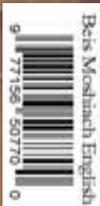


BEIS MOSHIACH

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IF IT WAS TRUE
25 YEARS AGO,
**IT IS
TRUE
TODAY.**

INTERVIEW
WITH RABBI
HELVEN
WOLF



Rabbi Yosef Y. Zaltzman
shares notes from private
moments with the Rebbe

**Face to Face
With the Rebbe**

**A MIDNIGHT
DRAMA ON THE
STREETS OF
LENINGRAD**



A REBBE OF ROBOTS



יחי אדוננו מורנו ורבינו מלך המשיח לעולם ועד



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Comics about Moshiach

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BESURAS HaGeulah

THE REBBE ON THE IMMINENCE OF THE REDEMPTION

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN 10 JEWS LEARN ABOUT MOSHIACH?

כב. קטעים משיחות ש"פ תזריע-מצורע, ו' אייר תנש"א (4)
6 Iyar 5751 – April 20 1991 (4)

As the *farbrengen* drew to a close the Rebbe summarized the call of the hour — to increase study of Torah, especially on Moshiach matters:

My intention here is action. The following suggestions will surely be publicized and encouraged everywhere:

In order to accomplish the immediate revelation and coming of Moshiach, each and every Jew,

— the men, whether they are “dwellers in the tent” — people who study Torah full-time — (like the tribe of Yissachar, who historically tended to be scholars), or business men (like the tribe of Zevulun),

as well as women and children, each according to his ability —

must increase in his study of Torah, particularly on the subjects of Moshiach and Redemption.

The Rebbe adds an important instruction as to the manner of study:

It would be even better if the study is in public, along with at least ten others.

ועל של פעל באתי - ובנדאי יעוררו ויפרסמו בכל מקום ומקום:

כדי לפעל התגלות וביאת המשיח תכף ומיד - על כל אדם ואדם מן ישראל

(האנשים - הן יושבי אהל (יששכר) והן בעלי עסק (זבולון),

ובן הנשים והטף, כל חד וחד לפום שיעורא (דיליה)

להוסיף בלמוד התורה (במיוחד) בעניני משיח וגאולה.

ומה טוב - שהלמוד יהיה (ברבים) בעשרה,

Because, in addition to the advantage there is *anytime* when “ten people sit and occupy themselves with Torah study,” namely, that “the *Shechinah* dwells among them,”

there is yet a *particular* advantage with learning about Moshiach and the Redemption in public;

— Such public study elicits excitement and heartfelt joy which in turn increases the desire and anticipation for the coming of Moshiach.

Obviously, this is in addition to the most essential thing — to increase the observance of mitzvos *b'hidur* — in a beautified manner.

Especially to beautify the mitzvah of *tzedakah*, which is comprehensive of all the mitzvos, as it involves a much greater degree of energy than is invested in any other mitzvah.

It therefore “draws near the Redemption,” as it elevates all the vitality invested into earning that money which was given to *tzedakah*.

The Rebbe goes on to show how giving *tzedakah* and learning about Moshiach can be combined:

It would be worthwhile and proper to connect the increase in *tzedakah* with an increase in the Torah study on matters of Moshiach and Redemption. This is done by giving *tzedakah* with the intention to bring close and hasten the Redemption.

כי, נוסף על המעלה ד"עשרה שיושבים ועוסקים בתורה שכינה שרויה ביניהם",

יש מעלה מיוחדת בשלומדים עניני משיח והגאולה ברבים

בנוגע להתפעלות והשמחה ברגש הלב, שעל-ידי-זה הולכת וגדלה ההשתוקקות והצפייה לביאת המשיח.

ועוד ועקר בפשוט - להוסיף בקיום המצוות בהידור,

ובמיוחד בההידור במצות הצדקה (כללות כל המצוות)

ש"מקרבת את הגאולה".

וכדאי ונכון לקשר ההוספה בצדקה עם ההוספה בתורה בעניני משיח וגאולה - על-ידי-זה שההוספה לצדקה היא מתוך כוונה לקרב ולזרוז את הגאולה,

"FIND INSTRUCTIONS ATTACHED..."

Rabbi Chaim Gutnick, on the 8th of Iyar 5751, in the weeks after the famous sicha of 28 Nissan, wrote a heartfelt letter to the Rebbe asking the Rebbe for guidance what to do to bring Moshiach. “Surely the Rebbe knows what needs to be done,” he begs the Rebbe, and ends with “*Gevald!* What should we do?!”

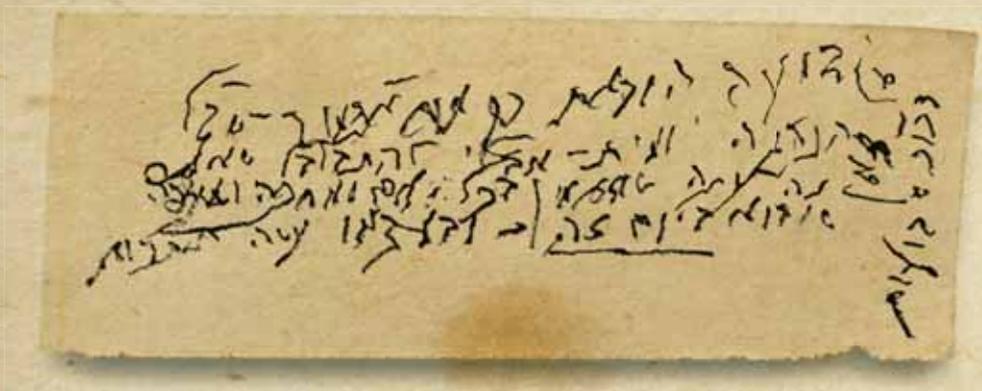
The Rebbe replied to him on the 10th of Iyar with a short answer (freely translated) attached to a copy of the above sicha: “I have said [what to do] **several times** — and most recently in the *farbrengen* of last Shabbos, attached here...” The Rebbe was referring of course to the *farbrengen* of Shabbos Parshas Tazria Metzora in which he spoke about learning Torah about Moshiach.

From The Rebbe's Pen



Planning Ahead Doesn't Contradict Expecting Moshiach

In response to a woman who asked, "How is making long term plans not a contradiction to our firm belief in Moshiach's imminent arrival." The Rebbe answered:



"ידועה הוראת כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר - שצ"ל הנהגה יומית - מבלי להתבלבל שאמר זה עתה שמאמין בכל יום ומחכה ומצפה שיבוא ביום זה - ובעצמו עשה תוכניות על זמן דכו"כ שבועות"

"It is well known the directive of my father-in-law, the Rebbe - that there needs to be proper day-to-day conduct - without getting confused by what he just said that he believes every day in Moshiach's arrival and he waits and expects that Moshiach will actually come on this very day.

In fact, the Rebbe Rayatz himself made plans for many weeks in advance".

See the *sicha* of Parshas Pinchas 5751 for more on this topic. ■

SHABBOS

06/29

כ"ו סיון

CANDLE LIGHTING	SUNRISE	LATEST SHEMA	MIDDAY	SUNSET	SHABBOS ENDS
8:12	5:27	9:13	12:59	8:30	9:22

ג' פרקים: הלכות מלוה ולוה פרקים כב-כד. פרק אחד: הלכות מטמאי משכב ומושב אדומה פרק ה. ספר המצוות: מ"ת רלז

SUNDAY

06/30

כ"ז סיון

SUNRISE	LATEST SHEMA	SUNSET
5:27	9:13	8:30

ג' פרקים: הלכות מלוה ולוה פרקים כה-כז
פרק אחד: הלכות מטמאי משכב ומושב פרק ו
ספר המצוות: מ"ע קצח

MONDAY

07/01

כ"ח סיון

SUNRISE	LATEST SHEMA	SUNSET
5:28	9:13	8:30

ג' פרקים: הלכות טוען ונטען פרקים א-ג
פרק אחד: הלכות מטמאי משכב ומושב פרק ז
ספר המצוות: מ"ע רמו

TUESDAY

07/02

כ"ט סיון

SUNRISE	LATEST SHEMA	SUNSET
5:28	9:14	8:30

ג' פרקים: הלכות טוען ונטען פרקים ד-ו
פרק אחד: הלכות מטמאי משכב ומושב פרק ח
ספר המצוות: מ"ע רמו

WEDNESDAY

07/03

ל' סיון

SUNRISE	LATEST SHEMA	SUNSET
5:29	9:14	8:30

ג' פרקים: הלכות טוען ונטען פרקים ז-ט
פרק אחד: הלכות מטמאי משכב ומושב פרק ט
ספר המצוות: מ"ע רמו

THURSDAY

07/04

א' תמוז

SUNRISE	LATEST SHEMA	SUNSET
5:29	9:15	8:30

ג' פרקים: הלכות טוען ונטען פרקים י-יב
פרק אחד: הלכות מטמאי משכב ומושב פרק י
ספר המצוות: מ"ע רמו

FRIDAY

07/05

ב' תמוז

SUNRISE	LATEST SHEMA	SUNSET
5:30	9:15	8:29

ג' פרקים: הלכות טוען ונטען פרקים יג-טו
פרק אחד: הלכות מטמאי משכב ומושב פרק יא
ספר המצוות: מ"ע רמו

THE TIMES ON THIS PAGE ARE FOR BROOKLYN, NY



**Rabbi
Boruch
Merkur**

IMMORTALITY AND MESIRUS NEFESH?

AT the Crown Heights *kollel*, some 20-plus years ago, not long after Gimmel Tammuz 5754, a debate ensued – about Moshiach, of course – during which I mentioned the Rebbe’s “self-sacrifice in appearing on the balcony...”

“Why do you guys insist,” a *yungerman* cut me off, “that the Rebbe had **self-sacrifice** in appearing on the balcony of 770?”

What motivated this bizarre interjection? I passed it off at the time as simple *grubkait*, but it always bothered me that it was a very intelligent and well-connected *yungerman* who had this complaint. Think about it. What bothered him so much? What was he really complaining about?

Cynicism breeds on failing to see integrity in authority. Once role models are dethroned and debased, everything genuine appears as a potential sham. Simple naivete and devotion is deemed childish and immature, unsophisticated. Cynics are often vociferous and confrontational to justify their jaded position. In that murky world, G-d forbid, *tzaddikim* could be wrong (after all, they’re only human!) or the generation might not have been worthy, etc.

With that in mind, it is clear what this *kollel yungerman* was protesting. Here he was speaking to someone who apparently jumped on the bandwagon of faith at speeds this cynic

just wasn’t comfortable with, so he called him out:

If you believe the Rebbe is perfect and G-dly in a way that seems to defy mortality itself, why do you ascribe to him self-sacrifice? He is beyond nature! By your own description, we are not talking about an ordinary man in his 90s, so why speak of *mesirus nefesh*? He is totally beyond human suffering! In other words, **if our eyes are lying and nothing has changed since Gimmel Tammuz, if the laws of nature do not apply to such a *tzaddik*, how can he be said to have self-sacrifice?!**

Trust me this cynic wants to be convinced. He is desperate to see this paradox resolved to infuse himself with newfound faith. More than anyone, **this type of personality wants to see redemption unfold in a way that is truly compelling, tangible and overt – and with the Rebbe as Moshiach at our head.** The main thing to him though is that it should go well with his concept of reality, with the rational, natural world he is so entrenched in and so much wants to be excavated from.



RABBI Sholom Mordechai Rubashkin was whisked out beyond the prison walls to learn of the spectacular and totally unexpected news of his immediate release from prison, gained by nothing less

than presidential maneuverings. Rubashkin insisted, however, to return to prison to *bentch* in the place where he was *koveia seuda*. The warden couldn’t fathom what he was talking about. **Saying Grace in prison when you are a free man?! You really want to go back there?!**

Reb Sholom Mordechai recently told this story at a banquet. All kinds of Jews packed the venue in a show of brotherhood and solidarity. Hearing how Rubashkin willingly walked back to the lion’s den, a non-Chasidische *rav* stood up and declared: **“I am a *rav* and I *pasken* that it was forbidden for you to go back to the prison to *bentch*!”**

The Rebbe says the same thing about the redemption of Gimmel Tammuz: “The Rebbe Rayatz had *mesirus nefesh* even for matters that several Torah giants held that we must **not** have self-sacrifice” (*Likkutei Sichos* 28, pg. 127).

The mindset that led to the Rebbe Rayatz’s unfathomable insistence to stay in prison until after Shabbos emerged from his “firm resolve not to be affected **at all**” by the regime that held him and not to accommodate their disregard for Judaism in any respect. Here the Rebbe speaks unequivocally about his father-in-law’s suffering: “As a result of this approach, the Rebbe was beaten, etc., and stricken with bodily suffering, *rachmana litzlan*.” Indeed, **the Rebbe defines Gimmel Tammuz as a day that is synonymous with self-sacrifice:**

This approach of uncalculated self-sacrifice is seen in the Rebbe Rayatz’s general conduct, and especially regarding the redemption on Gimmel Tammuz. In fact, the very date of Gimmel Tammuz (in connection to the redemption) is synonymous with his self-sacrifice. (pg. 125)



SO a Rebbe **can** suffer, but his main concern is surely his mission. The Rebbe Rayatz’s very mission was at stake if he provoked and enraged his captors, giving rise to the possibility of further incarceration or the reinstatement of the death sentence against him, G-d forbid. His lifework was at stake!

Yet in a sense, the Rebbe’s integrity trumped even his mission. People might not be privy to all the Rebbe’s calculations in determining whether or not he can travel on Shabbos, etc. Appearance in this sense, the way events seem to unfold in the public eye – that is what gives rise to an even greater concern: whether or not the Rebbe’s example will serve as a *kiddush Hashem*. A true leader knows that his own example and personal integrity is his top priority. It is the true lifeline of Judaism that a Rebbe seeks to extend to the Jewish people.

Our Rebbes are people who suffer real consequences, but in addition to the G-dly resolve they have towards their mission, first and foremost they are living examples of what it means to be a Jew. The Rebbe was not going to bow to the Communists in any way, to illustrate how a Jew can transcend any obstacle.

In connection with self-sacrifice for being a *kiddush Hashem*, the Rebbe clearly underscores here the importance of appearances. The Rebbe knows how Gimmel Tammuz 5754 looks to the world, yet with obvious *mesirus nefesh* he appeared on the balcony of 770 to show a personal declaration of faith and pride in the truth of his message to the world: **The true and complete redemption is imminent and I will not fail you! ■**

THE REBBE'S Kapitel

AN ANTHOLOGY OF COMMENTARIES

DOES HASHEM NEED HELPERS?

קִיָּת.

בו יסופר גודל הבטחון שהיה לדוד והרבה תהלות להש"י שקיים לנו מה שהבטיח אותנו:

In this psalm, the great trust King David had Hashem is described, as well as many praises to Hashem that He has fulfilled what He promised to us

5. From the straits I called G-d; G-d answered me with a vast expanse.

ה. מִן־הַמַּצַּר קָרָאתִי יְיָ הֵאֱנִי בַּמְרוֹחַב יְיָ־הֵ:

6. The L-rd is for me; I shall not fear. What can man do to me?

ו. ה' לִי לֹא אִירָא מִה־יַעֲשֶׂה לִי אָדָם:

7. The L-rd is for me with my helpers, and I shall see [revenge] in my enemies.

ז. ה' לִי בְעֲזָרֵי וְאֲנִי אִרְאֶה בְשֹׁנְאָי:

8. It is better to take shelter in the L-rd than to trust in man.

ח. טוֹב לְחַסוֹת בַּה' מִבְּטוֹחַ בְּאָדָם:

Rashi: It is better to take shelter in the L-rd: Heb. לחסות. This shelter (חסיון) is only an expression of the shelter of a shadow, a small thing.

טוֹב לְחַסוֹת בַּה' וְגו'. חֲסִיוֹן זֶה חֵינּוּ חָלָל לְשׁוֹן חֲסִיוֹן לֹל וְדָבָר מוֹעֵט הוּא:

Trust (מבטח) is a stout and strong support. Nevertheless, to take shelter in the L-rd is better than the promises of human beings.

מִבְּטוֹחַ. דָּבָר פְּרִיָא וְקַמְדָּ חֲזָקָה וְאִף עַל פִּי כּוֹן לְחַסוֹת בַּה' טוֹב מִהַבְּטוּחַת בְּגִנֵי חָדָם:

THE FRIERDIKER REBBE

“G-d is among those who help me; may I witness [the downfall of] those who hate me.”

The wording here is problematic, appearing to imply that a person has many helpers, and that G-d is [merely] one of them. In truth, however, “There is none else apart from Him.” He alone, blessed be He, is the Creator Who

brings a man into existence and animates him, and assists him in all his affairs. As Rambam declares: “The foundation of all foundations and the pillar of all wisdom is to know that there exists a Prime Being, and He brings into existence every existing thing; and all things that exist in the heavens and earth and between them exist only by virtue of His true existence.”...

Accordingly, it is difficult to understand the phrase, “G-d is among those who help me,” for it implies that G-d is one helper in partnership with others?

