

# HATOMIM





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### BEIS MOSHIACH

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## "My Request Plea, & Beseeching"



פּוֹתְחִין  
בְּדַבָּר  
מִלְכוּת

This is how the Rebbe Rayatz describes the place of a mashpia in the world of Chassidus:

Mashpiim for Chassidim are a primary thing in the “ways of Chassidus.” The “ways of Chassidus” are the planting of the divine flow... when the planter [mashpia] is an expert at his work and is not lazy in his labors.

The Chassidic crown of the town was the mashpia. They consulted with him in matters of avoda, they conferred with him about how to free oneself of a negative trait and how to become habituated to a good trait, what steps to take so that a prayer is a prayer, how to read the bedtime Krias Shema... From the mashpia one receives a program of preparation before going to the Rebbe for yechidus.

### THE REBBE IMPORTUNES: ASEI LECHA RAV

*At the farbrengen on Shabbos Parshas Devarim 5746, the Rebbe referred to this statement of our Sages and explained that a person is subjective and cannot rely on himself, especially not concerning matters of tzedaka and Torah study. Therefore, he needs a rav whom he looks up to.*

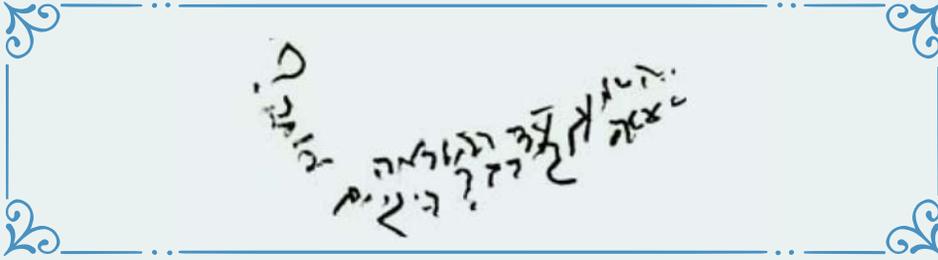
*Who was the Rebbe addressing? Everyone, without exception:*

It is extremely good and proper that every Jew, men and women, including small boys and girls, fulfill the instruction of the Mishna, “Asei lecha rav.” To do so by going from time to time to someone greater than himself in order to be “tested” regarding his status in Torah study, the giving of tzedaka, and his general conduct in the service of Hashem. This includes also permitted matters, “All your actions should be for the sake of Heaven,” “In all your ways you should know Him.” Through this he will receive the proper instruction and guidance without the “bribery” of self-interest. In addition to which, the very knowledge that he will have to give an accounting from time to time to a man of flesh and blood will cause him to improve his conduct and increase in all matters of good and holiness.

*More so, the Rebbe added (paraphrased):*

Even someone who is great in Torah and fear of Heaven and will have difficulty in finding someone greater should appoint a rav for himself, despite that person being on a lower level than him. The very fact that an outside person sees his situation will help him see things without self-bias.

*In one of the sichos, the Rebbe pointed out that it is known that even the Vilna Gaon had someone whom he would in-*



Have you heard about the directive to make for yourself a rav? Will you fulfill it?

*vite from time to time to give him mussar (rebuke), and he would do what he was instructed!*

Truth be told, this was not something new from the Rebbe. Thirty-three years prior, in 5713 (3rd day of Chol Ha'moed, 19 Tishrei), the Rebbe spoke about this in no uncertain terms:

**There are those who think that in lower matters they can understand and decide for themselves, and therefore do not need to go ask about such things from a “rav.”**

The Mishna says, “Asei lecha rav.” Every Jew needs to have a rav, whereas they think this applies only to lofty matters, but when it comes to simple things he believes in himself and he doesn’t need the influence of a rav. He can do it himself.

**And even though time has passed and he is still in the same lowly state, he still thinks it’s not worthwhile to go to a rav. He is waiting “until they will pour over him a spirit from Above,” until he will be inspired with proper fear, and then he will fix whatever needs fixing, with his own power.**

*What about someone who can’t find a suitable rav? The Rebbe goes on to address those people too:*

**They should know that it is from the counsel and seduction of the “yetzer.” Because it is certain that “the Jewish people are not widowed,” and it is impossible that there should be nobody greater than him in love and fear of Hashem, and therefore can serve as his “rav.” However, for this there has to be “asei” (also from the term meaning to coerce his own ego) and exertion – he needs to exert himself and search until he finds a “rav,” because he cannot rely on himself, and it is essential that he have a rav. And “if you toil you will find” – if he will really exert himself and search for real, he will find a “rav.”**

*Twenty-four years later, in 5737, the Rebbe again highlighted the need for mashpiim and mashpios. In order to encourage Anash to become mashpiim for those who ask them, the Rebbe instructed to publish a special printing of “kuntres Ahavas Yisrael” just for mashpiim:*

**In every place that my words will reach – a request, a plea, and beseeching (in every term of request and imploring that can possibly be employed) – they should establish this matter b’poel mamash, so that already on Chanuka... should begin the hashpa’a of those providing guidance....**

*It would seem that the Rebbe was not happy with the results of that initiative.*

## ASEI LECHA RAV – PRACTICAL GUIDE

\* Every Jew must fulfill the instruction in the mishna, “asei lecha rav” by occasionally going to someone greater than he to examine his standing and situation.

\* Fulfilling this instruction pertains to every day, and all day, and consequently it precedes all commands.

\* The rav chosen needs to have the three signs of a Jew, “bashful, compassionate, does kindness,” in an obvious way.

\* First, one needs to go to a rav that is appropriate to his level and only if that individual does not answer his question should he ask someone greater than him.

\* First, one needs to exert oneself and seek a solution to one’s doubts and only then approach a rav to clarify that which he did not achieve on his own.

\* Appointing a rav needs to be done in a way of kabbolas ol; not to choose a rav that feels “comfortable” and suits his desires.

\* One who has a rav does not need to seek another rav.

\* One should not threaten a rav to dismiss him, and one needs to do as he says with kabbolas ol unless one has attained a level that he is greater than the rav and needs to appoint a greater a rav than him.

\* Even someone who needs a lot of time to select a suitable rav should first appoint a temporary rav.

\* Ask a rav even in those matters that he will decide contrary to one’s will; on the contrary – these matters take precedence.

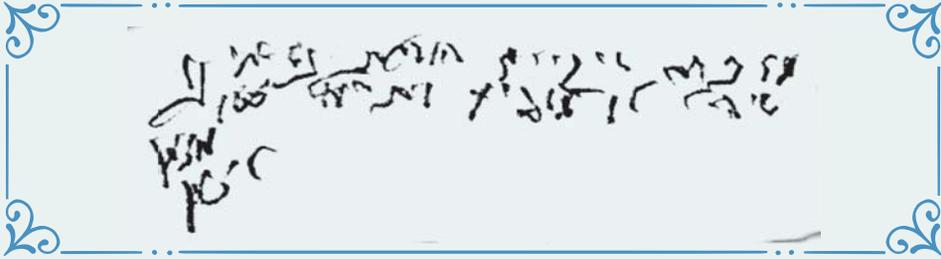
\* In particular, ask regarding those things which the teachings of Chassidus set out to clarify as these are subtle matters where mistakes are more likely.

*These practical horaos on “Asei Lecha Rav” are based on the Rebbe’s sichos and letters. A full compilation can be found in Kovetz “Asei Lecha Rav” (ed. Rabbi Zalman Hertz)*

*On Shabbos Parshas Bo 5743, the Rebbe shared his feelings on the matter:*

**When it was spoken a number of years ago about appointing mashpiim in every single place... I wanted to add in the expediting and encouraging of this matter. Therefore, since at that time the kuntres Ahavas Yisrael was published,**

**containing sayings and teachings of our Rebbeim and Nesiim... I announced that I would sign my autograph on these pamphlets and give them to each one of the mashpiim. From then until today, except for a small number, nobody has asked to receive this kuntres with my signature! Despite the fact that I suggested this on my own!**



It is imperative that you fulfill the directive of Nesieinu to have a mashpia and to consult with him from time to time

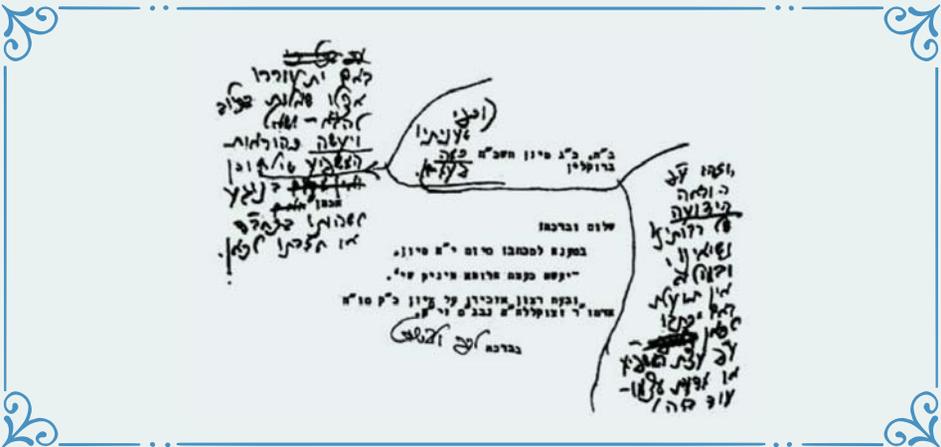


As mentioned above, in the end of 5746, the Rebbe made a big *shturem* regarding this matter and we can say that perhaps this time, the Rebbe placed the onus on every individual to appoint the rav for himself. In the *Shalsheles Haya-chas* (the brief biographical sketch of the Rebbeim published as an introduction to the Hayom Yom) which was *mugah* by the Rebbe, we find this entry at the end:

Proposes that yeshiva students periodically be tested to examine their stan-

dard of Torah learning and erudition and that everyone else — men, women and children — fulfill the directive of the Mishna (Avot 1:6,16): “Appoint for yourself a Rav” (Rabbi, teacher or spiritual guide), occasionally meeting with the “Rav” for “examination” of their level of Torah-study, service of G-d etc.

The Rebbe kept discussing this matter in the following years quite often, adding more important details about the fulfillment of this special instruction of Chazal ■



If similar questions present themselves in the future: ask – and follow – the instructions of the mashpia' (and as I've answered you several times) and this is in accordance with the famous directive of Rabboseinu Nesieinu.

Consequently, there's no benefit if you write me here, whether by advice of the mashpia or from your own volition, concerning your staying in Kfar Chabad or returning to here.



## *FAQs on* **"Asei Lecha Rav"**

We had the following one-on-one conversation with mashpia Rabbi Shlomo Sternberg of Yeshivas Tomchei Tmimim – Chovevei Torah, about "Asei lecha rav," addressing frequently asked questions on this important matter, such as "Is it okay for an older bachur as the mashpia for a younger one?", "Must my mashpia and I share the same outlook?", "How often should we talk?", and "What do I write to the Rebbe for if everything should be discussed with the mashpia?"





עשה  
לד רב

**First** of all, we would like to clarify what is unique about the Rebbe saying “asei lecha rav” as compared to what was always the seder in yeshivos Tomchei Tmimim. Wasn’t the mashpia in yeshiva also a guide in avodas Hashem?

The role of the “asei lecha rav” is different than that of a mashpia in a yeshiva. Although a mashpia in yeshiva can fill the role of “asei lecha rav,” and ideally, it should be that way, the two roles are different.

The role of a mashpia in yeshiva has always been to teach the student: teach him Chassidus, convey the tradition in learning Chassidus, teach him the Chassidic perspective, to guide him in what is avodas ha’middos, to show him the proper path in his conduct, to inspire him in avodas Hashem and hiskashrus to the Rebbe, etc.

Practically speaking, when it came to people making a hachlata in their personal avodas Hashem, depending on his circumstances, what and how to move forward, the mashpia was not necessarily involved in this. (There were situations, especially in days gone by, when the mashpia had real “mekablīm” and the mashpia would set out for them what to do and how, but that wasn’t necessarily the case.)

For the most part, these matters pertained to the Rebbe. Each person wrote to the Rebbe and when it was possible, even had yechidus, and the Rebbe guided him and said what was required of each one in avodas Hashem. This point, practical resolutions in personal matters of avodas Hashem, is what the Rebbe gave over to the “asei lecha rav.”

[This hora’ah came when it was no longer possible to have private yechidus and even when it came to letters, due to the lack of time and the volume of mail, it was not possible to respond to all of them.

As a hergesh, one can say that the Rebbe was thereby preparing us for a situation in which we cannot openly ask – such as the situation as it is after Gimmel Tammuz, and as the Rebbe instructed Chassidim in other areas to ask three rabbanim or to consult with knowledgeable friends, etc. so too, in avodas Hashem - “asei lecha rav.”]

The role of a “rav” then is to give a “psak,” halacha l’maaseh, about avodas Hashem, what and how to do based on each person’s personal circumstances. Not to be his personal teacher.

[Ed: all future references to “mashpia” in this interview is referring to the “rav” of “asei lecha rav” as explained above.]

The truth of the matter is that this principle is also learned from the logic behind the hora’ah of “asei lecha rav,” which is actually the entire point of the matter, which is – a person cannot rely on himself to make hachlatos about his avodas Hashem, because he is subjective. He is not capable of discerning what is the right thing for him to do. He can go too easy on himself due to laziness or be too tough with himself when this is unnecessary, because he does not have a true sense of where he is holding. Therefore, there needs to be someone outside of the picture, who is objective, who can decide for the individual what is proper and how to do it.

From this we understand that it is not necessary for the rav to be a big maven in everything or on the level of prophecy. It’s just that he is objective and

can help another person make a hachlata. Obviously, someone who can give a psak is someone who knows halacha. In this case, he should have knowledge of the Rebbe's hashkafa and based on this the ability to direct someone to align with the Rebbe's view. But as I said, he doesn't need to be a "baal madreiga," just somebody who can help me decide, objectively, what I should do.

What the Rebbe said regarding choosing an "asei lecha rav" is known, that the rav needs to show signs of proper conduct - "like an angel of the G-d of hosts" - i.e. that it is known that he is G-d fearing and has good middos and then he can truly help.

**Doesn't subjectivity play a part in whom is chosen for this role? Are there no ulterior motives involved? If so, what was accomplished here?**

There was once a bachur who learned in the yeshiva in Montreal who had problems with one of the mashpiim then in the yeshiva. This bachur had yechidus with the Rebbe and he poured forth all his complaints about this mashpia. The Rebbe listened and then said that this is why the Rebbe Rashab established that every yeshiva should have more than one mashpia, and everyone can decide to receive from the one more suited to him. Still, you cannot jump from one to the next.

This means that there can be someone who decides who to listen to because he really just wants to decide himself. He is just looking for a way to justify what he himself decided, and everything can be justified. If he doesn't daven at length, he points at the mashpia who doesn't daven at length; if he doesn't learn Chassidus, he points at the mashpia who isn't a big

maskil in Chassidus; if he doesn't learn Nigleh, he knows of a mashpia whose main involvement is not in learning Nigleh; if he is someone who gets into arguments, he tells about a mashpia who did the same thing; if he drinks more than four cups, he finds a mashpia who does that. Someone like this is not a mekabel at all; he is master of himself.

