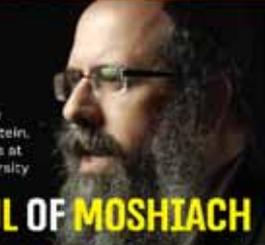


# BEIS MOSHIACH

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**47**

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**"A BIGGER DEAL THAN THE  
SPUTNIK MISSION"**

"Moments with the Rebbe" – Rabbi Dr. Nissan Mindel



**HOW TO FIX A  
MISSED CHITAS?**

Ksav Yaid Kodesh

# BESURAS HaGeulah

THE REBBE ON THE IMMINENCE OF THE REDEMPTION



## START BUILDING!

סו. חלקים משיחות ש"פ משפטים, ז"ך שבט, מבה"ח אדר א' תשנ"ב (15)  
66. Shevat 27, 5752 – February 1, 1992 (15)

Referring to a recent UN summit at which a resolution on arms reduction was made, the Rebbe said that it served as the beginning of the fulfillment of Yeshayahu's prophetic promise. "Looking at all this" the Rebbe continued, "leads to painful wonder: how is that we're still in exile and we have not yet received the instruction to build the third Beis HaMikdash?"

We therefore must do all we can to bring Moshiach, including a task alluded to in the Torah reading to be read at Minchah:

**In continuation to these lessons, there is another lesson we can learn from the opening verse of Parashas Terumah (which we read at Minchah of this Shabbos): "Make me a Sanctuary and I will dwell among them."**

This verse speaks of creating a sanctuary for Hashem on various levels:

First, **starting with construction of the private sanctuary within each and every Jew**, — as the wording of the verse "I will dwell in them" — and not the more expected term "in it" — implies.

Our Sages deduce from the fact that **"within it" is not written, rather 'within them,'** that Hashem seeks to dwell **"within each and every one"** of the Jewish people, **in the innermost recesses of his heart.**

Secondly, one must construct a sanctuary for Hashem **in his home and in his room, by making it a place of Torah, prayer and acts of loving-kindness.**

ובהמשך לזה - גם ההוראה מהתחלת פרשת תרומה (שקורין במנחת שבת): "ועשו לי מקדש ושכנתי בתוכם",

החל מהמקדש הפרטי שבכל-אחד ואחד מישראל

("בתוכו לא נאמר אלא בתוכם, בתוך כל אחד ואחד")<sup>33</sup>, בלבו פנימה,

ובביתו ובחדרו, שנעשה בית תורה תפלה וגמילות-חסדים,

Thirdly, this instruction of "Make me a sanctuary" **includes — especially — participating in constructing and expanding synagogues and Houses of Study**, being the nearest interpretation of this mitzva in its original form.

This is to be done **in a generous manner** reminiscent of **"Take for Me a contribution ... of gold and silver and copper"** and so on — reaching **all thirteen (or fifteen) kinds of contributions recorded in the Torah** as the items that were requested from the Jews for the building of the Mishkan, the Tabernacle).

The Torah lists *fifteen* items the Jews were requested to donate, but two of them are the oil for the Menora and incense for the *Ketores* and the *Shemen Hamishchah* (the anointing oil), leaving the count at *thirteen* items needed for the Mishkan-structure and for the priestly garments (according to some commentaries — see Likkutei Sichos vol. 21 p. 153, fn 70-71 for a discussion on this).

**Thus we accelerate, hasten, and immediately accomplish the building of the third Beis Hamikdash in its literal and simple sense.**

**May it be His Hashem's will — this being the main thing — that the true and complete Redemption through our righteous Moshiach should come in actual reality, teikef umiyad mamash — imminently and immediately,**

*Teikef umiyad mamash* is a frequently-used phrase of the Rebbe to describe how urgently we need Moshiach and how fast we hope for him to come.

The first two words (*teikef umiyad*) describe levels of immediacy. *Mamash*, a derivative of the Hebrew word *mishush* — touching, means the we want the Redemption literally and tangibly, so much so that we can actually "touch" it with our physical fingers and not grasp it only as a conceptual idea.