...Also requiring explanation is [King David's] request, “May I witness [the downfall of] those who hate me.” Seemingly, it would have been more appropriate for him to have asked that his enemies and haters be transformed into friends and intimates ... A desire to “witness [the downfall of] those who hate me” thus raises difficulties.



[The explanation:]

The spiritual level exemplified by [King] David was the Sefirah of Malchus (lit., “sovereignty”). His statement, “I am [a man of] prayer,” thus means, “I, the attribute of Malchus, am prayer.” Nevertheless, his divine service focused on the pnimiyus of the Torah, through which he sought to refine [his environment, which was not his primary Avodah].

Prayer seeks to refine and elevate [worldly existence]: Torah study seeks to draw down and reveal [G-dly light]. When Torah study seeks to refine [the undesirable aspects of materiality, it does this by rejection. This is reflected in the verse, “[This is the Torah...] to differentiate between the pure and the impure.”

This is implied by ... “Your statutes were my songs when I dwelled in fear.” With the power of the Torah, [David] would cut off [the forces of evil which are known as] “tyrants”;

...This, however, [is not G-d's intent in creation]: the world was not created for chaos, but in order that it be settled. [This requires that man] involve himself with the tasks of refining [his environment] and drawing down G-dly light into the world. For this reason [David] was punished, [for ignoring this thrust and seeking to rise above worldly existence].

STUDYING TEHILLIM

... There is an ancient custom of studying, every Rosh Chodesh, one verse with Rashi, and optionally with other commentaries, of the chapter of Tehillim of one's age.” — *Excerpt from a letter of the Previous Rebbe, 18 Teves 5703 (December 26, 1943)*

In accordance with this *minhag*, **Beis Moshiach** presents *pesukim* of Kapitel 118, the Rebbe's kapitel, with Rashi and insights from of our Rebbeim.

On this basis, [we can reconcile the queries raised at the outset regarding the verse,] “G-d is among those who help me.” A person's true helpers are the elements [of worldly existence] which he has refined.

[Included in the Hebrew original of the verse, “G-d is among those who help me,” is the phrase, לי הוי' — lit., “G-d is for me.” Hence:] When a person devotes himself in an orderly manner to his Divinely-appointed task of refinement, a revelation of *Havayah* shines forth upon him. Moreover, “G-d is among [lit., within] those who help me”: Through a person's self-sacrifice in carrying out his divine service, he brings about a revelation of *Havayah* within all those who help him. [As an automatic result of this revelation,] “I [will] witness [the downfall of] those who hate me.”

[The enemies here], included individuals such as Doeg and Achitofel who appeared to conduct their lives according to the Torah, David made this request with the intent that the truth be revealed — that *these* individuals hated G-d: they did not desire the revelation of G-dliness, and [more particularly,] the revelation of the Name *Havayah*, [which transcends the limits of nature]. They desired to live by the natural order and mortal reason. ■

(*Maamar Havayah Li BeOzrai 5687, reprinted from “Defiance and Devotion” - SIE*)

IS THERE A PROBLEM WITH UNDERSHIRT TZITZIS?

In connection with the mitzvah of Tzitzis discussed in Parshas Shlach, we present a collection of halachic articles from Halacha2Go.com on this fundamental mitzvah

By Horav Yosef Yeshaya Braun, Mara D'asra and member of the Crown Heights Beis Din

IS THERE A PROBLEM WITH UNDERSHIRT TZITZIS?

There is a product on the market which is an undershirt with tzitzis on it. It's worn by some people in hot weather, or while exercising or jogging. In order for such an undershirt to be kosher for tzitzis it must be ascertained first and foremost that most of the length on both sides of the undershirt are open at the seams, not just a small section at the bottom; otherwise it cannot be considered as having four corners and requiring tzitzis. The holes for the arms cannot be regarded as part of the opening. The mitzvah min hamuvchar (preferred manner of doing the mitzvah) is to wear a woolen tallis katan, which obviously, the undershirt tzitzis is not.

There are some additional concerns regarding this garment. Among them:

- There are some poskim who maintain that a garment which was made for absorbing

perspiration does not qualify for the mitzvah of tzitzis.

- Other poskim are of the opinion that although it is kosher, it's nevertheless not respectful to the mitzvah.

- When wearing garments made to absorb perspiration one often lacks the kavanah (intent) that he is wearing it for the mitzvah, as the garment is often worn for its "undershirt" aspect. According to some poskim, wearing tzitzis without kavanah is tantamount to wearing a four cornered garment without tzitzis.

- Many of these garments are made from netted material; according to some poskim netted material does not qualify for the mitzvah of tzitzis. Many are made out of synthetic material, and poskim question whether synthetic material qualifies for this mitzvah. Therefore, one shouldn't make a brachah on such tzitzis.

- According to Siddur Harav, an individual who is a yarei Hashem (G-d fearing) and wishes to perform the mitzvah of tzitzis in a manner that conforms to all opinions, should ensure that the garment is completely open on both sides. One shouldn't even fasten the sides to each other with clips or hooks and certainly one shouldn't have sleeves or fashion openings for the arms.

- According to Kabbalah one should not wear tzitzis directly on their body, but should wear an undershirt underneath.

It's important to note that one may not make a brachah on tzitzis if the garment is exempt from tzitzis, and wearing such a garment on Shabbos might be considered carrying. (Halacha2go.com #410)

TZITZIS WHEN SLEEPING

According to Kabbalah, one should wear a tallis katan, colloquially referred to as tzitzis, also during the night when a person sleeps.

There are non-Kabbalistic reasons for this as well. For example, if a person were to go to sleep without tzitzis and sleep into the daytime, part of the day would pass without him wearing tzitzis. Also, if he wished to put on tzitzis immediately upon awakening, he would have to touch his tzitzis before he washed negel vasser.

For these reasons and others, it is important to have available a pair of tzitzis to wear when one goes to sleep for the night. However, the Tzemach Tzedek points out that one should not designate the tzitzis specifically for the night, because then one would be wearing a k'sus leilah, a night garment, and according to many opinions night garments do not require tzitzis. Accordingly, the tzitzis on this garment would not be considered to have the sanctity of tzitzis and he would not be considered fulfilling the mitzvah. The pair of tzitzis should therefore be for use during both day and night, and since it is used for both day and night, it requires tzitzis. The fact that the wearer sleeps in the

SHORT Q&A'S

- **I have a blanket that has 4 corners. May I use it? Is there a difference between the day and night? What about wrapping myself with a four cornered towel?**

For a blanket that is sometimes used by day, you should make one corner round.

There is no need to put Tzitzis on a towel even if one is wrapping himself with it.*

- **May one clean his glasses with a Tallis Gadol or Tallis Katan?**

According to Halacha, one may clean glasses with the Tallis Katan, though some are stringent.

With the Tallis Gadol, one should not clean their glasses. However, even with the Tallis Gadol, if it is in order to be able to Daven and it is not really dirty, just to give it a shine, there is room for leniency.*

tzitzis into the morning does not make it a day garment; it should be a pair of tzitzis that is worn both day and night.

The common practice of having a night tzitzis only is not correct. One should therefore change their tzitzis in the morning in order to recite a brachah on a different pair and wear the same pair of tzitzis until the following morning. (Halacha2go.com #184) ■

* References and *marei mekomos* are available for this Halacha on the websites: www.Halacha2Go.com and www.AskTheRav.com

Please note that these halachos apply in general situations. In unique circumstances, a different halacha may apply. If you are unsure whether the halacha applies to your particular situation, please consult a Rav.

“

IF IT WAS TRUE
25 YEARS AGO,

IT IS
TRUE
TODAY.

”

Rabbi Reuven Wolf of Maayan Yisroel in LA prepares us for Gimmel Tammuz in a candid interview. He shares the story of his recent personal “transformation”, and poses to us the question that we must ask ourselves as we reexamine our personal and communal work: **“Do you want to be the last person to wake up for the Geula?”**



AVROHOM RAINITZ ◦

UNTIL TWO- AND-A- HALF YEARS AGO,

Rabbi Reuven Wolf was known primarily by his community in Los Angeles. He suddenly became known worldwide, thanks to a powerful and unforgettable speech he gave at the Kinus HaShluchim in 5777 in 770. He told about his personal transformation that came as a result of an in-depth study of Geula and Moshiach, and called upon his fellow shluchim to wake up from their slumber and learn inyanei Geula in-depth and live the Geula in all aspects of shlichus.

Lubavitchers in Eretz Yisrael were also inspired by the speech he gave at the main event for the following 11 Nissan. He described to the crowd of thousands the dilemma he had been struggling with for months and his conclusion that the proclamation of “Yechi Ha’Melech” and kabbolas ha’malchus of Moshiach, which is the shleimus of kabbolas malchus Shomayim, is the essence of all of Judaism and Torah and mitzvos; how every Chassid has to accept the malchus of the Rebbe Melech Ha’Moshiach with the declaration of “Yechi Adoneinu.”

I spoke with R’ Wolf and was surprised by his candidness. Despite his incomplete command of Ivrit, which made it hard for him to express himself fully, his fiery inner truth burst forth from him and filled in what language alone could not convey...

GENUINE EMUNA IS NOT AFFECTED BY THE PASSAGE OF TIME

It will be Gimmel Tammuz soon and if, G-d forbid, the Rebbe will not appear by then, we will be marking 25 years since the concealment of Gimmel Tammuz 5754. Since then, we find ourselves in a tremendous nisayon that grows ever stronger over the

years and yet, we see that Chassidim continue to believe that the Rebbe is the Nasi Ha’Dor and Moshiach Tzidkeinu and anticipate his imminent revelation. What is the secret to this burning faith and how come it has not cooled over the years?

The fact that there is no weakness despite the many years that have passed, goes to prove that this is a genuine belief, since the source of a true belief is in such a lofty place in the soul which is above time. In this exalted place, time has no meaning. It makes no difference whether a day or a year has passed.

It says “and they believed in G-d and Moshe His servant.” Just like belief in Hashem is not limited to a certain time, and even though the Jewish people have experienced thousands of years of galus, including extremely difficult times, expulsions and forced conversion decrees, our faith has not weakened. Why is that? Because it comes from that sublime source where time has no impact or meaning.

In addition, we received special empowerment from the Rebbe in the strengthening of our faith and firmly planting it in that place that is not at all affected by the passage of time. In the last maamar that the Rebbe gave out, on Purim Kattan 5752, “V’Ata Tetzaveh,” the Rebbe innovates that the source of emuna is higher than the certitude that comes from seeing a thing, since it comes from the essence of the soul which is one with G-dliness. The fact that emuna is not an add-on to a person’s existence, but one with his essence, makes it impossible for it to be weakened.

After the Rebbe gave us the maamar, aside from the fact that when we learn the maamar, it strengthens our emuna, by the act of giving out the maamar the Rebbe endowed us with this special power. Even before we learn it and

before meditating on it, the Rebbe himself already brought it down to this physical world. You can say that the maamar “V’Ata Tetzaveh” is the secret to our emuna in recent years.

Aside from the strengthening of emuna in a general sense, in this maamar, the Rebbe effected the drawing down into the world that the longing for Moshiach be so firmly implanted in us that every moment that Moshiach is not here, we are completely shaken. For some, it will burst forth from them more often and for some, less often, but generally speaking, compared to what we had decades ago, today we see an entire generation of Chassidim to whom it is clear, without a doubt, that it is impossible to continue in this exile-world as it is today. We must have the Geula!

I UNDERSTAND BUT...

We heard about the change you have undergone. After many years in which the subject of Geula and emuna in the Rebbe as Moshiach were on the sidelines, suddenly, it exploded outward with great force and has swept up in its wake thousands of Chassidim who watched your inspiring speeches. What caused this awakening and have you found the “recipe” to wake every Chassid from the slumber of galus?

I have to stress that, in a general way, I always had the emuna. Deep inside, I always believed that the Rebbe is Moshiach and we need to bring about his hisgalus. Even logically, it was clear to me that it couldn’t be otherwise.

Anyone who has the foundation of the teachings of Chabad Chassidus, especially the Alter Rebbe’s basic principle that the purpose of creation is Yemos Ha’Moshiach; whoever knows the main point of Moshiach whose job it is to bring about the G-dly hisgalus to the world; whoever learned the Rebbe’s first maamar in which he declared the role of our generation to draw the Shechina down to earth – understands that it is not possible that this

all ended on Gimmel Tammuz. It is out of the question for him that suddenly, another Moshiach will appear.

If it’s all clear, where were you all those years?

Gimmel Tammuz created a darkness in the world and this darkness entered me too, an inner darkness in the inner recesses of my soul that created a divide between rational understanding and feeling it. The topic of Moshiach was hidden deep in the dark recesses of my mind and did not emerge to affect my daily life.

What caused the change?

Learning. And not just learning but in-depth and thorough learning, just like the Rebbe says in the sicha of Balak 5751, that when you learn inyanei Moshiach and Geula, it leads to living inyanei Geula.

You can say I was missing the aspect of daas in inyanei Geula and Moshiach, and as the Alter Rebbe explains, daas is from the root meaning connection and bond, “that he attach his daas with a strong bond and implant his thoughts.” That’s what I was missing, to connect, bond, with inyanei Moshiach. When you connect to something, the thing comes to life.

Serious learning took place because of two factors. One was, when I was asked to speak at a women’s gathering following a number of tragedies among shluchim. Young shluchim passed away and there was a great awakening. We felt that something was amiss that needed to be corrected. In my speech, I said that the difficult situation put us up against the wall and obligated us to do everything we can to bring the Geula. When you look at the Rebbe’s sichos, we see that the direct way to bring the Geula is through learning inyanei Moshiach and Geula.

After the gathering, the women told me, you raised a good idea so please help us do it. I accepted that and began learning and teaching

inyanei Moshiach and Geula; this was at the end of 5774.

The second factor was the events occurring in the world during that year when I began giving a weekly shiur on inyanei Geula and Moshiach. I suddenly saw current events from a different perspective, with the realization that this was part of the Geula process. If we just open our eyes, we see the Geula process hurtling along and when we see it before our eyes, it changes our lives. It also caused me to take the learning much more seriously.

And without learning inyanei Geula, it's impossible to identify the Geula process?

Actually, sometimes, the sequences of events are so clear that you'd need to be blind not to see the approaching Geula. Even someone who doesn't learn would see it. But, without learning, it could be interesting, even exciting, but it doesn't have the ability to change your life. Only Torah has the power to change the life of the person who contemplates those events.

In the speech you gave at the Kinus Ha'Shluchim, you spoke about the book *Inyano shel Moshiach*. What appeals to you about this book?

Before I learned *Inyano shel Moshiach*, I knew that the Rebbe is Moshiach but did not attribute a position of central importance to it. Rabbi Sholom Ber Wolf, the author, shows the centrality of "Melech Ha'Moshiach" in the Rebbe's sichos about the Geula. I suddenly realized that this entire process revolves around the Rebbe, the king.

You suddenly get that all of Judaism, all of Torah and mitzvos, revolve around one point – drawing down the malchus of Hashem to the world as it is manifested in the malchus of Moshiach. "Melech Ha'Moshiach" becomes the central point of Judaism.

I'd like to emphasize that even someone who is involved in Geula and Moshiach without an emphasis on Melech Ha'Moshiach, fulfills the

Rebbe's directive to live Moshiach and Geula. Unfortunately, there are many Chassidim who, due to concern with what people will say about Moshiach's identity, completely neglect inyanei Moshiach and Geula. This is one of the things that it really pained me to discover and for me, it was an impetus to take a clear side, with lots of publicity, even though it goes against my nature and usual practice, in order to wake people up.

WITHOUT CHASSIDUS YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND THE DEPTH OF THE PROCESS

R' Wolf did not grow up in a Lubavitcher family. He was born in a Chassidische family in Boro Park. For many years he visited many Admorim, ("When I was living in Boro Park, I went to all the Admorim in the world though not to Crown Heights."), but did not find what he was seeking.

He learned in Yeshivas Slabodka in Bnei Brak, where he first became acquainted with Chabad Chassidus. He went to the yeshiva in Kfar Chabad for Shabbos where he met the legendary mashpia R' Mendel Futerfas, and he became very attached to him. At that time, he set up an intensive learning schedule in Chassidus for himself with the mashpiim R' Zalman Gopin, R' Yosef Yitzchok Offen, R' Mendel Wechter and R' Zalman Landau.

In recent years, he is a sought-after lecturer within Torah circles in Los Angeles and he started an organization called Maayon Yisroel, where most of the participants are not avowed Lubavitchers.

We spoke about the emuna among Lubavitcher Chassidim, but our main role is to spread the message further. As someone who works with all kinds of people, what do you think is the best way to inspire Litvishe Jews to belief in Moshiach and how can we inspire Poilishe Chassidim?

Today, everyone sees that something amazing is taking place in the world. You don't

need to be a Lubavitcher to look at the world three years ago and the way it looks today to see that they are two worlds. Mainly, in the way world leaders relate to Jews, Eretz Yisrael and Yerushalayim. Everyone sees the amazing change and realizes that this is miraculous, not something natural.

