song opens with the words “Az Yashir Moshe”, which is usually translated as “Then sang Moses.” However, Rashi notes, the literal translation should be, “Then Moses **shall** sing.” One of Rashi’s explanations for the use of the future tense is that while Moses was singing praise for the miracles that the Jewish people witnessed then, he was also alluding to the miracles of the future Messianic Era, after the Resurrection of the Dead, when Moses will be back to sing

the ultimate tenth song.

Indeed, as *Baal HaTurim* notes, the word *Yashir* is a composite of two words: *Yud shir*, which means “ten songs,” intimating that all ten songs were already implicit in the song they sang when they crossed the sea.

Another hint to the ten songs can be found by counting ten letters from the letter *shin* of the word *shira*-song, a count that will lead us to the letter *Yud*. If we count another ten letters we will find the letter *Reish*, and then counting another ten letters will bring us to the letter *Hei*. These four letters coded into the text at intervals of **ten** yield the word *shira*-song!

A SONG OF FAITH

The question is what was it that prompted Moses and the Jewish people to sing such an exalted song which had eluded them before, during the time when they witnessed the incredible miracles of the Ten Plagues and then their actual departure from Egypt?

While it is true, as noted above, that they did sing praise on the night of the Exodus, that song is neither recorded in the Torah nor does it contain any enduring message that will be repeated in the future. The song of the crossing of the sea, by contrast, is indeed connected to the future as well.

It is of enduring value. What is so unique about this particular song?

According to *Shaloh* (the seventeenth century, Halachic authority and Kabbalist), based on the Midrash, the key to understanding the power of this song can be found in the verses which precede the song. There it states that “they believed in G-d and Moses His servant.” It is the strong faith that they exhibited that provided them with the Divine inspiration to sing this exquisite song.

FEMININE ANTICIPATORY FAITH

However *Shaloh* makes an astute observation: With respect to the men’s song, the Torah employs the feminine term *Zos* for the word “**this** (song),” whereas in the song led by the women the Torah uses a masculine word *lahem* for the word “(to) them.”

Shaloh answers by establishing the premise that the women’s faith was on a much higher level than that of the men. Their song was therefore described in the more “muscular-masculine” form as opposed to the song of the men which exhibited a much weaker faith and was therefore phrased in the more diffident, feminine form.

What was it that was lacking in the men’s faith?

Shaloh answers that the men did not fully believe in the miracles that were to happen until they had actually happened. Although they were told by G-d through Moses that these miracles would occur, this promise did not move them. They were not motivated to sing praise to G-d for something that hadn't happened yet.

Thus the Torah introduces the song of Moses with the words, “**Then** Moses and the children of Israel sang,” with the emphasis on the word “then.” Moses was suggesting that only then was he able to give expression to the miracles through the medium of song.

The women by contrast exhibited their faith even before they witnessed the miracles. Proof of this is the fact that they had their tambourines with them because they anticipated that these miracles would occur and were fully prepared to make use of their instruments. They were in a joyous singing mode even before they witnessed the miracles. For the women, just hearing from Moses that these miracles would occur sufficed.

IN THE FUTURE SONG BEFORE THE MIRACLES

Shaloh states that in the future things will be different. He quotes the Midrash that says: “In the future, Israel will sing praise in the future.” *Shaloh* questions the repetitive language and provides an ingenious and inspirational answer:

As soon as the news of the Redemption is announced, they will sing praise for the future miracles even before they will happen. Just by hearing that the Redemption with its attendant miracles are imminent will suffice

“As soon as the news of the Redemption is announced, they will sing praise for the future miracles even before they happen.”

to inspire us with faith, joy, and song.

This, the *Shaloh* says, is the meaning of the order of the words in Psalm (98:1): First it states concerning the future, “Sing unto G-d a new song,” followed by “for He has wrought wonders.” First we will sing the new song of Redemption, and then we will experience the miracles.

RECTIFYING THE PAST

Perhaps we can connect the two diametrically opposite explanations of the introductory word *az-then*. The *Shaloh*, as mentioned above, understood its meaning as saying, “only then did he sing, but not earlier.” On the other hand, Rashi interpreted *az* to mean that he will sing this song in the future.

It can be suggested that Moses was already hinting to the fact, that notwithstanding their hesitation to sing before they saw the miracles, in the future we will indeed then sing the song even before the miracles occur. What they were lacking in the past, as exemplified by their use of the word “then,” which Moses and the Children of Israel sang only after witnessing miracles, will be rectified “then.” In the future—“then”—we will sing praise even before all the miracles unfold.

SING NOW!

The lesson for our times is obvious. Our generation has been privileged to hear the Rebbe declare that we are living

on the very threshold of the Redemption. Indeed these are clearly momentous times as we have already witnessed some of the greatest miracles of history with the collapse of the Soviet Union among all the miracles that involve Israel's survival and growth. But there are still many more miracles waiting to occur. The Rebbe has also made the declaration, quoting the words of the Midrash, “the time of your redemption has arrived.” We must respond to this anticipation for the ultimate and imminent Redemption with joy.