Here, the Rebbe reveals a deeper dimension of the phrases *miyad* and *mamash*:

**May this all happen to us in actuality, and immediately so, with all the explanations of "miyad,"**

[also including the way the word *miyad* contains an acronym that encompasses — in a general way — all the generations of the Jewish people,

starting with **משה** — *Moshe Rabbeinu*, continuing with **ישראל** — *Yisroel* (the name of the *Baal Shem Tov*, founder of Chassidus) and ending with **דוד** — *Dovid*, referring here to the **King Moshiach**, the first letter of each of these three names making up the word **מיד**].

כולל ובמיוחד ההשתתפות בבנין והרחבת בתי-כנסיות ובתי-מדרשות

באפן ד'ויקחו לי תרומה גו' זהב וכסף ונחשת"<sup>34</sup> (כל י"ג ט"ו)<sup>35</sup> דברים המנויים בכתוב).

שעל-ידי-זה ממחרים ומזרזים ופועלים תכף בנין בית-המקדש השלישי כפשוטו ממש.

. . . ויהי רצון והוא העקר - שהגאולה האמתית והשלימה על-ידי משיח צדקנו תבוא בפעל ממש תכף ומיד ממש

{בן תהיה לנו בפעל ממש, ותיכף ומיד ממש} עם כל הפרושים שב"מיד"

[כולל גם הראשי-תבות דקללות הדורות

משה ישראל (הבעל-שם-טוב) דוד (מלכא משיחא)]

## CAN A MAN DO HAFRASHAS CHALLAH?

A second installment of Halachos on the mitzvah of Hafrashas Challah, from Halacha2Go.com and AskTheRav.com

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

### MAY GIRLS UNDER BAS MITZVA SEPARATE CHALLAH?

In Halacha #231 we discussed the halachic issues involved in challah-baking events, noting that challah may not be separated with a bracha if the dough is then divided into small portions to be taken home by the participants.

A related question which is often asked concerns *bas mitzva* celebrations where the *bas mitzva* girl and her friends want to bake challah together. Assuming that the problem mentioned above doesn't apply—either because the host family is keeping all of the challah, or for some other reason—may girls under *bas mitzva* separate challah?

The halacha is that children during the year preceding halachic maturity, i.e. before their *bar* or *bas mitzva*, which for girls is eleven, are deemed a *mufla ha'samuch l'ish* (near maturity), and if they separate *teruma* it's valid—provided that they are aware Who they're separating *teruma* for. Likewise, challah separated by girls this age is also valid. However, *l'chatchila*, it should be done by girls who are already *bas*

*mitzva*. **Halacha2go.com #495**

### SEPARATING CHALLAH AT A "CHALLAH BAKE"

There is a halacha in Shulchan Aruch that when dough for baking challah is prepared *kedei le'chaleik*, in order to divide and distribute it, "taking" challah is not required unless each portion is of the requisite shiur.

There are many opinions regarding how to interpret the words *kedei le'chaleik*; there is a lengthy discussion by poskim, including the Tzemach Tzedek, who dedicates a lot of space to this discussion.

At a challah-baking event where many people gather to bake challah, a large amount of dough is prepared, and often the portion that each participant receives is not sufficient for separating challah; each woman then bakes her own challah and takes it home. In such a case, making a bracha for separating challah would be a *bracha levatala*, a blessing in vain.

A bracha could only be made if each participant were to receive the appropriate shiur of challah. Since the original intent when

preparing this dough was *le'chaleik*, to be divided among many, the sum of the individual portions is not considered the requisite shiur. **Halacha2go.com #231**

### WHEN CHALLAH IS SEPARATED FROM AFAR

When one separates challah in *Eretz Yisrael*, all the individual parts of the dough from which challah is to be taken have to be *min hamukaf* (nearby); according to one opinion, this means that all the pieces of dough must touch each other, and according to another—they must all be in the same bowl.

