



16



6



24

FEATURED ARTICLES**6 THE MODESTY AND BITTUL THAT HID EVERYTHING [CONT.]****11 THE REBBE AND THREE STORIES**

Shneur Zalman Berger

16 ANYTHING TO HELP A FELLOW JEW**24 FROM SOUL SEARCHING TO THE SOUL STIRRING MUSIC OF THE ALTER REBBE**

Sholom Dovber Crombie

34 IF NOT NOW, WHEN?

Sholom Dovber Crombie

WEEKLY COLUMNS**4 D'var Malchus****14 Farbrengen****37 Parsha Thought****40 Young Chassid**

Beis Moshiach (USPS 012-542) ISSN 1082-0272 is published weekly, except Jewish holidays (only once in April and October) for \$160.00 in Crown Heights, USA \$180.00. All other places for \$195.00 per year (45 issues), by Beis Moshiach, 744 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, NY 11213-3409. Periodicals postage paid at Brooklyn, NY and additional offices. Postmaster: send address changes to Beis Moshiach 744 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, NY 11213-3409. Copyright 2012 by Beis Moshiach, Inc.

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

BEIS MOSHIACH

744 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn, NY 11213-3409

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

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:
M.M. Hendel

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

ENGLISH EDITOR:
Boruch Merkur
editor@beismoshiach.org

A JEW SITS IN SHUSHAN AND DECREES: MOSHIACH NOW!

Translated by Boruch Merkur

The Purim story unfolds in Shushan HaBira, the capital city of Achashverosh's vast empire. Issuing forth from the royal palace there, in Shushan, were royal edicts and decrees that governed the subjects throughout the entire empire, "seven and twenty and a hundred countries."

On a deeper level, Shushan HaBira symbolizes the capital city of the King, King of Kings, Alm-ghty G-d Himself. Now, since it is said of a Jew that "G-d stands with him," therefore, he stands with the Divine strength of "Shushan HaBira," wherever he may be. Thus, it is a Jew who establishes the conduct of the world's inhabitants; it is within his power and capacity to rule over and have an impact upon the entire world, "seven and twenty and a hundred countries."

Of course, the skeptics ask: Where is the legal precedent for this claim in the Torah? At first glance, this is merely a *p'shetl* (a loosely derived teaching) from *Seifer HaTanya* [Ch. 41, where it quotes the verse, "G-d stands with him"! What authority gives us the right to make the claim that a lone Jew possesses the power to change the entire world?]

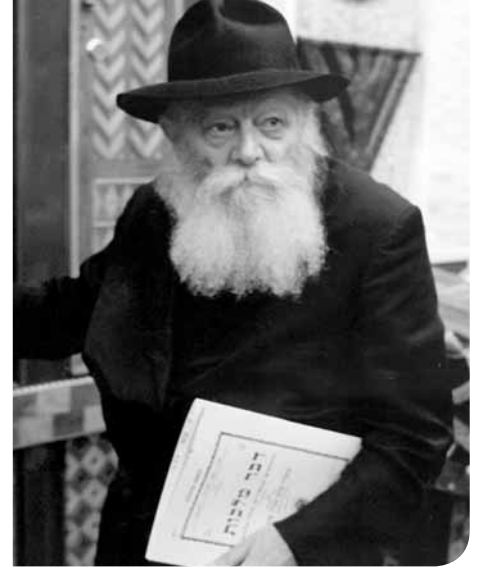
The response is that it is a clear ruling in Rambam's (purely legalistic work) *Yad HaChazaka*! There, in the Laws of Repentance, Rambam writes: "Every person must see himself ... as well as the entire world

as being half worthy and half liable ... If one performs a single Mitzva, he inclines himself and the entire world to the side of favor, bringing to himself and to the others salvation and deliverance."

This law establishes that it is within the capacity of every single Jew to have an impact on the entire world, to the extent that he can incline the judgment over the entire world to the side of favor, bringing about salvation and deliverance to all. Indeed, this ruling supports the notion that wherever a Jew is to be found, he is at the level of "Shushan HaBira," which governs the conduct throughout all "seven and twenty and a hundred countries."

Now, since the balance of power regarding judgment over the entire world is in the hands of the Jewish people – by means of their service of G-d (expressed in their action, speech, and thought) – clearly, "salvation and deliverance" is first experienced by the individual Jew who brings about the favorable judgment. Since each individual must acknowledge and proclaim, "the world was created for me" (Sanhedrin 37a), it is understood that when the redemption begins to unfold in a manner of "And you, the Jewish people, will be gathered one by one," the process starts with this Jew!

At first glance, the question is begged: How does one summon



such arrogance and self-indulgence to say that when the Jewish people need to be saved from exile, all the Jewish people remain as they are for a moment while the redemption begins to unfold for this individual?!

A Jew responds by saying that the connection of the essence of his soul with the very essence of G-d (the true Redeemer) is itself an essential bond. This bond is overtly expressed by means of Torah and Mitzvos. However, even prior to the consideration of his commitment to Torah and Mitzvos, there is an essential connection of the soul to the essence of G-d. It is not merely a bond between two distinct things, but a unity that is "*kulo chad* – entirely one" (in a manner that is superior to the unity described as one being a "chariot to G-d," discussed earlier). Since a Jew and the essence of G-d are "entirely one," a perfect union, there is absolutely nothing that comes between them; there is just the Jew and the Divine essence!

In this light it is readily understood that the entire world was indeed created for the individual Jew, to the extent that "G-d stands with him." Thus, the redemption first unfolds for him.

(From the address of Purim 5742, *bilti muga*)

WELCOME TO THE MASQUERADE

By Rabbi Yisroel Harpaz

If Shakespeare thought England circa 1600 was absurd, imagine what he would have thought of Persia in 400 BCE, or, for that matter Global Civilization 2012, where all the world is a wacky, crooked stage and all the people its drunken players.

On the surface, the Megilla, the Scroll of Esther, reads like a suspenseful story of palace intrigue that would make Shakespeare drool. It is so easy to get drawn into the drama of the storyline and the melodrama of the characters, that you could miss the absurdity of the whole narrative. Every character in the story is insane. It's like they're all drunk, or maybe there was something in the drinking water. No one is doing what they're supposed to be doing: Vashti, the first queen mentioned in the story, for no apparent reason, refuses to appear when the king calls her; Achashverosh is the king, but he can't make a single decision without consulting his moronic advisors; the royal palace guards are trying to kill the king instead of protecting him; Haman, a power-hungry megalomaniac gets exactly what he wants when he is appointed to a high position, and then risks it all to take out his ire against some Jew because he can't control his anti-Semitic twitch; the list goes on.

How do we make sense of all this? The question becomes much more pertinent when we

consider that it's not just about a two thousand year old narrative – the same could be said about the world we live in today. Over the last century or so, the course of human civilization has taken on a progressively absurd course, and the absurdity quotient seems to be speeding up exponentially. No one is doing what they're supposed to be doing. The CIA, charged with protecting American security, and hence world order, partners with the Taliban to defeat the Soviets in Afghanistan and essentially fund the birth of Al Qaida and modern terrorism; Israel, which is supposed to be a guiding light unto the nations, insists on chasing its own tail under the glare of the international media spotlight; universities, once considered bastions of independent free thought, are merely tools at the hands of ideologues and interest groups; North Americans, once the great frontier people, have settled into the comfortable non-existence of the corporate Disneyland otherwise known as suburbia.

The only conclusion is that something much deeper is going on. When things make sense, then it's easy to point to causal factors and say that this is happening as a result of this. But when everything is out of whack, when people make the most absurd statements and act completely out of character, and everyone else seems to be nodding and going along with it

making, you feel like you're the only sane protagonist in some kind of Kafkaesque conspiracy. When the whole world seems to be in upheaval, then there's really only one way to explain it: The Master Puppeteer is having some fun at our expense; it's almost like he's saying let's see how much of this absurdity they'll take before they look up and wonder who the heck is pulling the strings here.

The Sages say that when you find yourself in an era where everything seems absurd, you should anticipate the arrival of Moshiach. Because that's what Moshiach is all about – lifting the veils and revealing the true intent behind the facade. As an era, the times of Moshiach will present this reality as a global experience. On an individual level, we can experience it now by tapping into the teachings of that era, which can be found in Kabbala and Chassidus. But that requires humility, the ability to transcend the self, which is what the inebriation of Purim is really all about – getting outside of the self.

So while a lot of people seem to be merrily going about their business, even enjoying the incessant absurdity of the masquerade, there are those who will seek to penetrate its darkness through social activism, justice and mystical depth perception. Or you can ignore the absurdity, don your costume, and enjoy the masquerade.



THE MODESTY AND BITTUL THAT HID EVERYTHING



Rabbi Yaakov Friedman a”h was one of the outstanding individuals of our time. He was a giant in Torah learning and chesed, but he hid it all with his humility and bittul that were part and parcel of who he was. • **Part II**

WITH THE KLAUSENBERGER REBBE

Rabbi Yaakov was close with Rabbi Moshe Shuster a”h. He was one of the people who pushed him to get more involved in Lubavitch. The deep connection between them was mutual. Reb Moshe called him “my dear brother” in his letters and Rabbi Yaakov mentioned him for a bracha to the Rebbe whenever he was in need of one.

The Klausenberger Rebbe was another person who was grateful to him all his life for the years they spent together

during the war. Rabbi Yaakov had ensured that they would not have to work on Shabbos. The Klausenberger Rebbe said, “The cursed Nazis stripped the Jews of their clothes and of everything in their possession (after which they were given the camp uniform that looked like pajamas). In my barrack was a wonderful Jew who, till today, I can’t understand how, had a small Mishnayos. He did me a great favor by occasionally lending it to me.”

One day, years later, Rabbi Yaakov went to visit the Klausenberger Rebbe. The gabbai told the Rebbe that a man by

the name of Yaakov Friedman wanted to see him. The Rebbe asked what he looked like and when he was described, the Rebbe trembled and said to let him in at once.

When Rabbi Friedman entered the room, he locked the door and they spent two hours together, to the bewilderment of all the Chassidim. When Rabbi Friedman left, the Klausenberger Rebbe said to his Chassidim, "He is one of the *Lamed-Vav* (36) tzaddikim, and that is what Lubavitcher Chassidim used to look like."

His son-in-law Rabbi Sholom relates, "When I was a chassan, my father-in-law took me to see the Klausenberger Rebbe and I saw with my own eyes how he rose from his chair in his honor. The Klausenberger Rebbe was also one of the people who influenced Rabbi Yaakov to be a Lubavitcher Chassid."

One of his friends, who was also his mentor, was the Chassid, Rabbi Eliyahu Chaim Roitblatt. Rabbi Moshe Weber of Yerushalayim and Rabbi Michoel Teitelbaum were also friends of his.

HIS VAST KNOWLEDGE OF TORAH

Rabbi Yaakov cleverly concealed his greatness, since he was truly humble and modest, *ah bitul'dike Yid*. One of the things that is hard to discern is someone's greatness in Torah, for when it comes to chesed, as much as a person tries to hide it, the needy can come forward and testify to his aid. The same is true for other things, but how much a person understands of Torah and the extent of his knowledge, is sometimes hard to discern.

In this case, we have some

evidence from his three daughters who were/are (one daughter passed away) knowledgeable in all of Tanach and the relevant areas of Shulchan Aruch.

Every day between Mincha and Maariv he would attend the Halacha shiur given by the rav of the shul near his home. He sat there like anyone else and even sat at the end of the table as if he were the lowest person there. He sat there and listened as

the shul did not show up, Rabbi Yaakov would substitute. This was in addition to the shiur in Tanya that he gave in the shul on a regular basis.

Rabbi Brody of Flatbush related an astonishing story that happened during the Holocaust that tells us a bit about Rabbi Friedman's knowledge:

During one of the most difficult times during the war, when thousands of people were



though just learning these simple halachos for the first time, but those who paid attention noticed how he cleverly interjected important points for the benefit of the participants. Sometimes he even asked the rav to clarify certain issues so people wouldn't err regarding what is permitted and prohibited. It was amazing to see how none of the participants at the shiur realized that it was he who was making things clear. It seemed as though it was all coming from the one giving the shiur. However, when the rav of

being murdered, someone I did not know approached me and asked, "Perhaps we can establish a shiur?"

I could not believe what I was hearing. Here? In this place? At this time? "Do you even have any s'farim?" I asked him.

The man humbly said, "I know the Order of Nezikin by heart so we can start learning right away."

Later on, I got to know this man, Rabbi Yaakov Friedman. Thus, without wanting to, but



having no choice, some of what he knew came to light.

INVOLVED IN MIVTZAIM

Many people in Boro Park would give Rabbi Yaakov a *pidyon nefesh!* They did this because they considered him a worthy individual who was no less great than the Admurim they knew. Since Rabbi Yaakov was utterly battul to the Rebbe, he took all the *panim* and brought them to him. The same was true for requesting a bracha. Many people asked him for brachos, and being that he was all goodness and kindness, he gave them brachos. When he found it necessary, he would clarify that he was giving them a bracha as one Jew blesses another, but to request a bracha one must turn to the Rebbe.

With that introduction, we can appreciate how great his *hiskashrus* was. Furthermore, his *hiskashrus* was with the utmost simplicity. Every *mivtza* or instruction that the Rebbe uttered was undertaken by Rabbi Yaakov.

On one of his visits to Eretz Yisroel, he hadn't yet sat down on the bus when he asked the person next to him in his sweet and gentle manner, "Do you put on t'fillin? It's very important!" He then went on to talk about the importance of a mezuzah on the doorway of a house, "It's a big mitzvah and protects a Jew."

So too with the other *mivtzaim*. On Sukkos, even before he rested from his morning's work (he never returned home from the shuls before the afternoon), he brought the Dalet minim to the

tenants of the building he lived in. Before Pesach, he prepared handmade *shmura matza* for all the neighbors, etc.

"WE WILL DO" BEFORE "WE WILL LISTEN"

His *hiskashrus* wasn't only expressed in that which he did with others, but with himself as well. One of his grandchildren visited him after Rosh HaShana 5749 and told him that a few minutes before Rosh HaShana, the Rebbe said a *sicha* about having a pushka mounted on the wall of the house. Before he had finished speaking, Rabbi Yaakov had a hammer and nails and was putting up his pushka.