But then there is someone who decides who to listen to and he is still in the category of a "makebel." Yes, he chose someone suited to him, but after choosing him, he commits to him and whatever the mashpia says, he does.

Obviously, as I already said, if you're looking to him for a psak in avoda, he needs to be a baki in these matters just as a rav moreh hora'ah needs to be a baki in halacha. At least, someone with enough of the attribute of truth that when he feels he is not capable or he doesn't know what to rule on his own - all the more so when it comes to a question where he is subjective - he will personally ask someone else or refer the questioner to someone else.

Another thing to remember is that a person's yetzer hara affects only himself but has no effect on someone else. Therefore, even if my inclination toward someone is because there some things that appeal to me personally about his way of doing things it is not necessarily the case that he will tell me to do the same, because a person's nature is that he is tainted by self-interest but for someone else he can better see what is right.

**What is the nature of the relationship with this mashpia? Must he tell him everything?**

This is a bit complicated. One cannot say that because he is a mashpia, you must tell him all. Certainly, not every mistake a

person made in the past is something he needs to inform the mashpia, nor other personal things in his own life or between him and his family.

On the other hand, there are things in a person's inner world that if a mashpia does not know about them, he really cannot help him decide the right thing to do. Take a bachur who goes over to his mashpia before his birthday to ask what good hachlata he should make.

If the mashpia does not know what this bachur is contending with, what his state is in "sur mei'ra," where he is holding in "asei tov," how can he direct him? He can end up telling him to think Chassidus before davening when his davening still does not begin to be in accordance with halacha! He can tell him very lofty things in holiness when the bachur needs to invest real work in actual "turning away from evil" in terms of what he sees and listens to.

Obviously, when a bachur puts his energy into things that are beyond his level, aside from not being successful, he can end up in despair and lose any hope of changing. He sees that time after time he does not live up to the demands of the "asei lecha rav" and it breaks his heart until it seems that nothing good will come of him. This is because he was burdened with avoda that was not for him and he wasn't put on his feet in an orderly, gradual way, step by step, in accordance with his spiritual state.

The demands from each person in avodas Hashem are individualistic, in accordance with his state and situation. A person needs to correct those things he transgresses. Therefore, when it comes to actual resolutions in avodas Hashem, what and how to go about it, so that the

mashpia can decide for the bachur, in addition to his not being subjective, he must at least know in a general sense what the bachur is up to, and what things in his inner world need to be dealt with.

Just as it makes no sense to hide from his mashpia the good things he does, so that the mashpia doesn't tell him to do things he has already been doing, so too, he cannot hide the not-good things. Otherwise, consulting with a mashpia has no point and it won't help him move forward in his avodas Hashem. This is aside from fooling himself (and the mashpia, of course) into thinking that it's enough that he consults and asks.

**That would mean that the relationship with the mashpia needs to be one of closeness.**

Not necessarily. There are people who can obey and receive only from someone greater than themselves. But, most of the time, yes, it's harder to be open with someone loftier. As a rule, it doesn't work with someone greater. Speaking openly is easier with someone you feel closer to. With that said, as I mentioned, it depends on the person.

**There are people who, by nature, don't open up to others, or who feel that even if they open up there isn't anyone who will understand them.**

This mainly comes from the fear that if he talks about his real state of being, the mashpia's view of him will change and he won't be what he was previously. This definitely makes it hard to find a mashpia. This is despite, as we said, not having to tell all. Still, on some level the mashpia does need to be aware of the bachur's situation.

Therefore, the first thing is to find someone he can relate to. Just like it's easier to speak with a friend, it will be easier to speak with a mashpia that he feels close to. In order to create this bond, he doesn't need to start just by telling his deficiencies. It should be gradual by first sharing things about his everyday life, his daily experiences, what excites him, etc. and then slowly he will succeed in finding an inner channel of communications with that mashpia that will sometimes enable him to also tell him of deficiencies.

It's important for a bachur to understand that the mashpia himself has contended with the animal soul and he understands that it's human not to be perfect and that the life of a bachur isn't always easy. When a bachur reveals things to him, he doesn't lose the mashpia's respect for him; on the contrary, the mashpia respects him more since everyone contends with something and only those who are serious and responsible are willing to reveal this and work on it seriously.

He can actually discuss this with the mashpia, obviously someone he relies on to retain confidentiality, about how to get to a point where he feels he can be understood and comfortable enough to open up etc.

**Can a person choose a mashpia with whom he feels very close and able to talk to about his spiritual state while not agreeing with him on certain areas of hashkafa?**

Obviously, when choosing a mashpia, the one thing you cannot compromise on is that the mashpia has to have the Rebbe's hashkafa. He must know the Rebbe's sichos and hora'os so he can guide a bachur as the Rebbe wishes. Since the whole idea of a mashpia is to help someone understand

.....

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.....

what the Rebbe wants and how to live up to his expectations, then first and foremost he must be mekushar to the Rebbe.

Even with hiskashrus to the Rebbe, sometimes there are different views and it's possible for there to be someone who understands the Rebbe this way and someone another way, but both are certainly truly mekusharim to the Rebbe. Still, although one naturally is drawn to someone who is more compatible with his own style of avoda, it would seem that it's okay to choose someone who sees certain things of the Rebbe differently than his understanding since, in most cases, when it comes to practical application in avodas Hashem, you can rely on the mashpia to guide the bachur appropriately. Obviously, that is true where he has no personal stake in that matter.

So it really is possible, since if there are things that the bachur feels that he can't ask his mashpia because he knows it won't align with his hashkafa, he can ask someone else about that topic. He shouldn't do this to his detriment, i.e.

deciding on his own which topics to ask someone else because then the whole idea of “asei lecha rav” goes out the window and he’s back to being a bachur who is his own balabus. He should ask his mashpia permission after explaining why he wants to ask elsewhere.

### **How frequently should one be in touch with one’s mashpia?**

There are no rules; to each his own. What’s important is: 1) it should be on a regular basis, whether once a week, once a month or more, but there must be consistency. 2) The mashpia should establish the frequency as he sees fit because a person can be subjective even regarding the level of consistency.

### **Does the mashpia need to be local?**

Yeshiva bachurim should first look for someone among the mashpiim on staff. The advantage of a mashpia on the staff of the yeshiva is threefold: 1) because of his job, he is constantly involved in Chassidus and the Rebbe’s inyanim, so we can assume that he has an awareness of what is demanded of a bachur and how to guide him better towards the truth. 2) In most cases, he doesn’t need the bachur to do a whole reveal about himself since the mashpia can see for himself what’s going on with the bachur. 3) This point is also the answer to your question – being nearby makes possible what is impossible at a distance. Speaking face to face is easier than the phone, etc. Clarifying matters happens with more thoughtfulness and consideration.

Furthermore, out of sight, out of mind. Often, being at a distance does not promote the optimum mashpia relationship. Still, in the event that there is someone far away who knows the bachur well and is close to him, and he has the

time for him, and there is a convenient way to be in touch regularly, and it actually works, then despite all the advantages of an on-site mashpia, this is better.

There is no Shulchan Aruch about the details. You do what works. There’s a goal which is someone should help him constantly grow in avodas Hashem and that he won’t be the only one deciding so that his *yeshus* won’t get involved and won’t deter him from advancing, nor push him to taking on more than he’s ready for. This is the goal and you need to do what will achieve the goal. Ultimately, every person needs to decide what has the greater likelihood of working and do that. If, after doing it one way he sees that it’s not working, he should try something else until he achieves the goal.

### **Can the Rebbe be asked about avodas Hashem (whether through the Igros Kodesh or as the Rebbe once said, “The Rebbe will find a way to respond.”) or must it be through a mashpia?**

Of course you can ask the Rebbe about inyanei avodas Hashem just as you can ask about other things. The truth is that even then, after the Rebbe said “asei lecha rav,” some Chassidim continued asking the Rebbe and some got answers. And since the Rebbe said he would find a way to respond, surely there are no limitations and the Rebbe’s answer can come through the mashpia.

However – and this is something that you really need to feel - we still need “asei lecha rav” because there too one can be subjective with the Rebbe’s answer. When people received a direct instruction from the Rebbe, true, there wasn’t room for questions. But since today that’s not happening, and an answer from the Rebbe comes in accordance to the understanding

of the questioner, how does he know that what seems to him as a sign that he got from the Rebbe or what he understands of the “letter” he got from the Rebbe, is the true “psak” from the Rebbe? The same reason [for “asei lecha rav”] still applies - just as a person can’t decide on his own what to do, so too, he cannot decide on his own what the Rebbe’s answer is.

So if someone wrote to the Rebbe and he thinks he has an answer, he must get his mashpia’s approval. Without that, he reverts to being his own balabus and he has no proof that what he decided is not from the yetzer hara and has nothing to do with the Rebbe.

#### **Is it okay to have an older bachur as the mashpia for a younger bachur?**

The ideal way, as mentioned, is to have as a mashpia someone who is the mashpia in yeshiva. True, there are many ways in which a bachur can be more helpful than an older person because of the friendship and closeness between them. Therefore, if a bachur feels more open with him, and – the main thing is – that it’s more helpful, then he should have an older bachur as a mashpia. Obviously, he needs to be a *yerei shomayim* and have proper Chassidische conduct.

At the same time, it’s important to remember that with age comes wisdom and “elder Torah scholars, their minds become more settled every day,” and years of experience confer greater abilities to direct a bachur and give good advice (of course, there are always exceptions and it all depends on the circumstances). In addition, there are topics that are not appropriate to discuss with someone who isn’t married, even if he’s older, which is why it is sometimes better to pick an older person to begin with.

As for those who have undertaken being a mashpia, what are their responsibilities? If when it comes to a practicing rav, i.e. an actual posek, he must be exceedingly careful not to cause any harm; so too, and even more so, a mashpia must be careful in his spiritual guidance so that there not be any pitfalls.

This is the meaning of what we say in Vidui, “yo’atznu ra,” that it wasn’t the intention to give bad advice. Rather, he gave counsel in an area he doesn’t know, or he wasn’t sufficiently knowledgeable about the Rebbe’s view on the subject. We need to be very careful about this. We need to be able to say, “I don’t know” and refer the question to someone who knows.

Furthermore, if with the instructions “asei lecha rav,” the Rebbe was looking out for us, in a time when we wouldn’t be able to ask as we had been used to asking, like the situation after Gimmel Tammuz, this teaches us what the role of a mashpia is. It’s to direct as the Rebbe would have directed if he could ask the Rebbe. That means that the mashpia’s guidance not only can’t oppose what the Rebbe said; the mashpia needs to find the answers to everything in the Rebbe’s teachings and to constantly tell his talmidim: this is what the Rebbe said when asked about this. Similar to a posek halacha who usually is not innovating in halacha but is stating the halacha as it’s written in Shulchan Aruch by applying the law as written to each situation. So too, with *siyata dishmaya* and the *kochos* the Rebbe provides, the mashpia will be able to direct a mushpa as the Rebbe would wish.■

*This interview was originally published in the "Derech Tomim" journal of Yeshivas Tomchei Tmimim Ohr Yehuda and was translated into English by Hatomim staff.*



## ***The Royal Guard***

For decades, the Rebbe walked every Shabbos from 770 to his home and back. A few yards away were bachurim who followed at a respectful distance until the Rebbe entered his house • Why the need for security? What unusual things did the Rebbe's escorts see over the years? How did the Rebbe react to people who spoke to him on the street? • Fascinating anecdotes heard from those who accompanied the Rebbe over the years.





וּשְׁמוֹר  
הַגֵּל  
וְנִרְתִּיבוֹתַי

**R'** Yosef Yitzchok Gopin: “For a period of time, I was in charge of the list of bachurim who would escort the Rebbe on Shabbos when he walked home from 770 and back, whether on Friday night or Shabbos day. I myself was one of the bachurim who escorted the Rebbe. We always walked several paces behind the Rebbe, not getting too close, but we kept him within sight.

“There usually wasn’t anything extraordinary that happened, but there was always something to see and to learn. I remember escorting the Rebbe one Shabbos afternoon. There was no farbrengen that Shabbos. The Rebbe would go home late, at 3:30 or even 4:00. That Shabbos it was pouring. People usually walk more quickly in the rain, but I noticed that the Rebbe walked calmly as though it was the nicest weather, with his hands in his coat pockets.

“I remember a wintry Shabbos when it had snowed, and because of the frigid temperatures the snow had frozen and it became ice. It was so dangerous that you couldn’t walk without stumbling. But the Rebbe walked quickly, so quickly that we bachurim couldn’t keep up.

“I understood that there is always something to learn. By the Rebbe there is no ‘it just happened that way.’”

## **GREETING PEOPLE**

It’s about a five to seven-minute walk from Beis Chayeinu to the Rebbe’s home at 1304 President Street. There were times the Rebbe made the trip on foot, but usually, during the week, the Rebbe’s secretary would be waiting at the house in the morning with the car. The same would be for the return trip.



On Shabbos, the Rebbe made his way on foot (until the years when the Rebbe and Rebbetzin would lodge in the library building next door to 770). On Shabbos eve, the Rebbe would usually walk home at about 9-9:30, summer or winter, and on Shabbos day, when there was no farbrengen, the Rebbe would return home at about 3:30. When there would be a farbrengen, the Rebbe would go home after the farbrengen, close to sunset. At those times, the Rebbe would walk speedily, as opposed to his normal Shabbos pace, which was more relaxed.

It is fascinating to read the diary account of R' Sholom Dovber Volpo, written in Cheshvan 1965 when he was a bachur in 770, describing the Rebbe walking the city streets:

“Every time one sees the Rebbe *shlita*, it provides an infusion of new energy to keep learning more and more. The Rebbe can be seen six times a day, at Mincha and Maariv, when he arrives in the morning and leaves in the evening, and he then returns and goes home again at night. The Rebbe walks alone on the street without any escorts, and whenever he sees young or old he says *shalom* with a pleasant countenance. Only when the Rebbe goes home very late at night, at 4 or 5 (in the morning), namely on Sundays and Thursdays when there is *yechidus*, is he followed by two bachurim who walk at some distance from him, since at night there are safety concerns.

“On Shabbos eve after the prayers, the Rebbe remains in his room for about two hours and only then leaves for home. On Shabbos day, when there is a farbrengen, he only leaves after Mincha. On such occasions, immediately after Mincha the Rebbe enters his room, and all the

hundreds of men and bachurim go out to the entrance of 770 and the sidewalk of Eastern Parkway, and all the children line up in a long row. The Rebbe exits and they all begin to sing ‘Hoshia es amecha,’ and the Rebbe walks past the children and signals with his hand for them to sing. Afterward, they all walk behind the Rebbe until he makes the turn at the corner, and all of them follow him with their eyes until he passes from sight. It is an amazing display to behold, especially the singing of the children.”

## **THE REBBE WAS ACCOSTED ON THE STREET**

In the early years of his leadership, the Rebbe walked on the street alone, without any secretaries or aides. However, in the later 50's, it was felt that it would be appropriate to provide the Rebbe with an escort of young men from the yeshiva in 770. The bachurim saw this as a great merit, and obviously everybody wanted to take part. Therefore, a rotation schedule was implemented, with two *tmimim* assigned per week with first priority given to bridegrooms in the week leading up to the Shabbos of their being called up to the Torah, and then the rest of the *tmimim*. The first one appointed to oversee the operation was the *tamim*, Berel (Shalom Dovber) Futerfas.