Outside *Eretz Yisrael*, it is *midas chassidus* (pious behavior) to separate challah *min hamukaf*, but *bedieved* if there are no other options, it's acceptable to do so *shelo min hamukaf* (even if the different parts of dough are not in proximity to each other and even if they are in different locations), as long as they were all originally part of the same batch of dough.

In a case where challah had not been separated beforehand, e.g., if a kindergarten teacher discovers that baked challah was sent home with the children without challah having been taken from the dough, one may separate challah *shelo min hamukaf*, even in *Eretz Yisrael*.

The above halacha applies if there is a similar concern regarding matzos baked by a *chabura* (group); one may separate *shelo min hamukaf*, using the challah or matzah at their location for the mitzva of *hafrashas challah*, and thereby fulfill the halachic requirement for all the challos or matzos in other locations. It is advisable for a *rav* giving a *hechsher* on matzos to separate challah a few minutes before *Pesach* from the matzos in his own home in order to assure that the halachic requirement is met on behalf of all those who purchased matzos from that entire batch of dough and may not have separated challah. **Halacha2go.com #318**

### "OH, NO! I FORGOT TO SAY THE BRACHA

### BEFORE SEPARATING CHALLAH!"

The procedure of *hafrashas challah*\* is to make the bracha, separate a piece of dough and to declare aloud the separated portion as challah: "*Harei zu challah*" (this is challah). *Poskim* mention that verbally confirming *hafrashas challah* is an offshoot of the practice of *krias shem* (calling by name, i.e., verbal identification) when separating *teruma* — "*harei zu teruma*." [See AskTheRav.com #9414].

If a person forgot to make the bracha before separating the challah, can they still recite it afterwards? The answer is: If their intention was to then declare the dough "challah" (or this is the individual's practice on a regular basis), they may still say the bracha post-separation. Since they will proceed to make a verbal statement concerning the separation, the *hafrasha* has not yet been actualized. However, for those who do not plan to perform a *krias shem* the mitzva was completed with the physical separation of dough, and a bracha post-facto constitutes a *bracha levatala*. **Halacha2go.com #825**

### MEN SEPARATING CHALLAH

Separating challah from dough is the mitzva of the woman. It is specifically her mitzva, and she has priority to do it over her husband. In fact, there is a discussion among *poskim* whether she is considered her husband's shaliach, emissary, or if it is her mitzva independently. Indeed, some *poskim* say that if a husband separates the challah instead of his wife he owes her a payment of *asarah zehuvim*, the amount of money one owes another if they usurp another's mitzva. Others opine that he does not have to pay her since the dough belongs to the husband, as do all of a wife's earnings in lieu of his obligation to support her.

The same applies if the husband lights the Shabbos or Yom Tov candles, which is the wife's mitzva, before she has a chance to light them. The only time the husband may light the candles is if his wife is running so late that it is almost shkiah, after which lighting is no longer



# MOSHIACH IS A **WINNER**

The Mishneh Torah of the Rambam ends with the description of Moshiach: "He will fight the wars of Hashem." But fighting isn't enough...

A transcript of a workshop by Rabbi Gershon Avtzon, Rosh Yeshivas Lubavitch, Cincinnati OH to shluchim, presented in honor of the 39th Siyum HaRambam

## RABBI GERSHON AVTZON ◦

### I WANT TO START BY MAKING AN

*apology. A couple of nights ago, I had an argument, more like a friendly discussion, about how*

*important it is for someone invited to make a speech to show up to speak with prepared notes. The person with whom I had this discussion said, "What do you mean? You come and speak from your heart and mind. Show them that you thought about it and you don't need any notes." In response, I said that I was taught years ago that when you come with notes, it shows the people you're addressing that first you prepared for them and thought about what you wanted to say, and more importantly, it helps to keep you on track, remain focused, and not get distracted. As a result, I had notes prepared today, but on my flight here this morning, I was so aggressively reviewing my notes that I left them on the plane...*

### KEEPING THE MAIN THING THE MAIN THING

Once a year, the "Jewish Institute of Religion" holds a meeting to give a public accounting of where it spends its money. I can tell you that it's awfully painful to see how about ten million dollars goes to interfaith dialogue, trees, the Muslims, and all the other different ideas that they can come up with. You name it – whatever doesn't have to do with Yiddishkeit gets millions of dollars. When it comes to the Torah observant institutions, the numbers are at the bottom of the list, and Chabad institutions are almost non-existent.