He did not sit around analyzing the meaning of a *sicha* in order to figure out why and what for. He just did what the Rebbe said and only then did he look into the matter.

The Rebbe announced the birthday *mivtza* in which he asked people to celebrate their birthday with friends, by saying *divrei Torah*, etc. On Rabbi Yaakov's birthday, he went to shul with *mashke* and cake and carried out the Rebbe's *horaa*. This is usually difficult for older people, for various reasons, but to R' Yaakov it was a matter of "*naaseh v'nishma*." This was true for this *mivtza* and all the rest of the *mivtzaim*. On every special occasion such as Yud-Tes Kislev, he would bring *mashke* and cake to shul.

Of course, he took part in *inyanei Moshiach* and *Geula*. Whenever he recited the *Birkas HaMazon*, he would say,

"HaRachaman Hu Yivarech Es Adoneinu Moreinu v'Rabbeinu, Melech HaMoshiach." He always joined the proclaiming of *Yechi*. On the outside door of his home in Boro Park were stickers announcing the *Geula* and when he met people in shul he would motion with his hand and say, "*M'darf tzu'eilen Moshiach'n*" (We must hasten the coming of *Moshiach*).

DOZENS OF TANYA SHIURIM

Rabbi Friedman spread the wellsprings through *shiurim* in Tanya that he gave in numerous Boro Park shuls over many decades. His *shiurim* were inspiring and a thread of *Yiras Shamayim* was woven throughout. He spiced his explanations with pearls from the Rebbe's teachings. His special personality won people's hearts and drew many to Chassidus. People were willing to hear Chassidus only because it was Rabbi Yankel Friedman. Not surprisingly then, he gave a Tanya *shiur* in the Satmar beis midrash too. Among the shuls where he regularly gave Tanya classes were: Serdehel, Kruler, Vizhnitz, Kutna, Meilitz, Satmar and Anshei Sefard.

How apropos that the last Tanya *shiur* he gave, on the last Shabbos before his passing in the Meilitzer shul opposite his house, was on Epistle 27, *Tzadika d'ispatar*, which deals with the significance of the passing of a *tzaddik*.

He regularly had *yechidus* with the Rebbe and attended t'fillos and *farbrengens* from the beginning of the Rebbe's *nesius*. The following are two stories that happened with him over the years.



The man humbly said, "I know the Order of Nezikin by heart so we can start learning right away."

HE IS NOT SICK AT ALL!

When he first arrived in the United States in the early fifties, he was very sick. At this time, the Rebbe held a farbrengen but Rabbi Yaakov, who could not attend, asked his friend Rabbi Yisroel Munitz a”h, to mention his name to the Rebbe for a bracha for a refua shleima.

Rabbi Munitz went to the farbrengen and approached the Rebbe and said: Rabbi Yaakov ben Alte Chava is very sick.

Hearing this, the Rebbe said: Very sick?! A little sick?! Not sick at all!

The Rebbe’s bracha was fulfilled and Rabbi Yaakov recovered and lived many more years.

MOSHIACH IS ON HIS WAY

His son-in-law, Rabbi Sholom Horowitz, relates:

“In 5747, my father-in-law was in a car accident and was in serious condition in the hospital. Erev Shabbos following the accident I went to the Rebbe and asked for a bracha on his behalf. The Rebbe blessed him and said, ‘We have to make a Mi Sh’Beirach tomorrow in the first minyan.’

“I did not understand what was meant by ‘the first minyan’ and the secretary, Rabbi Groner explained it to me afterward: Your father-in-law started a vasikin minyan in Boro Park and apparently, to bring this z’chus to the fore, the Rebbe said to make a Mi Sh’Beirach in this first minyan.

“Shabbos morning, I said a Mi Sh’Beirach for him in the first minyan in Crown Heights.

“When he was released from the hospital but still did not feel well and did not want to eat,



Rabbi Friedman with his sons-in-law, from right to left: Rabbi Sholom Horowitz, Rabbi Yeshaya Hertzel, and Rabbi Yehuda Wolf

we brought him to the Rebbe. When the Rebbe saw him, he immediately asked: Did you already send a letter for the mosad? (referring to Chadrei Torah Ohr). Moshiach is already on his way and you need to inform us about that.

“After a week went by and we saw no improvement in his condition and he still refused to eat, we brought him back to the Rebbe. His friend, Rabbi Yerachmiel Kampinsky, a Gerrer Chassid, got up his nerve and said: Rebbe, he doesn’t eat! What should we do?

“The Rebbe turned to Rabbi Yaakov and with a fatherly smile said: It says ‘And you shall eat and be satisfied and bless.’ It’s a positive mitzva in the Torah. What does it mean that you are not eating?!

“Then the Rebbe turned to me (while pointing in my direction) and said: And you let me know

that he is fulfilling this mitzva.”

The Rebbe’s bracha was fulfilled and Rabbi Yaakov had a miraculous recovery and continued with all his activities for many more years.

HIS PERSONAL LIFE

There isn’t much to say about Rabbi Friedman’s personal life since it barely existed. He basically lived for others. If you went to his house, you saw a house of a hundred years ago with a chair, table, bed and lamp. If he hadn’t needed a telephone for Chadrei Torah Ohr, he probably wouldn’t have had a phone.

His relationship with his family was expressed mainly in Torah. When a grandchild came to see him, he would learn Tanya with him. He had a special shiur with his son-in-law Sholom every Motzaei Shabbos in Tana D’vei



Eliyahu, Tanya, and Shulchan Aruch.

SUFFICING WITH LITTLE

Rabbi Dovid Schweitzer relates:

"In general, he had very good hands and was skilled in many areas. When he first arrived in the US, he got a job working on ships which required great expertise. He was suited to the work and despite not knowing the language, his employers were pleased with him and gave him a large salary. For the sake of comparison, in those days, the average person earned fifty cents an hour while he earned five dollars.

"Rabbi Yaakov would work there for three hours and return home with fifteen dollars, a very respectable sum. However, he soon left his job. My mother asked him: You could have made a good parnasa, why did you leave?

"His reply was: I can't. It is *megashem* (it makes me coarse, materialistic)."

He would often say: The Rebbe Rayatz says "A Yid needs to be healthy" – so he can serve Hashem properly, and perhaps we can add – "A Yid needs to be rich." He would immediately explain: A Jew needs to buy a nice esrog, nice mezuzos, etc. and he needs money to do that." He considered himself someone who had no money because he really didn't have any. He gave it all to tz'daka. His family

was supported by what his wife earned!

The most definitive characterization of his personal life is a statement in the Gemara that his friend Rabbi Moshe Weiss applied to him, "The entire world is sustained because of Chanina My son, and Chanina My son suffices with a measure of carobs from Shabbos to Shabbos." Rabbi Yaakov supported and helped thousands of needy people while he himself sufficed with a very small amount.

THE PASSPORT IS FINISHED

In the final months of his life he was weak and hardly went out because of a problem with his foot. He often alluded to his impending death. When he saw that he could no longer walk, he said: If I can no longer help Jews, what purpose do I have in the world?

A few days later he said: The passport is finished.

When they told him that the matzos for Pesach were prepared for him, he burst into tears and said: Who knows? I will no longer be able to eat matza.

In his final month he complained about the need to do t'shuva and the difficulty of moving from this world to the next world. One time he said, "My mechutan Rabbi Pinchas ben Reuven Nossan Notte HaLevi (Hertzel) will help me up there."

He asked his son-in-law to daven and say Kaddish for his

neshama, saying, "The Rebbe Rayatz had no sons, just three daughters, and his sons-in-law davened after his passing." The same was true for Rabbi Friedman in that he had no sons from this marriage. He also requested of his descendants and those who knew him and benefited from him, materially and spiritually (the talmidim with whom he learned), to recite a Mishna every day and give tz'daka for his neshama. He asked that his acts of tz'daka and chesed be continued, and in particular that the simple paupers not be neglected.

He visited a doctor on the Thursday before his passing. The doctor said he was healthy but had to eat to gain strength. Rabbi Yaakov said, "And you have to put on t'fillin and keep Shabbos," and he spoke to him about this for some time.

The night of Parshas Mishpatim he made Kiddush and washed his hands for the meal, as usual, and he learned a sicha of the Rebbe and a portion from the Shulchan Aruch HaRav, as always.

The next morning he fell down in his home and passed away.

May his memory be a blessing and inspiration during the final moments of galus until Moshiach is no longer on his way, but is here fully revealed, and they shall "arise and sing those who dwell in the dust."

Only 1 minute from 770 • High Style Hotel in a small format • Fancy Studio Apartments



- Kitchen with all the latest technology appliances: Fridge, Microwave, Toaster
- Breakfast, drinks in fridge all day
- Broadband Internet
- FREE calls & video

KINGSTON HOTEL



718-473-5937

- Linen & Towels changed
- Fancy Bath & Shower with plenty of Shampoo & Soap



THE REBBE AND THREE STORIES

By Shneur Zalman Berger

WHY THE REBBE TOLD ME TO STUDY MEDICINE

The scene is set at the Friday night meal at the home of the shliach, Rabbi Yehuda Schechter in Miami. Dozens of guests and mekuravim of the Chabad house are sitting at the table. Even after the meal is over, they continue to sit and farbreng.

One of the guests, who looked like a regular Chassid, wearing a sirtuk, hat and a beard, got up and announced, “Because of Rabbi Benzion Grossman I am a Chassid of the Rebbe, and because I am a Chassid of the Rebbe my life was saved.”

Well, that was quite a dramatic statement. The room quickly quieted down. Everyone wanted to hear the story which the man soon related:

“It was the end of the 60’s. I was a student and had joined the hippie movement and wandered around, looking for meaning in life. I ended up in Eretz Yisroel at some point and met up with Rabbi Grossman. He had just opened a yeshiva for baalei t’shuva together with Rabbi Yitzchok Ginsburgh. I joined the yeshiva and was soon invited to his home.

“During the meal, Rabbi

Grossman spoke enthusiastically about the obligation every Jew has to live life according to the Torah. He emphasized that the Creator has much nachas from every mitzva that a Jew does. He spoke in Hebrew and someone translated into English. What he said about a mitzva giving Hashem such nachas made a deep impression on me.

“In the months to follow, I began thinking about the Jewish people, its existence, wanderings and travails. I continued to seek a more meaningful path in life. When I finished learning in Yerushalayim, I went to the Chabad yeshiva in Morristown where I finally gave myself over entirely to the Jewish way of life. I abandoned my hippie life and the secular world that I had belonged to until that time.

“After a number of years, in the course of which I learned very diligently, I decided that I had to learn a profession. I consulted with friends about what avenue to pursue. A good friend advised me to pursue medicine, specifically recommending that I study to become a physician’s assistant. It entailed a four year program and the salary was high, nearly as high as a doctor’s.

“Since I had become a

Chabad Chassid, I didn’t do anything without asking the Rebbe. I submitted a note and received a positive response and a bracha. I began the program which wasn’t easy since it was in addition to my Jewish learning. I was studying in yeshiva most of the day.

“I finally finished the program and received my degree. Then, to my dismay, a few weeks later the US government decided that from now on, a PA did not have to spend so many years on acquiring a degree; a shortened course of study would be sufficient.

“I was very upset, having just spent four years of my life on this course and it had cost a pretty penny too. Now, to become a PA was a fraction of the cost and time. The more I thought about it, the more disturbed I became by the Rebbe’s answer to pursue it. I knew that the Rebbe has spiritual vision; even if I didn’t understand why I had to go through this, the Rebbe surely knew.

“Several years passed and I found out why I had to study medicine for so many years. I was in Georgia when I felt terrible stomach pains. After being examined, I was hospitalized.

The doctors told me I had a serious, rare illness. Numerous doctors came to my bedside to check out this interesting disease and they immediately began a round of treatments.

"I was very worried. I called my family and asked them to come and be with me. I underwent a series of treatments that were very peculiar. I had never encountered such a thing in the world of medicine. The medication they gave me was unfamiliar. My intuition told me that something was very wrong. At some point, I realized that the doctors had decided to use me as their guinea pig and were giving me experimental medications and treatments to see whether they were effective or not (or even harmful).

"Having caught on to this, I asked to speak to the doctors and the head of the department immediately. They came to my bedside and I yelled at them, saying – why aren't you giving me the proper treatment and doing illegal experiments instead? I warned them that if they didn't give me the proper treatment, I would call the police.

"They were stunned by my outburst. I was a bearded Jew whom they considered a fanatic that didn't know his arm from his leg, and yet, I had figured out what they were up to!

"The hospital administration, members of the department and all the doctors apologized to me and promised to give me the proper treatment.

"Now I understood what the Rebbe had seen. He knew why I had to study medicine for four years."

This story was told by Rabbi Benzion Grossman of Migdal HaEmek, who happened to be present that Friday night.

DISAPPOINTMENT

Another story from Rabbi Benzion Grossman:

"I am disappointed with the Lubavitcher Rebbe," said the taxi driver on the way from Boro Park to 770. He drove quickly at my request, since I wanted to daven Mincha with the Rebbe at 3:15. En route, I had asked the Israeli driver whether he had ever visited the Rebbe, and this was his response. I was taken aback.

I asked him what he meant and he told me:

"When I lived in Eretz Yisroel, I worked in renovations in Bat Yam. The economy wasn't great and for a long time I had a hard time making it until the end of the month on what I earned. Friends suggested that I go to the US, saying I would surely find a good job there.

"I went to New York with high expectations. I had a hard time finding profitable work until I took a job with a contractor, a Bobover Chassid who lived in Boro Park.

"I became a regular visitor to the homes of Chassidishe people in Boro Park and nearby neighborhoods in the course of my work on their homes. I was very interested in the way of life of religious people. It was a whole new world for me.

"I found the homes of Rabbanim and Admurim even more fascinating because I always imagined their homes to be simple, but I found out that they lived very extravagantly. They had beautiful homes and drove new cars.

"My manager liked my work and whenever work needed to be done in the homes of Rabbanim, I was the man he sent to do the job. I would write descriptions of what I saw in these homes to my

family and friends in Bat Yam.