The route was fairly consistent. Upon exiting 770, the Rebbe would walk along the sidewalk of Eastern Parkway until the corner of Brooklyn Avenue, where he would turn left. At some point, the Rebbe would cross to the other side of the avenue until reaching President Street, where he would turn right until the entrance of his house.

When the Rebbe would arrive home, the bachurim would wait outside, since immediately upon entering the house he would go to the front windows and extend his hand from behind the curtains. This happened every time, and only then would the escorts return to 770.

The bachurim would walk a few yards behind the Rebbe, to maintain a constant sight line and see to it that everything was fine. However, there were some anomalous events, such as when a large black man approached the Rebbe and began to talk to him. Those accompanying from a distance could not hear what he said, but it appeared like he was asking for money. Before they had a chance to react, the Rebbe exclaimed in a loud voice, “Eh,” and the man panicked and ran.

R’ Saadia Maatuf, whose diaries from his kevutza year have been published here, describes in detail another time, during the month of Sivan 1973, when there was a heightened concern over the Rebbe’s security in which the police got involved (see issue #1069).

## **THE REBBE AND THE REBBETZIN MEET ON THE STREET CORNER**

Avi Baitelman, a grandson of R’ Lipa Brennan, recounts a story that occurred with his grandfather when he was a bachur in 770:

It was on the eve of Shabbos Shuva 1974, when he was a guest at the home of a friend who lived on President Street, right across from the Rebbe’s house. When he left the house after the meal, it was about 11 o’clock at night. Suddenly, he noticed the Rebbetzin standing on the porch at the front of the house.

The Rebbetzin saw my grandfather and motioned for him to come over. He crossed the street and went up the steps. The Rebbetzin said that it was very late, and the Rebbe is usually home by this time to make kiddush. “Did the Rebbe daven Maariv already?” she asked.

“Yes.”

“Maybe there was a farbrengen or a maamar tonight?”

“No.”

The Rebbetzin asked him to go to 770 and see what was going on, and to come back and report to her.

My grandfather began to run towards 770. When he got to the corner of Brooklyn and Eastern Parkway, he saw that the Rebbe had just left 770 and was walking home. He began to run back to the Rebbetzin who had been standing at her house, but when he got to the corner of Brooklyn and President, he saw the Rebbetzin standing on the corner. My grandfather told the Rebbetzin that the Rebbe was on his way, and turned to head back to the dormitory.

The Rebbetzin called him back and said that it was now late at night, and would he please wait with her until the Rebbe arrived. My grandfather felt uncomfortable. Understandably, he did not want the Rebbe to see him when he encountered the Rebbetzin. She realized his hesitation and pointed out, “It is not proper to leave a woman standing alone on a street corner in New York City.”

Having no choice, he stood there behind the Rebbetzin, close to the bushes of the corner house. When the Rebbe appeared, my grandfather pushed himself into the bushes. When the Rebbe got even closer, he saw the Rebbetzin standing there



on the corner. The Rebbe made a hand motion, as if to ask, “What are you doing here?” The Rebbetzin answered whatever she answered, but my grandfather did not hear what she said. The Rebbe and Rebbetzin proceeded to walk together with the escort of the tmimim behind them, and my grandfather joined the escort.

The Rebbe walked quickly, and the Rebbetzin walked slower. After a moment, the Rebbe glanced to his left and did not see the Rebbetzin. He turned around and saw the Rebbetzin walking slowly. When she caught up, they continued to walk together, and once again the Rebbe walked more quickly and had to stop for her. This happened three times until they reached the house.

When they got to the steps of the house, the Rebbe turned around towards my grandfather and said, “*Ah dank* (thanks)” and “*Gut Shabbos*.” They went up the steps, the Rebbe opened the door for the Rebbetzin and they both went inside.



R’ Shalom Yaakov Chazan recalls a Friday night when a tremendous downpour began exactly at the time that the Rebbe left 770. The Rebbe was wearing a coat, but in a deluge like that a coat is rather useless.

“I thought that the Rebbe would return to his room and wait for a lull in the rain, but the Rebbe only raised the collar of his coat to protect a bit against the rain, and began to walk calmly towards President Street as if there was no rain.

“At a certain point, the coat became so drenched that it appeared that the weight of the coat was making the walk difficult for the Rebbe.

“When he reached the junction of Brooklyn Avenue and Eastern Parkway, the roadway was completely flooded with water. The Rebbe walked into the stream and his shoes filled with water.



“We thought then that the reason that the Rebbe went despite the heavy rain was in order not to worry the Rebbetzin with an unexpected delay.”

## **LATE NIGHT TEA FROM THE REBBETZIN**

At a certain point, it was decided that the Rebbe should be accompanied by the bachurim on his way from his home to 770 on Shabbos and Yom Tov mornings too. The tmimim would stand not far from the door to the Rebbe’s house and wait for the Rebbe to exit, which was usually at a set time. The Rebbetzin would look out the window to make sure they were standing at the ready, and after about ten minutes the Rebbe would leave his house and turn towards 770.

The Rebbe would pass the corner of Brooklyn and Eastern Parkway, where on the other side of the parkway was the “Kerestirer mikva,” which had been built by one of the Admorim who had lived

in Crown Heights. Most of the bachurim would use this mikva. At the time that the Rebbe would pass, there would be bachurim on their way to the mikva. Some of them would run away when they saw the Rebbe approaching, but most of them would just press up against a wall waiting for the Rebbe to pass.

During the period of heightened tensions and hostility of a certain community against Chabad, there was a need to keep watch around the Rebbe’s house day and night. One night, the Rebbetzin exited the house at one in the morning, and brought the tmimim keeping watch a thermos with hot tea.

In 1980, R’ Zalman Gurary bought the house next door to the Rebbe, and from that point the bachurim keeping watch on Shabbos would be based in that house. Once, the assigned bachurim were late, and the lone bachur who was in the house saw the Rebbe suddenly leave his house. Having no choice, he went outside and

began to accompany the Rebbe. When the Rebbe saw him, he turned towards his house and gave a nod with his head, apparently to reassure the Rebbetzin that there was someone to walk with him.

R' Ezra Arad tells of one Shabbos when he and R' Binyamin Zilberstrom were standing guard at the Rebbe's house. On Shabbos morning, exactly when the Rebbe left his house, the mailman arrived and wanted to leave the mail at the door. The Rebbe walked a bit, and when he crossed the street he turned to look back sideways towards the mailman. The bachurim picked up on the subtle hint, that the Rebbe was concerned that the mailman might ring the bell, and one of them ran across the street to ask him not to ring the bell, and the man answered in the affirmative. Only then did the Rebbe turn his head back and continue on his way to 770.

In preparing this article, the writer spoke with a number of those who had been involved back in the day, including R' Yosef Yitzchok Gopin, who not only escorted the Rebbe on many occasions but was in charge of the rotation in the early summer of 1974. "Although I was in charge, I did not take too many spots in the rotation for myself. I was happy to give the opportunity to as many bachurim as possible."

**Did the Rebbe ever turn around to the bachurim that accompanied him?**

As far as I know, no.

**There are those who say that the Rebbe was careful to always cross Brooklyn Avenue before he reached the church, in order not to walk near there. Is this true?**

I also heard that, but I personally saw a number of times the Rebbe walking down

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**During the period of heightened tensions and hostility of a certain community against Chabad, there was a need to keep watch around the Rebbe's house day and night. One night, the Rebbetzin exited the house at one in the morning, and brought the tmimim keeping watch a thermos with hot tea.**

.....

Brooklyn Avenue towards his house, and I did not see the Rebbe being particular about not passing near that place.

R' Hershel Krinsky told about how when he was a bachur escorting the Rebbe from 770 to his house, the Rebbe walked on the sidewalk in front of the church. A Lubavitch couple appeared, coming the other way, and they did not notice the Rebbe walking towards them. At the last moment, they noticed the Rebbe and quickly moved aside, going up on the grass between the sidewalk and the fence of the church property. The Rebbe turned to them and pointed out that it was not proper to stand on grass that belonged to a church.

One Shabbos (it was a Shabbos Mevarchim in the winter of 5734, although I don't recall exactly which Shabbos), the streets were icy and unusually slippery. People walking the streets were slipping and falling, and it was really dangerous. On that Shabbos night, the Rebbe found

it difficult to go up the steps of his house without slipping, and it became necessary to extend him a hand. Whoever it was, saw to it that some gentiles came that night, removed the ice and spread salt, so that the Rebbe could walk securely the next morning. Following that Shabbos, they installed the iconic railings at the entrance to the Rebbe's home.

I remember that on Yom Kippur night I walked the Rebbe to his house, and the Rebbe wore a flowery silk scarf that was unusually colorful. That only happened on Yom Kippur.

## 24 HOUR SECURITY OUTSIDE 770

In the month of Nissan 5750/1990, there were warnings of a possible attempt against the Rebbe on the part of the PLO. The warning was transmitted in secret, but the Rebbe spoke about it publicly in a sicha said on 28 Nissan 5750. He spoke of the fact that the PLO had sent out a notice to all its branches around the world to carry out attacks against the "enemies of the Jewish people" [said euphemistically], may it not come to pass. The Rebbe encouraged people to say more Tehillim and increase the study of Torah.

Because of the threat, stricter security measures were taken around the Rebbe, such as reinforcing the windows to the Rebbe's room and security guards posted outside of 770, 24 hours a day.

In the diary called *Shnas Nissim B'Beis Chayeinu*, it is recorded that the Rebbe went to the Ohel at that time:

"When he went out to the car, he held a page with a *kol korei* printed on it (to add in Torah, tefilla and tzedaka, relating to what he spoke about on 28 Nissan about

the PLO). A police escort drove in front of the car. That's the way it was the last few times that he went to the Ohel, 'an honor guard.' For this reason, there have been shifts of tmimim standing guard the past few nights near 770."

The secretary, Rabbi Binyamin Klein *a"h* said that two hours before that surprising sicha, Prime Minister Yitzchak Shamir called and said the Rebbe should be told that the PLO was planning terrorist acts outside of Eretz Yisrael, and according to information they had, their target was the Rebbe. Shamir asked R' Klein to convey this to the Rebbe and to ask the Rebbe to pray that it be good.

Some time after that, there were knocks at the door of Rabbi Leibel Groner. There were two policemen at the door. They told R' Groner that they had just received an anonymous call that said the Rebbe was on the PLO's wanted list. The police officers asked R' Leibel to change the windows in the Rebbe's office for reinforced windows and this was done a few days later.

Apprehensions also rose after Rabbi Meir Kahane, *Hy"d*, was murdered in New York. The secretaries were even more worried for the Rebbe then. R' Groner decided to have guards posted near the Rebbe's office. The guards, bachurim from 770, had an emergency button directly to the NYC police department. A permanent police guard was also posted near 770. Two guards were hired for when dollars for tzedaka were distributed on Sunday, a man and woman who patrolled the line and looked for suspicious people.

When the Rebbe went to the Ohel he had a police escort and there was also a special escort car with bachurim.

On 10 Elul 5751, the driver of the escort car did not drive carefully and ran



over a black child, Gavin Cato. The blacks in the neighborhood began huge riots, which led to demonstrations, the burning of cars, looting and violence throughout Crown Heights. That night, the hooligans murdered Yankel Rosenbaum, a bachur from Australia, *Hy”d*.

An anti-Semitic minister named Al Sharpton began inciting blacks after the unfortunate and tragic death of Cato. He said the one responsible for the death was none other than the Rebbe.

Security around 770 was increased, particularly around the Rebbe. Every time the Rebbe made a trip to the Ohel, he was accompanied by several police cars and motorcycles. During the dollar

distribution, dozens of police stood the length of the line.

The Rebbe was grateful for the security and was warm to the policemen. At the end of the dollar distribution, the police would pass by him and they received an extra dollar, “for the security.”

In a sicha delivered that week, the Rebbe referred several times to the phrase, “fifty men running before him,” saying that in truth, every Jew ought to have fifty people running before him.

Before Tishrei 5752, the police chief asked R’ Groner to enclose the Rebbe’s bima with reinforced glass. When R’ Leibel repeated this to the Rebbe, the Rebbe firmly rejected the idea. ■



## ***Bedford & Dean: Tomchei Tmimim Meets The New World***

The first thing the Rebbe Rayatz did after coming off the boat on 9 Adar 5700 (1940), was to replant Tomchei Tmimim in America. It began with a group of bachurim learning at the Oneg Shabbos Shul in East Flatbush and quickly spread out to tens of branches all over the American continent. Raising American boys in the spirit of the authentic Tomchei Tmimim was nothing short of a revolution in the Jewish world, and it continues to benefit from it to this very day.





לתומך  
התמימי  
ביום הדין

**The** Drottingholm blew a long blast of its whistle and slowly entered pier 97 on West 57 in New York on 9 Adar, 5700/1940. A gangplank was soon placed and the Rebbe Rayatz debarked along with his family, all survivors of the Holocaust.

The Rebbe and those with him were exhausted and broken. They had escaped with not much more than the clothes on their backs. Most of their valuable belongings and the huge library, pride of Lubavitch, had been left behind in Eastern Europe.

After a festive reception attended by thousands, the Rebbe arrived at the Greystone hotel. At a smaller reception at the hotel the Rebbe surprised those present when he dropped this bombshell: I have the pleasure of announcing a decision that was made at a special meeting of unique individuals of Anash a few hours ago, that at the Oneg Shabbos shul, yeshivas Tomchei Tmimim Lubavitch of America will open tomorrow!

The Rebbe made it clear that he wasn't operating under any illusions. Though he had come to modern America where nearly everybody removed their beard, he had brought with him the authentic image of Eastern European Jewry. The Rebbe did not suffice with this pronouncement but asked people for their assistance:

**I hope to Hashem that the rabbanim, geonim, mosdos Torah and supporters of Torah with fear of Heaven, together with my friends Anash at their head, will come to my aid in perpetuating my work in spreading Torah and fear of Heaven and in communal work.**

Apparently the Rebbe's devotees did not feel the same determination and courage as he did. They did not want him

to live under the illusion that his dreams were realistic and they did not want him to be made a fool of, and so they tried to cool his enthusiasm as the Rebbe himself described in his diary (printed in Likkutei Dibburim):

Two distinguished people came to me, long-time American citizens, from the best of my devoted and loyal friends and they said to me, "We heard what you said at the reception and we attended the founding meeting of yeshivas Tomchei Tmimim Lubavitch in America, but unfortunately we must tell you about the pathetic spiritual state of America. We are saddened to tell you that your great hopes of spreading Torah and fear of Heaven and kosher Jewish education as you imagine it from the Jewish home in Europe is not at all realistic in America, despite the greatest efforts.

"We must save you from a catastrophic state and embarrassing failure and protect the honor of your great ancestors, the holy Rebbeim, may their merit protect us."