In any case, I arrived at this meeting and sat through their presentation. Line by line, my heart sinks as I listen to the allocations, thinking to myself, "Oy vey, how is this going to end?" Large sums of money collected by the community, which are not even theirs, and they give them out to spend on such things. I couldn't believe that I even came to this event.

Finally, the last speaker got up and said something that on its own made it worth coming. "Ladies and gentlemen," he said, "I want to teach you something: The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing..."

That's really the reason why we're gathered here today. Conferences like this are really enjoyable – we hear shiurim, experiences, get stronger in our hiskashrus, participate in far-brengens, etc. However, the main thing is how we get our families, our communities, and ourselves ready to greet Moshiach Tzidkeinu. And today, the goal is that the main thing should remain the main thing.

### NO NEED TO PREACH TO THE CHOIR

There's a story that I like to tell because it brings out the main point of our discussion: There once was a stunt man whose profession was walking the tightrope. He was preparing to do this across Niagara Falls, and he put out an advertisement for all to come and watch the event, free of charge. As you can imagine, hundreds and thousands of people came to see this crazy person cross the falls on a tightrope. He climbed up the ladder, reached the top of the rope, and is about to start his dangerous journey. Then, he announces to the crowd, "I can't walk by myself. I can only cross the falls on this rope if you all announce that you believe that I can do it." They all screamed, "I believe you can do it! I believe!"; and he walked across the falls and returned to the other side. The crowd thought that the show was finished, but it wasn't. He had someone bring out a wheelbarrow and then he said, "Do you think that I can cross the falls with a wheelbarrow?" When the crowd replied, "Maybe," he said that he could only do it if they say that they believe. "I believe, I believe!" they all said, and he crossed back and forth. Now, they thought for sure that



THE REBBE WITH A VOLUME OF MISHNEH TORAH OF THE RAMBAM

the performance was over, but then he said, "And now for my final act, I'm going to show how I can cross the falls with a wheelbarrow – and with somebody in it. But I can only do it if you say that you believe." Sure enough, everyone said, "I believe, I believe!"; to which he said, "Any volunteers?"

It's very easy to say that we believe. However, the question is: Are we ready to get in it? Today, you are showing that you are ready to be in it. Coming to this gathering today on a Sunday afternoon, while the company is great, whoever came today is declaring a commitment that he's in – and I don't have to preach to the choir. My speech today has nothing to do with being in it; that would be a speech for people who are **not** here. To convince them to come here, I would have to give them a speech on why they should come. However, I have learned this year something that has really changed my outlook on things: It's not enough to be in it, you've got to be in it to win it...

### HORSES RUNNING HOW THEY SHOULD AND AS THEY SHOULD

There's a big difference between the two. When did this start? One of the privileges of being a teacher is that I get to come with my family to the Rebbe for Yom Kippur and Sukkos, when school is on vacation. On my teacher's salary, while I can't necessarily afford seats in 770 during that time, one of the bonuses that my father gives me every year, knowing that it's very important to me, is to arrange places for me and my two sons in 770. My seat is located in the first row under the women's section when you enter the main shul.