Many lecturers, including those not in Chabad, express amazement about the big miracles and some even connect these events to the Geula process. There are others who consider it a small salvation within the galus and it doesn't occur to them that what's going on is part of the activities of Moshiach himself.

Why? Because in order to understand the depth of the connection of these events to the Geula, you must learn the basics of Chassidus and mainly that the Geula is the final step in turning this lowly world into a dwelling for Hashem and that the way to accomplish this is by refining the lowest elements so that they too agree to the Geula and help achieve it.

Whoever is unaware of these principles, to whom the world is a dark, corrupt place, and to whom Moshiach is like a meteor that comes from above to suddenly illuminate the dark world, does not see these current events as something messianic. But if he'd learn Chassidus and realize that there is a process here of refining the world that began with Avrohom Avinu,

continued with the Giving of the Torah, and was intensified with the revelation of Chassidus and reaches its peak in our times, the world suddenly looks altogether different.

At this stage, he can understand on his own that the Rebbe is Moshiach, even if we don't tell him. In classes that I gave in recent years, I focused on learning the Rebbe's sichos of 5751-5752. It is clear to me that many listeners of these shiurim realize on their own who Moshiach is, without my saying anything explicitly.

Because when you realize that Moshiach is a revelation of G-dliness in this lowly world and the revelation of pnimiyus haTorah, then it is clear to all – who is revealing G-dliness to the world if not the Rebbe?



This is one of the reasons that spreading the wellsprings is a prelude to Moshiach, beyond the fact that the revelation of pnimiyus haTorah is what Moshiach is all about, because without the fundamentals of Chassidus, people do not understand what Moshiach is and therefore, they don't have the ability to identify the Geula within current events.

As someone whose shlichus is primarily with non-Lubavitchers, and through your lectures you reach so many people, Litvish and Polish Chassidim, how has your personal life change been viewed by them?

As you've said, for the past ten years, I have reached a broad array of people, mainly through the spreading of classes on Chassidus by way of the distribution of CD's in religious communities and on our website maayon.com. From the feedback I've received over the years, I've learned how interested people are to get an inside look of Torah study and the fulfillment of mitzvos. People say that the Chassidus shiurim changed their entire outlook on life. Torah and mitzvos becomes illuminated with an inner, deep light. Even those who did not become Lubavitchers outwardly, have had their minds, their perspective, changed.

Just as the transformation of people's thought processes did not take place all at once, but took years of classes, so too, the transformation that I experienced in inyanei Moshiach did not happen with one shiur. Over three years of hearing the Rebbe's sichos on the subject, they, and I, underwent a transformation in a very deep way.

Since they were full partners to the transformation, from a place of an inner understanding of the processes, not even one came to me with complaints. I received no negative feedback!

Even when I spoke in 770 and at the 11 Nissan event in Eretz Yisrael, where I spoke explicitly about the Rebbe as Moshiach and proclaimed Yechi – I'll tell you the truth,

although I put it all out there, in order to wake up Anash, I was nervous that there would be some pushback. But people got the underlying message behind what was actually said. I saw that most of Anash agree with the basic idea and it's only that sometimes, lots of dust accumulated over the emuna.

I have no doubt this is a special bracha from the Rebbe. Indeed, throughout this journey, I have received directives and blessings from the Rebbe until I've felt that the Rebbe is holding my hand and leading me, step by step, and telling me – speak like this!

WE NEED TO CHOOSE BETWEEN GALUS LIFE AND GEULA LIFE

In hindsight, did the transformation in your thinking about the Geula change your daily life? Is there a significant difference between life before and life after, or has it only been a change in point of view?

Definitely! The transformation changed every area of life. First of all, my life became happier! When you feel each day, how the world is advancing toward Moshiach, that's a cause for great joy, one literally feels like dancing from all the joy! Especially during the last year or two, in light of the big miracles; with every passing day it becomes ever clearer that we are in the final moments before the hisgalus. It is very joy inducing and adds new flavor to life.

Spiritually too, as in hiskashrus to the Rebbe, it was hard for me to fulfill those directives connected with kabbolas ol like learning Rambam. By nature, I like to learn Chassidus and can learn Chassidus for six hours in a row, but to learn three chapters of Rambam I needed kabbolas ol and I wasn't always successful.

As long as my hiskashrus to the Rebbe came from my personal desire, that I be someone mekushar to the Rebbe – so, like everything else that depends on us, there are ups and downs. But ever since I internalized the awareness that we are in a Geula process and the Rebbe

is Moshiach, the awareness that I must carry out the Rebbe's wishes penetrated more deeply, because the Rebbe is king and you can't play around with that!

Today, I cannot go to sleep before finishing that day's Rambam, even if I'm keeling over in exhaustion, because the Rebbe will be appearing momentarily and how can I face him? What will I say? That I was tired and couldn't carry out his order? He is the king of the entire world and we have to accept his rule. It's not at all possible not to fulfill his orders, whether we want to or not. We must submit to him.

The amazing thing is that even in my material life, I see an enormous change, but before telling you about that, I want to make an important point. As I understood from the Rebbe's sichos, the world is now in a state of *bein ha'shmashos* (twilight), between galus and Geula. Actually, this is a situation which provides every one of us with the ability to choose. We can continue living in galus, because as long as we haven't achieved the complete Geula there are still the remains of the darkness of galus. Or, we can live with the light of the Geula that gets brighter with each passing day.

It's our choice. It's like Hashem is saying to us, "I am placing before you life and death; choose life!" And when you choose to live in Geula, Hashem responds to us in kind with open miracles, like in the time of the Geula.

I'll give you an example from the fundraising for my mosad. I don't like raising money and I've always seen miracles from Hashem. Every time I was stuck, I saw the Rebbe's brachos. But from the time I started to live Geula and Moshiach, relatively speaking, I see open miracles like in the Geula. Every month, the money I need to run the mosdos comes to me; most of the time, without effort on my part and from places I didn't dream of, as though the Rebbe is saying to me: Don't worry. You do your thing and I'll take care of the rest.

// I SEE OPEN MIRACLES LIKE IN THE GEULA. EVERY MONTH, THE MONEY I NEED TO RUN THE MOSDOS COMES TO ME; MOST OF THE TIME, WITHOUT EFFORT ON MY PART

Ever since I realized what was happening, it took all the pressure I was under, at the end of every month, which is when you need money for salaries and other expenses, off of me. I live with utter bitachon, not because I'm on that level but simply because I see open miracles, just like the Rebbe says that today you can rely on miracles. It's just that for miracles, you really need to live the Geula.

For example, a year ago Lag B'Omer, I was at a Shabbaton in Texas with a group of Litvishe people who invited me for an entire Shabbos about the Geula and Moshiach. It was a fantastic Shabbos. After Shabbos, I discovered that the organizer of the event had made a mistake and ordered a return ticket for Monday afternoon instead of Sunday. I was stuck there for another day and what especially bothered me was the fact that it was toward the end of the month and I had to raise another \$30,000.

When I am in Los Angeles, I can speak to friends and somehow arrange things, but in Texas I could do nothing. And when I arrived in LA Monday afternoon, I had to prepare a shiur that I would be giving that night and so, another day passed without fundraising.

After the shiur Monday night, I got a phone call from a friend who didn't feel well who asked me to come to him the next morning



with his tefillin. He also asked what expenses I had for Lag B'Omer because he wanted to help out. I told him that we would talk about it the following morning.

Knowing his ideas of what it means to give, I thought I might get \$500 from him. When I arrived, he said, it's an *eis ratzon* (auspicious time) now. If you ask for \$80, I will obviously give it to you, but you definitely can ask for more.

I said: I will tell you how much I urgently need and you decide. After a brief calculation, I told him that in two hours I had to put at least \$22,000 in the bank.

He thought a bit and then said: If I give you \$18,000, will that help?

I said: Of course! And I'll have to somehow arrange for the rest.

He thought again and finally decided: I'll give you \$22,000.

Since he wasn't in his house, he did not have his checkbook. He asked me to go to his bank and told the manager there to give me a book of checks for his account. When I returned with the checks, he thought a bit and then said: Why should I give you only \$22,000? I'll give you \$25,000.

And that's what he did!

The rest of the day, I met other people who, on their own, asked to take part in the Lag B'Omer activities. A week later, I sat down to make a calculation and noticed an amazing thing: That Tuesday before Lag B'Omer, I miraculously received exactly 33 thousand dollars; 33 being the numerical equivalent of Lag!

THE REBBE HIMSELF IS RUNNING THE GEULA PROCESS

During the years 5751-5752, the Rebbe spoke about world events, saying they are “a microcosm and a model and a preparation” or even “a microcosm and beginning” of Yemos Ha'Moshiach. Was that about specific events at that time or an ongoing process so that today too, there are world events that are part of the Geula process? How do we know what is part of the Geula process?

In the sicha the Rebbe said on Shabbos Mishpatim 5752, he said that the general impact on the actions of the nations of the world is the job of Moshiach himself. We, the Chassidim, work on the Rebbe's shlichus to draw Jews toward the Geula and also work with gentiles so they observe their seven laws. But

regarding the general conduct of the nations of the world, the Rebbe himself deals with that.

After Gimmel Tammuz, there was a period of great decline, like a retreat, G-d forbid, from the Geula process. In Eretz Yisrael, the Oslo peace process proceeded, leading to the terrible Intifada; ISIS rose up as a power in the world; and then there was the terrifying presidential administration of Obama, who signed a nuclear deal with Iran that placed Israel in very real danger. The worst thing was that the entire world accepted all of this and bought the lie that the only way to peace is by conceding parts of Eretz Yisrael including Yerushalayim and the Har Ha'Bayis, the site of the Mikdash and Holy of Holies! It was a period of great darkness.

I saw a piece in the Rebbe's sicha from parashas Mikeitz 5752 that illuminates that period with a new light. The Rebbe says, “And one can say that coming close to the coming of Moshiach Tzidkeinu is also the reason for the increased darkness in the world. Because of the increase in holiness, there is also the increase of the opposite, that which opposes the coming of Moshiach Tzidkeinu, and it is necessary to fight the opposition, for this is a matter of fighting the wars of Hashem until he is victorious.” I suddenly realized that even the period of darkness was also part of the Geula process.

Superficially, it looked like a reaction of the forces of evil, a last gasp before submitting to the work of Moshiach. The European Union, the Left in the U.S., the universities and media, all joined forces against the Geula. They set out to destroy the world with things that are the opposite of tznius, the destruction of the family unit, and mainly, war against the territorial “shleimus” (wholeness) of Eretz Yisrael. This period reached a peak in the final days of Obama's presidency when he gave the green light to the United Nations resolution against Israel and supported the International Conference on Middle East Peace in Paris in favor of the Arabs.

On a more profound level, even this period was part of the Geula process and the Rebbe was moving things forward behind the scenes. And then suddenly, against all predictions, in the darkest time, the miracle occurred and Trump was elected and turned things upside down.

On another occasion, I explained in detail how most of the big moves Trump made occurred on Chabad dates and the peace summit to dismantle nuclear weapons in North Korea happened motzoei Chof-Ches Sivan, to hint that everything is being done by the Rebbe.

The amazing thing is that it's all hidden within nature. It's incredible; on the one hand, nobody believed it would happen. On the other hand, what happened was completely disguised in the normal way of things.

When Moshe Rabeinu was born, everyone knew that the Geula process had begun, but it took many years until the final year, when the Geula process accelerated, with a new plague every month, until they finally left Egypt. I don't know exactly which stage we are in now, whether the plague of blood or frogs, boils or locusts, but it is clear that we are in the final stretch before the Geula.

Sometimes, there is clear synchronicity between what it says in the papers and what we learn in the sichos of the Rebbe, it's just extraordinary!

R' Naftali Estulin lives in my neighborhood. He is one of the veteran shluchim of the Rebbe in Los Angeles. For many years now, whenever something unusual would take place in the world, he would say to me, “See what the Rebbe Melech Ha'Moshiach is doing in the world.” He always said that all big world events are part of the Geula process, but as long as I did not delve into the sichos, I did not get just how right he was. Today, I see it all before my very eyes!

THE REBBE IS LEADING ME BY THE HAND

In your speech at the Kinus Ha'Shluchim and at the 11 Nissan event in Eretz Yisrael, you told about your personal transformation. You shared your personal doubts until you reached the conclusion that you did. I imagine it wasn't easy to tell the world your story and so I want to know, why did you decide to do it? What gives you the strength to deal with the ramifications of your decision, particularly among your own community?

After I learned the sichos and realized how central Moshiach's existence is to the Geula process, I was tremendously pained, really anguished in the depths of my soul, by how this all-important point of the Rebbe's role turned into a scary idea. People felt uncomfortable, or even truly afraid to even say "Moshiach."

When you realize that the Geula process is not just another one of the Rebbe's things, but it's the beginning, middle and end of the Rebbe's entire nesius, and as a counterpoint to that you see how people are covering it up and trying to redesign the Rebbe's image as a "great Jewish leader" who came after the Holocaust and breathed life into the Jewish people, that is simply diminishing the persona of the Rebbe and hides his true existence and main role!

It hurts me, so I could not remain silent. I found it necessary to say the truth and to wake up those who are not yet aware.

The truth is that despite my pain and the desire to wake people up, I would not have dared to do it if not for receiving clear direction from the Rebbe. Whenever I wrote to the Rebbe through the Igros Kodesh, I opened to clear answers. The Rebbe blessed me and instructed me to speak strongly and not be fazed. After the speech in 770, when I felt uncomfortable with the commotion that resulted, I opened to an encouraging answer from the Rebbe.

When I started with the speech in 770, I thought it would only inspire the shluchim. I

didn't think it would reverberate so strongly. I consider this a heavenly intervention that just before the Geula process began to accelerate, the Rebbe decided the time had come to wake up those of Anash who were asleep on the job. I don't know why me, why I was picked to be the good shliach for this important matter.

As I mentioned earlier, things went over rather smoothly with the members of my community, but I was nervous at first. It would have been enough for just one to decide to declare holy war against me, and to destroy is easy ... What gave me the courage to go public despite my concerns was the understanding that this is the most important matter in Judaism and if I can contribute my part to something so important, what value is there to some sorrow and shame that I might endure?

Today, as I say every morning, "fortunate are we and how good is our lot," I definitely include the fact that I merited to inspire Anash in this most crucial matter. There is no greater zechus!

There are many other Chassidim who, deep inside, know the truth but prefer to continue to push the topic aside and not deal with it, in fear that learning the Rebbe's sichos about Geula will force them to change their way of life. What message do you have for them?

Very simple, think: do you want to be the last person to wake up for the Geula? We are expecting the Rebbe's hisgalus momentarily, and what will we look like when the Rebbe appears and only then will we remember to finally shake ourselves awake. What will we say? How will we justify ourselves?

As I emphasized throughout our conversation, the best way to strengthen oneself in inyanei Moshiach and Geula is to start learning the Rebbe's sichos on inyanei Moshiach and Geula. We are guaranteed that our eyes will be opened and we will see the world marching toward the complete hisgalus of the Rebbe, *teikef u'miyad mamosh!* ■



Rabbi
Simon
Jacobson

EASY ISN'T GOOD FOR YOU

AS much as we may prefer an "easy" life, and no matter how "perfect" other people's lives look, the truth about life is that it is a struggle — and that's healthy. The "feel good" advertising industry wants us to think that an easy life is one click or one purchase away. That is simply not true — life is meant to be challenging. Here are the whys and hows of embracing it.

STRUGGLE IS THE PURPOSE OF EXISTENCE

It's an illusion to think that life is easy and that faith is bliss. On the contrary — life is a battle. And it is precisely this battle that we were designed to face. Therefore, do not be disturbed or demoralized by your challenges, by your inconsistencies and by your weaknesses. Do not be shaken when you do not live up to your highest aspirations, and often do not actualize or maintain your inspiration. Do not be discouraged — because this struggle is the fundamental purpose of all of existence.

BE HONEST: FACE THE TRUTH OF THE CHALLENGE

So many of us try to fight the fact that life is difficult, and we seek out ways to numb ourselves or find temporary balms to make us feel good. We turn to all sorts of escapes to relieve our pain. But they never last. However, when you embrace the struggle and realize that it is exactly what life was meant to be,

you paradoxically get empowered to face your challenges with confidence and strength. The key is not to deceive yourself into thinking that the world is just fine and you can remain passive and complacent. You must be wise and awake to life's traps and realize that life is a struggle. Make peace with your struggles. The first step to winning your battles is to recognize their value and importance.

YOU HAVE TOOLS TO FACE IT

You must always know that each challenge, no matter how difficult, comes with tools to face that challenge and come out stronger. Since struggle is the purpose of life, and not just some incidental distraction, you are provided with all the resources you need to deal with your struggles. Whatever difficulty and hardship that comes your way, whatever loss or setback you are experiencing, you must always know that you have all the tools necessary to face the struggle and prevail. Not just prevail but thrive and grow, and transform your corner of the world. This is also true about past traumas. You always have the ability to begin at whatever stage you are in your life. ■

EXERCISE:

How do you perceive struggles? Do you expect life to be easy? Do you feel inadequate because you struggle?