The two of them explained the American mentality:

"America is a land that consumes the great and worthy; it consumes the greatest of the great who just arrived here and within a short time turns him, without any mercy, into the smallest of the small. America is a land of fleeting fanatical enthusiasm which ends in coldness and indifference. It has happened dozens of times before that a very enthusiastic reception in which gedolei Yisrael were honored, immediately sank into the American coldness and those honorable gedolei Yisrael were forgotten and abandoned as though they were outside the camp.



TALMIDIM OF ACHEI TMIMIM IN THE 1930'S. FROM RIGHT TO LEFT: DOVBER BAUMGARTEN, AVROHOM DOV HECHT, YITZCHOK EBERT, YITZCHOK GREENBERG, YITZCHOK DOVID GRONER, ARYEH LEIB EBERT, BEREL LEVY

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“... We are telling you only a small portion of what we need to say. We want you to have a clear picture of the situation so you will know how to deal with your mission - the work of askanus in America.”

The Rebbe was single-minded in his ideas but that doesn't mean that he was indifferent to these warnings. On the contrary, they shook him up:

**It is unnecessary to describe how I felt when I heard this from my most loyal and beloved followers and the tears that fell from my eyes when I recited my first Shema in America ...**

One week after the Rebbe set foot in America, the first Chassidic yeshiva was founded. On 15 Adar II, Shushan Purim, about twenty bachurim gathered in the Oneg Shabbos shul in East Flatbush in Brooklyn and started yeshivas Tomchei Tmimim Lubavitch in America.

The combination of those words “Tomchei Tmimim” and “America” was absolutely incongruous, but the Rebbe put them together, both in word and in deed.

On that same historic day when the yeshiva opened, the Rebbe addressed the bachurim and set forth the principle policy rules:

**Not only will the talmidim of Tomchei Tmimim raise up, with Hashem's help, the glory of Torah in the United States and Canada but it will also set the tone for the religious yeshivos that already exist ...**

**My children, you ought to be happy that you have merited the great *zechus* to be talmidim in the holy yeshiva of Tomchei Tmimim Lubavitch. May Hashem bless you, and the friends who will join you in the future, that it should be fulfilled in all of you the wishes of our holy leader that all who see them will recognize them as blessed seed of G-d (Sefer HaSichos 5700).**

## **“THEY WILL LEARN IN MY YESHIVOS”**

If you want to understand how impossible founding Chassidic yeshivos in the spirit of Lubavitch was in America of those days, read the following:

When the Rebbe Rayatz visited the United States in 1930, the idea had already been proposed to start a Chabad yeshiva in New York, where a few Lubavitch Chassidim lived at that time. However, the spiritual climate at the time was such that even the Rebbe Rayatz concluded that

the time was not right for a yeshiva that required its students to attain spiritual heights of holiness and purity. But the Rebbe knew that the day would yet come.

When the Rebbe returned to Europe, R' Yochanan Gordon had yechidus with him, around Rosh Hashana 5691/1930. The Rebbe told him that he heard from R' Gordon's brothers who lived in the US that they wanted their brother to come to America too, but he refused. R' Yochanan affirmed this and said, "I am apprehensive because of the children. My brothers' children were corrupted and left the derech and I don't want my children to be corrupted."

The Rebbe said, "Go to America and I promise you that your children will remain erliche Yidden." R' Yochanan was still not convinced and he said that he wanted them to learn in the Rebbe's yeshivos. The Rebbe said prophetically, "I promise you that they will learn in my yeshivos."

R' Yochanan's son, R' Sholom Dovber, later said that when his father returned home he was shaken up by the Rebbe's promise. "To promise that they will remain erliche Yidden is one thing; that is unusual, but even in America there can be an exception to the rule. But what does it mean that they will learn in the Rebbe's yeshivos? How can we dream about something like that in America?"

R' Yochanan waited years for the fulfillment of his big dream. When the Rebbe Rayatz arrived in America and his children began learning in the newly founded American branch of yeshivas Tomchei Tmimim, the Rebbe's prophecy was fulfilled.

## **THE YESHIVA WILL BE A BASTION OF TORAH**

In the years prior to the Rebbe's arrival, Achei Tmimim had been founded and was being run by Rabbi Yisroel Jacobson. It offered shiurim for a group of yeshiva bachurim a few times a week. In Elul, 1939, six of these bachurim left America to go and learn in the presence of the Rebbe Rayatz. The advent of World War II curtailed their stay, and they returned home not long after they had come.

At the beginning of Shevat, 5700, the Rebbe suggested that Achei Tmimim be transformed into yeshivas Tomchei Tmimim but this plan was not implemented.

When the Rebbe arrived in the US, his first mission was to found Tomchei Tmimim in New York. His health was poor, as was his financial state, but this did not deter him from going on the offensive where many gedolim before him had failed.

The Rebbe had a hard time walking and he regularly suffered from physical ailments. He also had numerous debts (as a result of his work in helping the Jews of the Soviet Union). Another person in his shoes, would seek peace and quiet after all he endured, but the Rebbe was not just another penniless refugee and he devoted himself to his work. He did not even allow himself one day of rest.

The yeshiva officially opened a week after he arrived. His son-in-law, Rabbi Shmaryahu Gurary (Rashag), was appointed the acting director of the yeshiva. Rabbi Shmuel Levitin and Rabbi Yisroel Jacobson were appointed menahalim and mashpiim, and Rabbi Mordechai Mentlick the rosh yeshiva.

Rabbi Shneur Zalman Gurary was appointed in charge of the Achei Tmimim division for youth.

The 770 building was purchased at the end of 5700 and with the encouragement of the Rebbe, the yeshiva moved (at the end of Cheshvan 5701) into the building.

Yeshivas Tomchei Tmimim and its divisions were under the supervision of the Rebbe Rayatz, at first as “director of operations” and then as president. The Rebbe made no concessions and wanted the authentic spirit of Lubavitch to permeate the American yeshiva just as it did in Otvotsk, Rostov and Lubavitch. He invested great efforts to preserve the spirit of Lubavitch and the spirit of learning in the yeshiva. He constantly guided the hanhala of the yeshiva on topics of chinuch and wanted to be informed in detail about the conduct of each talmid, not only when they learned but in their free time as well. He wrote many letters on these topics, some of which are printed in his Igros Kodesh.

In the months to come, additional students joined the yeshiva, which had acquired a good reputation. In HaPardes dated Shevat, 1941, there was an article about the yeshiva’s successes:

This mosad immediately struck roots and began to grow and thrive, with



FORMER SITE OF TOMCHEI TMIMIM IN NEW YORK (BEDFORD AND DEAN)

Hashem’s help, and attracted excellent talmidim, gedolei Torah and yirah who diligently study Torah. The number of talmidim is growing, thank G-d, and in the future this mosad will be, with Hashem’s help, a magnificent edifice, a bastion of Torah for pride and glory, with which we can be consoled for the famous yeshivas Tomchei Tmimim Lubavitch which, due to our many sins, collapsed in the storm of war in Europe.

## HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS START A YESHIVA

On 2 Cheshvan, 5702/1941, nine bachurim from yeshivas Tomchei Tmimim in Otvotsk set foot on Canadian soil. They had spent a period of time in

Shanghai and after much effort on the part of the Rebbe Rayatz, they managed to make it to Canada. The Rebbe did not allow them to rest from their ordeals but immediately told them to open Tomchei Tmimim. The very next day, the new yeshiva opened in the Nusach Ari shul. Rabbi Yitzchok Hendel a"h was appointed menahel.

The Rebbe Rayatz didn't delay and a week later he sent them a long letter with instructions about how to interact with the townspeople, as well as specific instructions regarding the talmidim of the new yeshiva: to review maamarei Chassidus on Shabbos in the two Chabad shuls in Montreal, for the tmimim to eat the Shabbos meals together, during the meal to sing Chabad niggunim after the bachurim review Chassidus, and to tell Chassidishe stories.

The tmimim enthusiastically went about fulfilling the Rebbe's instructions. They made much publicity amongst the townspeople and recruited a number of talmidim in the shuls. In the weeks to come, the mashpia R' Shmuel Levitin was sent to help establish the new yeshiva. In less than a month, the nine bachurim had enrolled 24 young talmidim, for whom they set up two classes of a yeshiva called Achei Tmimim.

The Rebbe Rayatz was not satisfied with this, and about a week later he sent a letter to R' Levitin in which he complained about only having 24 talmidim. He gave practical ideas on how to recruit more students. Even after R' Levitin returned to New York they continued expanding the yeshiva on their own.

The yeshiva grew and, for lack of other options, it was located in the local orphanage where they were given a few

rooms. The Rebbe simultaneously began asking Anash and askanim in Montreal to buy a building for the yeshiva. The Rebbe sent letters to askanim who helped the yeshiva a lot and told them not to be concerned about their money but to see to it that the yeshiva got a suitable building and Hashem would repay them.

In the middle of the summer of that year they were able to buy a big building for the yeshiva. In honor of the Chanukas HaBayis that took place on 15 Kislev, 5704, the Rebbe sent a letter to the talmidim of the yeshiva in which he blessed them and the kehilla at large, led by the rabbanim, on the occasion of purchasing the building with blessings of mazal tov.

A very formal celebration took place with the participation of the rabbanim of the city and guest rabbis led by Rashag, the Rebbe's son-in-law and acting menahel, who traveled to Montreal for the occasion.

To conclude this chapter, let us look at a letter the Rebbe wrote in which he showers unusual praise on the talmidim who started the yeshiva in Montreal:

**With Hashem's help, with your mesirus nefesh, with enormous effort and sweat, you have established, thank G-d, the yeshiva in Montreal which was – like other cities – dry of all moisture of Torah and without etc. etc. and with Hashem's kindness the talmidim ha'tmimim were able to build a tower of Torah and light on the garbage heaps of Montreal.** (Igros Kodesh Admor Rayatz, vol. 7, p 383)

In the years that followed, the yeshiva grew and it exists till today. It is considered one of the flagship Tomchei Tmimim yeshivos, a yeshiva that began with nine bachurim who escaped Europe

and arrived with little besides the clothes on their backs.

## A NETWORK OF YESHIVOS

It's amazing to see how over the course of a few years the Rebbe managed, in his poor health and with little resources, to create "something out of nothing," a network of Chassidic yeshivos throughout the United States.

Ask any menahel with modern means to make connections and reach donors and he will tell you that it is still hard to establish and run just one yeshiva. Yet, the Rebbe, with the meager means at his disposal, attained spectacular achievements during the one decade he lived in America.

From 5702 until 5705 (see box), a network of yeshivos was formed for older boys, younger boys and children. They were under the administration of the Central Yeshivos Tomchei Tmimim, with the expenses for founding and maintaining these yeshivos coming from the central organization overseen by the Rebbe Rayatz.

The list of cities with yeshivos Achei Tmimim is staggering: Pittsburgh, Newark, Worcester, Buffalo, Rochester, Boston, Philadelphia, New Haven, Bridgeport, Chicago, Bronx, Springfield and Providence.

The Agudas HaRabbanim of the United States and Canada wrote the following in Kislev, 5704:

"... It is unbelievable and yet a happy fact, that in such a short time, so many yeshivos have been made in the following cities: Yeshiva Gedola in Montreal, Pittsburgh, Newark, Worcester, and Buffalo. Likewise, chadrei Torah were

founded in various locations in Brooklyn. In all these mosdos Torah over 1000 Jewish children imbibe from the source of Torah under the influence of Torah and *yiras shomayim*.

"The number of talmidim is so large that the present building of the central yeshiva in Brooklyn is too small to contain them all."

The Rebbe Rayatz wasn't satisfied with what he had accomplished and while taking care of the yeshivos he had founded he also sought to start additional yeshivos in other cities. Even when there were failures, the Rebbe did not give up. He sent letters and emissaries, contacted local askanim and rabbanim, until he successfully established a broad network of yeshivos.

The Rebbe did not only take care of obtaining funds but was involved with every single detail and toiled mightily to best serve the talmidim. He kept tabs on every talmid's spiritual state in avodas Hashem, Chassidus and Nigleh, as well as gashmius matters. Throughout the years, the Rebbe encouraged those who founded each yeshiva and urged wealthy people to contribute and the askanim to do their work.

Many of the menahalim of the yeshivos were talmidim of the central yeshiva in New York. For various reasons it became necessary, from time to time, to change menahalim; some of them had to return to yeshiva, others married, and some had become experienced and were assigned the task of opening a new yeshiva while their less experienced peers filled their place. This was all done by the Rebbe's instruction.

Rashag worked extremely hard alongside the Rebbe in the role of

“Menahel Merkaz Yeshivos Tomchei Tmimim.” Rabbi Chaim Mordechai Isaac Chodakov, the Rebbe’s secretary, was an outstanding educator and he kept in touch with a number of the menaholim and guided them in chinuch and other areas.

From time to time, emissaries of the Rebbe went on long trips in order to strengthen the yeshivos. Notable among them were Rabbi Shmuel Levitin and Rabbi Eliyahu Yochil Simpson.

## **ATTENDING EVENTS DESPITE THE HARDSHIP THIS ENTAILED**

The Rebbe did not only send letters. Despite his very poor health and being unable to walk, he attended events and dinners in honor of the yeshiva. At every event he delivered a long address in which he asked the participants to take part in the heavy burden of financing the yeshiva.

(Remember that at the same time, the Rebbe was also fundraising to save Jews in Eastern Europe and to establish mosdos Chabad in other parts of the world. His debt load was enormous.)

## **AMERICAN RABONIM GET INVOLVED**

While Chabad yeshivos were founded outside of New York, the central yeshiva in New York continued to flourish. Hundreds of bachurim learned there and the yeshiva was reminiscent of the glory days of the yeshiva in Lubavitch. It became necessary to purchase a building for the large number of students. The Rebbe Rayatz was involved in all the discussions concerning buying a building and wrote a number of letters on the subject to Anash and askanim.

The efforts towards this end that began at the beginning of 5702 continued until 5704, when a large building was purchased on Bedford, a twenty minute walk from 770.

Agudas HaRabbanim of the United States and Canada and other distinguished rabbanim raised money for Tomchei Tmimim and in HaPardes it said:

... Good news for all of American Jewry – boruch Hashem a large, magnificent building was purchased in the center of Brooklyn which will allow place for additional hundreds of talmidim, may they increase. Obviously, for all these massive activities, enormous sums of money are needed. It is the obligation of every Jew, no matter what party, to help as much as possible in this holy work in the most important field in Jewish life on which depends the future of American Jewry – the education of the young generation.

The same issue included a public call by Rabbi Yisroel Rosenberg and Rabbi Eliezer Silver. R’ Silver said that he spoke in learning with talmidim in yeshivos Tomchei Tmimim and derived much pleasure from them:

“We have merited, since the arrival here of the gaon and tzaddik the Admor of Lubavitch, who founded, with Hashem’s help, in towns and cities, yeshivos large and small that are truly a glorious achievement, and will grow into mighty oaks. I got to know and talk with in learning some of the gedolei ha’talmidim and found them to be full of Torah and talent, full of *yiras shomayim*, learning diligently, baalei middos who are filled with blessing.”

In the winter of 5706, the yeshiva with all its divisions completed its move



TALMIDEI TOMCHEI TMIMIM IN 770 IN THE EARLY YEARS

to the new building. A number of festive events were held in honor of the chanukas ha'bayis.