This past Erev Yom Kippur, I sat down and started all my preparations for Kol Nidrei. It was actually an interesting time, as it was very quiet because all the bachurim were upstairs for Birkas HaBanim, and only the ba'alei batim were downstairs. When you come into 770, it's like a printing press with an endless supply of new material on the tables. There was a wonderful publication printed this year with a

// THERE WERE CERTAIN MATTERS WHERE I HAD A SERIOUS PROBLEM, AND ALTHOUGH IT WASN'T EASY FOR ME, I CALLED RABBI HALBERSTAM, HEAD OF THE CHABAD MESIVTA IN CHICAGO, AND SOUGHT HIS ADVICE. IT'S A HUMBLING PROCESS, BUT SO WHAT? WE DON'T KNOW EVERYTHING,

but that's what winners do, because winners want good information. Winners learn from winners, and if you see somebody who's been successful, you don't look at his age or place of origin, you ask him what he's doing so you can follow suit. Fighters get stuck, but winners don't.

There's a fascinating story about a prominent young chassid in Crown Heights named Rabbi Levi Feldman, an eighth-grade teacher in Oholei Torah. During the summer, he gives courses for teachers, and just before the summer break, our school had an administrative staff meeting. At this meeting, one of the faculty members mentioned that he was planning to go to this course. This teacher was actually younger than Rabbi Feldman, while another much older staff member commented that he had been Rabbi Feldman's teacher in cheder. When I heard this, I was certain that this elder teacher would then say, "I'm sure you're not going to ask me to attend his class since I was his teacher." Instead, he said, "If the class is good, please let me know because I will sign up next summer."

Companies do not hire solely based on age. On numerous issues, particularly of a financial

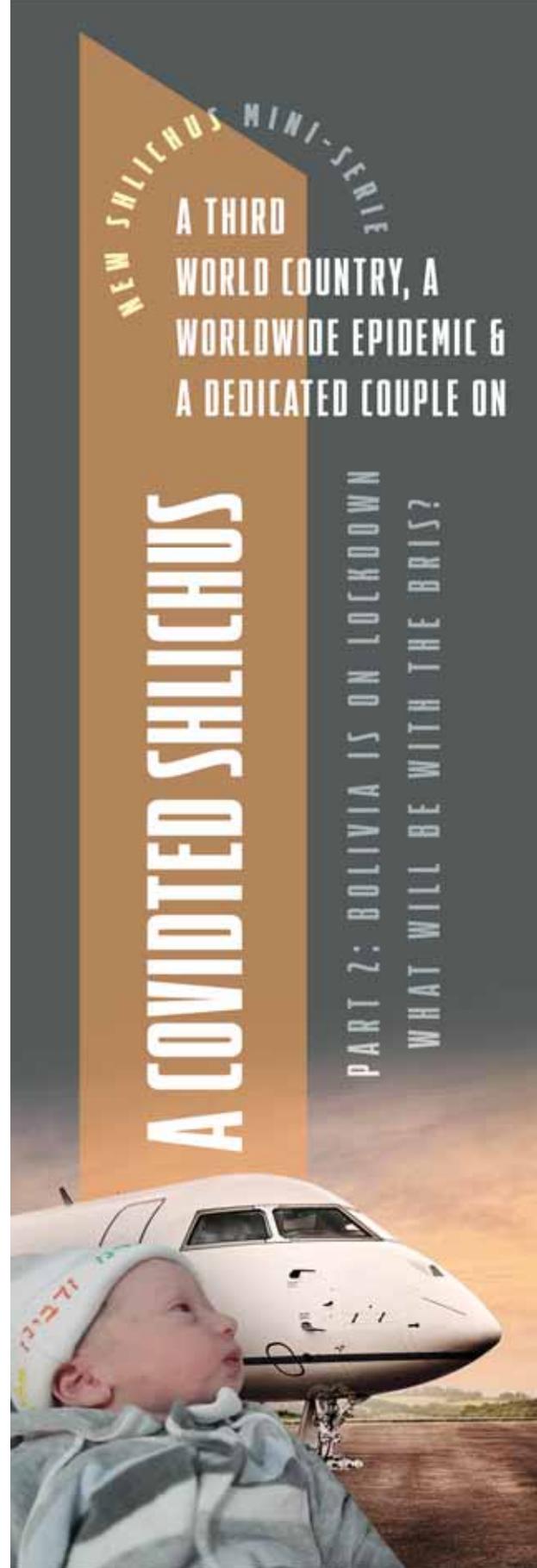
nature, I have written to the Rebbe in Igros Kodesh and received answers stating (in effect), "You're not the first person to do this. Find other yeshivos that were successful in this matter and ask them how they did it." **There's no need to re-invent the wheel!** There were certain matters where I had a serious problem, and although it wasn't easy for me, I called Rabbi Halberstam, head of the Chabad mesivta in Chicago, and sought his advice. It's a humbling process, but so what? We don't know everything, and there's no need to go through the same mistakes as everyone else. Winners want to learn from winners – no matter whom.