Face to Face **With the Rebbe**, Six Times Over



Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok Zaltzman, Shliach of the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach to Toronto, Canada shares his personal notes and stories from his 6 Yechidus meetings with the Rebbe.

PART I

RABBI YOSEF YITZCHOK ZALTMAN

was born 30 Shevat 5716/1956, to his parents R' Chaim Dovber and Chaya Esther a'h, in Dushanbe, Tajikistan.

His grandfather, the Chassid R' Avrohom Zaltzman, came to learn in Lubavitch at age eleven, and remained there for seven years. After he married, he lived in Charkov, Ukraine. In 1941, with the advance of the Nazis into Russia, his family escaped to Samarkand in Uzbekistan, where (along with Tashkent) most Lubavitcher Chassidim throughout the Soviet Union eventually made their way.

In 1945, R' Avrohom planned to join the rest of Anash in escaping from Russia with a forged Polish passport. However, after he had sold off all of his possessions and was ready to travel, an emergency telegram arrived from Lvov-Lemberg saying that "the vacation trip was canceled, and there is nothing to come for." The gates had slammed shut, and so R' Avrohom and his family remained in Samarkand, broken and shattered, materially and spiritually.

Most of the great Chassidim, such as Reb Shlomo Chaim Kesselman, Reb Nissan Nemenov and Reb Peretz Mochkin, had succeeded in getting out. At the same time, the KGB began to tighten their stranglehold, after having mostly overlooked the activities of the Chassidim during the war years, making the struggles to observe Torah and mitzvos and chinuch for their children almost impossible to bear.

This was the environment in which R' Berel Zaltzman came of age, as he just turned bar mitzva at the time.

Shortly after the "Doctors' Plot" came to a close with the sudden death of Stalin, R' Berel traveled together with his friend R' Dovid Mishulovin to open a factory in Dushanbe in Tajikistan, in the hope that it would be easier to make a living there, without having any "evil

eye" noticing that it would not be operating on Shabbos.

R' Berel traveled to Moscow to buy the needed materials, where he also did a shidduch and married his wife (Chaya Esther), who was the daughter of the spiritual leader of the Lubavitch community in the Moscow area, Reb Yehuda Butrashvili (Kulasher) of the Moscow suburb of Malachovka. In later years, he left for Eretz Yisrael where he served as the menahel of Beis Din Rabbonei Anash.

After their wedding, they returned to Dushanbe. The Zaltzmans and Mishulovins were the only Lubavitcher families in the entire area. To give a sense of how isolated they were, the nearest mikva was a 36 (!) hour train ride away, in Samarkand. Flying was not an option, since an airline ticket cost half of a monthly salary.

On 30 Shevat 5716, Yosef Yitzchok, their firstborn son, was born.

Not long after, they succeeded in building a secret mikva, in the Bukharian shul, but they moved back to Samarkand the very next year.

R' Yosef Yitzchok received his chinuch from his parents at home. When he reached the age of mandatory education according to Soviet law, his parents decided that under no circumstances would he attend public school. They told the neighbors that he had left home, "He goes to school in Moscow, and is living with his grandfather in Malachovka."

That is how he came to be under "house arrest," under the watchful eyes of his parents, who were exceedingly careful that he not show his face outside of the home, for fear that he might be seen by one of the neighbors, and they would be in big trouble.

At the very time that back in New York the Rebbe was speaking about *u'foratzta* and *shlichus*, and Chabad was undergoing major expansion around the world, those in Russia

were struggling against tremendous difficulties in the basic observance of mitzvos.

At a certain point, they opened a "school" for close to ten children of Anash in the city, of varying ages, who were divided into two class levels.

Around 1964, some bachurim arrived from Tashkent, and a "branch" of Tomchei Tmimim was started for them. Over time, other bachurim joined, until they reached the impressive number of (about) eight students!

One day, when he was eleven years old and the yeshiva was being hosted in their home, in a shack at the end of the yard, his father was grabbed off the street. He was taken for interrogation to the local KGB headquarters. That is a day that he will never forget.

"As soon as it became known, a few young married men of Anash came to our house and took all the 'incriminating' items. Grudgingly, they let me keep a small siddur so that I could daven." This was done out of concern that the police would conduct a search of the house. Concurrently, they warned the bachurim to flee from the house and head to the city park,

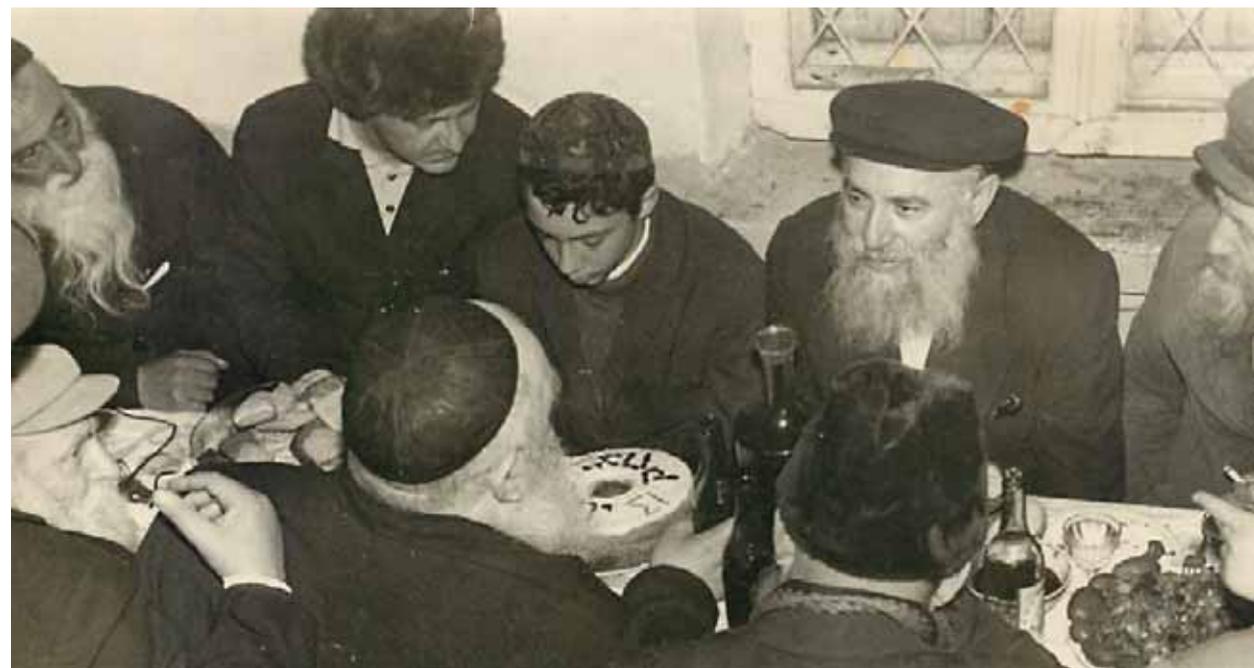
until the situation would become clear and they would be informed how to proceed. Boruch Hashem, he was released after twenty-four hours, without any further action being taken.

In 1971, when he was fifteen years old, the family received an emigration permit. On the 12th of Menachem Av, they flew from Moscow to Vienna. As they were flying, he asked his father, "Nu, can we take out our tzitzis strings?" His father answered, "Not yet. As long as we are over Russian territory, there is still danger." Only when the pilot announced that they had left Russian airspace, did they allow themselves to let their tzitzis hang out and to breathe freely.

They landed in Eretz Yisrael on 14 Menachem Av. Two weeks later, he joined the Tomchei Tmimim yeshiva in Lud. On 24 Elul, he traveled to the Rebbe with his father, and it was on Thursday 28 Elul, towards evening when the Rebbe returned from the Ohel, that he saw the Rebbe for the very first time and made the "*Shehechyanu*" blessing in a loud voice and with great emotion.

The extensive displays of closeness on the part of the Rebbe towards the newly arrived

RABBI ZALTMAN'S BAR MITZVA MEAL IN 5729. ON HIS RIGHT, SITS HIS GRANDFATHER R' YEHUDA KULASHER. ON HIS LEFT SITS HIS FATHER R' BEREL. OPPOSITE HIM IS THE FAMOUS CHASSID, R' CHAIM ZALMAN KOZLINER.



immigrants from Russia are beyond the scope of this piece. Just to mention one such astonishing display; at the time of the *tekios* on Rosh Hashana 5732, the Rebbe requested that all of those who had just arrived from Russia should stand on the bima platform with him, and he waited for all of the other “dignitaries” and “aristocrats” to step down...

On Shabbos Parashas Nitzavim, 28 Elul, two days after they arrived, his father was asked to lead the Musaf services since he has a nice voice. After some back-and-forth discussion he did just that, and during most of the service, the Rebbe looked directly at him.

During the farbrengen that Shabbos, the Rebbe asked that all of those who recently came out from behind the Iron Curtain should approach and say “Ichaim.”

R’ Zaltzman recounts:

When I approached, the Rebbe asked me, “What is your name?” I answered, “Yosef Yitzchok.” The Rebbe asked again, “What is your second name?” I didn’t understand, what does that mean? So again I answered, “Yitzchok.” The Rebbe smile and said, “Your family name.” That is when I realized what the Rebbe had meant and I answered, “Zaltzman.”

The Rebbe asked, “You are the son of the baal Musaf?” as the Rebbe pointed to my father who had already returned to his place, and asked again, “That is your father?” I answered in the affirmative.

“IN THE MERIT OF THE MESIRUS NEFESH OF YOUR PARENTS...”

During the “ten days of repentance” of 5732, one week after he arrived at the Rebbe for the first time, R’ Chadakov approached his father, R’ Berel, and asked him if he and his son would make do with one joint yechidus or if they specifically wanted to go in individually.

On Rosh Hashana, his father was the chazzan for Musaf on the first day. On Motzoei Rosh Hashana, during the distribution of “kos shel bracha,” the Rebbe instructed his father to sing. Suddenly, in middle of the distribution, Yosef Yitzchok, who was standing at the top of pyramid on the back wall of 770, felt people pulling him. They told him, “The Rebbe is calling you!”

He turned towards the Rebbe, and the Rebbe said to him, “Why aren’t you helping your father? You are obligated in the mitzva of honoring your father. Go help your father!” Within seconds, he found himself standing next to his father on the other end of 770.

The young Yosef Yitzchok remained to learn in proximity to the Rebbe for close to ten years, and in the year 5780, he married his wife from the Lifsh family of Kfar Chabad.

One year later, on the eighth day of Chanuka 5781, they left on shlichus to Toronto, Canada, to work with Russian speaking Jews, where they serve to this day.



Many thanks to Rabbi Zaltzman for allowing the publication of his personal notes from his personal yechidus encounters, and for the time he devoted to review, clarify and fill in, many of the details. (Note: Translation from the Yiddish used by the Rebbe may seem a bit stilted in English, as all attempts were made to be as true as possible to the original *divrei haRav*.)

R’ Berel asked his son, and he answered that he prefers to go in alone. Afterward, R’ Chadakov told R’ Berel that he has two slots, one after Yom Kippur and one after Simchas Torah. His father asked him which time he preferred, and Yosef Yitzchok said that he did not want to wait for Simchas Torah.

R’ Zaltzman provided some background to all of the above:

“In early Elul, two weeks after we had arrived from Russia to Eretz Yisrael, I heard my parents talking about getting a loan in order to pay for a plane ticket for me to the Rebbe for the month of Tishrei. I told them that as far as I was concerned they could make me only a one-way ticket. They immediately reacted with, ‘No way,’ ‘You can’t stay there by yourself,’ etc. In the end, it was agreed that I would travel, but on condition that I come back together with my father. And so they bought me a round-trip ticket.

“The day after Rosh Hashana, I heard from my friend Shmuel Notik (today a shliach in Chicago) and my cousin Yosef Yitzchok Mishulovin (today a shliach in Los Angeles), who were ‘classmates’ of mine and had also left Russia not long before, that they are going for an entrance exam by R’ Shmuel Heber, the rosh yeshiva of Morristown. I decided to join them. I was tested and accepted. I asked them to refrain from mentioning it to my father, for the time being.

“Obviously, I wanted to stay and learn near the Rebbe, but I knew that my parents would not agree. I understood that if I went into yechidus together with my father, I would not have the opportunity to ask the Rebbe about it. I also understood that if I waited for the day before the return flight, it would be too complicated to arrange things, which is why I preferred to go in earlier and alone.”

The yechidus took place on the day after Yom Kippur, in the early hours of the night, at around 10 pm.

In the note that he submitted, R’ Yosef Yitzchok wrote his life story up to that point, all of the events that happened to him as a child in Russia, how he avoided going to learn in the communist school, etc. He also wrote that he had been tested and accepted to the yeshiva in Morristown, and asked for a blessing for this.

When his father had asked him before he went in, whether he could see what he wrote in the note, he only showed his father the first page, saying that the second page contained personal matters, which it, in fact, did, but it also had the question about learning in Morristown.

After the fact, his father told him that he actually took pleasure in the fact that although they had just come to the Rebbe two weeks prior, he already felt open enough to tell the Rebbe everything, even more than to him, his own father!

FIRST YECHIDUS, 11 TISHREI 5732

If the administration agreed to take you as a student, it should be in a good and auspicious time. You should remain here to learn, and have success in learning and fulfilling mitzvos with enhancement...

And with the merit of the mesirus nefesh of your parents, you should be a Chassid, a yerei shamayim (G-d fearing), a lamdan (learned in Torah), and you should succeed in learning, in Nigleh and Chassidus, and perform mitzvos with enhancement. And learn with great diligence in general, and especially here, which will be a tikkun (rectification) for the past and a good resolution for the future. [May it be] with great success.

R’ Zaltzman recalls:

“When the Rebbe raised his holy eyes, I understood that the yechidus had concluded, and I began walking backwards towards the door. The Rebbe did not take his holy eyes off of me and I could not turn my head to see where the door was. On top of that, I was understandably in a state of great excitation etc. I kept going and going and could not find the door...

“Finally, R’ Leibel Groner opened the door and pulled me out.”



When his father heard about the answer of the Rebbe, he did not have too many options remaining. The only thing to do was to inform his mother, who had remained behind in Eretz Yisrael.

Meanwhile, R' Berel's friends, who knew him from Russia heard that his son would be staying to learn in Morristown. They began to convince him that if he was already staying in America, it was preferable for him to learn in Oholei Torah, under the administration of R' Michoel Teitelbaum. They claimed that this was a more Chassidish yeshiva, led by devoted Chassidim who were "from ours,"

"TELL HIM EVERYTHING, WITHOUT HUMILITY"

R' Zaltzman does not have a written record of his second yechidus, and it was not a private yechidus. This is the story, as he tells it in his own words:

On one of the days of Chol Hamoed Succos 5732 (one week after the first yechidus), they made an announcement in the "small zal" that the Rebbe is calling all of those who recently

whereas Morristown was a yeshiva of American balabatim (working types).

When it was his turn for yechidus after Simchas Torah, he asked the Rebbe about it. The Rebbe answered with a smile (the wording is approximate): The hanhala (administration) is the same, the bachurim are the same, but the air there (or he may have said: in Morristown) is better.

[On the literal level, the Rebbe seemed to be referring to the more rural and pastoral environment of the yeshiva campus in Morristown, where the air is actually fresher].

arrived from Russia to his room. About twenty-five people came.

I stood literally in front of the Rebbe, in the exact place that I had stood one week earlier in yechidus. The Rebbe was wearing glasses and looking into a sefer. After some time had passed, the Rebbe turned to R' Chadakov and asked if they were all present.

When he was answered in the affirmative, the Rebbe turned to us and told us that he wants us to go to the gaon and posek, Reb Moshe Feinstein, and that we should tell him about life in Russia. One thing I recall that the Rebbe said was, "Tell him everything, without humility."

[Just to complete the picture, we are including the rest of the story]:

When we left the Rebbe's room, R' Binyomin Klein and R' Yudel Krinsky were waiting outside for us with two cars (the two cars that the Rebbe traveled in). We got into the cars – I was in the "regular" car of the Rebbe, driven by R' Krinsky, and we drove to Reb Moshe.

Reb Moshe was very amazed to see young bachurim and young marrieds, most of whom were born many years after the Communist Revolution, all of whom were complete and

"AS FAR AS FOREIGN THOUGHTS DURING DAVENING"

After Tishrei 5732, R' Yosef Yitzchok began learning in the yeshiva in Morristown, New Jersey, and would come to Crown Heights for Shabbos Mevorchim and special days in the calendar, in order to participate in the farbrengens of the Rebbe.

After four months passed, in anticipation of his sixteenth birthday, he once again went in for yechidus (as was the system back then).

From the answers, we can see that his concerns were in line with that of a full-fledged "tamim."

YECHIDUS, 25 SHEVAT 5732

As far as pizur hanefesh (distractibility), you should hold open the sefer or kuntres (pamphlet) or siddur, this will help for the thought that it should not stray. And another pointer for this is to learn with a friend. And as pertains to foreign thoughts during the davening, you should learn

G-d fearing Jews and knew how to learn a daf of Gemara, no less than a bachur from America.