## INTERIM ACCOUNT

On 16 Adar, 1945, a festive event was held to mark five years since the founding of Tomchei Tmimim in New York. The Rebbe Rayatz personally attended and he told about the founding of the yeshiva and those who tried to discourage him:

**"Over the course of three years, boruch Hashem, the American spiritual sea of ice broke and my earlier proclamations about spreading Torah with *yiras shomayim* and proper chinuch, teshuva and Geula, which over the years were attacked and mocked by the left, center and the right, are now being heard from time to time from a few of those who have ambitions as leaders of the generation. Another year goes by and in the newspapers articles**

**are published and events are planned to start special funds to spread Torah and for chinuch ...**

Another year passes and boruch Hashem, my assistants in the field of spreading Torah and *yiras shomayim*, led by my son-in-law Rabbi Gurary, have already founded dozens of mosdos Torah and *yiras shomayim*, and my assistants in the field of proper chinuch and Machne Israel led by my son-in-law, Rabbi Schneersohn [the Rebbe MH" M who ran Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch and Machne Israel] started schools for girls and over half a million copies of publications have already appeared...

American Jewry! In five years the work of Merkaz "Tomchei Tmimim Lubavitch" in America has established Jewish respect in this country and clearly proved that American children can be bnei Torah like in the *alte heim*.

## THE NETWORK OF YESHIVOS FOUNDED IN FIVE YEARS!

The rate at which yeshivos were founded in America is astonishing:

**15 Adar II, 5700 – New York** – the Rebbe Rayatz, upon his arrival in New York, opened yeshivas Tomchei Tmimim

**3 Cheshvan, 5702 – Montreal** – Nine talmidim from Tomchei Tmimim in Otvotsk, who escaped to Shanghai and arrived in Canada, opened yeshivas Tomchei Tmimim.

**Kislev, 5702 – Pittsburgh** – the yeshiva was started by Rabbi Mordechai Altein. He arrived in Kislev and after much effort, the yeshiva opened before Pesach. Already in the first few months, 60 talmidim learned there. At the end of the summer of 1943, Rabbi Sholom Posner was appointed the menahel of the yeshiva which he ran, devotedly, for decades.

**Sivan, 5702 – Newark** – Rabbi Sholom Dovber Gordon ran the yeshiva. Rabbi Dovid Stockhammer and his sons-in-law, Rabbi Mordechai Mentlick and Rabbi Moshe Pinchas Katz helped.

**12 Tammuz, 5702 – Worcester** – the yeshiva was founded on the Chag HaGeula, 12 Tammuz, 1942. Before it opened, the designated menahel, Rabbi Avrohom Dov Hecht arrived accompanied by Rabbi Avrohom Pariz.

**Buffalo** – R' Fogelman founded and ran this yeshiva at first. On 23 Av there was a founders meeting. A few months went by and the number of talmidim grew and the yeshiva moved into a new building. Rabbi Fogelman later on took over the yeshiva in Worcester.

**Cheshvan, 5704 – Rochester** – directed by Rabbi Tzvi Shusterman.

**13 Shevat, 5704 – Boston** – In Adar, 1943, an attempt was made to start a yeshiva in Boston but it soon closed. The yeshiva re-opened and was run by R' Avrohom Dov Hecht. By the winter of 5705 the yeshiva already had 80 students.

**2 Iyar, 1944 – Philadelphia** – On 2 Iyar, 1944, the yeshiva Achei Tmimim was founded in Philadelphia under R'

**American Jewry! Our call – of the Central Tomchei Tmimim Lubavitch in America – is to make America, with Hashem's help, be a place of Torah so that on a Jewish street in America the sound of Torah will be heard from young children as it was heard in Lubavitch and in other cities in Lithuania and Poland.**

Five years later, marking ten years since the founding of yeshivas Tomchei Tmimim in New York, was reason for another gala event. The hanhala of the

yeshiva planned a resplendent event for this significant milestone.

The Rebbe wrote a special letter for the dinner with a call to attend it and with the goal of doubling and tripling the donations for the yeshiva.

Erev Shabbos, 9 Shevat afternoon, the Rebbe signed the letter and the next day he was *nistalek*. This was the last letter the Rebbe signed.

Yosef Menachem Mendel Tenenbaum and R' Yitzchok Dovid Groner. R' Sholom Tzvi Schneiderman, a distinguished Lubavitcher rav and menahel of yeshivas Ohel Moshe there, asked that his yeshiva be under the auspices of Tomchei Tmimim and his request was granted too.

**Rosh Chodesh Tammuz, 1944 – New Haven** – R' Mordechai Dov Altein and his helpers, R' Berel Levy and R' Zev Schildkraut started the yeshiva in New Haven. The learning began with dozens of children in the Beis Yisrael shul. On the following Shabbasos most students came to shul wearing yarmulkes with the name of the new yeshiva printed on them. They attended Mesibos Shabbos and formed a parade through the streets of New Haven which called upon Jews to keep Shabbos.

**14 Tammuz, 1944 – Bridgeport**, the yeshiva was opened by Rabbi Elozor Pinchas Weiler and a short time later the permanent menahel, Rabbi Dovid Edelman, arrived with Rabbi Tzvi Feffer.

**Elul, 5704 – Chicago** – After much effort, Achei Tmimim opened in Chicago

in the summer of 1944, led by Rabbi Yosef Wineberg. A group of talmidim from New York arrived with him.

**18 Shevat, 5705 – Bronx** – the yeshiva opened in the Nusach Ari shul on 1243 Washington Avenue. The menahel of the yeshiva was Rabbi Altein and the teacher for the oldest group of students was Rabbi Nosson Teomim. A committee of distinguished balabatim helped found and maintain the yeshiva.

**Winter, 5705 – Springfield** – Rabbi Sholom Dovber Gordon opened the yeshiva with ten talmidim in the home of a supporter of the yeshiva. The school operates to this very day under the able and devoted leadership of Rabbi Dovid Edelman (a'h) for more than half a century.

**23 Av, 1945 – Providence** – the final yeshiva founded in this period of time. The yeshiva opened on 23 Av and was led by Rabbi Yitzchok Dovid Groner with the devoted assistance of the rabbanim and brothers, Rabbi Yehoshua Werner and Rabbi Dovid Werner.

After the histalkus the question was whether to hold the dinner on the designated date. It was finally decided not to postpone it since the Rebbe himself had told people to attend the dinner. However, the dinner was held without music and the great simcha originally planned, but a large crowd attended it as well as the talmidim of the yeshiva. The speakers made a powerful impression on the donors, who responded more generously than usual.

Thus the Rebbe Rayatz completed his earthly mission as an integral part of yeshivas Tomchei Tmimim, for which he worked for nearly 53 years – from his marriage in 5657/1897 when he was 17, until his final day. ■

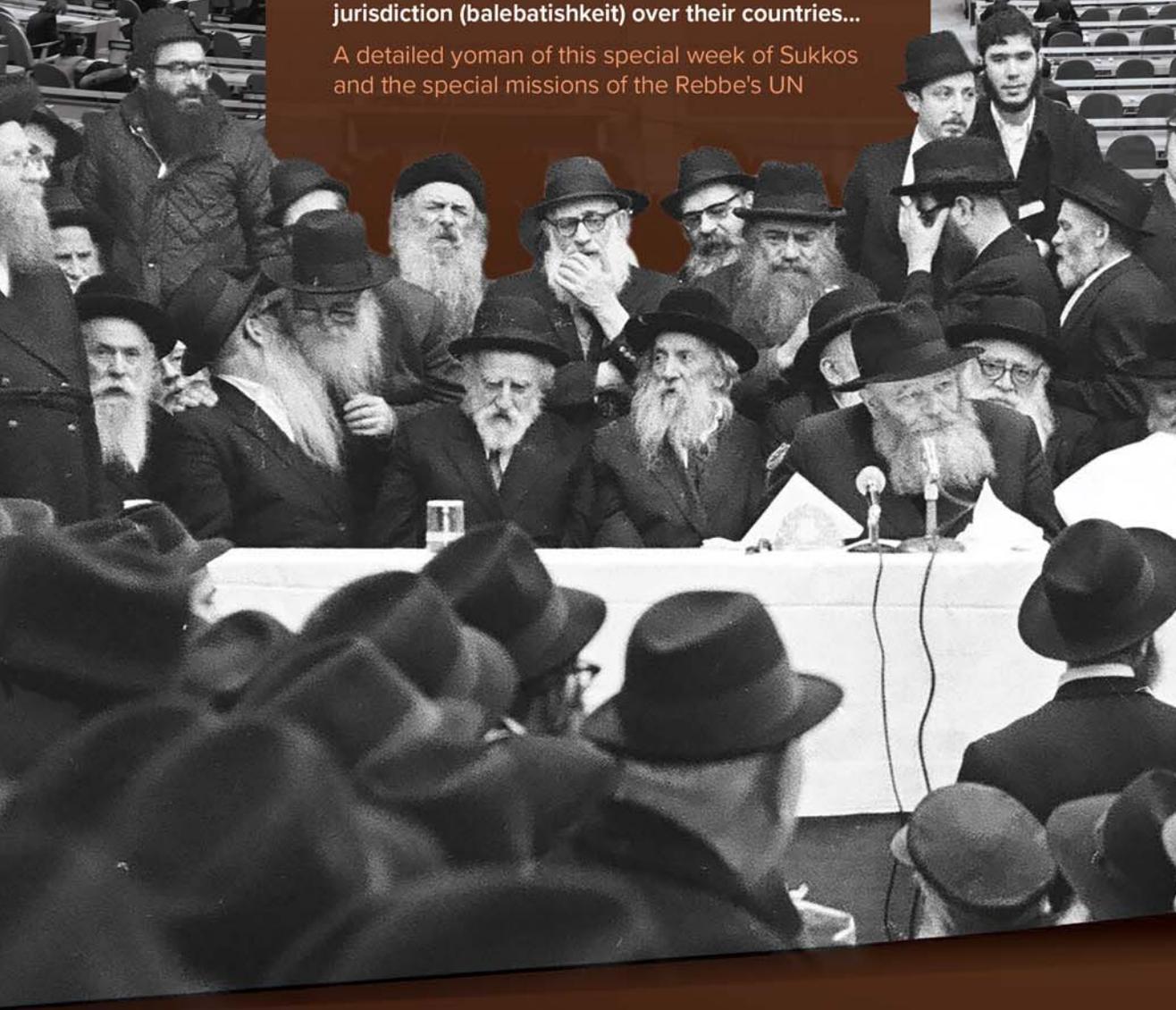
*Sources: Likkutei Dibburim, Sifrei HaSichos of the Rebbe Rayatz, Igros Kodesh of the Rebbe Rayatz, Toldos Chabad in America, Zikaron L'B'nei Yisroel, Yemei Bereishis, Beis Moshiach, HaTomim (a Beis Moshiach supplement), the website – “Shalom iz mainer”*



# *The Rebbe's United Nations*

Sukkos 5731 (1970) was the first time the Rebbe would not hold the annual Sukkos farbrengen due to it being a sakanas nefashos despite the pleas of many Chassidim. But the Rebbe, unexpectedly, announced that he'd deliver a maamar in the big zal instead. The maamar was delivered and then, after a joyous niggun, the Rebbe proceeded to deliver a most unique sicha during which the Rebbe instituted a most unique organization — a body of the United Nations with all the delegates appointed by the Rebbe himself and given complete and total jurisdiction (balebatishkeit) over their countries...

A detailed yoman of this special week of Sukkos and the special missions of the Rebbe's UN





וַיֵּרֶד  
מִיָּם  
עַד-יָם  
וּמִנְהַר עַד  
אֶפְסֵי אֶרֶץ

**On** Thursday, the first day of Sukkos, at 8:15, the Rebbe arrived at 770. After making the blessing on the [lulav and] esrog and handing it over for the public, he returned home.

## Surprise Maamar

At night, the Rebbe said to convey that tomorrow, at the usual time for the far-brenge, there would be a maamar in the Beis Medrash.

On Friday, the second day of Sukkos, the Rebbe arrived at 770 at 8:05 and later returned home.

At 6:05 in the evening he entered the Beis Medrash and said to sing the “Shalosh Tenuos” of the Baal Shem Tov, the Rav HaMaggid, and the Alter Rebbe, and they should sing it three times. Then they sang the niggun before the maamar and at 6:20 the Rebbe began saying the maamar, “Hallelu es Hashem Kol Goyim” until 6:55.

After the maamar, he sang a Niggun Simcha and clapped. Then he said a long sicha about the United Nations. This is what he said:

## Why is the UN General Assembly on Sukkos?

Everything is by divine providence, however there are times when we see this plainly. In this case, the fact that the gathering at the UN began on Sukkos and will continue until Shabbos Bereishis – although they did not intend on meeting specifically on Sukkos, “his mazal saw,” and by divine providence they gathered on Sukkos when we read in the haftorah, “And I will gather all the nations, etc.” and this is also connected with Sukkos when

seventy bulls were offered to correspond to seventy nations.

Their gathering is not one of righteous people and therefore Hashem made sure they would gather on Sukkos, for that is when the Jewish people offer seventy bulls, thus drawing down chayus to the heavenly ministers of these seventy nations and this causes the ministers of the nations to be subservient to Israel because they receive *hashpaos* from the Jewish people. This affects the seventy nations here, below, so they won't think up undesirable things against the Jews.

When their gathering became known we needed to immediately arrange a gathering of holiness near the Kosel, remnant of our Beis HaMikdash, and when Jews gather together, especially when among them are Jews who are from the seventy nations, and they are involved in holiness, a gathering like this transforms the UN to good!

The Rebbe then said to hold gatherings around the world, even in a place where there is only one Jew, because that could also help! He asked that at these gatherings people should talk about Torah and mitzvos in general and the mitzva of lulav in particular as it is a timely mitzva and when one shakes the lulav, it shakes the entire world!

The Rebbe also spoke about Israeli representatives who were attending the meetings held on Shabbos, thinking that by doing so they are helping the Jewish people; who knows whether they are doing the opposite? He said the well-known story in connection with this, that once someone finished davening quickly and he was asked why the rush. He said he was hurrying to fulfill G-d's commandment to work for a living ... He was asked: How do



RABBI REFAEL TAWIL (THE "BALABUS" OF ARGENTINA) AT THE REBBE IN TISHREI 5731

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you know you are running toward your parnassa? Perhaps you are running away from it ...

## **Jewish Assemblies to Counter the UN**

The Rebbe said several times that gatherings of Jews around the world can bring about the cancellation of bad thoughts of UN representatives. He said that even if we don't actually see this, it is the reality!

The entire farbrengen was an utter surprise (since after the Rebbe announced that there wouldn't be a farbrengen in the sukka, they thought there wouldn't be a farbrengen at all, and even after the Rebbe announced a maamar, they thought it would just be a maamar). The Rebbe referred to this himself, in the farbrengen, when he said this was one of the reasons to hold a farbrengen, to address the issue of the gathering at the UN.

After the long sicha about the UN, they sang a niggun again and he began another sicha, this one about the first mishna in the third chapter of meseches Sukka. At about 8:00 they davened maariv.