### THE JUDGE IS MY FATHER

Point #5: *To be successful in the avoda of greeting Moshiach Tzidkeinu, you really have to believe that the war has already been won.* We just have to bring that out in the world. There's a story of two people before Rosh Hashana: a Chassid and a Litvisher. The Litvisher is crying, doing teshuva, and saying Selichos in preparation for the Day of Judgment, while the Chassid is walking and smiling happily. The Litvisher asks the Chassid, "I don't understand. Don't you people believe in the Day of Judgment? How can you walk around with a smile?" The Chassid replied: "Of course, we believe in the Day of Judgment, and it's very scary. But I know something that you don't know: I know that the judge is my father..." Yes, we're going to have to go through the process of the court case, but the war is already won.

When the Rebbe tells us repeatedly, "When you go out to war against your enemies," this isn't just some nice dvar Torah, it's the real thing. If we believe in our minds that the war has been won, then we can be winners and eventually make our communities into winners.

In summation, the avoda of preparing the world to greet Moshiach Tzidkeinu is not just getting people to fight the wars of Moshiach, but to emerge victorious. Be in it to win it! ■



## RABBI ITZIK KUPCHIK, SHLIACH OF BOLIVIA ◦

We really wanted to fly to Israel for this seventh birth. To give birth overseas with the medical conditions they have here is not a simple matter! No "Shifra and Puah", no help from the family, no bread from the Angel bakery or cottage cheese from Tnuva... With 7 little ones at home... Not a simple matter.

But the doctor said we could get on a flight no later than before Purim. But to leave the whole community and hundreds more tourists and backpackers without a Chabad House for Purim and Pesach? "Bring in replacements!" you say? After Purim comes Pesach with all the preparations of making a Seder for 1000 people and this is the way it usually is in La Paz... It's impossible to leave all this to someone who is not experienced... So with a great deal of Mesiras Nefesh, Chaya decides to stay and have the baby in La Paz. To have the baby here, on Shlichus.

After Purim, the Coronavirus outbreak started and everything was surreal. Impossible to understand. Unclear. Only two confirmed cases and the authorities here decided to close the borders. We, of course, are staying. We understood that 1000 people for the Seder are not going to turn up. But even if there are 100, who is going to do a Seder for them? And who is going to take charge of the Pesach needs of the community and any backpackers who stay behind?

Complete madness. Hundreds of tourists are trying to get out of the country. There is no place on the flights. Flights are being canceled. We become a travel agency. We advise, check and help everyone to find



# THE NEXT WAR

"China has declared a cold war against America...The next battles that we're going to have...aren't going to be about bombs and bullets and planes and ships and tanks. It's about artificial intelligence. It's about machine learning. It's about autonomous vehicles. It's about semiconductors, and the first battle is on 5G. They control 5G...This is about the future of America."

By Prof. Shimon Silman,  
RYAL Institute

## BY PROF. SHIMON SILMAN ◦

### "CHINA HAS DECLARED A COLD WAR

against America... The next battles that we're going to have...aren't going to be about bombs and bullets and planes and ships and tanks. It's about artificial intelligence. It's about machine learning. It's about autonomous vehicles. It's about semiconductors, and the first battle is on 5G. They control 5G... This is about the future of America."