"One day, the contractor told me that in a few days I would have to fix the windows in the home of the Lubavitcher Rebbe in Crown Heights. I looked forward to the visit. I imagined I would see expensive wall-to-wall carpets, new, modern furniture and so on. After all, he wasn't an ordinary rabbi but the Rebbe of all the Jewish people! I had seen the work of his Chassidim in Bat Yam and other places in Eretz Yisroel.

"On the appointed day, at the appointed time, I knocked at the door and a Chassid ushered me in. He showed me what needed fixing. I followed him but wasn't listening to what he said; my attention was glued to the old tapestries on the walls and the furniture that looked many decades old. The shock left me dumbfounded. I had expected a veritable palace and this house was modest in the extreme.

"On the one hand, I was disappointed, but on the other hand, I couldn't help but conclude that the Lubavitcher Rebbe is greater than all other rabbinic figures that I knew, as evidenced by the fact that he lived simply and in such modest fashion.

"During the days that I spent working on the windows, I expected to meet the Rebbe, at least once. However, since I finished my work in the afternoon, I did not see the Rebbe who arrived home in the evening and once again, I was disappointed."

Continued Rabbi Grossman:

"I heard this story from the taxi driver and felt I must bring him to see the Rebbe. I explained to him that the Rebbe would soon be davening Mincha and it was a good opportunity to see



him. He agreed to accompany me, at which point we realized we had been so engrossed in conversation that he had taken a wrong turn.

"We arrived at 770 at 4:00. I told the driver that the Rebbe had surely finished davening and was in his room. I saw that he was disappointed that he had missed seeing the Rebbe yet again.

"I wanted to pay him, but I only had big bills. I got out of the taxi to get change and saw a group of bachurim standing near 770. They were saying how late it was and the Rebbe had still not come down for Mincha.

"I went back to the taxi and took the driver into 770. A few moments later the Rebbe came in for Mincha. At the end of davening, the driver said, 'When the Rebbe entered the shul, he gave me a special look, as though to say – I know you wanted to see me so I waited especially for you!'"

HE EXPERIENCED THE REBBE'S RUACH HA'KODESH

A Litvishe fellow in Kollel

"The Rebbe read the note, looked up, and began discussing a topic that I hadn't written about. At first, I thought the Rebbe was continuing to talk about the topic he had discussed with the person who had yechidus before me. Then I suddenly remembered that I had wanted to discuss this topic with the Rebbe but had left it out."

came to New York for Shavuot. He went to 770 and asked Rabbi Groner for an appointment for yechidus. When Rabbi Groner was told that the man would not be spending Yom Tov in 770, he told him that only those guests who spent Yom Tov in 770 could have yechidus. The man begged him for an appointment and was finally allotted five minutes.

When it was his turn and five minutes had gone by, Rabbi Groner went in to indicate that the man's time was up. The Rebbe motioned that the man should stay. He finally left after fifteen minutes and he emotionally told Rabbi Groner what happened.

"Before I went in to see the Rebbe, I had prepared many topics that I wanted to discuss. When you told me that I had only

five minutes, I picked three of the topics and wrote them on the note that I handed the Rebbe as soon as I walked in. The Rebbe read the note, looked up, and began discussing a topic that I hadn't written. At first, I thought the Rebbe was continuing to talk about the topic he had discussed with the person who had yechidus before me. Then I suddenly remembered that I had wanted to discuss this topic with the Rebbe but had left it out.

"The Rebbe finished talking about that topic and went on to the next topic which, amazingly, was also one of the topics I had wanted to discuss. The Rebbe went from topic to topic, all of which I had wanted to discuss but hadn't written in the note. My conclusion is – the Rebbe has ruach ha'kodesh!"

ON THE FRONT LINES - FROM BEHIND THE SCENES



By Rabbi Akiva Wagner

Mrs. Geula Cohen was a member of the Knesset, and was also a long-time admirer of the Rebbe. She understood and identified strongly with the Rebbe's position regarding various crucial issues pertaining to Eretz Yisroel and was actively involved in furthering the Rebbe's goals.

Once she attended a farbrengen of the Rebbe in 770. She listened from the *veiber shul* while the Rebbe spoke passionately about the terrible danger in returning territories, areas of land that were captured by Israel, to our enemies. (According to another version, the Rebbe was discussing the scandalous law regarding *Mihu Yehudi* and the urgent need to have it changed.)

After the farbrengen, she was asked for her impressions. "I am very much in agreement with everything the Rebbe said," was her reply, "but I don't understand why he speaks about it here, to the Chassidim in attendance of his farbrengen. These are matters that need to be dealt with by Israeli politicians and public figures; what assistance can be provided by Crown Heights-based Lubavitchers?"

When the Rebbe was told about her query, he responded: "Zog ir, az oib di yungeleit vellen ton in taavos heter, vet dos brengen di yeshua in Eretz Yisroel" [Tell her that when the Chassidim here put their efforts into abstaining from worldly indulgences, this will bring about the betterment of the situation in Israel]. According to another version, the Rebbe said this about the bachurim applying themselves diligently to their learning.

We are the Chassidim, the *batlanim* of Crown Heights (or its various branches throughout the world). Yet, as the Rebbe pointed, we can have an even greater impact than the Israeli politicians or the government officials. It's merely our methods that differ. Our influence is through the spiritual war that we wage. It is through learning, *koching* *zich* in learning and through *avoda b'poel*. It is through increasing our efforts to live as Chassidim – to (occasionally) forego worldly pleasures, even those that are fully permissible.

As Yidden, we believe and know that there is more than meets the eye. We have to focus on the fact that our dedication

to fulfill the Will of Hashem and serve Him better, although not having visible bearing on the war that the Rebbe waged for *shleimus ha'aretz*, are in fact vital weapons that are critical to the war effort and its ultimate success.

The Friedlike Rebbe once repeated a story that was told to him by Reb Chaim Brisker, about his father, the Beis HaLevi: The Beis HaLevi had a shiur every day with two great talmidei chachomim. (One of them was known as Reb Eizik Klotz, because he spent so many continuous hours each day sitting on a klotz – a block of wood – that he left a mark on the klotz.)

One day a group of askanim came to meet with the Beis HaLevi about a very urgent matter affecting the entire community. The Bais HaLevi, however, who was in the middle of his shiur at the time, first completed the shiur and only then attended to the communal matters.

One of the askanim was upset at this practice, and questioned the Beis HaLevi, saying that the shiur could wait, while the matter about which they had come was of utmost importance. The Bais HaLevi, however, disagreed, and attached more importance to the learning of these two

great scholars, explaining that if Eizik would shorten the time of his learning by even one hour, that would set in motion a chain reaction, that would ultimately result in the Jew in Paris committing shmad r”l.

We are going to read this Shabbos Parshas Zachor, when we remember the evil done to us by Amalek. The Torah tells us clearly that Amalek is present in every generation – “*Milchama L’Hashem Ba’Amalek MiDor Dor.*” Incidents such as what is happening now with Iran remind us that Amalek is very real and tangible, an enemy that is actively fighting us to this very day.

One of the prominent Chassidim of the Alter Rebbe was first attracted to Chassidus by seeing the intense and genuine hatred that a Chasid displayed towards Amalek. While it may be difficult for us to relate to or despise the **spiritual** evil that Amalek represents, it becomes much easier when he manifests his evil into the physical plane, in physical acts of terror.

During WWII, one of the generals of the allied forces, after capturing and liberating a concentration camp, made all of his soldiers pass through and witness what had been taking

place there, stating “I don’t know if they understand what they’re fighting for; let them at least understand what they’re fighting against.”

But this doesn’t change the nature of the fight, which remains a spiritual one. We hate Amalek with all of our being, but the way to defeat him is by combating *kaltkeit* – “*asher karcha*” – and eliminating doubt, *sofek*. The only certain way for us to defeat Amalek is by increasing within ourselves and those around us the light and warmth of Torah and Yiddishkeit.

This and only this will weaken him, until he will be completely eliminated. Then, and only then, will Hashem’s throne be complete, when G-dliness will be revealed throughout the world.

Then, and only then, will we finally be able to make sense of all the madness, and see the purpose behind the pain, when all of the K’doshim and all of the tzaddikim of all of the generations will return to the world, when we will once again have – truly and literally – “*Ora V’simcha V’sasson Vi’yekar!*”

L’chaim! May we all join forces to combat Amalek, beginning with the one contained



Reb Yosef Dov Halevi Soloveychik – Beis HaLevi

within each of us, and through that, obliterate the evil in the world, and may this Purim be overshadowed by the greater Geula with the coming of Moshiach Tzidkeinu Teikef U’miyad Mamash!

From a written farbrengen directed towards Alumni of Yeshivas Lubavitch Toronto. The original article was written with regards to the Itamar massacre one year ago.

Make a “Mivtzah Kashrus” in your own computer!

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

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

That’s why J Net was created.

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

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

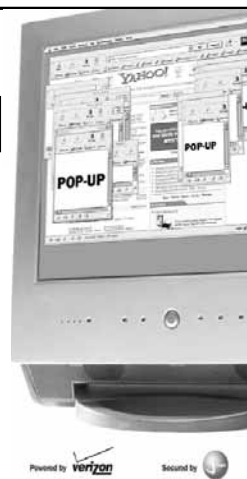
experts that will solve your problems fast.

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

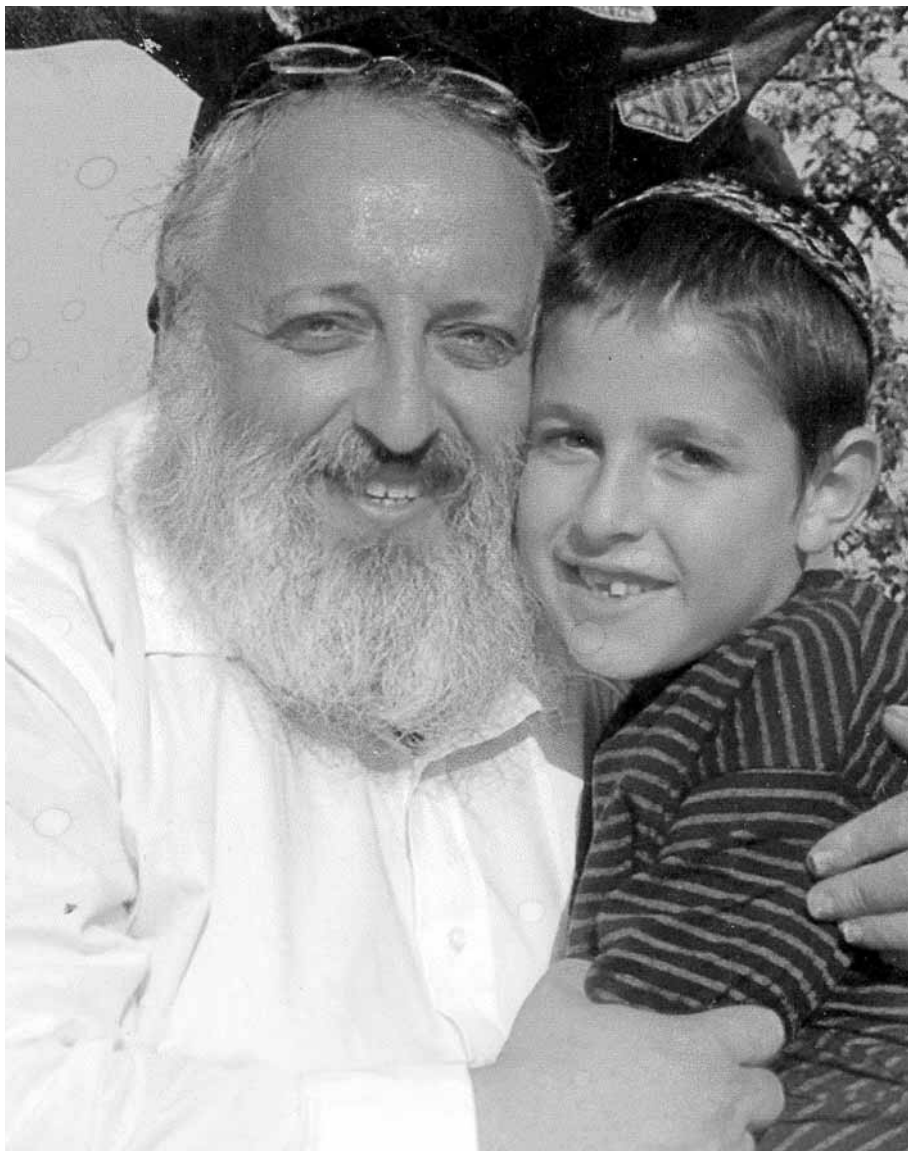
If you’re ready for the world wide web without the world wide worry, you’re ready for JNet.

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

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



ANYTHING TO HELP A FELLOW JEW



Rabbi Yossel Tewel (Tevel) a”h of Crown Heights was taken from us two years ago. Beis Moshiach presents a few stories that illustrate his tremendous devotion to his fellow Jews that was infused with his signature zest for life.

If we could have asked Yossel (Rabbi Yosef is too formal) what he thought of our writing this article about him, he would have “given it to us over the head.” He was a p’nimius’dike Chassid who did his work with a lot of excitement and simcha, but without a drop of showiness and pride. Sounds impossible? Only to someone who did not know him.

Chassidim don’t eulogize; they tell stories about the departed, because from stories we can learn a lesson in avodas Hashem. From Yossel there is plenty to learn. He wasn’t an

askan (communal activist) but many askanim could learn what askanus is from him. He did not have the title of shliach but his entire life was a shlichus to be mekarev Yidden, and many Chassidim can learn that from him. Above all else, his Ahavas Yisroel was enormous and this is something every one of us can and must learn from him.

Without getting paid, he was able to rope in top lawyers in Manhattan and top doctors on Long Island on behalf of his fellow Jews. He got involved in mivtzaim with people that others would prefer to skip such as prison inmates, dropouts, and the like. And it's not like he wasn't busy enough with the doctors and lawyers mentioned above.

Despite all the tzaros and hardships that he endured, it didn't stop him from perpetually smiling. He was always happy and always ready to help.