When they told him that R' Yankel Notik was fluent in half of Shas (Babylonian Talmud), he was flabbergasted. He asked him, "How did you do this? How were you able to withstand the nisyonos (spiritual challenges)?" R' Yankel answered simply, "We had a choice?"

Afterward, Reb Moshe turned to us young bachurim and asked us what we are learning. He asked us questions in the chapter of *Ha'omeir* in Kiddushin, and when we answered his questions articulately and so on, Reb Moshe began to tear up and wipe his eyes.

At the time, I did not understand why he was crying. He was crying from emotion to see the fruits of our Rebbeim, in that children who were born close to forty years after the revolution, could discuss Gemara like seasoned scholars...

Chitas every day and give tzedaka (charity) of a few prutos (small coins) before the davening.

And as pertains to the birthday, you should see that they give you an aliya on Shabbos, and on the day of the birthday you should give tzedaka before Shacharis and before Mincha, and have an additional learning session. And you should be a Chassid, yerei shamayim and lamdan, and it should be a Chassidische year and a year of yiras shamayim and a year of easy battle and conquest of the yeitzer (evil inclination).

And we should hear good news from you.

[The accounts of R' Zaltzman's three other private yechidus encounters, as well as two stories from his numerous group yechidus experiences with some of the wealthy donors that he brought to the Rebbe under the auspices of the Machne Israel Development Fund, in the next issue] ■



Levi
Liberow

"REBBE ROBOTS"

IT must be easy to be a robot. Aside from occasional overheating because of too many commands at once being hurled at it, it has an easy life.

Much of the stresses and anxiety we experience is because of the need to make decisions, and then from suffering the consequences of these decisions...

Wouldn't life be easier if we were human robots programmed by Hashem with no feelings of guilt, anxiety, and stress?



WHO are we to say, but perhaps preventing human robots was in Moshe's mind when he came up with an idea: let's send representatives of the Jews to explore the land Hashem has promised them. Why? Is Hashem's promise that it is a land flowing with milk and honey not enough? And besides, if they decide it's not what they like, do they have other pieces of real estate to choose from?

Moshe Rabbeinu, explains the Rebbe, wanted not only the best for the Jews (which is what Hashem already chose), he wanted them to know it's the best based on personal experience and conviction.

That's why he chose one traveler from every tribe, so that when they all come back with a unanimous report that "the land is very, very good," every *shevet* will feel it had their very own representative — who knows their pref-

erences and needs well — in the inter-tribal committee for appreciating Hashem's gift.

Sounds like a plan, no? So, Moshe sends it off to the Big Boss for approval. Hashem refuses to give it His blessings. Moshe insists nonetheless on implementing it. Bottom line, the Jews remain in the desert for another 38 years. Moshe's plan seems to be a failure.

Well, what did he expect? Didn't Hashem say it's not a good idea?

But nothing that Moshe does ever fails, and nothing that Moshe does can be not in accordance with Hashem's will.

If we carefully examine Moshe's plan, we see that his plan actually *did* work. The *meraglim* came back with a glowing report on the qualities of Eretz Yisrael, and 38 years down the line, when the Jews finally entered the land, they did so happily, because of that very trip 38 years ago when their own representatives assured them that "the land is very, very good."

Hashem "blessing" this mission would be the opposite of the purpose of this mission!

"*Ani eini metzave lecha*" was *exactly* what Moshe wanted to hear! He wanted Hashem — and so too did Hashem want — to so to speak "stay out" of this. He wanted the Jews to feel comfortable with Hashem's promise of the goodness of the land, *not only because of faith*, but also that the *Nefesh Habehamis* should feel that "the land is very, very good!"



AT a farbrengen of Parshas Shlach 5748, the Rebbe said these surprising words:

"The Rebbe — Moshe of our generation — entrusted each and every one of us ... with the mission of concluding the last remnants of divine service in galus.

"... Since this mission was entrusted to us as a '*bar da'as*,' we are to use our own intellect to find the best possible manner of fulfilling this mission. We are not to act as a 'spoiled only-child,' who constantly inquires about the most minute details as to how to go about conducting his life. We are to decide what words will be most effective, what books should be disseminated, etc.

"Obviously," the Rebbe adds, "it must be based on established Torah principles and upon the specific directives of the *meshaleach*." The Rebbe gives the general direction and all the necessary powers, but we must make the decisions regarding the details.



ONE particular area where many Chassidim often wish, silently or not, the Rebbe would have given more "clear" directions, is the Moshiach campaign.

A large part of the debate on this matter, unfortunately, is not surrounding the sichos and ma'amarim which were addressed to the public, but instead focused on different answers and *hora'os* the Rebbe gave individuals and specific organizations.

While there is much to learn from these answers, they are "overrated" in both directions.

The Rebbe clarified many times that answers he gives to private individuals apply to them alone. The reason, I think, is quite simple. The Rebbe's sichos, ma'amarim and public letters are where the Rebbe speaks to everyone and gives general direction. The *ma'anos* are where

the Rebbe addresses individuals who proposed certain actions to be taken in these directions.

If the Rebbe blessed a certain *peulah* fulfilling a certain general *hora'ah*, does it mean that from now on *this* is the only and exclusive way it could and must be done? If the Rebbe approved a certain slogan, is that the only slogan that must be used and on any and every activity?

And if the Rebbe admonished an individual on something he did, does it mean that the Rebbe henceforth disapproves of *any* similar action? Or perhaps the Rebbe wants it to be fine-tuned and improved?

The point, however, is that every Chassid should transform his own self and make his *Nefesh Habehamis* useful as well. There are as many types of *Nefesh Habehamis* as there are people and insisting that there is one way to bring Moshiach, a notion that exists on either side of this debate, is ignoring this truth.

I personally don't feel compelled to bring Moshiach by what the Rebbe told individuals, whether in writing or by dollars. I don't feel compelled to bring Moshiach even by certain *peulos* for the general public that the Rebbe approved and blessed.

I can take ideas, cues, and inspiration from them, but I am committed to two things:

1. the *hora'os* the Rebbe gave *me* at the public farbrengens, and
2. "Finding the best possible manner of fulfilling this mission, based on established Torah principles and upon the specific directives of the *meshaleach*."

Bittul doesn't mean becoming the Rebbe's robot, *Bittul* means harnessing your own intelligence to do the will of the Rebbe.

If we're looking to become the Rebbe's robots, into which he will feed detailed information, then the Rebbe doesn't need so many of us. He probably doesn't need any of us, he could do it himself much better than any of us would. ■



Are We There Yet?

The answer is yes,
at least for the
last 2,000 years

Principle #8



The 12 Principles

- 1 Moshiach is a principle of Jewish faith.
- 2 Moshiach is the purpose of creation.
- 3 Moshiach is a topic in Torah.
- 4 Moshiach has a halachically defined role.
- 5 We must await him.
- 6 We must pray for and demand Moshiach.
- 7 Our actions create the Geulah.
- 8 Moshiach could come any second.**
- 9 There are signs that indicate he's near.
- 10 Moshiach is a person.
- 11 There is a Moshiach in every generation.
- 12 There is an order of events in Moshiach's arrival.

LEVI LIBEROW ◦

A LONGTIME JEWISH "HOBBY,"

dating back to the days of Ya'akov Avinu, has been calculating and uncovering the "ketz" – the time of Moshiach's arrival.

A famous adage says that "those who know don't say, and those who say don't know," yet Jewish literature from time immemorial, is filled with various *kitzin* predicted by *Gedolei Yisrael* of all groups.

Regardless of the legitimacy of this quest, (a topic to be discussed in the second part of this essay), the interest in this unknown topic itself is testament to the great yearning for the Geulah embedded in the psyche of the Jewish people, in a way reminiscent of children asking their parents "are we there yet?" before the car managed to pull out of the driveway for a multi-hour trip. It's slightly annoying, but it's a show of enthusiasm...

Yet the very notion of a specific preset time for the Geulah is something that requires explanation: is there such a time and it is just unknown, or as Rav said, and rendered Halacha by the Rambam in unequivocal terms "the Jewish people will do Teshuvah and be *immediately* redeemed."

No date, no time; *Immediately*. Period.

"I WILL BE A NAZIR THE DAY MOSHIACH COMES..."

If one were to think that this is just a theological and theoretical topic that has no practical bearing, the following Halacha proves otherwise, and at the same time answers the question.

The *Gemara* discusses the case of a person who makes a conditional vow to become a *nazir*, thereby abstaining (among other things) from drinking wine.

"If one vows, 'I hereby undertake to be a *nazir* on the day that [*Moshiach*] the son of David comes,' — if the vow was undertaken on a

weekday, he is forever forbidden to drink wine. If it was undertaken on a *Shabbos* or a *Yom-Tov*, then he is permitted to drink wine on that *Shabbos* or that *Yom-Tov*, but from then on, this is forbidden forever.” (Eruvin 43b; Rambam, Laws of Nezirus 4:11)

From this Halacha, we learn that Moshiach can come any day.

23 MINUTES AND 59 SECONDS

Another example:

There is an opinion in the *Gemara* that even in our days, after the Destruction, a Kohen is forbidden to drink wine, since it is probable that “the *Beis HaMikdash* will be speedily rebuilt,” finding him under the influence of wine and hence disqualified from serving there.

Now this influence can wear off by either of two causes:

(a) Sleep; or (b) The passage of as much time as it takes to walk a *mil*. According to the longest estimate, this comes to 24 minutes.

Here, then, we have evidence from the revealed plane of the Torah that in the course of a very short time (i.e., within a maximum of 23 minutes and 59 seconds), Moshiach is likely to arrive together with a completed *Beis HaMikdash*.

[This opinion has not become Halacha, and *Kohanim* may drink wine and become intoxicated for the reason that we lack the knowledge to which *mishmar* [shift] of *kohanim* every *kohen* belongs to, but would a *kohen* know his *mishmar* he would indeed be prohibited from drinking wine during that week.]

To gain some clarity into this topic, let’s return to the beginning of the galus.

WHEN AVRAHAM DELAYED THE GEULAH

The galus actually began, not when the *Beis HaMikdash* was destroyed, but long before that at the *Bris Bein HaBesarim*, at that supreme

moment when Hashem told Avraham, “Know for sure that your seed will be foreigners in a land that is not theirs ... for four hundred years” (Bereishis 15:13). Chazal explain that this covenant between Avraham and Hashem alludes to *all* the exiles the Jewish people will experience before its redemption:

“[Hashem] said to [Avraham]: Take Me a prime heifer, a prime goat, a prime ram, a dove, and a young pigeon.” (15:9)

The Midrash comments:

“A prime heifer” – this is the kingdom of Edom...; “a prime goat” – this is the kingdom of Greece; “a prime ram” – this is the kingdom of Medea and Persia; “a dove” – this alludes to the descendants of Yishmael.

“He took for him all these, and he split them down the middle...” [ibid. 15:10]: Had he not split them, the world could not have withstood them. Once he split them, their strength weakened. – (Pirkei DeRabi Eliezer, ch. 29)

During this prophetic vision, something strange happened:

“Vultures descended on the carcasses, but Avraham drove them away” – “Vultures” alludes to Moshiach ben Dovid. Avraham stood and waved shawls at the vultures so [they] would not gain control over (the carcasses) until the evening. – (ibid)

If the vultures allude to Moshiach, why did Avraham chase them away? Was he attempting to delay the Geulah?

To explain this, we must preface that galus is analogous to pregnancy and Geulah to birth.

The prophets (Hoshea 13:13 and others) describe the pre-messianic tribulations as “the sorrows of a travailing woman.”

Redemption is also likened to birth — “...for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children” (ibid. 66:8). These prophecies are the source of the famous term “*Chevlei Moshiach*”

– “the birth pangs of Moshiach” that are described in the Gemara and Midrashim, which are a series of pain-stricken events that precede the onset of the Messianic era.

THE LIFE OF THE EMBRYO

This analogy teaches us much about the nature of galus and Geulah:

R. Shimlai delivered the following discourse: What does an embryo resemble when it is in the womb of its mother? A folded writing tablet, its hands rest on its two temples, its two elbows on its two legs, and its two heels against its two buttocks. Its head lies between its knees. Its mouth is closed, and its navel is open. It eats what its mother eats and drinks what its mother drinks... As soon as it goes out into the space of the world, the closed organ [its mouth] opens, and the open one [its navel] closes. — (Niddah 30b)

It appears from this *Gemara* that an embryo’s limbs are no different from a born child’s, other than that many of them do not function in the womb. However, there is a crucial difference: Man’s uniqueness lies in his brain; hence, his head’s position above all his limbs. Yet the embryo’s head lies between its knees, for the superiority of the head is not yet manifest.

Moreover, the embryo cannot speak or smell, it can barely hear, its lungs do not inhale, and its life is reduced to survival and development. Only after birth does it truly see, hear, taste, breathe, eat, and live.

The embryonic stage parallels galus. For in galus, the Jew may be able to study Torah, pray with devotion, and love and fear Hashem, but he does not see G-dliness or hear G-d’s word crying out from every corner of creation. He views the universe as self-sufficient. Only after much contemplation can the Jew realize that Divinity sustains every moment of creation.

Furthermore, just as the embryo neither tastes nor understands its umbilical nutrition,

the Jew in galus does not fully experience his mitzvos, performing them only by rote.

Our yearning for Redemption is comparable to the embryo’s desire to be born, to open its eyes and ears to the world. Only then will we merit the revelation of Hashem’s light before our very eyes. Then, “all flesh will see together, that the mouth of Hashem has spoken.”

After the Geulah, when the Jew studies Torah and observes mitzvos, his entire body will connect with Hashem. Being then aware of our connection with Hashem, we will leave our embryonic state and become seeing, feeling, living beings.

A “RIPE” GEULAH

One more important aspect about the Geulah that this analogy sheds light on is the timing of the Geulah:

Just as pregnancy precedes and prepares the embryo for birth, galus prepares us for Geulah. When the Jew strives for *deveikus* with Hashem, loving and fearing Him despite His concealment within *galus*, he readies himself for *Geulah*.

The process of pregnancy, like any process, takes the time it takes. This process ensures not only that *we* come ready to the *Geulah*, but it also ensures that the *Geulah* that comes to us is a ready and ripe one.

THE TIME MOSHIACH COULDN’T COME...

The Abarbanel enumerates three periods of galus: the first period, when *Geulah* cannot yet commence; the second, when *Geulah* can come but would be premature and therefore imperfect; and the third period, when *Geulah* is ready and waiting to come, and ultimately *must* come at its end. (Yeshuos Meshicho, vol. 1, p. 11)

Avraham’s vision of the *Bris Bein HaBesarim* began at night, continued throughout the day, and concluded in the evening. The vultures

did not appear at night because night symbolizes the first period, when Geulah *cannot* begin. With sunrise, representing the second period, the period of imperfect Geulah, Avraham chased away the vultures lest Moshiach arrive unaccompanied by prophetic wonders and ultimate revenge against Israel's enemies. But Avraham banished the vultures only until evening, ushering in the third period, which is ripe for Geulah.

Significantly, Avraham waved the vultures away with “*sudarim*” (shawls), a term related to the word “*seder*” (order). For Geulah must take place in the correct order, i.e., in “the evening,” which has already arrived.

THE SHABBOS OF THE WORLD

In light of this, the Halachically established belief that Moshiach can come any day, seems not understood: Why expect Moshiach to arrive before his time? Do we want a premature and incomplete Geulah?

The simple answer, of course, is that this belief became the Halacha only in the third period, in which Moshiach must come.

But to explain this better, yet another analogy of Chazal for *galus* and *Geulah* is in place: the six days of the week and Shabbos.

On Shabbos they would sing in the Beis HaMikdash “A Psalm, a Song for the Shabbos day.” ... a psalm for the future, for the day that is completely Shabbos [tranquil] for all eternity. — (Mishna, Tamid 7:4)

The comparison to Shabbos means more than that during the Redemption we will rest like we rest on Shabbos:

Rav Ketina said: The world will exist for six thousand years and in one it will be destroyed. — (Sanhedrin 97a)

[The meaning of “destruction” of the world means the destruction of the world as we know it — in its *galus* state of being, as is obvious

from the continuation of the *Gemara* which brings a supporting opinion to Rav Ketina.]

In other words, just as Shabbos is the seventh day of the week, the era of the Redemption – the “Shabbos” of the world – commences after 6,000 years.

But the *Gemara* continues by bringing what seems to be an alternative, much more detailed, description of the history of the world:

The world is to exist six thousand years: two thousand years of desolation, two thousand of Torah, and two thousand of the days of Moshiach.

According to Rashi, **the period of desolation** concluded when Avraham began “making souls” (see Bereishis 12:5), converting people to Hashem's cause. Then came the period of Torah, during which Avraham promoted monotheism in the world. Hence the words of the Midrash, “Until Avraham, the world was conducted in darkness. With Avraham, it was illuminated.”