While joy has always been an indispensable part of Judaism, it is now much more crucial. Now—despite all the negative things that have been occurring during the last few years that we must respond to appropriately—is the time to increase in joy. This joy, which expresses itself in song, is the ultimate means for us to demonstrate our faith in, and prepare for, the imminent coming of Moshiach and the true and complete Redemption.

SOUNDS OF WAR

Their father was in the hospital and their mother went to visit him. * Heishke and his sisters remained at home with Zeide. * They were playing in the yard when bright spots appeared in the sky, from which extended long trails of light. * Suddenly there were explosions and air raid sirens – the sounds of war.

By Rabbi Yehoshua Dubrawski a"h

HEAVENLY SIGNS

The year that the horrific World War II began we were living in a suburb of Moscow called Dorokhova (about 20-30 miles from Moscow). When our family left our Ukrainian hometown, we had no legal permit to live in Moscow. In addition, it was impossible to find any sort of apartment in the Soviet capitol.

We were granted permission to live in Dorokhova. We found a house on the edge of town near the forest. Our home consisted of one room in a two-room house. We lived in the one room and the landlord, a Russian gentile, lived in the other room with his wife and children. There was a narrow hallway between the two rooms with two ovens for cooking and warmth during the cold winters.

In our not-large room lived the six members of my family. Aside from the six small and smaller beds, a small table and three chairs, there was hardly any furniture. Needless to say, we did not exactly feel the lack of clothes closets and a pantry for foodstuffs.

Understandably, in the summer, the three children (my two sisters and I) spent most of our time in the large yard which was empty and did not even have a fence. Some poles stood there to indicate the boundaries of the yard. The forest began immediately beyond the yard.

One evening at the start of summer, I was in the yard as usual, busy with a game, when I suddenly noticed bright spots in the sky. I also observed that from those spots way up in the sky appeared extended trails of light.

I was twelve at the time and I was seeing a sight like this for the first time. I instantly realized that this boded ill and indicated threatening things that were going to occur. It seemed like the red spots and frightening images which I had read about as omens of foreboding in *Seder Ha'doros* and *Tzemach Dovid* and other s'farim. A cold tremor took hold of me from my head to my toes; my knees trembled in fear. But I immediately caught hold of myself – Zeide Rav, who knows everything, will surely know what those white spots in the sky are.



THE "WEDDING" BEGAN

Zeide was the only one at home. He was sitting and learning. My father was in the hospital in Moscow; it was because of his illness that they allowed us to leave our hometown and live near Moscow. My mother went to Moscow to visit him and bring bread for the family. It was wartime already and there was no bread in the store in Dorokhova.

I went inside shouting, "Zeide, Zeide! Come quickly outside! Something very scary is in the sky! Come, come!"

"Frightening things in the sky," said Zeide slowly and with a half-smile, as was his wont, he left the house. He looked at the flying white spots, and with an unhappy shake of his head he said, "Nu, the real wedding will begin."

Yes, I could see that Zeide immediately knew what those white things were. "Zeide, what is it? It's so frightening!"

"It is definitely not something joyous," he said. I understood that these were not at all frightening signs in the heaven about something about to happen, but something worse than that, something that was actually taking place now, on earth. For some reason, it did not occur to me that these spots had

any connection with the terrible war between our country and the German army which was swallowing up parts of Russia. Zeide told me – and how he knew this was news to me – that these were very powerful searchlights that illuminated at a great distance so they could locate enemy planes that dropped bombs. When a searchlight lit up an enemy plane, they could shoot at it.

A new fear took hold of me like a dibbuk. I had already heard and knew that German planes dropped bombs that killed people, fathers, mothers and children. Now I felt that they were aiming at our area!

I remember till today how this new fear of mine, despite being so tangible and immediate, was still like my earlier fear of the frightening heavenly signs laden with mystery and confusion.

I demanded an answer from Zeide – what should we do? The planes could drop bombs here on us. Zeide calmed me, saying we had to daven to Hashem and we should have bitachon in Him. In any case, they did not drop bombs on little towns; just on big cities, factories, industries, army camps and so on.

WAITING FOR MOTHER

Zeide was still in the middle of talking when suddenly, the quiet of the night was interrupted. From somewhere in the area began a strange noise, the sharp wailing of sirens like the ones from the factory and the choo-choo sounds like those made by trains pulling in or out of their stations. “That is an air raid alarm,” said Zeide. “German planes are flying and bombing Moscow.”

Searchlight rays multiplied



“I could see that Zeide immediately knew what those white things were. “Zeide, what is it? It’s so frightening!”

and became sharper in the darkness. From all directions bombs flew through the air, tracing a path through the sky in the direction of Moscow. These were anti-aircraft tracer shells fired by the Russian artillery corps who targeted German planes.