THE REBBE NAMED HIM

Yosef Tewel (Tevel) was born on 3 Shevat 5715. His parents were Reb Avrohom and Doba (nee Reitzes). The Rebbe was involved in all the details of the shidduch of his parents who had come over from the refugee camps. The Rebbe even chose the name "Yosef" for him and not "Yosef Yitzchok," and the story goes like this:

Since he was born on 3 Shevat with the bris on Yud Shevat, they thought of having the bris done at the Ohel. When they presented the idea to the Rebbe in yechidus, the Rebbe said: The main thing is, don't forget to name him for the *shver* (i.e. the Rebbe Rayatz – Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok).

When they left the Rebbe's room, it dawned on them that they had a problem. Mrs. Tewel's



father's name was Reb Shmuel Yitzchok, so the name Yitzchok was not available. Ashkenazim do not name for people who are alive.

When Reb Shmuel Yitzchok heard the Rebbe's instruction, he accepted it with characteristic Chassidishe matter-of-factness. He assumed that the baby would be named "Yosef Yitzchok" and he thought that this meant he would soon leave this world. He started doing t'shuvah from the depths of his heart to rectify his few decades spent in this world. His wife quickly sent in a note to the Rebbe with a request for a bracha.

The Rebbe's response was: I did not mean that at all. He should be named just Yosef. The main thing is not to mix [names of Rebbeim with names of Chassidim].

BIKUR CHOLIM

Yossel began his work with Bikur Cholim organizations in Boro Park and Williamsburg in the 80's. His children relate that at Shomrei Shabbos in Boro Park they would pack hundreds of

packages of food, coats, shirts, etc. and he would have them put the packages near people's doors and then run away so nobody would know where it came from.

Together with Rabbi Avrohom Leider, they started Ahavas Chesed in Crown Heights. They arranged for doctors in Crown Heights to take part in an on-call rotation in the event that a woman had to give birth. In such a situation, the woman was also taken to the hospital free of charge. When he became aware that there were homes in the community without heat, he bought a few hundred heaters and distributed them so nobody would be cold in the winter. For Pesach he would bring about two hundred suits to distribute to those in need.

BIRTHDAY MIVTZA

It's hard to say that there was one particular Ahavas Yisroel-related mitzva that Yossel excelled in more than any other. Chesed, Bikur Cholim, Tz'daka, Hachnasas Orchim – they were all favorites. Birthdays were also very important to him and they

were always great celebrations. Why? Listen to this:

Friday morning, 13 Elul 5752, Yossel went to see a big doctor at SUNY Downstate Medical Center in order to show him X-rays of someone whom the doctors feared had a malignancy. As soon as he walked in, the surprised doctor (Yossel did not make an appointment, of course) said, “Yossel! Are you a prophet? Come in!” and he told the secretary that he was in an important meeting and couldn’t be disturbed. This was a doctor for whom you had to wait three months in order to see him and yet here he was, in an important meeting with Yossel Tewel.

“Yossel,” said the doctor, who was Jewish but not religiously observant, “tell me about Schneersohn.”

“Oh, you mean Rabbi Schneersohn,” Yossel gently corrected him.

“Fine, *Rabbi* Schneersohn. Tell me about him.”

How does a Chassid describe his Rebbe as a “Tzaddik, Navi, etc.” when this isn’t even the tip of the iceberg of who and what he really is?

“Well, we recently had the Persian Gulf War in which the Iraqis used Scud missiles. In Israel, people were terrified. The only one who said there is nothing to be afraid of was the Rebbe. He said they should publicize the words of the Yalkut Shimoni: ‘Humble ones, the time for your redemption has arrived.’

“And just two weeks ago, there was Hurricane Andrew that was heading for Miami. The city was evacuated except for the Lubavitchers who remained because the Rebbe shook his head ‘no’ when asked whether to leave. The hurricane unexpectedly veered off and headed directly for

the city where many had fled.

“Enough of the global stories; here is a personal story. My father, a Holocaust survivor, came to America in the 50’s. His father had been murdered Erev Yom Kippur when he took the Nazis (supposedly) to show them where Jews were hiding. He led them somewhere else which enabled the Jews to flee, and was killed on the spot. My father, his oldest son, endangered himself by running to get a tallis with which to wrap my grandfather and bury him. When he came to America, he could have bought a butcher store and supported himself. He chose not to since his father-in-law, Rabbi Shmuel Yitzchok Reitzes, said G-d forbid, it shouldn’t happen that he provide treif meat to Jews.

“My father had a yechidus with his children in order to ask for a bracha for his mother, Miriam Baila, who was also a war survivor and was seriously ill. They all submitted their notes to the Rebbe. The Rebbe looked up and said, ‘Whose birthday is it?’ When nobody responded, the Rebbe asked the question again and went back to reading the notes. Before they left the Rebbe’s room, the Rebbe asked the question a third time.

“When we left yechidus, we were bewildered. We all went to sleep except for my father who couldn’t settle down. He tossed and turned as he wondered, ‘When is my birthday?’

“In the days before the war, people often did not know their birthdays. The date written in their passport was usually inaccurate and the Jewish date was of no interest to anyone except for parents who remembered it in order to make a bar mitzva.

“The next morning, my

father went to the hospital. That day was one of her better days and as soon as he walked in, he asked her, ‘Do you know when my birthday is?’ She replied, ‘Of course, the 18th of Av.’ Needless to say, that was that day’s date.

“My father went to 770. When the Rebbe came out for Mincha, he stood in the Rebbe’s path and said, ‘Rebbe, I know whose birthday it is.’ The Rebbe smiled and blessed him with a year of success and blessing.

“The Rebbe is like Moshe. Moshe Rabbeinu was chosen to lead the Jewish people because he cared about even a little sheep. The Rebbe, who gets more mail than the White House, who records Torah insights nonstop, who meets with people about the most vital of issues, found the time to remind a Holocaust survivor that he has a birthday. The Rebbe strongly emphasized celebrating birthdays, and so a computer program was devised that can convert the civil birthday to the Jewish date.”

“Really?!” exclaimed the doctor. “You can find out what my Jewish birthday is?”

“Definitely,” said Yossel as he took the phone and called Tzach. Nechemia Kessler answered the phone; when he heard what Yossel wanted he sighed. At the time, the program wasn’t easy to use, so he asked him to call back on Monday. “It’s Friday and people are rushing off to do mitvzaim.” But when he heard why Yossel was calling, he agreed to look it up for him. A few minutes later he had the answer – 13 Elul.

Yossel immediately excused himself. The doctor, who wanted to know if he had an answer for him, had to wait until Yossel returned. “Come back! I still haven’t explained why I asked

about Rabbi Schneersohn!”

Yossi had already left. He drove quickly to Crown Heights where he picked up his brother Pinny and went to the bakery where he bought a birthday cake. He grabbed a bottle of mashke and hurried back to the hospital to the doctor’s office. He burst in, holding the cake and with a loud, “Happy Birthday!” greeting.

It took the stunned doctor a few moments to digest the fact that Yossel wasn’t kidding and it was, in fact, his Jewish birthday. He took a yarmulke out of a drawer and said, “See, I’m also Jewish.” It was the first time in his life that he was celebrating his Jewish birthday and he wanted to do so with a yarmulke.

After a brief birthday farbrengen – it was Friday, after all – Yossel got ready to leave. The doctor stopped him and said, “Do you know why I asked you whether you are a prophet when you came, and why I asked you to tell me about Rabbi Schneersohn?”

“This morning I got a phone call from a colleague, a gentile, who yelled, ‘Irving, he answered me! I got an answer!’ I had no idea what he was talking about. Then he told me, ‘A few years ago, I got home late at night and sat down to watch television. As I flipped through the channels, I saw an angel, a man who looked angelic. I watched him and listened to some of the translation of his talk. I did not understand it all, but the little bit that I understood I loved. At the end of the broadcast, a telephone number was posted. I called the number and found out when the next event would take place. Since then, each time the ‘angel’ spoke, I would sit and watch.

“For several years I would watch his broadcast. I came to



“Hey Mario, what kind of people do you employ?” Yossel heard Rabbi Hecht say. Mario Cuomo was the governor of New York at the time... A few minutes later, the anti-Semitic guard was brought out in handcuffs. The warden said, “Rabbi, here’s my card. If you ever need anything, you can call me directly; you don’t have to call the governor.”

the conclusion that this man is very righteous and worthy of being the true Messiah. A few months ago, the rabbi had a stroke and I felt terrible. I missed this good man with the face of an angel whose name, I now knew, was Rabbi Schneersohn. After a few months, in which I saw that his condition did not improve, I decided I wanted to send him get-well greetings. I bought a card and added a few lines of my own in which I said I hoped he would soon be better, and I included a note with some questions that were on my mind that I wanted to ask him. I concluded by saying that I hoped we would soon be able to sit together and resolve these issues.’

“Several weeks went by and my friend, the gentile doctor, could not understand why he did not receive a reply. Even when you write to the president of the United States you get some sort of response, and here there was nothing. He was somewhat disillusioned.

“He continued, ‘Last night, I had a dream. In my dream, I was standing in a crowd waiting for the Rebbe. When the Rebbe strode in majestically, he looked beyond his staff (the secretaries) and said to me, in English, “Thank you for your good wishes. There is no need to be sad.” And the Rebbe went on to respond to all my questions.

“I woke up in confusion and



shock. I pinched myself to see whether I was still dreaming. I began thinking about the questions and the answers I had received and was amazed. All my doubts had been resolved; every question had an answer! I felt I had to share this with a Jewish friend and that's why I called you.'

"I got that phone call this morning," said the Jewish doctor. "I was wondering who was the angelic-faced man who so impressed my friend and then you showed up. That's why my first question to you was: who is Rabbi Schneersohn."

my house. But since there is no Jewish community where I live and nothing going on, I decided to bring my grandchildren here so they can see what a Jewish holiday looks like."

The son Mendel picks up the story. "Before my father's birthday, I thought about what would make him happy [in the next world] in honor of his birthday. I remembered that my father always regretted that he hadn't offered t'fillin to that doctor. So I called the doctor and arranged to meet him. When I met with the now older man, he remembered the extraordinary story and the impression my

Since that incident with the doctor and his birthday, Yossel made a big deal about every birthday. His *Koch* in Mivtza Yom Huledes is something anybody who knew him was familiar with.

Reb Yossel, who passed on the day after his 55th birthday, participated in a birthday farbrengen held by his family from his hospital bed, via telephone. One of the participants in the conference call was Sholom Mordechai Rubashkin, someone for whom Yossi fought tirelessly in the face of his legal difficulties. On the previous Shabbos, he had an aliya and held a Chassidishe farbrengen before collapsing on his way home from 770. On his birthday, Henoch Junik put t'fillin on him and reviewed a maamer at his side, so he fulfilled nearly all the customs that pertain to a birthday. Like his father who was moser nefesh for burial in a tallis and who himself passed away while wearing his tallis, Yossi was moser nefesh for the birthday campaign and he passed away after fulfilling the birthday customs for the last time in his life.

In the sicha of Shabbos Parshas VaYitzei 5752, the Rebbe speaks at length about tzaddikim who die on their birthday which symbolizes the completion of their avoda. Perhaps it was the same for Yossel, except Heaven did not want to take him in the middle of his birthday, something that he had cherished so much.

PRISON VISITATIONS

Yossel served as an unofficial shliach to prisons in New York. How did he get involved in this unglamorous pursuit? One day, he was standing in front of 770 when someone asked him for a donation for Meir Kahane who

"All my doubts had been resolved; every question had an answer! I felt I had to share this with a Jewish friend and that's why I called you." "I got that phone call this morning," said the Jewish doctor. "I was wondering who was the angelic-faced man who so impressed my friend and then you showed up. That's why my first question to you was: who is Rabbi Schneersohn."

On Chol HaMoed Sukkos, about a month later, Yossel Tewel took his children on an outing, as he did every year, to the attractions in Boro Park. His children related, "Suddenly, we heard shouting: 'It's his fault! He did it!'"

From among the straimlach of the Chassidim standing there emerged the doctor with the yarmulke on his head. "You don't know what you did to me!" he said to Yossel. "After what happened, I couldn't calm down. On Rosh HaShana I went to shul. On Yom Kippur I fasted the entire fast for the first time in my life. I even built a sukka near

father made on him. I told him that my grandfather had died while wearing tallis and t'fillin like a tzaddik, and maybe this was because he buried his father in a tallis with mesirus nefesh. This made a tremendous impression on him.

"He said that he had bought tallis and t'fillin and once a week, on Sundays, he put on the t'fillin and davened. He asked me when his birthday is and wrote it down. We sat together for nearly an hour while all those waiting to see him waited outside. He had many questions about Judaism, from the laws of kashrus to the Holocaust."





was in prison. “The famous Meir Kahane? Why does he need me?!”

The man bitterly replied, “Meir Kahane is sitting like a dog in jail.”

“What! How can I get to see him?”

Five minutes later, Yossel was in Mermelstein’s restaurant, buying franks and some other food. He then drove off to the jail in the Catskills, an hour and a half from 770. When he arrived, the guard refused to let him in since his name did not appear on the list of approved visitors. After a few phone calls to Rabbi J. J. Hecht, he was let in.

Yossel had to wait until they brought Meir Kahane out. He looked terrible. He told Yossel that he couldn’t even eat the kosher food since they prepared it in the dirty kitchen with unwashed hands that had handled treif. The only things he ate were fruits with peels which the Moslem inmates brought him since they respected him. As

for a prepackaged kosher meal, something that is readily available today after nearly forty years of Chabad outreach, they didn’t dream of it then. When Yossel offered him the food he had brought, Meir Kahane refused to eat until they brought another four Jewish inmates so they could eat too.

This was the impetus for the tremendous outreach work Yossel did in prisons. Huge quantities of kosher food, menorahs, mishloach manos, the Piamenta band and lots of simcha were only some of the things he brought with him.

One time, Yossel entered a large prison lugging large packages of food for the Jewish prisoners. A burly, bald anti-Semitic guard wearing boots was standing there, giving off the air of an actual Nazi. When he saw Jews coming in with bags of food, he told one of his underlings to throw it all in the garbage. They tried explaining that they always brought food, but he didn’t care.

As they argued with him, the man snarled, “If only Hitler had finished the job!”