The period of Torah ended around the time of the redaction of the Mishnah and the beginning of the age of the Amoraim. The Halachic decisions of the Sages from this time on all focus on explaining the words of the Mishna, and no longer on passing along the tradition of the Torah by heart.

Today, over 1,700 years after the conclusion of the period of Torah, it is perhaps surprising to think of ourselves living in “**the period of Moshiach**,” for we remain in *galus*, with all its trials and tribulations; furthermore, the hardest phase of *galus*, the destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash*, happened at the start of the “2,000 years of Moshiach!”

“THE SEASON OF MOSHIACH” LIKE “THE SEASON OF RAIN”

However, the term “the days of Moshiach” indicates merely that Moshiach's arrival is *feasible* if we merit it. Abarbanel (Yeshuos

Meshicho, *iyun* I, ch. 1) compares this period to the rainy season: “...rain is more likely to fall on some days than on others. Similarly, the last two thousand years are days that are ready for the coming of Moshiach”.

Maharal of Prague explains that before “the days of Moshiach,” even if the Jewish people had merited Moshiach, he could not have come. But now that the two thousand years of “the days of Moshiach” have commenced, it depends on us: Once we merit it, Geulah will come immediately, but even if we never become worthy of it, it must occur during this period. (*Netzach Yisrael*, ch. 27) Hence Rav Ketina's perspective, according to which the current state of the world *cannot* continue after 6,000 years are concluded.

“ON TIME” OR “EXPEDITED” GEULAH

These two possible timeframes for the Geulah are “*be'itah*” – “on time,” and “*achishena*” – “I will hasten it:”

Moshiach *must* come by a certain time, but our deeds can hasten his arrival and bring him earlier, within the 2,000 years of Moshiach, of which the *Gemara* says “due to our sins that have increased, so and so many years have already elapsed.” Obviously, the fact that our sins have delayed has a flip side: our good deeds and Teshuva have the power to cause it to happen.

This seems to be what stands behind Rav's statement (delivered, interestingly, right at the start of “the two thousand years of the days of Moshiach”) which became Halacha through the Rambam's ruling: “all the *kitzin* have passed and now the matter depends only upon Teshuva and good deeds.” (*Sanhedrin 97b; Rambam, Laws of Teshuvah 7:5*)

Another teaching that supports this notion is that on the day of the *churban* Moshiach was born. Most commentators understand this to be an indication that the ability to achieve a perfect redemption came only after the destruction of the *Mikdash*.

From here comes the strong faith that Moshiach can come at *any* time, as we say in the *Ani Ma'amin* “I await his coming every day” — a statement which has a twofold meaning: “I await Moshiach every day,” and “I believe Moshiach can come any day.”



The Geulah is compared to birth and to Shabbos. What both have in common is that they come after a process which we can hasten, but not skip. The good news is that it's Friday afternoon and we're overdue... ■

Portions of this essay were taken from “From Exile to Redemption” (SIE) and from “The Days of Moshiach” (Machon Lubavitch)

SUMMARY:

- According to Halacha, Moshiach can come any day.
- There was a period when Moshiach's arrival was not to be expected.
- Would Moshiach have come then, it would be an “unripe” and incomplete redemption.
- Since the beginning of “the two thousand years of Moshiach,” this time has passed.
- The coming of Moshiach now depends only on our Teshuva and good deeds.
- According to the Rebbe, we are in a period in which to a certain extent the process of Geulah (albeit not the Halachic definition of it yet) has begun.

DAYS BEFORE WERE OFF TO CAMP, MENDY HECHT SPEAKS WITH COUNSELORS, LEARNING TEACHERS, LIFEGUARDS AND OTHER STAFF MEMBERS IN LUBAVITCHER CAMPS AROUND AMERICA, AND COMES BACK WITH TIPS TO ENSURE THAT THE KIDS THAT COME UNDER OUR CARE COME HOME MORE EXCITED ABOUT YIDDISHKEIT, THE REBBE AND THE CHASSIDISHE WAY OF LIFE.

COUNSELOR & CAMPER EMBRACE



MENDEL HECHT ◦

"CAMP IS AN ANVIL

upon which Chassidim are fashioned," the Rebbe said about Camp Gan Yisroel. In several letters and sichos (see Hisvaaduyos 5743 p. 1894) the Rebbe emphasized how children being in a 24-hour environment of Yiddishkeit, can sometimes gain a lot more than in a regular school and home environment.

But it's up to the staff to provide that environment so essential for the growth of young Chassidim.

I turned to some Bochorim who filled various positions in summer camps around the country in the past summers for some of their experiences and tips.

While the camp staff is divided to the staff members who deal directly with the campers — the counselors and learning teachers to

an extent — and those that have other, more "technical" jobs; lifeguards, kitchen staff and so on, it doesn't mean that these staff members aren't part of the "educational" aspect. To the contrary, they can and must be a *dugma chaya* of a Chassid, and can even have a direct influence on campers.

I spoke to some of these staff members.

What were some advantages you had because of your position?

Mendy Hershkop says, "I was a lifeguard, so I wasn't in a position where I was 'breathing down the backs' of the campers, like a counselor or learning teacher, which can be a huge advantage. Naturally, the connection ends up being a more friendly one, and both the staff and the campers can have a more open connection sometimes."

Yisroel Cohen who was a learning teacher at Gan Yisroel Parksville, says "that as a learning teacher you are only dealing with your campers for some time, so you can focus more on their needs without getting aggravated. There is less pressure involved. There is a *ma'alah* as well as a *chisaron* when you only spend limited time with them," he sums up.

A counselor can have a more considerable influence on the campers because he spends more time with them. Another plus that a counselor has is that he spends time with his campers in a lighter mood and not a setting whose purpose is for learning. It is sometimes in these "non-learning" settings, like in the bunkhouse or on a runaway, where most is actually learned. It is from these mundane, real-life experiences where *Yiras Shamayim*, trust in Hashem, and respect for one another are learned through real-life experiences.

Working with frum campers vs. not-yet-frum campers

Back in the day, when Jewish summer camps began, they attracted both children from frum homes and from not-yet-frum homes. There weren't as many camps as there are today. You had Gan Yisroel for boys and Camp Emunah for girls.

Today, with the blessed growth of the community and so many Chabad Houses opening up, many more camps exist, and generally, children from not frum homes attend specialized camps that cater to their unique needs and help them "catch up."

Both types of camps are a unique and challenging shlichus, and I asked Bochorim who spent summers in both kinds for their input.

What do you think was most unique about working in your kind of a camp?

Mendy Hershkop, who went to Lman Achai, notices that "working with not-yet-frum kids

helps you remember why you are in camp in the first place. You came to give a proper Jewish and Chassidishe experience to all the campers so they can utilize the lessons and experiences they will learn during the summer throughout the rest of the year and beyond.

"When you are aware of your objective, it affects your behavior, and you remember that there are always campers watching how you are acting. You, therefore, make sure to act accordingly at all times. Whereas a camp in which there are only 'regular' Lubavitch campers, the goal may not always be on the staff member's mind."

Mendy suggests that "It can perhaps even be helpful for a staff member in a Lubavitch camp to view his campers as if they were new to Yiddishkeit. Like this, he will better remember why he came to camp when he should have really been in Yeshiva learning..."

Something else he wishes can be copied from the Chabad House style camps is the unity among the staff.

"At Lman Achai," he recalls, "there wasn't a sense of competition between staff. At color war, for example, each team would help the other in a way you wouldn't necessarily see in a Lubavitcher camp. Again, this is because the shlichus aspect of camp is always at the top of the mind."

Another thing he points out is that "not-yet-frum campers have a stronger desire to grow in Yiddishkeit than your average Lubavitcher camper may have since this is all relatively new to them. They also have a more objective perspective for the same reason. They aren't used to washing *Negel Vasser* and saying *Modeh Ani*. They don't have as much of an opinion for the good or bad. When they start doing it, it comes with their own understanding, not from habit."

Do you keep in touch with any of your campers?



"Yes! I am in touch with about 10-15 of my campers," says Mendy. Even though he was not a counselor or learning teacher, he was able to make a strong *keshar* with many campers. This is something I find to be truly amazing. Mendy speaks to his campers about once a week through texting or calling. He uses his *keshar* as an opportunity to teach them more Torah even after the summer is over, through a *Dvar Torah* before Shabbos or when about once a month or so he will schmooze and *farbreng* with one camper for an hour or more.

This essential and amazing tool is more commonly used by staff at Chabad House style camps, than by staff members of camps for kids who come from Lubavitcher homes and should really be implemented more.

Usually, kids will come out of camp with a better, more positive approach to their Yiddishkeit, and a periodical call from a staff member will help cement that in and bring back positive memories of Yiddishkeit and Chassidishkeit. This could be a lifesaver, *especially* for the more challenging children who may be having a hard time at school or at home.



I continue to seek some more practical advice and tips for ensuring a productive and pleasant summer.

How do you balance discipline and control without hurting your friendly connection with your campers?

Tzemach Wolf, a counselor, has a golden rule. "Never raise your voice. That will show them that when you are disciplining it is only for their own good and to help them. It's not a punishment, and it's definitely not for your own pleasure and enjoyment."

What do you find that aroused your campers most in Yiddishkeit and

Chassidishkeit —ideas from Chassidus, stories of Tzaddikim, camp songs...?

Mendy Hershkop says that in the camp he was, where the campers were children from not-yet-rum homes, the focus is on getting them interested in Yiddishkeit, not on telling them how to behave. Help them change their *Hashkafa*, which will ultimately lead to their actions as well. Then the mitzvos they do will also be in a more *p'nimusdike* way. He found that in his conversations with campers, ideas from Tanya and sichos from The Rebbe are perfect for getting someone excited about Yiddishkeit.

Aside from giving over values and ideas to your campers, in what other ways can you make a positive impression on the campers?

Mendy points out that hands down, the most effective tool is being a *dugma chaya* of what you preach and teach. "Each staff member, regardless of their position, is being watched by the campers and therefore must be a proper *tziyur* for the campers. It would be especially difficult for the campers to understand and follow the values being instilled in them if they saw there was a double standard. If the campers do not see the staff davening and learning themselves, it would be difficult for *them* to daven and learn!"

It's a huge responsibility for each staff member to be a good example. When the objective of being in camp is at the top of the staff member's mind, it will help him to remember to be a good example.

Besides for the obvious reason of being an example — not to show hypocrisy *c"v* — a staff member must make sure to act appropriately, because, in order for a person to give over to another, they must constantly be working on themselves and make those values and ideas they know and learn become one with them. Only then can they properly give over.

Yisroel Cohen says he finds it essential to first and foremost be a *mentch*. "Make sure you are always saying hi to campers you see around you... and act *mentchtlich* even when you're not teaching. Your job description as a learning teacher does not require you to do this, but your job in camp goes well beyond its description."

He also says that the campers are always watching the staff and how they behave, even if it seems they are uninterested and do not care, in reality, the way you act as a staff member affects the campers. In everything you do, you are being an example whether you like it or not.



In case you thought you're going to camp to have fun, it seems like there should be a lot on your plate and on your mind.

What did you find most challenging with working with your campers?

Yisroel tells me that it gets hard, "especially when I am not feeling into it. When you wake up in the morning and say to yourself 'Eh... maybe I don't want to be a learning teacher that much today...'"

"But the campers immediately see right through you, and they'll take you for quite the ride. You don't have a choice, you must teach each day, and if you don't feel up to it, that won't change your responsibility."

What should you do with these moods? — Just ignore them and "jump into it" with all you've got. They usually fizzle away quite quickly.



Before we go, if there was one thing you could change or add in camp, what would it be?

Mendy Hershkop thinks that the staff *Seder Sichos* should be *before* lights out, so the campers will see the staff learning, and it will affect them. Every time the campers see the staff, their actions are being monitored.

Another proposition he has is that there are campers who wake up early on Shabbos mornings and there isn't *CocoClub* like there is on weekday mornings. If there were a program for extra learning during that time, it would be beneficial. "A staff member I know made an impromptu *Seder Sichos* in a camp on Shabbos morning and got a considerable number of campers to show up!"



AS we head off to camp, **Beis Moshiach** wants to wish all the dedicated staff members a happy, healthy, and most importantly — successful and productive summer.

May we be able to have the annual Chof Menachem Av rally for the camps in the third Beis HaMikdash, with the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach's presence in a revealed way! ■

– PART I –

The rattle of the GPU vehicle momentarily disturbed the still of night in Leningrad. A moment later the hum of the motor could still be heard from the distance and the car carrying the Rebbe Rayatz passed from sight. The car had just left the Rebbe's house on its way to the unknown.

On the corner of the street stood the Chassid, Rabbi Eliyahu Chaim Altheus, one of the Chassidim closest to the Rebbe and his family, confused and in shock. He had just gone to sleep when he suddenly heard firm knocking at the door. He got up in a fright for, at a time like this, any knock in the middle of the night bode no good.

He called out quietly, "Who's there?"

"Mendel Schneerson," was the answer, also quiet.

That was the man who was going to be the Rebbe's son-in-law, later the seventh Nasi in the chain of Chabad leaders. He was in Leningrad,

helping the Rebbe with his various activities to spread Judaism.

Before opening the door, R' Altheus realized that something serious had happened at the Rebbe's house. He quickly opened up and there stood Ramash who briefly told him what happened.

How did the Rebbe's son-in-law-to-be know about it when he wasn't present during the arrest? It was the quick-thinking cleverness of his fiancée, the future Rebbetzin, Miss Chaya Mussia, that prevailed to assist her father and the entire flock of Chassidim.

Shortly before the GPU broke into the Rebbe's house, Ramash and Chaya Mussia arrived at the house. The Rebbetzin, with her keen senses realized that something terrible was taking place. She asked her chassan to wait in the yard while she went upstairs.

As she entered the house and saw the "angels of destruction," she knew she had to act quickly. She entered one of the rooms and while there alone for a moment, despite the terrible danger,

she opened the window facing the courtyard and called out, "Schneerson, guests came to visit us!"

Ramash knew precisely who she was referring to and that it was time to take action, for every moment counted. Despite the late hour, he ran to inform those close to the Rebbe about the arrest. He first ran to the home of R' Altheus.

R' Altheus and his two sons dressed quickly and left the house. The group dispersed. Ramash and one of the sons hurried in the dark toward the house of the Rebbe's secretary, R' Chaim Lieberman, to wake him up and warn him. He would be arrested right after the Rebbe. In R' Lieberman's house were many documents and letters that the Rebbe wrote to Chassidim throughout Russia, in which he strengthened them in spreading Judaism. These letters also contained the names of the yeshivos and chadarim, money matters and support, names of Torah teachers; a list

blacker-than-black that could not fall into the hands of the thugs.

R' Lieberman, upon hearing the news, realized that at any moment the evil ones could knock at the door and arrest him. He quickly lit a fire and burned all the incriminating documents. Indeed, not long afterward, the GPU knocked at his door. They had missed it by a few minutes; the incriminating documents had turned to ash.

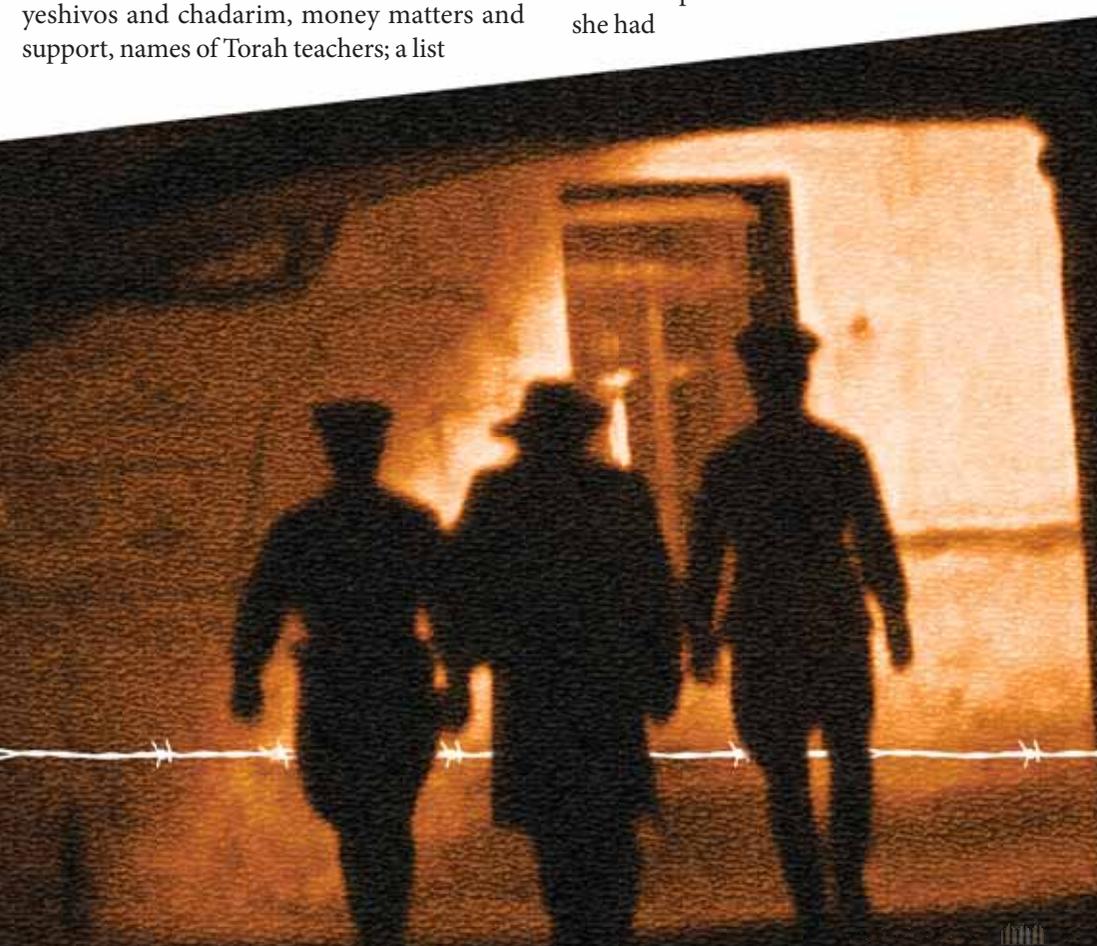
Ramash moved on to the next step, carrying out the task he had been given. He went to where the manuscripts were stored, and throughout the night and morning he transferred bundles of manuscripts to hiding places that had been prearranged in case of danger.