## **Not Delegates, Balabatim!**

On Sunday, 18 Tishrei, the Rebbe arrived around 9:00. At 1:00 he entered the sukka and returned to his office at 2:00.

As for the gathering of Tzeirei Agudas Chabad, the Rebbe told Rabbi Chodakov that each of the personal emissaries would be not just a representative of the country he comes from but like the balabus! The Rebbe likewise asked him to tell R' Binjamin Eliyahu Gorodetzky that he would represent the countries that do not have a representative here.

I heard that at 2:00, R' Leibel Groner went in to ask for the dalet minim for those who had gone on Mivtza Dalet Minim and had just returned. The Rebbe said: I just rebound the lulav. He thought a bit

# The Rebbe's UN "Delegates"

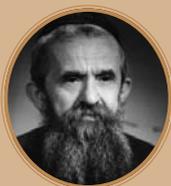
## Eretz Yisrael and the "Big Four":



Eretz Yisrael —  
Rabbi Chaim  
Sholom Segal



USA — Rabbi  
Shmuel Levitin



UK — Rabbi  
Benzion  
Shemtov



Russia —  
Rabbi Yehuda  
Kulasher



France — Rabbi  
Yosef Goldberg

## Middle East & North Africa:



### Egypt — Rashag\*

Rashag traveled through Egypt with the Rebbe Rayatz in 5689 (1929) on his way to visit Eretz Yisrael



### Iraq — Rabbi Yitzchok Yadgar



### Morocco — Rabbi Leibel Raskin



### Tunisia — Rabbi Refael Wilschansky\*

In his capacity as secretary of Lishkas Lubavitch of Europe which oversees Chabad in North Africa



### Yemen — Rabbi Zecharia Guri

## Europe:



### European countries with no rep — Rabbi Binyamin Eliyahu Gorodetezky\*

In his capacity as chariman of Lishkas Lubavitch of Europe — the Rebbe's European office



### Baltic countries and Finland — Rabbi C. M.I. Chodakov



### Belgium — Rabbi Chayim Aryeh Zilberstein



### Denmark — Rabbi Avrohom Osdoba



### Germany — Rabbi Avrohom Yitzchok Glick\*

In his capacity as the Rebbe's "wandering shliach" in Europe



**Hungary — Rabbi Shmuel Chefer**



**Poland — Rabbi Moshe Pinchas Katz**



**Romania — Rabbi Zalman Abelsky**



### The Americas:



**Argentina — Rabbi Refael Tawil**



**Brazil — Rabbi Hirschel Chitrik**



**Canada — Rabbi Yitzchok Hendel**



### Africa & Australia:



**Australia — Rabbi Abba Pliskin**



**South Africa — Rabbi Yosef Wineberg\***

In his capacity of Shadar to South Africa

and then said: Nu, shluchei mitzva, they have mazal; I just finishing binding it.

On Tuesday, 20 Tishrei, he bought three bundles of hoshanos. At 11:20 at night he went home with the Rebbetzin and returned at 12:30. At 1:00 in the morning he went out to say Tehillim and at about 3:00 he went home.

On Wednesday, Hoshana Rabba, the Rebbe davened shacharis at 10:00. At about 12:30, lekach was distributed. The Rebbe davened mincha at 3:15.

Maariv was at 7:00 and hakafos at 9:00. Before the hakafos, the Rebbe instructed by way of R' Groner that the one leading each hakafa should hold Moshiach's Sefer Torah but shouldn't dance with it. The Rebbe himself supervised this from his place.

The Rebbe called over the one making the announcements before the fourth hakafa and told him that he himself would conduct the fourth hakafa.

The Rebbe said to announce that since it says, "He set the borders of the peoples according to the number of the children of Israel" - therefore, balabatim from each of the countries would be honored. And since everything has to be according to Torah, therefore it would be those that have semicha or roshei yeshivos. He said to announce that so-and-so is the balabaus of country x.

[When it was remarked that R' Bentzion Shemtov didn't serve as a rav, the Rebbe responded that he takes on the responsibility.]

He said to announce again that it says, "He set the borders of the peoples according to the number of the children of Israel," and they are balabatim over these countries according to Torah.

## "The Rebbe is the Balebus of the World!"

As expected, the continuation of Shemini Atzeres was taken over entirely by these heavenly events. An idea was proposed to hold a special meeting of all the *balabatim* of all the countries. At the meeting, they decided that since they were appointed by the Rebbe, then that means that the Rebbe is the leader and owner of the entire world!

Shemini Atzeres in the afternoon, as the Rebbe returned from his house before mincha, the representatives of the "Big Four" — Russia, England, France and the USA — along with Rabbi Chaim Shalom, the *balabus* of Eretz Yisrael, waited in *Gan Eden Hatatchton*. Rabbi Segal was requested by them to inform the Rebbe of the resolution made at the meeting – that they appoint the Rebbe as the *balabus* of the entire world!

The Rebbe responded in a smile, "You're already throwing the *balabatishkeit* on me? What did you accomplish thereby?"

Rabbi Segal then said the other resolutions they made (that Eretz Yisrael belongs to the Jews and that the Jews of Russia should be freed soon and those there should be able to do Torah and mitzvos in peace. The Rebbe added: "*Mitoch harchava* – abundantly." Afterwards, the Rebbe asked if there was a minyan at the meeting.

Apparently, this meeting had some effect on the events of the farbrengen later that night as can be seen in the *yoman* inside.

[All the "*balabatim*" were either living and active in those countries or born there.]

The Rebbe began to sing, "Utzu Eitza V'Sufar" and they sang with great enthusiasm.

### Absentee Delegate

It's interesting to note that R' Zalman Abelsky was not in 770 at all on Simchas Torah (I heard he asked the Rebbe whether to come for Tishrei and was given a copy of a letter the Rebbe sent to R' Yeshavam Segal which said that due to the difficult situation of the Reshet, the principals should remain in Eretz Yisrael.) and yet, when they said "Romania" - the Rebbe immediately said R' Abelsky's name. Then, when the *balabatim* over the countries had to say l'chaim, they were sure he was

in 770 and they looked for him all over 770 and did not find him and the Rebbe said that his son, Yosef Yitzchok, should say l'chaim instead of him.

Thursday, the night of Shemini Atzeres, the Rebbe davened maariv at 7:00. Before maariv, they sang happy niggunim and there was a very big circle of dancers, over the entire Beis Medrash! The Rebbe stood and instructed anyone in the Beis Medrash to enter the circle.

### The "Big Four" Make a Unanimous Resolution

The farbrengen began at 8:00 in the evening and ended at 11:30. In the middle of the farbrengen, the Rebbe called the "Big Four" (the heads of the four biggest countries: USA, England, France

## “Become a Rav”

When the Rebbe chose Rabbi Zilberstein to be the balabus of Belgium, he said that he was not worthy because he was not a rav. The Rebbe told him that if that's the case he should become a rav...

Reb Chayim Aryeh took it seriously, and indeed, immediately after Yom Tov he began to study for semicha and was tested and qualified as a rav.

*(Yamim Tovim im HaRebbe – Sukkos p. 35)*

## “It’s Not a Joke”

At the seuda on Shemini Atzeres in the sukka of the Rebbe Rayatz, one of the guests, **Rabbi Yankel HaKohen Katz** asked the Rebbe jokingly about the “*balabatim*” appointed over the countries, why there was no General Assembly after hakafof.

The Rebbe's answer was: “If it was a joke, I would not have instructed to take out Sifrei Torah...”

and Russia) and the balabus over Eretz Yisrael [as the chairman], and gave them all bottles of mashke. The Rebbe also gave the balabus over Eretz Yisrael mezonos to distribute in the women's section.

Then he stood and said that the order is that after the meeting of the “Big Four,” they would call the rest of the members and [if they all agree then a unanimous resolution is passed]. Therefore, he is calling upon all of them to stand in their place and said he had a proposal to vote on, namely that G-d is true and His Torah and Yisrael are true and “Emes Havaya l'ol-

am.” He asked that all those who agreed to this proposal should answer with a l'chaim and the entire crowd answered l'chaim.

## Theater In 770...

When he stood, he began to sing a joyous niggun and then stopped in the middle and announced: The order at the UN is that after a gathering they go to the theater. Since, here we don't go and there also isn't time, therefore my suggestion is that someone should “*gutt zich iberkullen*” (do a good “kula” - somersault) and with this we will discharge the obligation of theater. [The balabus of England, R' Benzion Shem Tov] and two more people did so and he was very pleased.

Upon standing up, he gave a big bracha that it should finally be the end of galus and the imminent coming of Moshiach as the Rambam says at the end of Hilchos Melachim, and the farbrengen was over.

## Hakafof

At about 12:00 he came in for hakafof and standing there were about twenty officials, diplomats and military men, who came as representatives of Eretz Yisrael from the embassy, as arranged by the consul, Tzvi Kaspi. Among the reps were Aharon Becker member of the Israeli delegation to the UN and former secretary of the Histadrut, and Yosef Shufman of

cont. on p. 63

# *Nation After Nation We Are Conquering*

In honor of Sukkos, a Yom Tov in which the seventy Nations of the world are represented in the Beis HaMikdash with special korbanos, we present a selection of short stories, anecdotes, and observations the Rebbe Melech Ha-Moshiach made of various countries and states and their customs and habits and how they may be put to use for a Higher purpose...





וְעַל  
הַמְדִּינֹת  
בּוֹ יֵאמַר



## **India – People With Fine Middos**

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The Hebrew name for India – Hodu – is from the root meaning thanks as well as glory and majesty. The Rebbe spoke about the name in one of his sichos about a verse in Megillas Esther “from Hodu until Kush.” It would seemingly have been sufficient to say that Achashverosh ruled the entire world without specifying “Hodu until Kush.”

The Rebbe explained that Hodu is from the root meaning glory and majesty, beauty and light while Kush is black, the opposite of light.

Names of countries tell us about the character of the people of the place and so the residents of these two countries were completely different from one another. In Hodu the people had fine character while in Kush they were cruel. Achashverosh ruled over them all, over all types of characters and personalities throughout the world, good – like in Hodu, and bad – as in Kush.

In a letter that the Rebbe wrote to Zalman Shazar (27 Elul 5717), he noted that the serenity that the Jewish people seek is not the same serenity that the

people of India experience: “... and not like the serenity of the people of India *l’havdil*, which is inactive but the serenity that the Jewish people seek which is ‘going from strength to strength’ towards perfection, goodness and beauty.”



## **The United States – Tzedaka & Chessed**

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There is much that was said about the United States. In the Rebbe’s sichos and letters we find numerous references to the character of the United States, its values and its laws. An entire article could be written about what the Rebbe had to say about the United States but we will give you just a sampling.

The Rebbe spoke a lot about Chabad headquarters’ host country, the United States of America. On the one hand, the Rebbe emphasized its materialistic aspects, “it has all physical pleasures and they are preoccupied with them.” On the other hand, he spoke about its wonderful qualities, its expansiveness and great generosity.

We are all familiar with the expression that America is a “malchus of chessed,” but the Rebbe described the US on many other occasions. The Rebbe said that in America everything is assessed by its price

tag and therefore, the Rebbe Rayatz in his time said to write a price on the booklets they produced even though they sent them for free to whoever asked for them. Because the way it works in America is that when you get something for nothing, you don't treat it with respect.

At the same time, the Rebbe pointed out that the generosity of Americans "especially the tremendous amount of tzedaka which is the special quality of the United States, will draw down Hashem's tzedaka – the true and complete Geula."

Elsewhere, the Rebbe describes the good-heartedness of Americans: "It is known, regarding recent events, that this country – which is founded on tzedaka and chessed, as is known, used its power to help and save people far away even though its citizens gained no direct benefit by doing so. In this we see the compassion of the people in this country. When they heard and saw how people are suffering, even though they are not their relatives, the country roused to help them in accordance with the approach of this country regarding tzedaka; that they help people the world over and they don't even wait to be asked for help." (13 Iyar 5751)

As for pursuing a career and money the Rebbe said, "There are women who look to their friends that their children should grow up and be 'established' ... this one as a doctor, that one as a lawyer, and he – at least a shoe shiner."

What do shining shoes and a "child that is established" have to do with one another? The Rebbe teaches parents a lesson about the American mentality: "In America there is a saying that a shoe shiner is also something important since Rockefeller shined shoes and he became an extremely wealthy man."

At the same time, stressed the Rebbe, although the dollar is the "holy of holies" in America, nevertheless, upon it is expressed Americans' belief in G-d: "To the point that belief in G-d is engraved on the **money** of the country, and along these lines regarding the general conduct of the country, from the capitol city starting with the president of the country and all those who listen and follow his instructions. For the foundation of it all is belief in G-d." (Contrast this to the magnate in Eretz Yisrael who recently commented about the idea of writing about faith on the shekel: "Money is money and only money.")

As in every matter, we need to make use of those things which can interfere with avodas Hashem. So too with the problem of obedience, as the Rebbe writes, "Especially here in America where children don't listen so much to their parents ..." "in America parents listen to their children and teachers to their students." The solution: The Rebbe connects this to the signs of Geula when "youth will shame the faces of the elders."

The transformation: "And when Moshiach comes, we will be able to proclaim with justifiable pride, here are our soldiers, here is our army, 'Made in America,' children raised in America but **complete Jews** who are ready for Geula! (In an unedited reshima: and the Rebbe, my father-in-law, will point at his talmidim and say: "see the children that I have raised," American bachurim with beards who conduct themselves on the proper path etc.).



## **Italy – An Inept Nation**

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In one his letters (Igros Kodesh vol. 10 p. 94) the Rebbe comments that Italy did not exist in the time of the Avos but only later, during the time of Shlomo HaMelech when he married the daughter of Pharaoh.

In Hisvaadus Kodesh Shabbos Parshas Savo, 18 Elul 5713, the Rebbe spoke about the *batlanus* (ineptitude) of Italy of those days: “It is necessary to clarify and to ensure one thing. First, what the Rebbe, my father-in-law said that they would say about Italy (which was considered an incompetent nation) that the truth is that it is a country like all others. It has trains, it has a locomotive, and there are compartments, an engine and steam. It whistles and everything else. Only one thing is missing. They forgot to connect the engine to the other cars.”

The Rebbe learns from what the Rebbe Rayatz said:

“Regarding us, we need to direct everything at ourselves. Each of us needs to know that this is meant for him, not for someone else, but for him.”

(Toras Menachem vol. 9 p. 157)



## **Germany – The Maggid Left It Out**

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Over a hundred years ago, our Rebbeim singled out Germany for comment. This country caused us such grief, spiritually and materially with the apex reached during the Holocaust. From Germany came coldness towards Torah and mitzvos as well as the Haskala (Enlightenment) movement. The Rebbe, who lived in Germany for a period of time, referred to the character of a “Daitchel” a number of times.

The Rebbe referred to the holiness of the Maggid who saw well in advance what would happen in Germany: “The Rebbe, my father-in-law, told me that the Maggid of Mezritch gave *yichudim* (unifications) to his disciples for every one of the nations except for Germany.