When Yossel heard that, he demanded that they allow him to leave and the rest of them should remain inside. That’s not a simple thing to do in a prison, but it was hard to refuse him. When he went out, he went over to a public phone and called Rabbi J. J. Hecht. Rabbi Hecht asked him to wait on the line.

“Hey Mario, what kind of people do you employ?” Yossel heard Rabbi Hecht say. Mario Cuomo was the governor of New York at the time (he was governor from 1983-1994).

“Yossel, go back inside and the matter will be taken care of within minutes,” said R’ Hecht.

Yossel went back in and the guard began shouting at him, but he insisted on waiting. Within five minutes the prison warden and some assistants arrived and asked, “Where’s the rabbi? What’s going on here?”

A few minutes later, the

“Yossel had a brainstorm – Jewish names. “We have to give them Jewish names! What are they called?” She said, “Half-Moon and Crystalina.”

anti-Semitic guard came out in handcuffs, a most unusual sight. The warden said, “Rabbi, here’s my card. If you ever need anything, you can call me directly; you don’t have to call the governor.”

On another occasion, it was Chanuka and when Yossel showed up with a group of fellow Lubavitchers, they heard the doors suddenly closing behind them. To their dismay, the two guards who were supposed to escort the group remained on the other side of the doors. Moments later, the doors on the other side that opened to the cells began to open. About a hundred black men were returning from playing basketball. When they saw the Jews, they got mad. One of them shouted, “Kill the baby murderers!” and they all began to chant after him.

The area was small and the Lubavitchers were terrified. “We saw murder in their eyes,” recalled his brother Pinny. “We realized that the anti-Semitic guards had purposely left us there so that the inmates could do as they pleased with us. Afterwards, they would say there was nothing they could do. Some of us said Shma Yisroel. I turned on the tape recorder we had with us to record what happened as a ‘black box’ of the lynching we expected would take place.”

Years later, Yossel would say that he did not know from where he got the strength. He suddenly began shouting, “Ay, oh, ah!” The blacks paused. “How many of you have ever met a good Jew?”

he roared.

“I did!” “I did!” “I did!” said some of them.

“And how many of you want to eat kosher salami?” he shouted.

“Yeah, man, kosher salami!”

“So come and let’s do this right.” And as he did years before when he was a head counselor in camp, he had them all sit on the floor as he told his friends to use the menorahs to cut the salami.

“Okay, now everybody say after me: We!”

“We!” they all shouted.

“Want!”

“Want!”

“Moshiach!”

“Moshiach!”

“Now!”

“Now!”

The doors behind them opened and some guards dashed in. “What’s going on?”

They stopped in their tracks at the sight that met their eyes. One hundred dangerous inmates were sitting on the floor and shouting slogans while bearded fellows walked around giving out salami.

“Rabbi, if you want to work here, you are more than welcome! The job is waiting for you,” said one of the guards to Yossel.

Some years later, Yossel was walking on Eastern Parkway when he felt a hand on his shoulder. When he turned around he saw a big, Jamaican fellow.

“Rabbi, do you remember

me?”

Yossel recalled, “I looked him up and down but it was nighttime and he was black and I couldn’t really see him. Then he smiled, so I saw something white.”

“Rabbi, you may not remember me but I can’t forget the tasty salami you brought us in jail.”

ENCOUNTER AT THE WASHINGTON MONUMENT

As part of his nonstop efforts on behalf of others, Yossel went to Washington to meet with a certain senator. On the way, he stopped to rest near the Washington Monument where he saw a peculiar sight. Near the monument were dozens of Indian tents. When he went over to take a better look, he heard a tourist ask one of the Indian women what they were doing there. She said they came from the other side of the country and were on their way to New York on a cross-country trip.

The tourist heard *what* she said; Yossel heard *how* she said it. There was something about her accent ... “Excuse me, are you Jewish?” he asked the Israeli looking woman.

“Yes, of course,” she answered in surprise. “What are rabbis doing here?”

“More importantly, what are *you* doing here dressed as an Indian?” asked Yossel.

Yael was touring in America when she met a member of this tribe and married him. They had two children and she was bothered by the fact that they knew nothing about Judaism. As for leaving, forget about it. Their tribal culture was more extreme than the Arabs when it came to these things.

What could be done with

the children? Circumcision was out of the question and the boy wasn't yet the age of bar mitzva. How could he provide them with a little Judaism? In the meantime, the mother had gone to bring her little children to show them what a real rabbi looked like.

Yossel had a brainstorm – Jewish names. “We have to give them Jewish names! What are they called?”

She said, “Half-Moon and Crystalina.”

“Okay, let's pick Jewish names.” Addressing the boy he said, “Your name is Half-Moon so your Jewish name is ‘Shnei-Ohr,’ which means ‘two lights.’ And he made a Mi Sh'Beirach. “Wow! Shneur! What a nice name.” Yossel explained whom he was named for.

“As for Crystalina, your name is Yahalom,” declared Yossel. Before they parted, Yossel gave Yael the address, 770 Eastern Parkway.

On Chanuka, Yossel would go with a group to a prison which was a two hour drive from New York. They were ready to set out when one of the bachurim insisted on remaining for the menorah lighting by the Rebbe (this was in the 80's). Yossel tried to dissuade him but the bachur was so insistent that he agreed to wait.

In the middle of singing “HaNeiros HaLalu, someone walked into 770. “Are you Yossel Tewel? Someone outside wearing shmattes is looking for you.”

When he went out, he saw Yael and her children. The Indian tribe had arrived in Manhattan and she had decided she had to escape in order to thank Yossel for the beautiful names. They took her around Crown Heights and showed her the menorah lighting. She was impressed; her interest in Judaism had been ignited.

THE FISHIES

Long ago, when Yossel was a head counselor in camp in Montreal, there were a brother and sister from Hawaii whom everyone called “the fishies” since they could swim better than anyone else. In Hawaii there was nothing Jewish; so when they came on a visit to their grandfather in Montreal, he sent them to a Jewish camp.

The children were very sincere about what they had been taught and when they returned from camp they continued doing what they had learned. Their mother called them in to eat but they refused since they only ate kosher. The wealthy parents, who were liberal minded and believed in freedom of choice, went to the grocery store and found some

kosher products and prepared a meal. At the next meal though, one of the children remembered that the dishes were not kosher and they had to buy new ones.

The school year began. After two days, the principal called the parents. The school was concerned that their son might be having a nervous breakdown or be going through some sort of social meltdown. Why? He was walking around with something on his head and strings coming out of his pants. Even his sister was wearing the yarmulke and tzitzis in solidarity with him.

Their father was a smart man. He met with the principal and offered a large donation if the school would have a “religion of the month” program in which the children would have to dress up and bring in clothing of that month's religion. The designated religion for the first month would be, of course, Judaism.

The project began and the school was in an uproar. How could they get such a large quantity of yarmulkes and tzitzis? One call to Yossel in Crown Heights was all it took for the shipment to be sent out. After several weeks, Yossel got a picture of the entire school, boys and girls, wearing yarmulkes and tzitzis. The picture was submitted to the Rebbe who responded very warmly.

Raskin's
“if it grows we have

**Consistently
Superior**

Fruit and Produce Emporium WHOLESALE & RETAIL

Michal & Aaron Raskin

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



FROM SOUL- SEARCHING TO THE SOUL-STIRRING MUSIC OF THE ALTER REBBE

Nadav Becher traveled to the Far East, visited ashrams, and studied just about every form of mysticism. He studied Indian music and listened to the utter silence on the Thai islands. None of these experiences truly touched him until he learned a maamer of the Alter Rebbe. For the first time in his life, he felt that someone truly understood him, that someone was speaking directly to him. * He abandoned a musical career and a spot in a top Israeli band and today he is a Chassidishe “baal menagen” who presents niggunim of the Alter Rebbe to the public.

By Sholom Dovber Crombie

If you were to see Rabbi Nadav Becher as he stands on the stage, dressed as a Lubavitcher, and plays authentic Chassidishe niggunim, you would find it hard to believe the journey he has taken to get there. It's quite a distance from starring in bands

in Tel Aviv and visiting ashrams in the Far East. This is his story.

TRUNCATED SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

Nadav grew up in a home that was not religiously observant.

Judaism, to him, consisted of family meals on holidays, nothing more.

As a child, he displayed unusual musical talent, so his parents sent him to advanced music classes and private lessons. He was especially talented on the

guitar and began participating in youth bands and national music competitions. During his school years, he spent seven years studying classical guitar and devoted most of his energy to his musical development. As he describes it, he felt an “intense lack of interest in school studies.”

“I practiced for hours and was a complete loner. For me, it was a time to broaden the soul, for thinking, straining upward in the exploration of various ideas, theories and ideologies. I had had a bris and bar mitzva, but there was no involvement with or significant mention of G-d in my life. Nevertheless, from the time I can remember, I always considered it possible that one day I would do t’shuva. The religious world was always alluring to me.”

At the age of eighteen, Nadav left home and moved to Tel Aviv. He skipped army duty and began attending the Rimon music school. His life was divided between work, studying, and hours of playing in clubs and at various venues. Today, he defines that time as a “period of rejecting values and disdaining the establishment,” and he sees this as a consequence of the permissive and liberal education he had in his youth.

Questions began to gnaw at him such as: What is the soul? Is there meaning to anything? Can one be truly happy? Is music alone the purpose of my life? During hours of practice, Nadav thought about these questions and wondered whether his happiness depended on a successful musical career or

whether there was a deeper dimension to life. He decided to pack his bags and go on a trip to the Far East. His first stop was a silence retreat at an Indian ashram; it was meant to teach one how not to think.

“Now I understand that their approach is corrupt. In Chassidus it explains that thought is a garment of the soul. Therefore, you cannot stop thinking. You need to exchange a negative thought for a positive one, and through thought one should affect the soul. Through thought, you can reach very high spiritual planes, but you can never fight thoughts. Back then, I didn’t know the depths of Chassidus and those new ideas I discovered seemed revolutionary to me. After the retreat I was left with many thoughts and



impressions, and I tried to make sense of everything I had seen and heard. My conclusion was that I had to invest more in spirituality.

“From there I continued to an isolated island in order to be with myself and my thoughts. I was sure that I was only at the beginning of my journey, but after a few days on the island, I was stung by a mosquito and contracted Dengue Fever. I was flown back to Eretz Yisroel and was hospitalized for a week in Tel HaShomer in Tzrifin. From there, I went back to Tel Aviv; my spiritual trip had been cut short.”

YOU MUST START KEEPING SHABBOS

“However short, my trip exposed me to spirituality. I began practicing meditation every morning on the beach. Something also opened up in me to Judaism. I realized I knew more about Eastern religions than about Moshe Rabbeinu.”

Several months passed and Nadav felt there was something he had yet to discover and that he couldn’t suffice with communing with nature and doing relaxation exercises on the beach. Despite his successful career and his many performances with top artists, he decided to head back to the Far East. This time though, he wanted to spend the Jewish holidays at Chabad houses throughout India. When he packed his bags, he even included t’fillin, a big kippa, a Tanach and a Siddur that he got in high school.

“I thought I could combine my interest in Far Eastern religions with my nascent interest in Judaism.”

He almost spent Rosh HaShana at the Chabad house

in Manali, but missed the start of the big day thanks to a broken down bus that left him stranded at a hostel in the middle of nowhere. But he observed Yom Kippur for the first time in his life at the Chabad house in Dharamsala:

“Although I spent most of the time figuring out where they were up to in the pages of the Siddur they gave to me, after the prayers of the day I felt completely different. When I left, I resolved to return and visit again.

“In the meantime, I continued traveling and met an Indian ‘Baba,’ whom I joined in order to examine his spiritual life from up close. After spending several weeks with him, I saw that most of the things he preached about were not practiced in his own life. He would often get intoxicated. Everything made him angry. I saw that his life was far from the image portrayed by those who claim to be immersed in spirituality.

“One day, I went with a friend of that Baba to a river to do some foolish Indian religious ceremony. As the ceremony was progressing, I felt that something was not right. Suddenly, it all seemed very bizarre to me and empty of any real content. While contemplating this, I began turning around and did not notice a small piece of wood that was stuck in the ground and it pierced my foot. I was in such pain that I ran limping to the hut where I lived. I lay down with the pains shooting through my foot and felt very dizzy.

“I woke up in the middle of the night with a high fever and a pounding headache. I felt very weak and knew I had gotten an infection from the wood. I prayed to Hashem that I make it through the night.

“In the morning I mustered my last ounce of strength, took my belongings, and left. I went to an Indian doctor and found out that I had contracted malaria. This time, I did not return to Eretz Yisroel. I spent weeks in a guest house and had an Indian cook prepare food for me and care for me. Half the time I was delirious because of the Indian antibiotics I was taking.

“After several weeks, I had recovered and felt an urge to continue my traveling. I went to southern India, to Poona and Goa, but did not find the elusive peace of mind I was seeking. I constantly felt a tremendous emptiness and I tried to figure out what I was lacking. I suppressed any thoughts of the visit to the Chabad house on Yom Kippur and tried to find the answer in the magic that India offers. As a final step, after much traveling, I headed for Varansi, which is considered a stronghold of Indian impurity, in order to study music.

“After the exhausting 72 hour trip, I arrived in Varansi and the thought popped into my mind: I must keep Shabbos. It’s hard to explain where this thought came from. Maybe it happened specifically because this was an impure place that was full of idols. My Jewish spark had been ignited.

“I felt that until now I had tried to get in touch with my true self unsuccessfully, but now it was happening to me. I rented a private house for 1800 rupees a month (180 shekels/45 dollars) and bought a gas stove and pots and began cooking for myself and making a blessing on whatever I ate. I did not light a fire on Shabbos and did not play music. I would sing to myself and talk to G-d. I felt He exists,

that everything is G-dliness, and that this world is under constant supervision and it all comes from Him. This was the end of Kislev, and I constructed a menorah out of mineral water bottle caps. I lit the menorah every night and sang all the Chanuka songs I knew.”