– PART II –

During the search of the house, Chaya Mussia reported to her father that she had

A MIDNIGHT DRAMA ON THE STREETS OF LENINGRAD

The first hours after the
Frierdiker Rebbe's arrest in the
hands of the GPU thugs, 92 years ago.



managed to convey the message to her fiancée. The Rebbe knew he could rely on his future son-in-law's perspicacity and realized that his secretary had been told about the unexpected guests as well as the arrest and that, therefore, he probably burned all the incriminating evidence.

Even during these tense, difficult moments, the Rebbe's compassionate and fatherly heart flowed with endless love and caring. The Rebbe did not fear for himself at this fateful time, but for the welfare of his loyal secretary. He wished in his heart that his secretary would know to escape, for why should he also suffer?

The only one who knew all the ins and outs of the spiritual net that the Rebbe had cast over many cities throughout Russia was R' Lieberman. He was also the only one who knew with whom to speak in each place, to where to send letters and where each of the people the Rebbe had sent to disseminate Torah was located. He also knew what needed to be done.

The perpetuation of Judaism in Russia was the most important thing to the Rebbe during these difficult and terrifying hours.

Another concern the Rebbe had was about his writings, the holy manuscripts, lest they fall into the hands of the wicked ones. True, when he was brought to prison he had managed to receive information about the work of his future son-in-law, but he did not know whether the job of smuggling out the holy writings had been completed successfully.

In his diary, the Rebbe wrote that while sitting in prison he was very afraid about the fate of the writings and the fate of the one who had been given the dangerous job to save them: "And what will we do with the one meant to be my son-in-law, Mr. Menachem, who went to the dwelling of my secretary, Mr. Lieberman. Was he, G-d forbid, caught in the trap?"

The Rebbe continues to write, "The general picture shook me and a flood of tears burst forth from my eyes. Very hot tears coursed

down my face, my heart was agitated and my entire body trembled: who knows whether, G-d forbid the manuscripts were taken... did they touch the light of my eyes, the holy manuscripts... and if such a thing were to be... great is the devastation, will they too, the holy manuscripts, also be brought to prison?"

Thankfully, the secret and dangerous mission was successful and, as a result, the agents were unable to lay their impure hands on this treasure. The holy writings were saved thanks to the Rebbe, for the benefit of future generations.

– PART III –

R' Lieberman's own description is fascinating, as he related the events of that night decades later:

"The Rebbe shlita, who was then the future son-in-law, came to my house together with the son of R' Eliyahu Chaim Altheus. The gate to our courtyard was already locked at this late hour and in order to get in, they needed to ask the concierge to open up for them and this became known to the GPU, as I found out later.

"They did not enter my house then, but let me know, through the window, about the search being conducted at the Rebbe's house. Then they immediately fled so they wouldn't be caught in the net. When I heard this, I immediately took all the mail and everything that could arouse suspicion, and burned it all.

"Before the fire went out, there were knocks at the door and the secret police burst in. As soon as they entered, they turned towards the fire and said to themselves, 'Everything is already burned.' Nevertheless, they conducted a search of the house and took every document with them and arrested me.

"During my interrogation, I was asked, 'Who were the two people who came to your house in the middle of the night before you were arrested?' Apparently, they knew about it from the concierge. Since they saw that I had burned the suspicious papers, they realized

they had been messengers from the Rebbe's house to inform me of the severity of the situation. They wanted to know who the two men were.

"I told them that they were two drunks who forgot their address and came to my house saying it was their house and I should let them in. I don't know if they believed me but they did not ask me anything further about it."

– PART IV –

R' Altheus dressed hurriedly and left the house to head to R' PG to wake him up and report on the serious situation. He also got up in a fright, dressed hurriedly, and together they went to the home of R' SB. Due to the fright and excitement, he became weak and remained at home while R' Altheus and RPG rushed toward Machavaya 22, the Rebbe's home.

The two made their way quickly down Litinov Street. As they approached Pantilamanska Street, they noticed that on the other side of the street was a group of GPU agents. One of the agents noticed the dignified visages of the two Chassidim and pointed toward them. The others turned their gaze toward them and began walking in their direction. The danger was palpable, close enough to touch. The two Chassidim, gifted with great cleverness, realized what they were facing and immediately turned into the first alleyway and disappeared via yards and side streets.

It was only after walking for many minutes, as they approached the juncture of Nodyez Dinska Street and the corner of Pantilamanska, that they felt that the danger had passed. They stood there for a few minutes to consider whether to approach the Rebbe's house. They realized that it was very dangerous to approach the place. R' Altheus was overcome with emotion. "Whatever will be, will be; I must go and see what is happening at the Rebbe's house."

R' Altheus approached the Rebbe's house with silent steps and from a distance

contemplated the goings on at the entrance of the building. "Before my eyes, there was a frightening and terrifying sight, disaster and distress were before me. A scene of fear is what I saw. My soul was greatly shaken up." This is what he wrote in his memoirs.

The Rebbe sat in a car with an open roof. On either side were two armed policemen. At just that moment, the car began to move and the evil ones noticed the Chassid with the dignified appearance standing on the corner. They glared at him with hate-filled eyes. R' Altheus caught the Rebbe's eyes. "With wise eyes filled with kindness and mercy, literally face to face with me, he shined his face towards me with much compassion and nodded his head in serenity and much love."

In Kostroma, I heard him say, "When I saw you as I sat in the car, a tranquility hovered within me, knowing that you, a heimishe (familiar) person would go into the house (to assist the family). And I recalled in what situation we saw each other an hour earlier, and in what kind of a situation we are seeing each other now."

R' Altheus, who stood rooted to his spot, recovered instantaneously and thought quickly about his next move. He realized that the Rebbe would quickly disappear into the unknown dark regions of the secret agents, and therefore someone needed to follow them in order to know where the Rebbe was being taken. Without hesitation, he got into a nearby car in order to chase after the car holding the Rebbe.

Suddenly, he felt a hand grab hold of him to hold him back from carrying out his plan. He recoiled in shock, and then suddenly saw Mrs. Chana, the eldest daughter of the Rebbe standing next to him.

"What are you doing? Where? Why? What help will it provide?" she asked, as tears poured from her eyes like water. "It is more important now that you come to the house with us, to think and consider what we need to do know. We can't afford to waste even a moment."

R' Altheus and the Rebbe's oldest daughter joined the Rebbetzin, the other daughters and son-in-law of the Rebbe, who still stood in the street, overcome and stunned into silence. This very moment, they had parted from their dearly beloved, and who knew...

"We were struck dumb, dazed like the completely forlorn. All of us together, literally in the throes of death which enveloped us, embittered souls in darkness and the shadow of death," is how R' Altheus described what they all felt at those moments on the streets of Leningrad, at three in the morning.

The Rebbe's oldest daughter broke the silence, insisting that they could not just stand around in silence in the face of the terrible abduction of their father, "Let's go up to the house in order to confer and consider how to save him from the trap they have laid at his feet. She added the fact that all knew good and well, that the Rebbe was in great danger and every second counted.

With faltering steps, R' Altheus entered the Rebbe's home. The first place that he entered was the large room where the davening was held. A tremor ran through his body as he beheld the bowed figure of Rebbetzin Shterna Sarah, the mother of the Rebbe, standing next to the Aron Kodesh with her head and half of her body inside the ark itself. She was crying out from the bitterness of her soul, "Ribbono shel Olam! It is for Your Torah and service that my precious only son was taken. Help me, G-d of our salvation, and save him from the hands of the villains. Our G-d should be with him like He was with his holy forefathers, and surely He will not leave me nor will He forsake me."

R' Altheus attempted to soothe her with words of consolation and convince her to sit and rest a bit, due to her weakness and poor health, but the Rebbetzin did not seem to hear him at all.

He then continued on to the other rooms in order to meet with the other family members. He was particularly concerned about the

Rebbetzin, the wife of the Rebbe Rayatz, since he knew her to be a physically weak woman. As he walked through the rooms, he suddenly found his feet rooted to their place, as he was overcome with shock.

The door to the holy room of the Rebbe, the yechidus room, known as *gan eden ha'elyon*, was wide open. The door that was always closed, as a divide between the holy and the holy of holies, was open. The room that no man would dare enter without explicit permission, was now open to all and sundry. As he writes in his diary account of the events, it seemed to him as a "desecration of the holy! The destruction of the chamber of G-d!" The holy room, outside of which Chassidim stood at times for long hours in order to have the privilege to enter with awe and trembling, now stood bereft and open to all.

When he entered the room of the Rebbe, he saw another shocking sight: The Rebbe's son-in-law Rashag was standing with Nosson Gurary opposite the Rebbe's table, both of them crying bitter tears. The drawers of the desk were all wide open, with various important papers and letters strewn about, including Chassidic manuscripts. It was all cast about without any order, on the desk and under it, on the floor, in the drawers and on the chairs. It was a sight of destruction and devastation.

When the two spotted R' Altheus, Rashag being overcome with pain and fear let out a fearsome wordless cry. It seemed like forever that R' Altheus stood there in that holy spot, unable to open his mouth. The three stared at each other in silence, with eyes swollen from crying. Emotionally overwrought and with their minds numb, they began to sort through the papers that were left behind after the search. Perhaps there remained among the papers some with content, that might be dangerous to leave about if the agents returned to search again, which needed to be hidden away as soon as possible. They checked each paper, and whatever seemed dangerous or forbidden was burned immediately.

As they searched through the papers, they came across a small note in Yiddish, handwritten in pencil, clearly legible and organized:

"Hear me, Chassidim and all sons of the Jewish people who are hoping for Moshiach. Give over in my name to all of the Chassidim in the world, that I have instructed that in all Chassidic shuls they should say every day after Shacharis, including on Shabbos, a portion of Tehillim as it is divided by the days of the month with a quorum, and afterward to say *kaddish*. All merchants and business people should go to shul to daven and be present when they learn *Ein Yaakov*, and Hashem should help them with ample parnassa. Say to the Chassidim that I instruct, and to ordinary Jews say that out of Ahavas Yisrael and for the good of the Jewish people I ask, that they fulfill the aforementioned. And Hashem should help them with a year of good fortune, spiritually and materially, and we should merit the complete Geula through Moshiach, amen!"

When was this note written? Did the Rebbe foresee what would happen to him and prepare this in advance, specifically for this turn of events? No man knows, but what they did know was that they needed to rend the heavens with the recitation of Tehillim.

— PART V —

A long while passed before the family members gathered their wits about them and began to recount how the agents had to come to the house, and the order of events of the search and arrest. Upon review of the events, a ray of hope appeared when they realized that the evil ones had behaved with respect and proper manners towards the Rebbe, throughout the ordeal. They did not speak harshly to the Rebbe, nor did they treat him with disrespect. Even the search was not very thorough and severe.

When they had wanted to take the manuscripts of the Rebbe Rashab, the Rebbe told them that he is not prepared for them to

take possession of these holy writings, and the wicked ones acquiesced and returned them to him immediately. Similarly, they did not prevent the Rebbe from walking about the rooms although this was against standard arrest protocol. They went so far as to even allow him to speak his mind.

When he warned them to think long and hard whether it was worthwhile for them to arrest him, as it would create a storm of outcry in the world, the agents answered that the GPU was a powerful organization that was prepared to take responsibility for its actions. The Rebbe insisted that despite that fact they should still reconsider and even suggested that they call the head of the GPU on his telephone. They acceded to his demand and called. However, the answer was in the negative. All of the above were not the usual tactics of the most terror-inducing government agency in all of communist Russia.

The beasts in human guise even agreed that he could take his tallis and tefillin, and a few holy books, which would also be considered an accomplishment. When he insisted that they call a car for him as he was not prepared to walk to the prison on foot, they again yielded and called for a car to come take them. This was despite the fact that hundreds of arrests were carried out that night, and there were no available cars.



After a brief drive, the black wagon turned right on Shpalerna. On this street, stood a large building, number 24, nicknamed "Shpalerka." There was no mistaking this terrifying structure with its sealed doors and gates. In the predawn dark of night, the building seemed to project even more terror and despair. A satanic house, whose name inspired dread in the hearts of millions of residents.

That was the night of 15 Sivan, ninety-two years ago, when the terrible arrest of the Rebbe Rayatz took place. ■

HOW MANY NON-JEWS DOES IT TAKE TO CHANGE A LIGHTBULB?

A JOKE TO BEGIN WITH...

How many engineers do you need to change a lightbulb? — Five, one to hold the lightbulb and another four to turn the ladder...

How many Russians do you need to change a lightbulb? — It really doesn't matter, since they're too drunk to do anything anyway...

How many Americans do you need to change a lightbulb? — Why change it? Just move into a new apartment...



THIS week's Torah portion, **Parshas Shlach**, deals primarily with the subject of the *meraglim*, the spies Moshe sent to Eretz Yisrael – their mission, their mistake, and the resulting consequences. However, let's put the affair of the *meraglim* aside for the moment, and focus on a subject that seems slightly marginal in this parsha – the mitzvah of tzitzis.

While the section on tzitzis is at the *end* of Parshas Shlach – for us, it constitutes the *beginning* of our daily routine. Each day, we wrap ourselves in the *tallis*, put on tzitzis, and even read (at least twice) the Torah section on the mitzvah of tzitzis as part of the *Krias Sh'ma*.

In the present-day world, nothing (except misfortune...) comes for free. Everything has its price.

What do we get for doing the mitzvah of tzitzis?

Well, even though it is quite easy to fulfill the mitzvah of tzitzis, the reward we will receive in the Future to Come is tremendous in comparison to the effort invested. The Gemara states (Shabbos 32b): “Reish Lakish said: Anyone who is vigilant in performing the mitzvah of tzitzis merits that two thousand eight hundred [servants] will serve him in the World to Come. As it is stated (Zecharia 8:23): “So said the G-d of Hosts: In those days, when ten men of all the languages of the nations shall take hold of the corner of a garment of a Jewish man, saying, ‘Let us go with you, for we have heard that G-d is with you.’”

Let's calculate how Reish Lakish arrived at so large a number:

“Ten men of all the languages of the nations.” As we know, there are seventy nations in the world. Thus, a simple accounting (70x10) brings us to the conclusion that in the World to Come, seven hundred servants will take hold of our tzitzis.

However, this is only at one “corner of a garment of a Jewish man,” and since tzitzis have four corners and seven hundred men will hold one corner...in the Future to Come, we will have (at least...) 2,800 servants of all types from all the nations of the world. We'll never have to change our lightbulbs by ourselves again!

What will we do with so many workers?

Every *balabuste* would surely appreciate three or four housekeepers coming in a few times a week. But what will we do with 2,800 workers?

The Rebbe, when discussing this question, answered that apparently, this is one of the issues that *Melech HaMoshiach* will himself resolve once he comes. Let's wait and see.

But to the more pressing question: the Jewish idea of Olam Haba and the days of Moshiach is not about having abundant food, riding fancy horses and running plantations with thousands of workers. Why are the prophets and the sages making such a big deal out of this? Is this indeed the reward for a mitzvah that reminds us of all other mitzvos?

Let's further examine the words of the prophet himself.

“Ten men ... shall take hold of the corner of a garment of a Jewish man, saying, ‘Let us go with you, for we have heard that G-d is with you.’”

It doesn't say that *we* will run to employ them; it says that *they* will run to us and beg *us* to employ them.

Why will these 2,800 workers actually be begging for the opportunity to hold the corner of a Jew's garment?