“Throughout the years this was not understood – why Germany? However, after many years, over 150 since the time of the Maggid, we ‘get it,’ we understand how great was the tzaddik’s vision, how he saw into the distance, many years hence ...” (sicha of 19 Kislev 5714, Toras Menachem vol. 10 p. 256)

R' Yehuda Leib Posner married on 30 Shvat 5711. During the reception, the Rebbe asked about the origin of the mechutan on the kall's side (Freimark) and when he was told that he was from Germany the Rebbe said, "From Germany went forth much Torah and much greatness" and then he sighed and said, "and also much suffering."

The Rebbe referred to spiritual suffering aside from the Haskala. In yechidus with the Belzer Rebbe on the night of 10 Adar I 5733, the Belzer Rebbe said that the heretics themselves use "kabbala" and quote things about the first Shemita, the second Shemita etc. to which the Rebbe said: "If they only took it from there that would only partially concern me but they deny the entire Torah! This spirit is sourced in Germany for it is a country designated for spiritual and material calamity."

The Rebbe also referred to the German "Yekkes." When the Rebbe lived in Berlin he wrote to someone that he doesn't know how the Yekkes would manage without being able to say "good morning" the morning of Tisha B'Av.

At a farbrengen in 5713 the Rebbe told the following story:

"The Rebbe, my father-in-law, told about one of the trips his father, the Rebbe Rashab, made to the health resort in Germany. Despite the nature of the local residents who in all matters gauged themselves with measure and limitation, he learned Chassidus with them and some of them were drawn close to the teachings of Chassidus. One of them was especially interested to the point that he began learning Chassidus and conducting himself in the ways of Chassidus and began working on the 'avoda of mesirus

nefesh' (service of self-sacrifice) – in the bedtime Shema when you are supposed to visualize actually sacrificing yourself – even though this went against his nature.'

"This man related that the amount of time he spent on the avoda of mesirus nefesh in the bedtime Shema was 'precisely one minute,'" and the Rebbe smiled and said, "Apparently he had a watch next to him and in the middle of mesirus nefesh he looked at the watch to see how long his mesirus nefesh had taken."



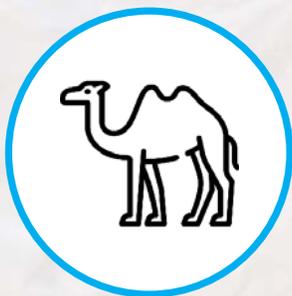
## **England – Cold Manners**

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In yechidus with Professor Branover the Rebbe said, "When I saw Peter [Kalms, a businessman who received many instructions from the Rebbe especially regarding Russian Jewry], things were so successful, there was great progress, and yet he was still not happy. I expected to see him dancing! How is it that things are so successful and he is still clinging to his English manners? When I smile at him he smiles back; I see that you are working closely together and with unity as I told you on another occasion."

On another occasion the Rebbe said about him:

“He needs to be less English and more joyous. I will mention you at the gravesite of the Rebbe Rayatz for good news in all your activities.”



## ***Saudi Arabia – An Unstable Evil Nation***

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There is no Jewish community in Saudi Arabia and no reference from the Rebbe to this country except in political terms in connection with Eretz Yisrael. The Rebbe referred a lot to Saudi Arabia when he spoke about the so-called peace process. Back during the Camp David accords, both the United States and the Soviet Union tried to gain Saudi Arabia as an ally. Saudi Arabia, which back then was considered a moderate Arab country, was presented by Israeli politicians as a reliable source, guaranteeing that the oil fields Israel was giving away to Egypt would be replaced by oil from Saudi Arabia.

The Rebbe warned that Saudi Arabia had an unstable government and that Russia's influence over it was greater than that of the United States. The Rebbe compared Saudi Arabia to the czarist government which fell after 300 years of rule: “You don't need to be a big politician or genius in the ways of politics and war

to understand that the most abnormal [situation] is in Saudi Arabia.

“There are three people there from one family who have an income of tens of billions of dollars annually and the only thing sustaining them is that part of the money is used to hire soldiers to protect them. They pay good money for these bodyguards who defend a few people who make tens of billions of dollars ...”

In 5739 the Rebbe mentioned its instability once again and added that there were a number of issues that were being kept secret and Heaven forbid if they aren't resolved very soon!

Another time the Rebbe said, “There is an evil kingdom in Syria in Rabat Amon (modern day Amman, Jordan), in Saudi Arabia and the like, whose hand is extended to take power over, G-d forbid, the nation that dwells in Zion.”



## ***Poland – A Name Established By Jews***

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The extermination of Polish Jewry during the Holocaust marked the end of a glorious history of Jewry in Poland. In a sicha of Shabbos Parshas Behaaloscha 19 Sivan 5751, the Rebbe spoke about the

“kingdom of Poland” as well as what the country is about:

“It is known that when the first Jews went to settle in Poland, they said ‘Polin’ – *po lin*, rest here. That they would rest here during exile (and this is the real reason why that nation has that name because even if they didn’t see this, their *mazal* saw it).

“*Lina* – resting, sleeping is done at night for the (darkness) of exile is like night. That is to say, that the meaning of ‘*po lin*’ is that dwelling here is only in a way of *lina*-rest, during exile, but after that they will leave for the rest place of every Jew – Eretz Yisrael, with the true and complete *Geula*. On the other hand, it is still in a way of ‘*lin*,’ that even though we are still in exile, Hashem helps and there is a place to rest peacefully (relatively speaking).”

The Rebbe spoke about the history of Jews in Poland, referring to the Jewish “Moshke” and the Polish *poritz* (squire, landowner): “As it was during the good years in Poland when the Jewish people lived in peace, and in special times – in a way that ‘all ministers of the countries etc. elevated the Jews,’ as we know that some government ministers would put their possessions in the charge of Jews (Moshke – as the *goyim* called them, for their *mazal* saw the aspect of Moshe in every Jew). The Jewish people used this for good and holy causes according to their intellect (‘to your knowledge’) along the lines of ‘and you took advantage of Egypt’ (the opposite of what the *goyim* did with the possessions when it was in their hands, as is known).”

After the almost complete annihilation of Polish Jewry in the Holocaust, most Jews did not return to live there. The

Poles stole all Jewish property. Those who sought to retrieve their property were often murdered by the Poles in the years after the war. The few who did return to live there hid their Jewish identity for decades.

Once, when giving out dollars for *tzedaka*, David Chase (a wealthy man and a philanthropist, supporter of Lubavitch work) introduced Ronald Lauder (another wealthy man and philanthropist and supporter of Lubavitch work) and said that they had just returned from Poland and were planning to visit there again soon. Mr. Lauder wanted instructions from the Rebbe about how to operate there. He said they had visited Cracow and since there were few Jews there, they considered bringing American Jews there in order to rebuild a *kehilla* (community).

Mr. Lauder: There are also young Jews and they need a *kehilla* they can join.

The Rebbe: You can send a few Jews for them but it is not possible to transfer an entire community there. If someone were to ask me whether to start a new *kehilla* in Poland now, I would say frankly that I don’t see a purpose in doing so. Today there is a future for Jews in America, in Eretz Yisrael, or England or the like, but not in a country unsuited for Jewish life, for it to have continuity for another three generations or even two. That is an unobtainable goal in Poland.

On the contrary, the attempt to build a community in Poland can lead the youth to assimilate because there are not enough Jewish girls for the Jewish boys. Since there is nothing there now, it is not right to cause them to remain in that country. So I do not believe that someone should undertake this task, to build Jewish life for youth **there** because there is no purpose.

Conversely, there is great purpose and it would be strongly recommended and not only recommended but this is **pikuach nefesh** (danger to life), to be involved with the older people there. For those for whom it is hard to seek another country and start life anew, it is necessary to provide them with all the means and possibilities to lead a Jewish life there.

As for the youth, as I said, I don't see a purpose for the young generation in Poland or in Czechoslovakia etc. and furthermore, this goes against my belief.



## **Russia – “That Country”**

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So much has been said about Russia. In the Rebbe's sichos and letters, as well as in that of the other Rebbeim since the Alter Rebbe, we find numerous references to what Russia is about. With the Rebbe's teachings we could write an entire article about Russia but will quote just a sampling (much was quoted at length in the book *Dedushka*).

Russia, the cradle of the revelation of Chassidus and the Chabad dynasty, was a country that fought Chassidus from the days of the Alter Rebbe until our times. The sharp and shocking expressions that we heard from the Rebbe were about

the Yevsektzim (Jewish communists) or “that country” whose name wasn't even mentioned. Despite the many references to Russia, the Rebbe did not say much about the nature of the country. Perhaps, due to the sensitive situation of the Jews living there, about whom he worried like a compassionate father, he chose not to utter expressions that could anger those who set policy in Russia, who could make life for the Jews there unpleasant.

In any case, we find expressions about the rule of the czars. In connection with the so-called peace talks that Israel signed, the Rebbe spoke sadly about the absurdity of viewing this agreement as an achievement. The Rebbe spoke about Israel's receiving oil from the Saudis and said:

“A situation like this (with one family ruling over millions of people) was possible 100 years ago when the nation that lived there was oppressed and did not have enough sense to understand this and there was no one to tell them the truth and to say that they had the power to change it, and so they thought this situation could go on forever.

“At first, anyone who was somewhat realistic did not believe that after 300 years of being ruled by the czars, there would suddenly come a number of farmers and a few soldiers and push them off their throne. When it actually happened, all the surrounding nations said that since Russia was a wild country with wild ways and many desolate places and all sorts of wild things, it was fitting that this would happen.”

In a sicha of Shushan Purim 5714 the Rebbe described the “drunken czar” of Russia:

“The kings who used to be in Russia

.....

In recent years there was a drunken czar and when the Jews wanted to influence him regarding a certain matter, they would go out to greet him with a Torah scroll.

.....

could do as they pleased since there was no one over them, no Congress or the like. In recent years there was a drunken czar and when the Jews wanted to influence him regarding a certain matter, they would go out to greet him with a Torah scroll.

“At that time, Radatz served as rav in Chernigov and when the czar came to visit the town, Radatz did as was customary. He went out to see the czar wearing a sirtuk and carrying a Torah scroll. When he approached the czar he stood still, raised his hand to his forehead (that is what Radatz did – before saying a bracha he would put his hand to his forehead and concentrate on the blessing – that Havaya ‘was, is, and will be as one,’ Elokeinu – ‘He is our strength and our life,’ etc.) and said the blessing, ‘who conferred from His glory to flesh and blood,’ in a loud voice so that others could answer amen.

“The czar saw a Jew standing there dressed in peculiar fashion, holding a Torah scroll and raising his voice ... and it was explained to him. After Radatz went home, his nephew who was a bit of a maskil asked him: You know that the czar is a drunkard. How could you treat him that way – blessing him and going out to greet him with a Torah?

“Radatz said: *Petoch* (fool)! He has a governing angel up Above!”

In another place the Rebbe spoke about the peace accords, comparing Israeli democracy to Russia and arriving at the conclusion that the Russians had what to learn from the Israelis about creating a dictatorship in the guise of a democracy:

“A dictatorship like this in the guise of a democracy cannot be found anywhere else in the world, not even in Soviet Russia!

“Woe to us that we have reached this state so that we need to bring proofs from them; that even the ‘corrupt of the nations’ do not behave this way.

“I myself was in Soviet Russia and I know their ways. When they force people to do something, they explain that ‘conscience’ obligates one to conduct oneself according to communist principles; this is required by Marx’s approach, by the principles of ‘justice and righteousness,’ the approach that it is forbidden to undermine the wages of the worker, and other things like that. They add that if someone expresses his personal conscience in another way, they will put him in jail or send him to Siberia. But to openly and officially announce that someone should vote against his conscience – something like that has not been done by any leader in the Kremlin!”

The Rebbe used the term “that nation” to refer to Russia and was dissatisfied with the term “Iron Curtain.” “... Since there are Jews present who left – as people are accustomed to saying – from behind the Iron Curtain, I don’t agree with that term at all since there is no curtain of iron but merely an imaginary curtain ...” Nevertheless, on another occasion, the Rebbe found a Torah source for the expression “Iron Curtain.” ■



## ***When a Hint Should Suffice***

"Even a tzaddik's mere movement," writes the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach in *HaYom Yom*, "must leave an everlasting and unforgettable impact." More than any other mode of communication, hand and head gestures were the way the Rebbe encouraged Chassidim to believe, publicize, and thrive with his *Besuras HaGeulah* and the *higalus* of the Moshiach shebador. In a rousing essay culled from sources in *nigleh* and *Chassidus*, **Rabbi Shloma Majeski** delves into the meaning of gestures made by Tzaddikim and their powerful meaning. Plus, what has all this got to do with *Hakhel*?



**The** Rebbe writes about the Shpola Zeide in the HaYom Yom:

*The Shpola Zeide (“Grandfather of Shpola”), a disciple of the Maggid of Mezritch, was a man of intense fervor, far more than any of his colleagues - the Maggid’s other disciples.*

*When he visited the Alter Rebbe in Liadi in 5569 or 5570 (1809 or 1810) he related that when he was a child of three he saw the Baal Shem Tov. “He placed his holy hand on my heart and ever since I have felt warm.”*

*A gesture of a Tzaddik, certainly seeing him and hearing his voice, must make an impression never to be forgotten.*



Sometimes there are complaints about publicizing the identity of Moshiach and proclaiming “Yechi.” These complaints have as their goal the weakening, G-d forbid, of emuna and cooling off people’s enthusiasm even though they might be presented in the guise of holiness and hiskashrus. When you look into it carefully you see that the disdain for Yechi is not only a disdain for the concept of Moshiach and the right way to publicize it. It’s a disdain for everything holy and dear, to the point of disdain for, and the casting of doubts on, G-d forbid, the concept of “Rebbe,” the foundation of all of Judaism!

This article won’t go over all the sources in which the Rebbe stresses the importance of publicizing the identity of the Redeemer. I will just refer to one source which I think is not as well known – the sicha of Shabbos Parshas Balak (Sefer HaSichos 5751 p. 692) in which the Rebbe says that “living with the time” of Yemos

HaMoshiach means, “to the point of behaving in thought, speech, and action in a way that is appropriate for this unique time when we stand on the threshold of Geula and pointing with a finger - ‘behold, this (Moshiach) comes!’

As I said, I won’t get into the sources but will take a different angle – the Rebbe’s encouragement of the singing of Yechi for over a year’s time. What is the reason that this lofty matter, upon which depends the hisgalus of Moshiach, is expressed primarily by motions of the hand and head?

This question is not only about the encouragement of the singing of Yechi but also about many responses approving the publicizing of the Besuras HaGeula such as the Rebbe’s approving the publication of *Besuras HaGeula* which has the words “C”K Admur Melech HaMoshiach shlita” written in it. Why were most of these positive acknowledgements given by way of a hint?

When you look in Chazal and in Chasidus, you find that the idea of hinting is generally used to reveal something spiritual that is very lofty and which cannot be revealed in the usual form of speech.

It is very interesting to discover in the Gemara something that is perhaps not so well known – that many halachos were ruled upon by the Amoraim merely with a hand motion. An example would be the Gemara in Yoma (the end of daf 54b) where it brings the explanation of Rav Yehuda for the word *matzlif* which is used by the Mishna regarding the avoda of the Kohen Gadol: “What is like a matzlif? Rav Yehuda showed like someone whipping” (like hitting with a strap that starts at the shoulders and strikes downward - Rashi).