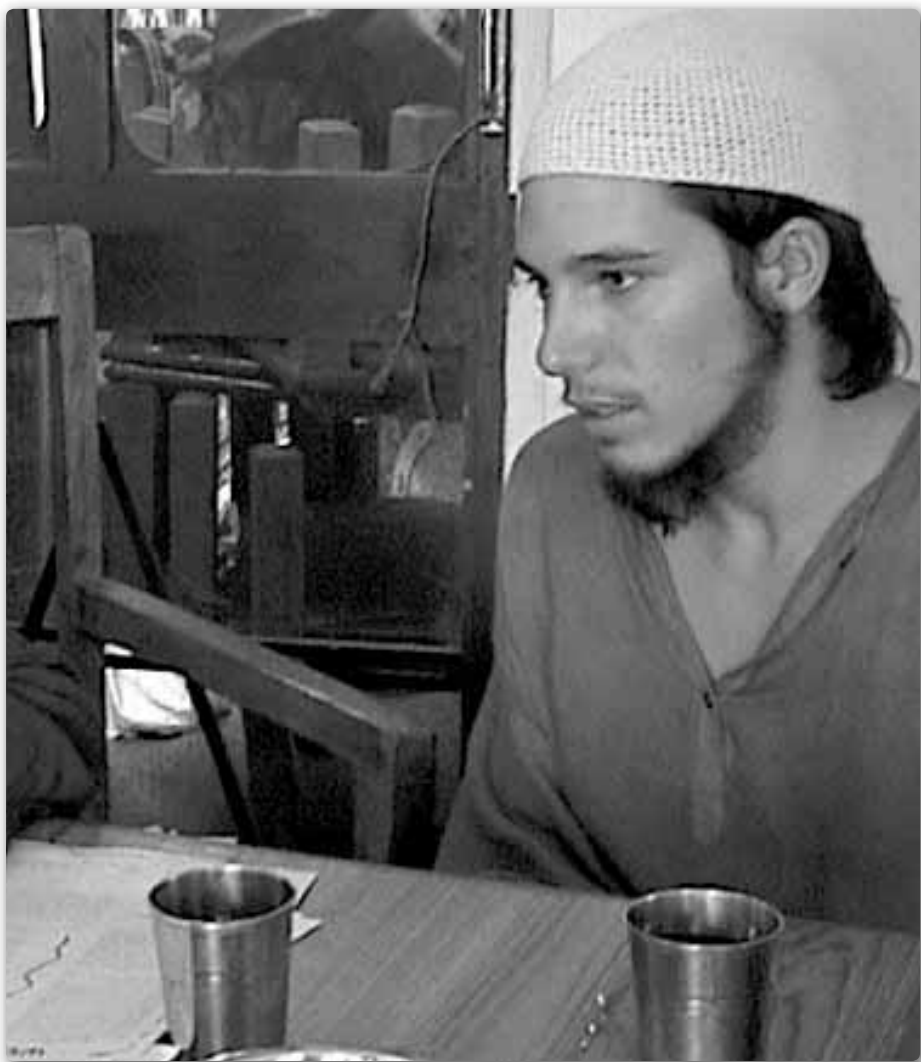
FINDING THE ANSWERS

“I lived that way for two months as I studied Jewish music and reconnected to Judaism. Most importantly, I was happy. I began to feel connected and keeping mitzvos gave me a sense of something real.

“My visa expired. I had to fly to Thailand to renew it. I took the opportunity to hop over to one of the distant islands that can be reached only by a small fishing boat. Unfortunately, while we were at sea, a storm kicked up and we were thrown about among the waves. The Thai sailors panicked and all the tourists began screaming. I began shouting the verse ‘Shma Yisroel’ which I knew by heart and held a T’fillas HaDerech card that I had with me, with all my might.

“After a few minutes of terror, the Thai sailors were able to approach the shore and they told us to toss our bags into the sea and start swimming towards the shore, which we did. After a long period of uncertainty, we arrived safely and our bags did too. I was stunned by the experience. I would lie in a hammock on the island and recite entire chapters of Tanach; I still held on to the T’fillas HaDerech card that I felt had saved my life.

“On the island I met other Israelis who had come seeking a spiritual experience, including those who had left prestigious positions in order to do yoga



Nadav, when he was first beginning the t’shuva process.

all day on the beach. I was very confused and wanted to speak with a rabbi.

“I traveled to Bangkok, though not before undergoing another two-week silence retreat. I was happy to discover that there would be a four-day seminar at the Chabad house, given by Rabbi Yechezkel Sofer. I very much wanted to get involved in Judaism but did not know anything about it. I didn’t even know that t’fillin are put on every day, or that there are three t’fillos a day, or what the Mishna and Gemara are. All these words and concepts were foreign to me.

I was sure G-d exists but other than that, I knew nothing.

“At the seminar, the rabbi said that the starting point is whether you believe the Torah was given at Sinai. If you believe that, then it’s all true. I believed. I knew it was just a matter of time before I would become religiously observant in my daily life. That Pesach I did not eat bread but in my ignorance, I ate spaghetti instead. I had no idea this was a problem.

“After Pesach I returned to India and Dharamsala. The Chabad house was just starting a course in Kabbala and meditation



Nadav (left) playing the guitar

with the shliach Rabbi Dror Shaul. I was happy to finally be able to find out what Judaism is and what it has to offer. I discovered that all the answers to spiritual questions are found in Judaism in a much deeper way.

“I found the answer to the central question, namely how to be ‘enlightened,’ in Tanya. I was amazed and after the course on meditation I decided to stay at the Chabad house to get accustomed to praying three times a day. I struggled with my inclination that found it easy to meditate for an hour but to sit with tallis and t’fillin and daven was difficult.”

I FELT THAT THE ALTER REBBE WAS SPEAKING TO ME

“It was all new to me and I experienced many internal struggles in gaining an understanding of Judaism. I found the answers in Chassidus. My encounter with Chassidus was powerful and won my heart. The high point was when I learned the maamer in Likkutei Torah on Parshas Shlach, in which the Alter Rebbe explains

the sin of the spies in spiritual terms. I understood that the spies wanted to preserve the spiritual awareness they had acquired in the desert, but they sinned because they did not believe that one can combine the material and the spiritual while maintaining the same, high spiritual awareness. I learned about the significance of mitzvos and the drawing down of the Sh’china to earth and discovered the secret within Judaism – the combining of opposites, the material and the spiritual, here below.

“This was the answer to all my questions, in a nutshell. I felt that the Alter Rebbe was speaking directly to me. I was astounded that someone had dealt deeply with the questions that had bothered me for the longest time. On the one hand, the Eastern religions champion distancing oneself absolutely from the material and being completely devoted to the spiritual. On the other hand, the Western philosophies maintain that the more you satisfy your desires, the more you actualize yourself. I felt stuck between

the two approaches until I read that the Alter Rebbe addresses this and provides the answers. The answer is that the purpose of creation is ‘Hashem desired a dwelling for Himself down below.’ Hashem wants to be revealed down in this material world. The whole point is to sanctify the material and infuse holiness and G-dliness into this world which conceals the light of the Sh’china.

“I moved into the Chabad house for a period of study. Rabbi Shaul began talking to me about returning to Eretz Yisroel and learning in a yeshiva, but this sounded farfetched to me. I wanted to go home and learn more about Judaism, but in my own way. I was afraid to commit. I returned home and began searching for a new path as the impact of my encounter with Judaism in India began to fade from my life. I was simply afraid of the truth that was Chassidus.”

GOING TO YESHIVA

“It was wonderful, a few months later, when Rabbi Dror Shaul called and told me he was in Eretz Yisroel. He invited me for Shabbos and I figured, why not?

“I went to Rechovos to spend Shabbos with him. After Shabbos, he showed me a video of myself, taken half a year earlier in India, in which I spoke about the joy I found in Judaism. I watched it and asked myself, where am I now? Why didn’t I pursue this when I know it’s the truth?

“I kept thinking about this and finally decided that I was going to choose, of my own free will, to live a religious life. I felt that G-d had arranged things so that I could make a conscious choice, far from the

initial excitement I had in India. I decided it was time I went to yeshiva.

“I went to the Chabad yeshiva in Ramat Aviv and thought I was renouncing my old life, including music. After spending some time in yeshiva, I realized there was no reason for me to stop playing; on the contrary, Hashem gives every person gifts and talents with which to serve Him and fulfill his shlichus in this world.

“After all the traveling I had done and experiences I had, learning Chassidus was the only place that quieted my soul. It’s not an intellectual space but a deeply felt space in the soul. What all the meditation and searching in India had failed to accomplish, learning and doing mitzvos accomplished.

“I spent three years in yeshiva, studying the Alter Rebbe’s teachings. I felt closure since it was a maamer of the Alter Rebbe that had brought me back home, to Judaism, and to myself. This connection-building was a process that extended over a period of time in which I learned and delved into Chassidus in order to satisfy the enormous thirst I had.

“I felt that the treasure which is the Tanya must reach everyone, and when we held Shabbat evening services for students from Ramat Aviv I would photocopy entire chapters and distribute them. You feel the power of Tanya immediately, but it takes inner work for it to begin to speak to you, so that it moves your soul.”

THREE ALBUMS OF CHABAD NIGGUNIM

Today, Rabbi Nadav Becher is working on a number of projects whose purpose is to

“I don’t understand why, when singing at farbrengens, people sing a niggun for five minutes and then move on to something else. You can sing a niggun for forty minutes without growing tired, but you have to sing it properly.”

bring Chassidic niggunim to the broader public. He is the director of two music groups, *A Groise Metzia* which performs original compositions and the *Peshita* band that performs at Chassidic



The cover of the CD he produced with Oren Tzor

weddings.

Since he became a Chabad Chassid, he produced three CD’s of Chabad niggunim. The last one was done with musician, Oren Tzor.

He is particular about

retaining the original Chassidic tune and not dropping a note. “I don’t understand why, when singing at farbrengens, people sing a niggun for five minutes and then move on to something else. You can sing a niggun for forty minutes without growing tired, but you have to sing it properly.”

As for the niggunim of the Alter Rebbe:

“There is some special quality about anything associated with the Alter Rebbe that affects one very deeply. You sense a powerful truth. There is no other way to explain it other than truth. When you sing or play the Alter Rebbe’s niggunim, you really feel that you want to be somewhere else, much cleaner, simpler, purer. A niggun of the Alter Rebbe connects you with your core inner space – demanding of you that you be true and pure.”

See issue 779 for an interview with musicians Nadav Becher and Oren Tzor about their music.

Anash Car Service
Airports & Pick ups From Israel Call: 03-9770270 ext 1 Local & Long dist.

1-718-756-5656

THE GROAN THAT SAVED ME

By Rabbi Yehoshua Dubrawski a"h

The wasteland of death and disease that encompassed all of Samarkand was fully evident between the four walls of the Balchana, the room in the attic where we davened and said Kaddish – it seemed to me that we said Kaddeishim more than we davened. Most of the worshipers said Kaddish after a child, father or mother or after two or three family members. There were the crooked walls and the pitted floor that seemed as if it were kneaded of ashen earth that crumbled in the Samarkandian heat. The pockmarked walls revealed the yellow wooden skeleton of the house. They looked like dry bones after the meat was removed.

Narrow, crooked stairs led up to the minyan in the attic. And we, those who said Kaddish, had to climb them one by one; both because of their narrowness and so that they wouldn't collapse from excessive weight. This is why, when someone climbed the steps you would hear faint squeaks and groans, which allowed the climbers to join in and free the blocked emotions choking their throats; one with an "Oy" and another with a "Vei" and a third with an "Oy Vei."

Only one of the men did not groan even once. He was a middle-aged man. His beard wasn't large but was very dense, and it seemed strange attached to his gentle pale face. His eyes were clear and alight, making one feel uncomfortable when looking directly into them.

He was a strapping fellow, something my mind couldn't grasp since I knew that he was starving like the rest of us, and maybe more so. This man (for some reason I never learned his name) came to Samarkand from a distant, frozen camp in Siberia. He brought with him a sickly daughter, a long tattered strange looking garment, and two frostbitten fingers which remained of his right hand.

He came to Shacharis every day but did not often attend Mincha and Maariv because of his night blindness (due to prolonged starvation). When he showed up for Mincha Maariv, his daughter would come for Maariv and hide beneath the stairs and walk him home after the davening.

He was one of the two or three men who did not say Kaddish. He always stood with his face to the narrow wall between two warped windows. During Shacharis I could not see his face since he would cover his head and part of his face with his old, worn tallis that moved back and forth due to his vigorous swaying. This was also the reason why it was always empty on either side of him; nobody sat there, almost as if his fevered davening belonged in its own space, a corner of fervor amidst the sorrowful and lackluster davening of the mourners.

It was only when the fifteen-sixteen mourners said Kaddish that he stopped shaking, lifted his



tallis with a quivery twitch and remained standing there frozen in place, as though the roar of *Yisgadal*

V'yiskadash somehow pressed in and constrained him.

By nature, even at my best, I was shy and withdrawn. So I was often cheated out of a chance to daven, amongst the many mourners. In addition, being the youngest of those saying Kaddish, I could not often lead the davening. With the oppressive starvation, the suffering and pain, every mourner tried to serve as the leader of the davening as if they thought that there they would be able to tear out of themselves, with greater strength and a loud voice, all the bitterness of life and death. For me, the few steps to the lectern were like some vast expanse that I could not cross. My claim that now I was saying Kaddish not only for my father but also for my sister did not help. The truth is I wasn't alone in that.

That man came to my aid on more than one occasion when he saw me standing in the back. He would turn around from "his" wall, take my hand in his, and lead me to the front. While doing so, he would say in the matter of fact tone of one used to getting his way, "Nu, nu, it's about time to let him lead the service." And

it worked, without complaints or arguments.

Did he have a special feeling for me? Maybe. On rare occasions he said a word to me; he did not even ask me my name. But a few times, he took a little package out of his tallis and t'fillin bag. It was wrapped in a piece of paper and he put it into his inner pocket. Then, he slowly approached my corner and pushed the package into my hand. He did this confidently and quickly so nobody would notice. He did it with such authority that I could not refuse him. Why did he do this? How could he allow himself? I don't know.

What I can say for sure is that my feelings towards this man went far beyond the food he pushed on me. I benefited far more than that from him. A feeling of consolation and upliftedness wafted over me from this Yid who would pull his tallis over his head beyond his beard. His tzitzis in the back were wedged into his gartel and the tallis covered his upper body almost completely, as though he was cut off from the surroundings of this earth of congealed sand. You could sense that there, under the tallis, life was stirring. It seemed as though the man's whisperings that emerged from the depths of his heart originated from afar, from a place where the soul is closer to its Maker, a place where feelings are not dulled by hunger and heat and the heart delights in enjoyment.