The **Nimukei Yosef**, Rabbi Yosef ibn Chaviva, among the last of the Rishonim and one of greatest Torah scholars of Spain, explains that the nations of the world will recognize the great quality of the mitzvah of tzitzis, and how it will bring the Jewish People to the life of the World to Come. As a result, the Gentiles will long to take part in this mitzvah. However, after they learn that they are unable to reach the level of the Jewish People in fulfilling this mitzvah, they will “settle” for holding on to the corners of our tzitzis.

Other prophecies of this nature, the massive change in the way Gentiles relate to Jews, their desire to cleave to our holy nation, have already been mentioned in the words of the Prophets (Yeshayahu 61:5):

“And strangers shall stand and pasture your sheep, and foreigners shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers.” The fact is that in the Future to Come, the Jewish People will not have to work for their sustenance, as all their needs will be provided in great abundance by a large number of foreign workers pleading to work (for free!) for every Jew. The Gemara has already alluded to this phenomenon (Berachos 35b): “When Israel performs G-d's Will, their work is performed by others.”

In **Sha'arei Teshuva** (66a), the Mittlerer Rebbe explains that at the time of the Redemption, the unique quality of the Jewish People over all

other nations in the world will be revealed. This is what Moshe Rabbeinu requested: “And may we, myself and Your people, be uniquely distinguished from all other nations that are on the face of the earth” – the nations of the world will recognize this on their own. Thus, they will naturally be drawn to offer their assistance, work, and do everything in their ability to get closer to the Jewish nation.

Just imagine: What wouldn't an obsessed fan of a sports star do in order to have the “privilege” of personally meeting this famous personality? He would do anything! Similarly, the Gentile nations will do anything – plowing in the field, work on the computer, change lightbulbs, and even diapers!

Interestingly, the Gemara hints that they will even prepare Shabbos food for us!

The Gemara (Eruvin 43b) states that the coming of Moshiach can take place on Erev Shabbos, and it would not cause any inconvenience to the Jewish People because they would have more than enough servants to deal with Shabbos preparations in their place!

Who knows what Brazilian cholent, Japanese gefilte fish, or Scandinavian kugel will taste like?



THE lesson to us now, in these final moments of the galus, from how the Geulah will change the nature of our relationship with the Gentiles, is that it's high time for us to improve our relationship with... ourselves!

The time has come to relate to ourselves more seriously. We need to know that every action, every thought, every utterance of ours, is essential and significant. Each one of us is a pearl, a diamond in the royal crown of Hashem. Who has time to get involved with trivialities and matters of little importance? We have a far more urgent and vital mission, one that

(according to the Rebbe's sicha of 28 Nissan 5751) only we can fulfill – bringing the True and Complete Redemption by increasing in all matters of Torah and holiness!

TO CONCLUDE WITH A STORY:

This is a story told by the Rebbe at the farbrengen of Chof Av 5716, a tale emphasizing the Gentiles' recognition of the unique quality of every Jew, and particularly of the *Nasi Hador*...

The Rebbe Maharash once had to make a journey outside of Russia, and he traveled from Lubavitch to a nearby town with a train station. Due to unforeseen circumstances, the Rebbe Maharash was slightly delayed, and when he did not arrive at the station on time, the train left without him — the clerk in charge decided not to wait for the Rebbe Maharash, and gave orders for the train to depart. When the Rebbe Maharash learned of this, he lodged a formal complaint. Not long afterward, orders came from the capital city of S. Petersburg to fire the clerk in charge!

When the Rebbe Maharash journeyed back to Lubavitch, he passed through a neighboring village, and all the local Gentiles came out together with the leading elders of the city to greet him with great honor. They came out to greet him, as customary, with bread and salt and fell on their knees before him. During this journey, the Rebbe Maharash was accompanied by his nephew, R' Yeshayahu Berlin, who told his uncle with much excitement: “Fetter! Did you see what great honor they gave you?” The Rebbe Maharash replied: “Petach (fool)! About whom was it written, ‘You shall be blessed above all peoples?’”

Good Shabbos!

Based on a sicha of Parshas Shlach 5742.

KIDS Corner

STORY TIME

THE HANDWRITTEN TEHILLIM

IT was a difficult time for the Jewish people. The secret police in communist Russia made every effort to wipe out Judaism. Many Jews did not withstand the test and joined the communists in order to save themselves. During this time, it was the Rebbe Rayatz and his Chassidim who, with mesirus nefesh, preserved Torah and mitzvos and even influenced others. They taught Torah secretly and helped with everything having to do with mitzva observance.

Many of them paid a high price for this “crime.”

R' Dovid Leib Chein was one of these Chassidim. Because of his activities in spreading Judaism, he was arrested. For nine months they kept him in one prison after another, one worse than the next. Food was meager and the isolation was difficult and oppressive. He didn't even have a Tehillim or siddur and so he would recite many chapters of Tehillim by heart.

After nine months, he was brought to trial and the merciless sentence was read: “Ten years of hard labor in Siberia.”

If that wasn't enough, the judges said, “If you do not behave properly in exile, you will get an additional ten years!”

You should know that in Siberia, a person feels like he's at the end of the world. It's like life stops. For nearly ten months of the year,

there is hardly any sun. There is weak light from eight until eleven in the morning and then it is dark. During the other months, the sun shines nonstop and there is no night.

Of course, in addition to the physical hardship and distance, there are also many problems related to halacha such as: when does Shabbos begin and end and what are the times for davening?

Here, in distant Siberia, he began a spirit-crushing life journey of disconnection from family, being in an isolated place, in subhuman conditions, and working at hard labor that shattered the body.

At first, R' Dovid Leib was assigned to work with coal diggers. This is difficult and very dangerous work. The coal mine was deep in the earth. In order to extract the black rocks from which they got the coal, they would drill holes into the rocks that contain the coal and fill the holes with dynamite. The workers would exit the mine and then set off the explosion, which broke the rocky earth into little pieces. Then they would clear out the broken pieces of earth, clear out the space for a tunnel and put up wooden scaffolding. This was so that the rocks wouldn't cave in and bury the workers inside, which occasionally happened when the scaffolds were not strong enough.

They would take the broken pieces of rock out of the mine and had the prisoners pick

ARE WE THERE YET?

through and remove that which was not usable. The usable material was left outside until it was burned and turned to coal. It was a great deal of work and took place in two shifts, by day and at night.

R' Dovid had to bring material in and out of the ground. He worked at this intense labor for a month until he felt his strength giving out.

When the supervisor saw that R' Dovid wasn't doing his work with the requisite energy, he began shouting and threatening, but it didn't help because R' Dovid Leib wasn't slacking off; he just couldn't exert himself any more.

His job was changed to clearing the roads of snow which was less arduous.

Later, through the kindness of Hashem, the supervisor in charge of shipping and storing merchandise, suggested that he work on guarding the main warehouse.

"I see that you are religious and the work is hard for you," he said. "My advice is that you work as a watchman at the warehouse. Also, when merchandise arrives, you need to show the driver where to drop it off."

R' Dovid was happy with the idea but made it conditional on his not having to work on Shabbos. In his free time, he made himself a little, handwritten Tehillim. Whatever chapter he knew by heart he wrote down and that is how he had a partial Tehillim, written with tears and supplications.

This book was precious to him and he always had it in his shirt pocket. Whenever he had a chance, he took out the Tehillim and recited chapter after chapter.

One day, something exciting happened. Once every few months, a prisoner was allowed to send a letter to his family and to receive a package from them. In many instances, the package never reached the prisoner or only some of it arrived.

R' Dovid received a package from his wife and this time, the package reached the guard at the end of his shift and since he wanted to leave, he said to give the package as is, without checking it at all.

In the package, R' Dovid discovered a treasure, a real Tehillim! It wasn't handwritten and it wasn't incomplete; it was a Tehillim!

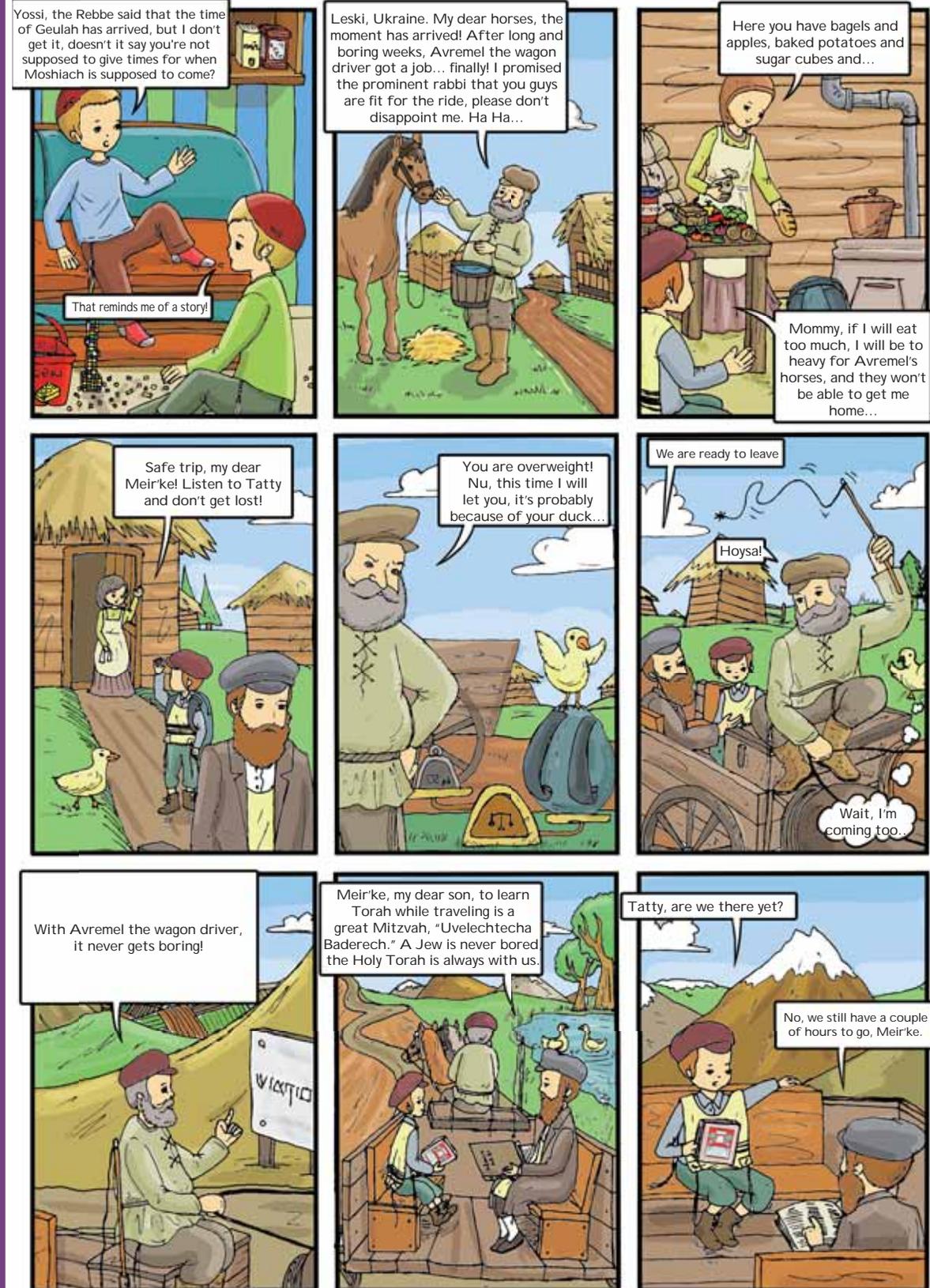
He was thrilled, however, it was too big for his pocket.

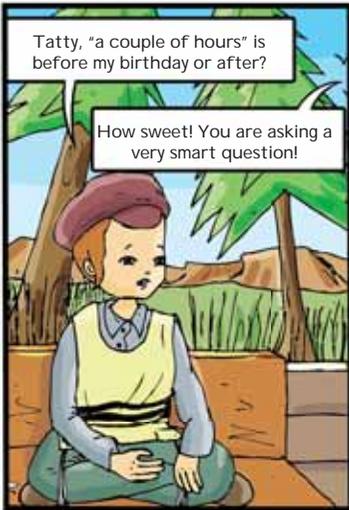
What did he do? Whenever he had free time, he copied chapter after chapter, thus he created a precise handwritten copy that was pocket-sized. When he completed it after several months, he was happy.

After that, he carried the complete Tehillim that he had written in his pocket. In the morning, he would go outside when nobody was there and it was just snow and barbed-wire fences and he would pour out his heart to Hashem.

He also miraculously received tefillin after a long time in which he was unable to do this mitzva. One day, a religious Jew came to the camp. Unfortunately, this was the second time he was sent to the Siberian exile. Since he had bitter experience without tefillin, this time he managed to smuggle in tefillin. How? He bought a loaf of bread, hollowed it out and put the tefillin inside. Thankfully, nobody caught on and the tefillin arrived safely in the camp. This is how R' Dovid was able to put on tefillin every weekday.

Many years passed and R' Dovid left Russia. When he went to the Rebbe, he showed the Rebbe the Tehillim he had written while in exile. The Rebbe greatly valued this Tehillim that served this Chassid in such difficult times and told him that on Shabbos Mevorchim, when the entire Tehillim is recited, he should use this Tehillim. ■





Tatty, "a couple of hours" is before my birthday or after?

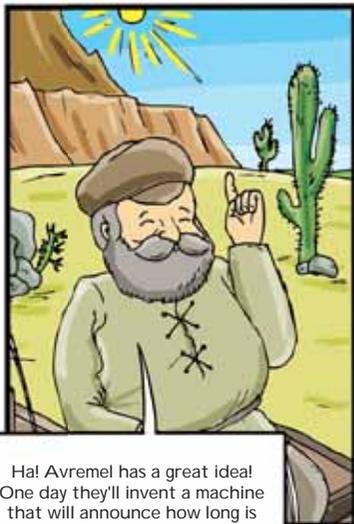
How sweet! You are asking a very smart question!



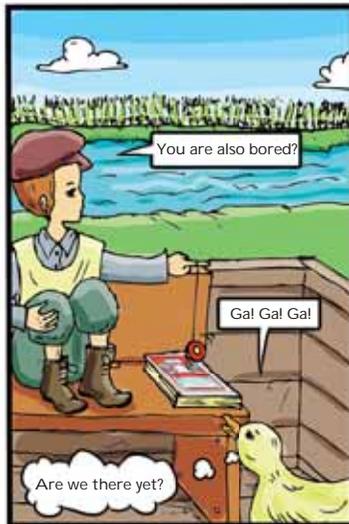
5 minutes later...

Tatty, are we there yet?

Meir, enough. Have patience, and please don't ask me again! That's a foolish question!



Ha! Avremel has a great idea! One day they'll invent a machine that will announce how long is left to the trip. Remember it was my idea!



You are also bored?

Gal Gal Gal!

Are we there yet?

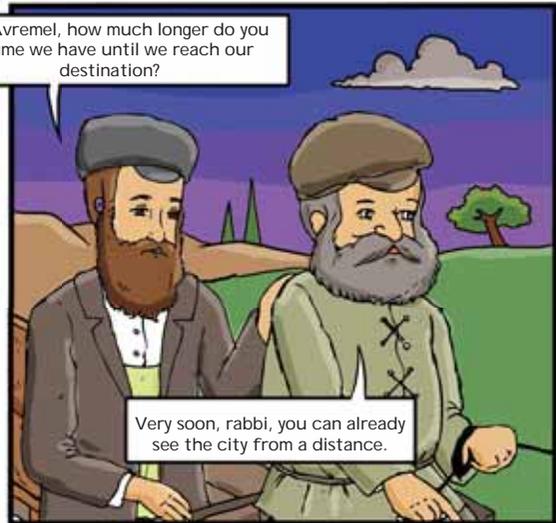


Are we there yet?

That's a foolish question!



Reb Avremel, how much longer do you assume we have until we reach our destination?



Very soon, rabbi, you can already see the city from a distance.



Did I hear right?



Tatty?!

Yes, my Meir'ke, did you want to ask something?



Yes, didn't you say it's a foolish question!!

At the beginning of the trip, there was no point to ask, "are we there yet." But now that we are almost there, it's a very wise question, we need to get ready to arrive at our destination!



My grandfather would say that a truly wise man says the right thing at the right time and in the right place.



So, Are we there yet?

At the beginning of Galus, the Chachomim were worried that Yidden would give up waiting for the Geulah by trying to figure out when Moshiach will come. But now we are so so close, and we need to get ready, so now we are allowed and must talk about the destination.



We arrived!



We arrived!

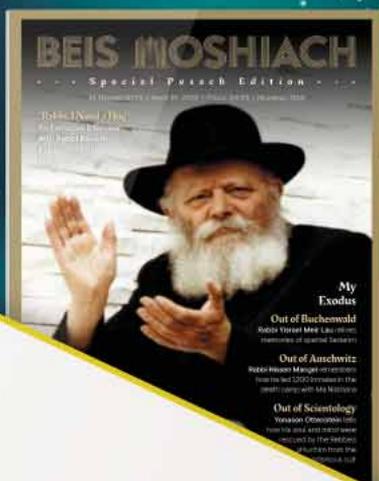


Are we there yet?

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