In the Gemara Makos (daf 21a) we find that Rav Sheishes used his fingers to teach

a halacha, “He is guilty (of shaving) on the head,” Rav Sheishes pointed to the different areas on the head. “And (of shaving with a razor) on the beard, two on this side and two on this side, and one below,” Rav Sheishes pointed to the different areas on the beard.

So too the Gemara Shabbos (daf 106a) which discusses the size of the area prohibited by *melaben* (whitening), “Rav Yosef showed the area doubled, Rav Chiya bar Ami showed it straight.”

So too in a number of places like the Gemara in Bava Metzia (daf 7a) which brings a discussion in the laws of splitting an item in dispute: “Rav Tachlifa bar Maarava taught before Rav Avahu, two who are grasping a tallis, this one takes as far as his hand reaches and that one takes as far as his hand reaches and the rest they divide equally. Rav Avahu indicated (pointing his fingers heavenward, Rashi) and with an oath” (i.e. he alluded with his fingers that the split requires an oath).

Looked at superficially, you might conclude that there is a common denominator in all these halachic decisions and due to technical reasons they were decided with “hints,” i.e. hand motions, whether it’s because they are laws in which we need to know precise amounts which can only be done with one’s hands, or for some other reason. But Chassidus explains that there is a special spiritual matter going on here and it’s not a coincidence that these laws were decided by hand motions.

In the Sefer HaMaamarim 5699 p. 188, the Rebbe Rayatz explains the topic of *v’dai l’chakima b’realiza* (a hint to the wise is enough): “That through hinting you can also uncover a deep intellectual matter which would need hours to explain but

someone wise can understand it quickly even with a hint.”

The maamar goes on to bring an example of this from the Gemara in Brachos (daf 46b) where it brings a discussion between the Reish Galusa (leader of the exile recognized by the Babylonian authorities) and Rav Sheishes: “The Reish Galusa said to Rav Sheishes, although you are of the elder rabbis, when it comes to table manners, the Persians are more knowledgeable than you!

“When there are two couches, the greater one reclines at the head and the one second to him above him.” (Rashi: when they recline at a meal [they were accustomed to reclining on their left side with their feet on the ground, each man on the his own couch] they recline in such a way that the couch of the second in greatness is at the head of the greater one).

Rav Sheishes asks: When the greater one wants to talk to the other one, he will have to sit up from his place so that the other one can hear him which is surely not in accordance with his dignity. (Rashi: and if the greater one wants to talk to the other one, he will have to straighten up in his place to sit upright for as long as he is reclining he cannot talk to him since the other one is behind his head and the greater one’s face is turned away, and it would be better if the other one sits below him and listens to him as he is reclining).

The Reish Galusa responds: The Persians are different because they show with a motion (they hint by demonstrating with their hands and fingers, Rashi).

The maamar asks: We find several times that Rav Avahu, Rav, Rav Yehuda, Rav Yosef, Rav Sheishes would indicate with their hands. It was their practice to reveal deep wisdom with a hint because



what cannot be expressed in words can be revealed through a hint. This is very surprising for how can a physical motion reveal a very deep intellectual idea which cannot even be revealed through speech?

He explains this by first prefacing with a long explanation about the intellectual matters which come in two forms: the externals of intellect and the *pnimiyus* (internal aspect) of intellect. Then he says: “This is the difference between a hint and speech that in speech only the light of intellect which is the external aspect of intellect can be revealed and apprehended. With a hint you can grasp the entire essence of the intellect which cannot be intellectually apprehended; it needs a wise man to understand a hint.”

Then the question is asked: how is it possible that through a physical gesture the deepest aspects of intellect can be revealed, which cannot be revealed through speech which is the usual way of revealing intellect?

He explains: There are certain matters that are so lofty that there is nothing great

enough to contain them and consequently, they cannot be revealed within any vessel. It is specifically through something that has no relativity to them at all that they can be revealed.

The words the Rebbe uses are: “For the essence of intellect there is no vessel that is similar to it and the *keilim* are merely for the externals of *seichel* and this is what is revealed through letters of speech. As for a hint which is not in the realm of a *keili* at all, it is specifically in this way that the essence is grasped. It’s just that it is not revealed since it is not in the realm of a vessel, but through it is grasped and drawn the essence and substance of the *seichel*.”

In other words, it is the lowliness of a movement – which is not even considered a *keili* altogether – that makes it possible to reveal deep things of the level of *Mahus* and *Atzmus* of intellect, things which cannot be revealed within *keilim* and cannot possibly be revealed within the usual *keili* of *seichel*, namely speech. So the reason those laws were finalized with

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**When you look into it carefully you see that the disdain for Yechi is not only a disdain for the concept of Moshiach and the right way to publicize it.**

.....

a hand motion is because hinting allows for a revelation that cannot be expressed any other way.

We find this idea in the writings of the Alter Rebbe in Likkutei Torah (Parshas Bechukosai): “It is impossible to draw down a revelation of G-dliness from the aspect of *sovev kol almin* (encompassing all worlds) through any intellectual grasp and power of thought and speech for thought cannot grasp it at all even supernal intellects etc., only through the aspect of action and the fulfillment of mitzvos as in the idea of ‘a hint to the wise is enough.’ And it is like a person who cannot speak and explain everything that is in his heart to his friend. What does he do? He motions to him. So too, as it were ... through the actions of mitzvos and their fulfillment is hinted and drawn down from way, way up, and from a very lofty place like with a hint.”

In light of all the above, the rulings that were made by a motion consist of a higher spiritual level that could not be revealed in any other way. This idea is borne out in sources in Chassidus which speak about the importance of a movement, like what the Rebbe Rayatz writes in the name of his father (Sefer HaSichos, kayitz 5700):

“There are two times, each of which, in accordance to his standing and position, becomes ‘almost a man’ and afterward a ‘man.’

“... the time that I became a ‘man’ started from 5651 when I heard from my father: Our Rebbeim guided the flock of Chabad that a word is conceptualization, Torah; and a movement is guidance, a directive.”

So too in Sefer HaToldos – Admor HaZakein (in the story of his arrest and liberation): “The Alter Rebbe was greatly pained that he had to reveal the intention of his master the Baal Shem Tov and explain his ways to gentile ministers. Although he could have pushed them off with a number of answers, he did not want to be separated from even one movement of our master the Baal Shem Tov, not even for a brief time and not even just for appearance’s sake.”

This enables us to understand some stories of our Rebbeim. In Sefer HaSichos 5703 it tells of a moving conversation between the Maggid of Mezritch in his final days and his disciple, the Alter Rebbe.

The Alter Rebbe said: When the Rebbe told me about [what is done the night before a bris] he said: Why don’t you ask me what is done for a Sholom Zachor?

I said: I feel that the holy talks which you honor me with are in a way of “inspiration from above,” “dew that drips from Atika Kadisha.”

(Then there is a frightening description of the Alter Rebbe’s holy face when he mentioned what his Rebbe told him ... This is followed by a continuation of what the Alter Rebbe said).

Upon which it is said “and you shall be silent,” do not attempt an arousal at all. My

master, the Rav HaMaggid nodded his holy head as a sign of agreement.



In the Sefer HaMaamarim Basi L’Gani vol. 1 p. 263 there is an excerpt from the notes of the Rebbe MH”M: “... When I brought the pamphlet to the Rebbe my father-in-law I found him in his room, where he davens, where they go in for yechidus etc., sitting at his desk and the Siddur (Torah Ohr, Brooklyn 5701) opened in front of him to page 45 – the end of Hodu and the beginning of Posach Eliyahu. I put the pamphlet on the desk and he nodded to express his approval and satisfaction.”

In light of the sources brought above we can understand the significance of the nodding of the head as a sign of agreement in these stories. Obviously, there is no need to add a word about the significance of the fact that most of the instructions and encouragement from the Rebbe about publicizing the Geula and the Goel including those broadcast widely on television, were done via a hint, because from everything that was said above we understand the greatness of the revelation being revealed here.

However, we need to emphasize what the Rebbe Rayatz said in the maamar above that there is an important condition necessary in order to understand the hint: “One who is very wise will know from the hint the essence and substance of the idea, which cannot be put into letters of speech.”

How do you attain the requisite level of wisdom? The maamar explains: “Although being a chacham is through bittul ... the fulfillment of mitzvos needs to be done through accepting the yoke of the king-

dom of Heaven and not for any reason. As in the well-known saying ... if Hashem commanded us to chop trees we would do so with kabbalas ol like all mitzvos, and in order to understand the inner hint in Torah and mitzvos we need to be wise and to reach the quality of chochma. This can only be done through bittul.”

As mentioned at the beginning of this article, disdain, G-d forbid, for a hand or head motion of the Rebbe expresses a disdain for the foundation of Chassidus and the concept of Rebbe.

Despite this being quite obvious and known by any beginner student, it still seems worthwhile mentioning two sources that clarify this without being able to be interpreted some other way:

In the sicha of the fifth night of Sukkos 5748 the Rebbe told about something the Rebbe Rayatz did that was surprising to him “for quite some time.”

“For the recitation of Hallel, the Rebbe Rayatz would take the lulav along with the two minim tied to it and without the esrog ... and only during the waving of the minim did he pick up the esrog too and hold it together with the other three minim ... Seemingly, according to what we know about how great it is to unite all four minim ... it would be preferable to hold the esrog together with the lulav and other minim throughout the recitation of Hallel ... What is the reason for what the Rebbe did?

“We can explain this according to something else we saw by the Rebbe Rayatz. Those who watched how he did things saw that after each waving he would look at the esrog, apparently to check that the esrog did not get a nick. And one could say that this is why he did not hold the esrog throughout Hallel but

only when necessary (during the waving), because of fear of scratching it.

“... We saw this in later years when the Rebbe Rayatz was not that well (while in earlier years, when his health was good, we did not see this (at least I did not) manner of conduct, and therefore extra care was taken ... because the hands shook.

“We find in the Mishna – ‘Hillel said a ‘full *hin* measure’ ... a person must say it the way his Rebbi did,’ (*in* instead of *hin*, or *hane* instead of *hin* – he mispronounced the word like his Rebbi) even though the reason for exact repetition does not, in this case, apply to the talmid.

“So too here: since this is what the Rebbe Rayatz did (for whatever reason), some of the Chassidim who took note of his conduct began doing the same thing (to only hold the lulav and its minim during Hallel and pick up the esrog only during the waving and also to check the esrog after the waving) as the Rebbe did.”



So the Rebbe is saying that if the Rebbe Rayatz did things a certain way, for whatever reason he had for doing so, Chassidim did the same because every movement of the Rebbe is holy and there is no such thing as inexact behavior by the Rebbe!

We see this too in a letter that the Rebbe wrote in 5713 (Igro Kodesh vol. 7, p. 58) about the reason for the change from drinking a lot of mashke as used to be the practice:

“1) Because abilities were given to Anash through the many easy maamarim and sichos in matters of explanation and understanding to affect the listeners without the need for copious alcoholic drink;

just a little is enough. 2) Since, in recent times in particular, what is demanded of us with extra emphasis is the inyan of spreading the wellsprings **outward**, drinking a lot could undermine this a great deal...

“I found support for one part of this from what I once heard from the Rebbe my father-in-law in Riga who said, ‘I am now (the reference to **now** was not merely to that particular time but to those years since he started drinking less mashke) like after a bit of mashke.’ And although the superficial reason was that the doctors had told him to minimize mashke, obviously this was the external reason and consequently was accepted only by outsiders and not by Anash who know that Chassidim demands pnimiyus, and surely this is also an instruction about the matter in general. As it is known that the body is drawn after the head and so Chassidim are drawn after our Nasi, the Rebbe my father-in-law, that his saying that he is now like after having a little mashke is an instruction to all Chassidim and the conferring of ability likewise, to be like this.”

Once again we see clearly that without looking at the reason that seemingly “caused” the Rebbe to say and act that way, we as Chassidim know the facts: this is what the Rebbe did and surely this is a holy thing.

I’ll conclude with how I began, with the quote from the HaYom Yom: “A gesture of a Tzaddik, certainly seeing him and hearing his voice, must make an impression never to be forgotten.” May we merit seeing this right now with the hisgalus of the Rebbe MH”M when we will proclaim once again that which he encouraged us to proclaim: Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu V’Rabbeinu, Melech HaMoshiach L’olam Va’ed! ■

## The Real UN Is Not the Glass Window Building

During President Shazar's visit in 5733, the Rebbe said to him: "Here is the real UN, not in the glass building in Manhattan, but here!" Then the Rebbe said, pointing to Rabbi Sholom Eidelman, one of the shlichim in Morocco who was present: "He is our representative in Morocco."

Gahal (the then opposition bloc to labor in the Knesset). The Rebbe spoke with a few of them for some time.

They reported afterward to R' Gershon Jacobson (who writes for a newspaper in Eretz Yisrael) and these are the main points:

Aharon Becker said that the Rebbe demanded of him several times that he promise that Yerushalayim would never be returned to the Arabs. The Rebbe said he meant not even to give extraterritorial rights to Christians or Moslems.

Interestingly, when Becker asked the Rebbe why he did not go to Eretz Yisrael, the Rebbe did not answer right away; he just smiled. However, when he asked again, the Rebbe said with a smile that this is a question that he asks himself every day!

Another interesting thing was when Becker brought up the idea of having a unified nusach ha'tefilla for all Jews. The Rebbe dismissed the idea, saying that it would be better if the process of the integration of the exiled communities develop naturally.

The Rebbe asked Yosef Shufman to give Mr. Menachem Begin a "yashar koach" for resigning from the government following the decision to approve the Rogers Plan.

The Rebbe also praised Begin's speech about MiHu Yehudi.

After the first hakafa, they all said l'chaim. He [the Rebbe] said they should be honored with a hakafa [they bought a pasuk for the Rebbe and he bought a pasuk for each of the reps].

They began to sing "Hoshia es Amecha" and then "Utzu Eitza V'Sufar" and they sang with tremendous energy and for a relatively long time.

## "A Tefach Above Ground"

We will end this description of this most unique and special event with a snippet of a letter the Rashag wrote to his brother-in-law the Rebbe after Simchas Torah of that year:

"Still under the impression of the days of Yom Tov, I'd like to first and foremost express my feelings. I recall how during the lifetime of the Rebbe *Nishmaso Eden* [the Rebbe Rashab], immediately after a farbrengen, the Rebbe [our] father-in-law sent a letter to his good friend, my uncle Reb Shmuel Gurary, writing that there was clear *gilui Elokus*."

"So too, the days of Yom Tov, through the Sichos Kodesh that were said by *Kevod Kedushas Gisi Shlita* [my saintly brother-in-law] at the farbrengens, especially during the farbrengen of Simchas Torah night before *hakafos* made a strong impression and caused an elevation of the spirit that cannot be evaluated on the large crowd *bli ayin hara* that participated. To use the terminology of Chassidus, 'It lifted them a *tefach* above.'" ■

# לזכות

הת' מנחם מענדל, חיה מושקא,  
חנה, שיינא ושניאור זלמן

קרומבי



# לזכות

תלמידי התמימים בכל רחבי תבל

לחיזוק ההתקשרות

לכ"ק אדמו"ר מלך המשיח