He would daven at length in the morning. He would pause several times at certain set places in the davening, take a coin out of his pocket and place it on the windowsill. They were small coins but he did it with such assurance and bent his entire body in this effort that it seemed

that by doing so he was taking something out of his very being, out of his life.

After the davening, and after removing his tallis and t'fillin, he would collect the coins and slowly wrap them in his handkerchief and put them in his pocket. As he did so, an almost imperceptible joy flitted across his face; probably, thanks and praise to the One who had enabled him to save a few kopecks for tz'daka.

For three months I had to stop reciting Kaddish. During this time, I parted from the world several times when the

impulse secretly burned within me – to go to shul once again and say Kaddish, many Kaddeishim, as many as I could ... also for my father's beloved youngest child. The way it seems to me now, I was very drawn to the shul in order to see that Yid one more time. Was he still there?

At the start of summer (during the days of S'fira of the year 1943), I dragged myself from the house. What day it was, I don't remember. It was after three months of being in a darkened room in which I constantly saw how life ebbs and is extinguished, and I felt the chill brought on by



It was only with the final Kaddish Yasom that I stopped; I absolutely could not continue. When they had all finished the Kaddish and I tried again and again to continue, the man suddenly turned to me. He raised his tallis and fixed his clear gaze upon me; his eyes were a bit red. He stood for a moment and then came over to me, slowly, up close, until I noticed his rapid breathing. He took my hand and whispered, "Be strong, my child."

"starvation disease" sucked out the little bit of life I had left. My second sister was sick at this time with this disease and one day, she left this world. My father and two sisters were gone.

I had no tears and no sighs. The lump in my heart turned to stone and the stone crumbled, scattering and coating all the chambers of sensation with the darkness of ash that is burned many times. Even all the troubling thoughts that went round and round and remained stuck feeding the imagination, they too ceased; they too remained dormant. Just one

the howling of the jackals at night from the sand dunes behind the old city. The sun that day looked so bright and alive with warmth it never had before. I was very doubtful though whether I would make it to the shul.

My appearance at the time was strange even to me; not that there was a mirror available. Nor did I have the desire to look at my face. I simply felt that my feet would not carry me. I dragged them as though they were two weights attached to my body pressing against every sliver of bone and ankle. I was overcome with fear as I felt that I was being



drawn downward towards the ground.

Yet, I managed to get there, albeit in the middle of the davening. Not many Kaddish-sayers had been added to the group, while many of the previous

ones were gone. Each wooden board of the stairs creaked as always; only one of the steps hung there mutely making the climb even more difficult. From the walk and climbing the steps, something fluttered in my chest

and I became momentarily dizzy. I managed, with difficulty, to sit on a bench and catch my breath.

The man was standing in his usual place and davening, swaying energetically with a tallis over his head. It may have been drawn down even further over his face, and his head was bent more than usual. What I noticed quite clearly was that several times during the davening he stopped, his hand groping under his tallis in his pockets, but I did not see any coins on the windowsill. I observed that afterward, he withdrew his hand as if in defeat and it took a bit longer until his body once again became revitalized.

It was very hard for me, but I recited the entire Kaddish out loud. It was only with the final Kaddish Yasom that I stopped; I absolutely could not continue. Something caught in my throat and did not allow my voice to be heard. When they had all finished the Kaddish and I tried again and again to continue, the man suddenly turned to me. He raised his tallis and fixed his clear gaze upon me; his eyes were a bit red. A few times I lowered my gaze and then looked up. He was still looking at me with a gaze that shook the silence of the shul. A few other people looked at me and I leaned instinctively against the wall. Why were they looking at me like that? Did the man and the rest of them never see one such as me? He stood for a moment and then came over to me, slowly, up close, until I noticed his rapid breathing. He took my hand and whispered, "Be strong, my child." He did not leave me; he held more firmly onto my hand with his two fingers and pulled me towards

the Aron Kodesh. The entire shul was silent.

He opened the Aron Kodesh with his trembling left hand and a large Torah scroll sat gleaming before us in its decorated, wooden case in the Bucharian style. The man lowered his head and said nothing; he did not cry out, did not make a commotion, and just clacked with his lips, stretching forth his right hand with the two orphaned fingers. At the time, it seemed to me

that the fingers were raised who knows how high. The two mute witnesses said nothing but seemed to reach far off into space.

And this man, whom I never heard groan or sigh, groaned this time. He closed the Aron Kodesh, went to his place, pulled down the tallis and did not move. He leaned his head on the wall and just three words could be heard a few times from under his tallis. From time to time they were

whispered ever more quietly, "Oy, Ribbono shel olam! Oy Ribbono shel olam, Oy Ribbono shel olam."

Was I at fault? I felt a quiet despair at the time since it was because of me that the man groaned. At the same time though, a ray of hope formed itself in my thoughts. It was the man's outpouring that sent a ray of light into my miserable life and opened a crack of trust for the future.

Crown Travel International



- Express service
- Fully Computerized

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

(718) 493-1111

Fax: (718) 493-4444

Get your tickets within minutes!



SAVE MONEY TODAY!!

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

Call Today 888-468-3256 x 2770

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

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

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

New Businesses Welcome | Exclusive Referral Program | Organization Charities Partnership



"The quickest way to reveal Moshiah is by learning the Torah sources about Moshiah & redemption" שי"פ תוריע ומצורע התנשי"א

Radio Moshiah & Redemption

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

Rabbi Jacob Schwei
Member of the Rabbinical
Court of Crown Heights

APPROBATION

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

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

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



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

For donations or dedications make checks payable to:

"Radio Moshiah & Redemption"

383 Kingston Ave. #94, Brooklyn, NY 11213

718 756-4530 Tel/Fax 363-1652 Email: RadioMoshiah@erols.com

יחי אדוננו מורנו ורבינו מלך המשיח לעולם ועד

IF NOT NOW, WHEN?

The very thought that Ahmadinejad (may his name be erased) will come to his senses at the last minute and turn the reactor into a research center for peaceful purposes brings to mind the suggestion that the arch-murderer Abu Mazen will forego the use of terror and embrace the Jewish People.

By Sholom Dovber Crombie

Translated by Michael Leib Dobry

During this past week we heard more threatening statements against the free world by the Islamic Republic of Iran. This bastion of state-run terror is attempting to send the world a sign that it has already passed a point of no return, and therefore, if any nation starts up with them now, that country will be heading for serious trouble. According to the mad proclamations of the president of Iran, his regime will soon construct another three nuclear reactors. Ahmadinejad is trying to double-deal: threatening the world while hiding behind declarations that all his actions are reasonable and legitimate. He is seeking to grab the rope at both ends, crying out “Be careful – I’m dangerous and irresponsible” at one end, while feigning innocence on the other.

The window of opportunity is closing. Military experts are divided over the exact date when Iran will reach an irreversible point. Yet, all are in

agreement that sooner or later, if not stopped, Iran will attain its desired objective.

During the years that have passed since the government of Israel began to discuss the Iranian atomic program, Iran has managed to build some highly advanced missiles, which they claim can even reach the shores of the United States. They are preparing for total war. The country’s leaders are determined not to become a second Iraq, and they will not allow the Israel Defense Forces to attack them without a full retaliatory response.

DESTROY IT NOW!

As if we didn’t need any further proof that a state of war with Iran is already upon us, there were recently two terrorist attacks against Israeli embassies in India and Georgia. A day after the embassy attacks, an explosive device was detonated in an apartment in Thailand. It

was discovered that the device was being prepared for a terrorist attack against Israeli diplomats in Thailand.

After the explosion, two Iranian men escaped from the apartment, but their collaborator didn’t get away, because none of the local taxis agreed to stop for him. He became so frustrated that he threw hand grenades in the direction of one of the taxis that refused to take him and at the police officers that arrived on the scene. His interrogation by the local authorities led to the arrest of his accomplices in Malaysia en route to Iran. They later learned that another member of this terrorist cell, a woman, had managed to evade Thai security forces and had made her way to Tehran.

Unrelated to these events, the United States has devoted much effort over the past few weeks to reach an understanding with the government in Eretz Yisroel regarding how to deal with the Iranian threat. Last



week President Obama sent his intelligence chief and national security adviser to Eretz Yisroel for consultations with senior defense officials. Those in the know claim that these representatives of the U.S. administration were sent to try and convince the Israelis not to attack Iran and to allow the sanctions imposed upon Iran to take full effect.

Giving credit where credit is due, it must be said that the government of Israel is holding its own this time around. Thus far, the Israeli position has remained firm that the reactor must be destroyed – the only question is when it will happen. There are those who say that the government's position on its right to bomb the reactor is like someone saying, "Hold me back. Give me an excuse. Try and finish the deal yourselves; otherwise I won't be able to withstand the test and I'll have to take action myself." Whether these interpretations are correct or not,

it appears that the idea that Eretz Yisroel is about to take action on its own managed to shake the international community out of its apathetic stupor.

The prime minister and the defense minister must stop delaying their attack plans and take action against Iran as soon as possible, regardless of the Obama Administration's political considerations. The prime minister must take full advantage of the primary season within the Republican Party in the race for the Presidency of the United States, during which the various candidates speak openly about how America should assist Eretz Yisroel in attacking the reactor, thereby putting an end to a most troubling crisis that has unnecessarily instilled fear among many of our people in Eretz HaKodesh.

YOU CAN'T RELY ON THE WORLD

It would seem, however, that

those who oppose attacking Iran have a trump card. They claim that there is nothing to worry about if we stand alone against the Iranian threat, for if Iran attacks, America will immediately come to our aid. They also argue that the international community simply cannot remain unconcerned in the face of the demented actions of this Moslem ruler. Thus, there's no need for apprehension, and the Israeli government can sit quietly under the security of the nations of the world.

These arguments sound quite logical, but regrettably, those who make such claims forget what's happening right now in Syria, where a crazed Arab leader slaughters his own people while the world at-large stands passively and does nothing to stop the murder of the Syrian people. They also forget the assurances made thirty years ago by those who supported the peace treaty with Egypt, certain that if an Arab head of state would call

for the treaty's abrogation, the whole world would rise in protest against him. But this has yet to happen.

Here are the Rebbe's amazing words from more than thirty years ago during a sicha on Rosh Chodesh Elul 5738, in connection with the rioting that was taking place in Arab countries at the time, and its relevance to security in Eretz Yisroel and throughout the world:

"There is a country north of Eretz Yisroel that has no connection with Jews, and thereby there is no relevance to the statement of 'Eisav hates Yaakov,' nor is there any claim that the conquered took something from the conqueror or that they had previously driven people out from there. Yet, despite the fact that there are no such arguments, a large army came in from another country and commits daily acts of murder (not [against] those fighting with them or those who took something from them, but) against innocent people *r"l*.

"And the excuse they found is that since they have to bring peace, justice, and honesty to the world, they brought in the military with weapons, shooting and killing innocent men, women, and children on a daily basis! They don't do this at night in secret...rather they do it in broad daylight, and all the seventy nations of the world stand around while everyone cries out and urges them to help etc., and no one dares say a

thing! This has been going on for weeks and months, and in recent days, it has taken place with even greater force.

"And all those (governments) that want us to rely upon their guarantees, as they give their word that they won't allow (the Arabs) to violate the promises they made – they also know from this situation where people urge them to do something – that they won't lift a finger!

"...We see what's happening now on the northern side of Eretz Yisroel in an open and public manner, as they send messengers to speak and plead with them to do something, yet they do nothing to prevent the killing of innocent people, and it's all simply because they want to conquer a land that is not theirs. From this we understand that it's impossible to rely upon any [of their] promises."

SENDING A MESSAGE OF CALM

While most of the Israeli public expresses no concern about a war with Iran, there are still many who feel much apprehension. The media in Eretz Yisroel is constantly dealing with the various possibilities in the event of an Iranian attack – or if they develop a nuclear bomb. Such talk merely brings tens of thousands of Jews to a state of panic.

These days remind us of an earlier era when Eretz Yisroel was under the threat of Arab

armies. As a result, we have the same task today of publicizing the Rebbe's announcement of "The Guardian of Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps." As Lubavitcher Chassidim, it is our sacred obligation to spread the message of the prophet of the generation that Eretz Yisroel is the safest place in the world, "a land in which the eyes of Hashem, your G-d, are upon it from the beginning of the year until the end of the year."

During the most difficult times over the past several decades, the Rebbe spoke with a clear and definite voice. Every Chabad child knows the stories of the Six Day War, the Yom Kippur War, and the gas masks that stayed in the closet during the first Persian Gulf War. This firm voice – the voice of the leader of the generation – must be heard today with even greater vigor. Our responsibility is to calm the Jewish People from all the fear and threats, reminding them that G-d Alm-ghty is standing guard over us.

When we see all these amazing occurrences taking place around us in the Arab world, reminding us of the numerous Midrashim and prophecies of the Redemption, and when we clearly see how G-d's Mighty Hand is leading all world events to the True and Complete Redemption, there is obviously no reason to fear and there will be great miracles on this occasion as well – and no evil shall befall us.

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

THE MYSTERY OF THE MISSING JEWEL

By Rabbi Heschel Greenberg

Director of the Jewish Discovery Center of Buffalo, NY



THE TWELVE JEWELS

This week's parsha, Tetzaveh, discusses the special garments the Kohanim-priests were required to wear when they performed the service in the Temple. Of all the garments, the *Choshen* (Breastplate) stands out for its colorful nature, both literally and figuratively. This was worn only by the *Kohen Gadol* (the High Priest). The *Choshen* consisted of four rows of Jewels, three stones in each row, for a total of twelve, the number that corresponded to the twelve tribes. Indeed, the names of each of the twelve tribes were etched into these twelve jewels.

The very last stone was the *yashpeh*, translated as jasper. According to the chronological order of the twelve sons, this gem corresponded to the youngest tribe, that of Benjamin.

There is a fascinating story in the Jerusalem Talmud (Peia 1:1) concerning the extreme to which one must go to honor one's father, that involved—it would appear only incidentally—the *yashpeh* jewel.