We heard the buzzing of aircraft and spent a long time watching the lights and fire in the sky, but we never saw a plane exploding. That means, I thought to myself, that not a single enemy plane was hit. My anger dulled a bit of my fear.

Zeide and the three children who pressed in on him from both sides, my sisters on one side and me on the other, stood a long time in the yard at some distance from the house. I later understood why. We also understood why Zeide kept looking at his pocket watch. It was already late at night and my mother had still not returned.

Zeide was able to calm us but we were still very frightened. It was so late and my mother was not there. The older sister was

the first to start crying. “Where is Mama? Ma...ma!” The younger one repeated quietly and in tears, “Mama, Mama, Mama.” I restrained myself although I was more scared than they were, as I wondered whether the bombing hadn’t, G-d forbid, hurt her. I was afraid for my mother as well as for my father in the hospital. The later it got, the more we clung to Zeide.

I don’t remember what time it was, but Zeide took us inside the house very late at night and wanted to give us something to eat. Just then, a knock at the door announced that my mother had arrived. She threw down her big bundle with the bread and spread her arms wide. It looked so wide that it seemed her arms had stretched who knew how long, and all three children flew into them. She hugged us so tight, with such motherly warmth, like a mother who finds her lost children and children who find their lost mother.

That is how we experienced the first German bombing of Moscow.

WHY IS IT CALLED MONEY?

By M.E. Gordon

It was obvious that something was worrying Nechama, and her sister, Shternie was determined to find out the cause.

“Nechama, please tell me what’s wrong. For two days already, you’ve been acting as if there was a black cloud hovering over you. You look as if you haven’t slept, and when I try to make conversation, you don’t respond. What is the matter?”

“Shternie, I’m surprised that you don’t know what I’m so worried about. In fact, I would think that you should be just as worried as me! Don’t you care about our situation? Don’t you know that Tatty lost his job last week?”

“Of course I care,” answered Shternie, indignantly. “I care about the situation at least as much as you do, but I don’t see any point in worrying. I decided that I’ll take on a *hachlata tova* (a good resolution) plus say an extra chapter of T’hillim each morning. Good deeds are more likely to help Tatty than worrying.”

“I’m also doing those kinds of things, but I can’t help worrying!”

“Look, Nechama, I don’t think Tatty is as worried as you! He always has such a positive attitude. Maybe you’ll feel less anxious if you talk to him.”

Nechama didn’t feel comfortable bringing up the subject to her father. He didn’t seem to be upset, but how could she really know how he felt inside? That evening, however, after the younger children had gone to sleep, Tatty invited Nechama and Shternie to sit

down for a little chat.

“I’m sure you are aware that I am in between jobs right now. I don’t want you girls to worry needlessly, or imagine the worst possible scenarios. We have a bit of money saved up, and there are a few job possibilities I’m looking into. Most of all, we have a wealthy Benefactor who gave us the two keys to His vaults.”

“A Benefactor?”

“Yes! The Master of the Universe is our Benefactor!”

“And the keys?”

“The two keys to open Hashem’s treasure vaults are Emuna and Bitachon.”

“Emuna and Bitachon? Aren’t they more or less the same? What’s the difference between Emuna and Bitachon?”

“Emuna is faith: knowing that Hashem Yisborach **can** provide whatever is needed. When B’nei Yisroel were in the desert, Hashem provided B’nei Yisroel with Monn to eat. No matter how much one gathered, he would end up with exactly an omer for each member of the family. This was a message to future generations that Hashem **CAN** provide each of us, too, with exactly what we need.

Bitachon is trust – trust that He **will** provide it for us. Just as the Monn in the desert came down every single weekday without fail, so too we can be confident that Hashem actually **will** sustain us every day.”

The girls thought this over for a few minutes. They both had questions. “How do you

know when to have Emuna and when to have Bitachon?” asked Shternie.

“Believing that Hashem can do anything and everything is a constant mitzvah. A Jew has to always be aware of this. Bitachon, however, seems to apply mainly when something is needed.”

“But Tatty,” Nechama hesitated, not sure if she should continue.

“Don’t be afraid, Nechama. Tell me your question.”

“I understand the Emuna part, but when it comes to Bitachon, how can someone be sure that Hashem will help? Maybe one doesn’t deserve....”

“Nechama!” called out Shternie, somewhat shocked.

“It’s okay, Shternie. I know that Nechama is not speaking with chutzpah, but genuinely wants to know.” Tatty turned to Nechama. “Our Rebbeim have taught us that when someone has Bitachon that Hashem Yisborach will help him, then that very Bitachon alone gives him enough merit for a good outcome.”

“So maybe if we have enough Bitachon, Hashem will send gold coins raining down from the sky, like the monn?!”

Tatty smiled. “Maybe, but meanwhile we have to do what is normally done in such circumstances, like looking for jobs, and not wasting money needlessly.”

“I know, my teacher told us that this is called ‘making a vessel within Nature.’ Right?”

“Correct. But even when making that vessel and doing

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