JASPERS AND RED HEIFERS

The Talmud relates that once, during the Second Temple Era, it occurred that the *yashpeh* was missing from the *Choshen*. The Sages heard that a certain Roman official who resided in

Ashkelon named Dama ben Nasina owned such a jewel. When they came to him and offered him a handsome sum for the jewel he turned them down saying that the key to the box in which the jewel was kept was in his father's possession and that his father was sleeping so he could not sell them the jewel at that moment. The rabbis offered to double the amount, thinking that he was using his father's sleep as an excuse. Again he demurred. Even when they offered to raise the price and pay an exorbitant amount for the jasper he refused. They realized that he was not going to sell the gem, and they left.

For his financial sacrifice for honoring his father, G-d rewarded him with the birth of a red heifer on his farm. This animal was used for the purification ritual of a person who had been in contact with the dead. This breed was so rare that it earned him the sum that was equivalent to the amount he forfeited because of the honor he extended to his father.

BENJAMIN'S JEWEL

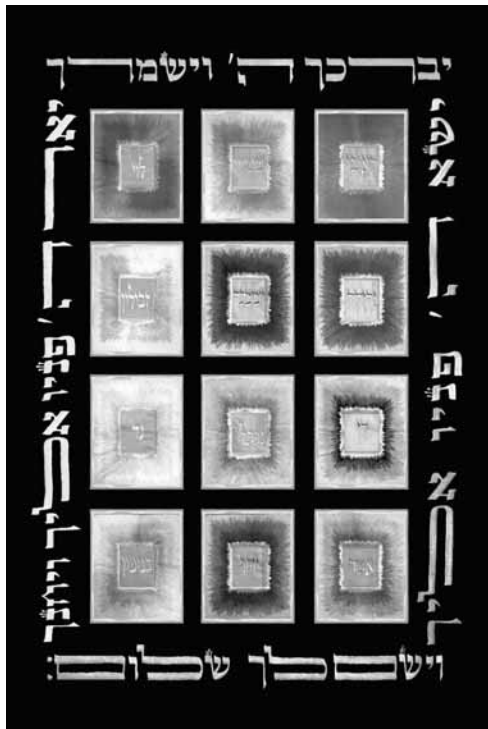
Nothing in life happens by coincidence. Divine providence dictates that even the most minute and seemingly trivial detail happens by design. This is certainly true about the Torah. Everything the Torah relates to

us has meaning and must convey an important message. In light of this we must try to understand what the connection is between the missing *yashpeh* stone in the *Choshen* to the Mitzvah of honoring one's father? What is the significance of the fact that this stone in particular was lost? And what lesson can we learn from the details of this story? We can certainly learn a lesson from this story as to how far we should go to honor our parents, which is, of course, the main point of that Talmudic discussion. But what additional lessons can be gleaned from all the "minor" and seemingly trivial details?

Commentators point out that Benjamin, who is identified with the *yashpeh* stone, was the only one of Jacob's sons—the progenitors of the Jewish people—who was not involved in the sale of Joseph. Even Joseph was tainted by his own sale, although he was the victim, because of the way he provoked his brother's jealousy of him. Benjamin had absolutely no major or even minor role in the sale of Joseph.

THE ULTIMATE HONOR OF PARENTS

Of all the ways one can hurt their parents, as well as show a lack of concern and respect for them, is for brothers and sisters to not get along. Our parents'



Aaron rejoiced in his heart when Moses, his younger brother, was chosen to be the liberator of the Jewish people. For his lack of jealousy and the great joy he experienced in his heart, Aaron was rewarded with the Choshen to wear over his heart.

The Choshen thus represented the idea of brotherly love and respect, those feelings which bring the greatest joy to our parents.

A JOLT

During the second Temple era, especially near the end, at the time when the Roman Empire controlled Israel, the Jewish people degenerated into *sinas chinam*-senseless hatred. Their internecine divisions were

as for their Father in heaven because of their divisions, they lost the *yashpeh* jewel. The Choshen, which symbolized brotherly love, was missing its key component — the one jewel that corresponded to the tribe of Benjamin, the only son of Jacob who was not involved in the sale of Joseph.

Apparently, the mysterious disappearance of the *yashpeh* stone did not accomplish its objective. This bizarre occurrence should have awakened the Jews to do some serious soul searching and to make them realize that they were missing the “Benjamin” mode of honor which is achieved only when we are united.

However, when the requisite conclusions were not drawn, divine providence alerted them to this lesson in a novel and circuitous way. A Roman official, whose very position was emblematic of the potential for exile, was to impress upon them the need to shore up their filial responsibility. By owning the gem that symbolized brotherly love and by the unusual sacrifice he had made for his father, Dama ben Nesina served as the Divine agent to inspire them to recognize that they were missing the spiritual dimension of the Choshen in general and the *yashpeh* in particular.

To further impress upon them what their course of action should be, Divine Providence alerted them to the phenomenon of the Red Heifer that was born on the farm of Dama. The enigmatic ritual involved sprinkling the ashes diluted with spring water on the person who was made ritually impure by contact with the dead. What is so enigmatic about this ritual is that the people involved in the preparation of the ashes would become impure

“The message should have been unmistakably clear. The way to generate brotherly love and respect for our parents is by going out of our way to help bring purity to our brothers and sisters, even if it means that we sacrifice some of our own purity. Only the sacrifices that we will make for one another are the key to reconnecting to our Heavenly Father.

greatest wish is to see their children treat each other with love and respect. The more strident and vitriolic their divisions are the greater the pain that a parent will experience. And, conversely, the greater the love and the lack of jealousy among them causes parents the greatest joy and satisfaction.

The Psalmist exclaims, “How goodly and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together.” The Talmud (Krisus 5b) applies this verse specifically to Moses and Aaron. Elsewhere (Shabbos 139a) the Talmud states that

at their worst level at that period in history and were the eventual cause of the destruction of the Second Temple as recorded in the Talmud.

In those very discordant times, the Jewish people had to be reminded of what they were missing. They might have deluded themselves into thinking that they were doing fine in terms of their relationship with G-d, their Father in heaven. To jolt them into realizing that they had failed in their honor for their physical parents, as well

while the person upon whom the ashes were sprinkled would become purified.

The message should have been unmistakably clear. The way to generate brotherly love and respect for our parents is by going out of our way to help bring purity to our brothers and sisters even if it means that we sacrifice some of our own purity. Only the sacrifices that we will make for one another are the key to reconnecting to our Heavenly Father.

BECOME A CHOSHEN AND RED HEIFER

The word Choshen has the same numerical value as the word Moshiach. It is symbolic of Moshiach because in it we have all the Jewish people represented in the context of jewels. In the Choshen we have the feeling that we are all G-d's jewels, and we would feel incomplete should

we lack even one of them. The Baal Shem Tov taught that each Jew is a "land of desire" because of the infinite treasures buried within each of our souls. The Rebbe would stand for hours and distribute dollars for tz'daka and blessings to thousands of Jews. When asked how he could endure such a strain and not tire, his famous response was, "When you count diamonds you do not get tired."

But as long as even one jewel is missing, the Choshen is incomplete. Particularly if the jewel that is missing is the *yashpeh*, which symbolizes the lack of division, it causes our father in Heaven to shed tears and makes the exile for Him and for us more unbearable.

Now is the time when the lesson of the Choshen and the Red Heifer is most needed. Now is the time for each one of us to reach out, or, more accurately, reach **in**, to every Jew to discover

and expose the Jew(el) within them, even at the expense of our own material and spiritual comforts.

This is the hallmark of identifying Moshiach. In addition to his other qualifications, Moshiach, according to our Sages, is a Jewish leader who sees the good in every one and dedicates himself to helping us actualize the diamond, or *yashpeh*, within.

Moreover Moshiach is the ultimate expression of the Red Heifer mindset of putting the needs of his people ahead of his own.

Our mission is to emulate Moshiach's traits. And the power to accomplish this we derive from the spark of Moshiach within us. This, in turn, will hasten the imminent Redemption when we will see Aaron wearing the Choshen with all of the jewels intact!

LIVE SHIURIM ONLINE

Anywhere, Anytime !

CHITAS

**INYONEI GEULA
& MOSHIACH**

RAMBAM

**SHIURIM IN LIKUTEI
SICHOS KODESH**

חת"ת

עניני גאולה ומשיח

רמב"ם

שיעורים בלקוטי

שיחות קודש

WWW.770LIVE.COM



יחי אדונינו מורנו ורבנו מלך המשיח לעולם ועד

ב"ה

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE PERFECT

By M.E. Gordon

It was Friday afternoon, again, and Zev tried to get out of the Yeshiva building without being seen. It wasn't the teachers, Rebbeim, or staff members that he was trying to avoid. No, they wouldn't comment if they saw him going home at lunchtime on Friday. The official learning was finished for the day; everyone was allowed to go home. The problem was that although that is what they were allowed to do, most boys didn't. Instead of going straight home, most of the students went to pick up their t'fillin and their mitzvaim bags and headed with their partners to their mitzvaim route.

Zev tried very hard every Friday to sneak home without any of his friends seeing him. He knew that no one would make fun of him, but he dreaded their innocent invitations to join them. They just wouldn't understand what was holding him back. Actually, Zev didn't quite understand it himself. It wasn't shyness; Zev was always the first one to introduce himself to newcomers and made friends easily. Yet, for some reason he did not feel comfortable going on Mitzvaim.

"Hi Ma, I'm home," Zev called out, as he closed the door behind him.

"Hello Zev," answered his mother, "we have a special guest staying with us this Shabbos."

Zev hurried into the kitchen where his mother was busy taking trays of fresh challa out of the oven. His eyes opened wide when he saw who was sitting at

the table sampling a piece of hot kugel.

"Uncle Dovid!" Zev cried out, delightedly. Dovid, his mother's brother, was on shlichus in a city that had only one other shul.

"How's my favorite young Chassid? What are you learning these days? Tell me an inspiring word or two!"

Zev dutifully complied by telling over some of what he had recently learned. When he finished, his mother commented: "See Dovid how well Zev learns! And he's helpful, as well. Every Friday he peels potatoes and carrots for the cholent." With this she put the abovementioned vegetables down on the table. Zev started peeling.

"If you'll find me another peeler, I'll help, too," offered Dovid. "In our Chabad House peeling potatoes is considered a 'gehoibeneh avoda' – a lofty service," he explained, his eyes twinkling. "So Zev, you know how to learn, you know how to help, you even know how to peel potatoes! You are going to make a great shliach!"

Zev put down the peeler and mumbling an apology, rushed out of the room. Dovid stared after him, astonished. He turned to his sister. "Did I say something wrong?"

Zev's mother sighed. "It's not your fault; you couldn't have known that this is a sensitive point. I myself have no idea what's bothering Zev, but he never wants to go on mitzvaim on Friday afternoon or on Yom Tov. We've tried talking to him

about it, but we had no success. Now we just don't say anything when he comes home early every Friday."

"Do you mind if I try bringing it up to Zev? I'll tread carefully, and only talk to him if he's willing."

"Okay, you can try. I know that he really looks up to you."

A few minutes later, Zev came back into the room, and began peeling the last potato without looking up at Dovid. Dovid started talking, as if nothing unusual had happened, telling all kinds of interesting stories from his shlichus. Zev said nothing, but after a particularly funny anecdote, Dovid spied a glimmer of a smile. When he felt that Zev was more comfortable, Dovid asked his nephew to come with him down the street, to buy some flowers for his sister, Zev's mother. "I try to buy my wife flowers every week to put on the Shabbos table. She knows how much I appreciate all the effort she puts in to make our shlichus successful, but I want our Shabbos guests to know it too. This weekend I'm not home, but your mother also deserves something, for hosting me."

"And what about your wife? Won't she have any flowers this Shabbos?"

"Ahh, no! But...I'm bringing back a special present for Tanta Esty. If not for her, I don't know if I'd be worthy of being a shliach," Dovid joked.

"But that's exactly what I'm worried about!"

"What do you mean?"

"I mean, I think," Zev's voice dropped to a whisper, "I really

am worried that I'm not worthy of being a shliach or even doing mitzvaim... like I know all of the things I've done wrong and all of the Mitzvos I have neglected... How can I tell others to do mitzvos?"

"Zev, do you know what? I'm going to tell you something that I've only told to a handful of people. I felt very much like you, and when I was privileged as a bachur to be chosen for shlichus, I thought there was a mistake. At that time less than twenty boys would be chosen out of the whole yeshiva for a two year shlichus. I had previously written to the Rebbe about my failings, so I was shocked that I was among those chosen. A few months after the shlichus started, I had a private Yechidus with the Rebbe. He told me that fulfilling the shlichus in the best possible way is a tikkun for every failing, including those I had written about. The Rebbe's words changed my whole perspective."

"So you don't have to first perfect yourself?"

"Of course, one should always work on himself; a Chassid is always finding ways to improve. However, if everyone would wait until they were perfect, who would do the shlichus? There's a sicha on Parshas Tetzaveh that explains it like this: Moshe Rabbeinu was told by HaKadosh Boruch Hu to bring Aharon and his sons close and to make them Kohanim for Hashem Yisborach. Rashi says that this command is to be fulfilled after the building of the Mishkan. The Rebbe explains that the holiness of the completed Mishkan made it possible for the Kohanim to be brought close to Moshe's level. Receiving the Kehuna at that later point also meant that although Aharon had built a mizbeiach for the golden



“When I was privileged as a bachur to be chosen for shlichus, I thought there was a mistake. At that time less than twenty boys would be chosen out of the whole yeshiva for a two year shlichus. I had previously written to the Rebbe about my failings, so I was shocked that I was among those chosen.”

calf (with good intentions) this would not disqualify him.

"The Rebbe connects this to our times. Those who are students of the leader of our generation are like the Kohanim of those times. They are brought 'close' and given extra strength to do the service of the Mishkan. They are given no other choice. If they feel unworthy, well, they must realize that the holiness is

already there – Moshe Rabbeinu has completed the Mishkan, and they just have to reveal it."

"So I can be a shliach even if I'm not perfect?"

"That's all the more reason to be one!"

Based on Likkutei Sichos Vol. 6 pp. 170-178. The shliach's yechidus is a true story; the rest is fiction.