(Daniel Goldin, former director of NASA on 5/18/20)

Sounds scary, right? Wrong! If you want to know what scary is, "Ask your father and he will tell you..." (Devorim 32:7) Not so long ago, before the Swords into Plowshares declaration of 1992, "the next war" would have meant a global nuclear war with Russia—to which we came very close a few times, sometimes by accident and sometimes by open threat.

If your father is too young to remember, try the second half of the verse, "...your elders and they will say it to you." If they are old enough they will remember actually practicing for a nuclear attack—the periodic air raid sirens, school children taught to hide under their desks in case of an attack (not that it would have helped any), and the "fallout shelters" in every neighborhood stocked with food, water etc. where everyone would run to hide in case of a nuclear attack, where the walls were lined with lead to protect them from the nuclear radiation ("fallout").

As the song from the 1970s goes:

"And you, of tender years

Can't know the fears

That your parents grew by"

America had just come out of World War II where they lost hundreds of thousands of

soldiers fighting the evil Nazi Empire that was aspiring to world domination, and now there was another evil empire—this time with nuclear weapons—the communist Soviet Union, that was aspiring to world domination, threatening the U.S. in particular. No, this was not paranoia—it was real. I was there.

### SIP – PHASE II

I was there...so you can't scare me with "autonomous vehicles" and certainly not with 5G. Actually, I'm very happy that these are the next battles. Let me explain.

In the prophecy of Isaiah regarding Swords into Plowshares, he says:

*And they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks;*

*nation shall not raise a sword against nation nor shall they learn any more war.*

At first glance, something may seem out of place. It seems that first it should say:

*nation shall not raise a sword against nation nor shall they learn any more war.*

Then, since there is no more war, they don't need their weapons any more, so then comes:

*They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks.*

But it's in the opposite order. My understanding is that the prophet is saying that this will happen in stages. First (SIP – Phase I), they shall beat their swords into plowshares—even before all wars have ceased—because there is a new moral awareness that there should be no more war, that war should no longer be used as a "tool of diplomacy," that they should settle their differences peacefully and work together for their mutual benefit. This is what happened

in 1992. The nations feel much less threatened by each other, so they don't need vast military resources and decide to transform them to peaceful uses—swords into plowshares.

But there still may be wars in the world, especially wars involving nations that have not yet signed on to this new program. They are not yet so morally advanced. Some may even be terrorist states (like Iran) or non-state terrorist organizations. Meanwhile, the more advanced ones, who may develop rivalries with other nations, realize that that they can't express their rivalry militarily anymore—they can't use "bombs and bullets and planes and ships and tanks"—and look for alternate methods of warfare: cyberwarfare, trade wars, information wars etc. They *learn* other methods of warfare...

Then comes a second phase (SIP – Phase II) where all wars cease—"nation shall not raise a sword against nation"—but they still *learn* war and look for new ways to express their rivalry. (If I may push the metaphor, I think "learning war" alludes (also) to warfare that involves learning and intellectual activity such as devising computer software to hack into your rival's computer systems.) I call them rivals and not enemies because they may still be competing for power and domination, but they are no longer fighting with each other.

Finally (SIP – Phase III), in the last phase, there is no more rivalry so they cease all cyberwarfare, trade wars etc.—"nor shall they learn any more war." This happens when Melech HaMoshiach is completely revealed and gives instruction to the nations on how to act, and they come to him to resolve all their issues. As Isaiah says in that prophecy,

*And many nations shall go [to confer with each other]*

*and they shall say one to another,*

*"Let's go up to the mountain of G-d*

*to the house of the G-d of Yaakov*

// "FIGHT COVID, NOT EACH OTHER" WAS ACTUALLY THE CONTENT OF A PLEA MADE BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS ON MARCH 23 TO THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD.

*and [Melech HaMoshiach] will teach us of G-d's ways*

*and we will follow His paths...*

*And he will judge between the nations*

*and admonish many peoples.*

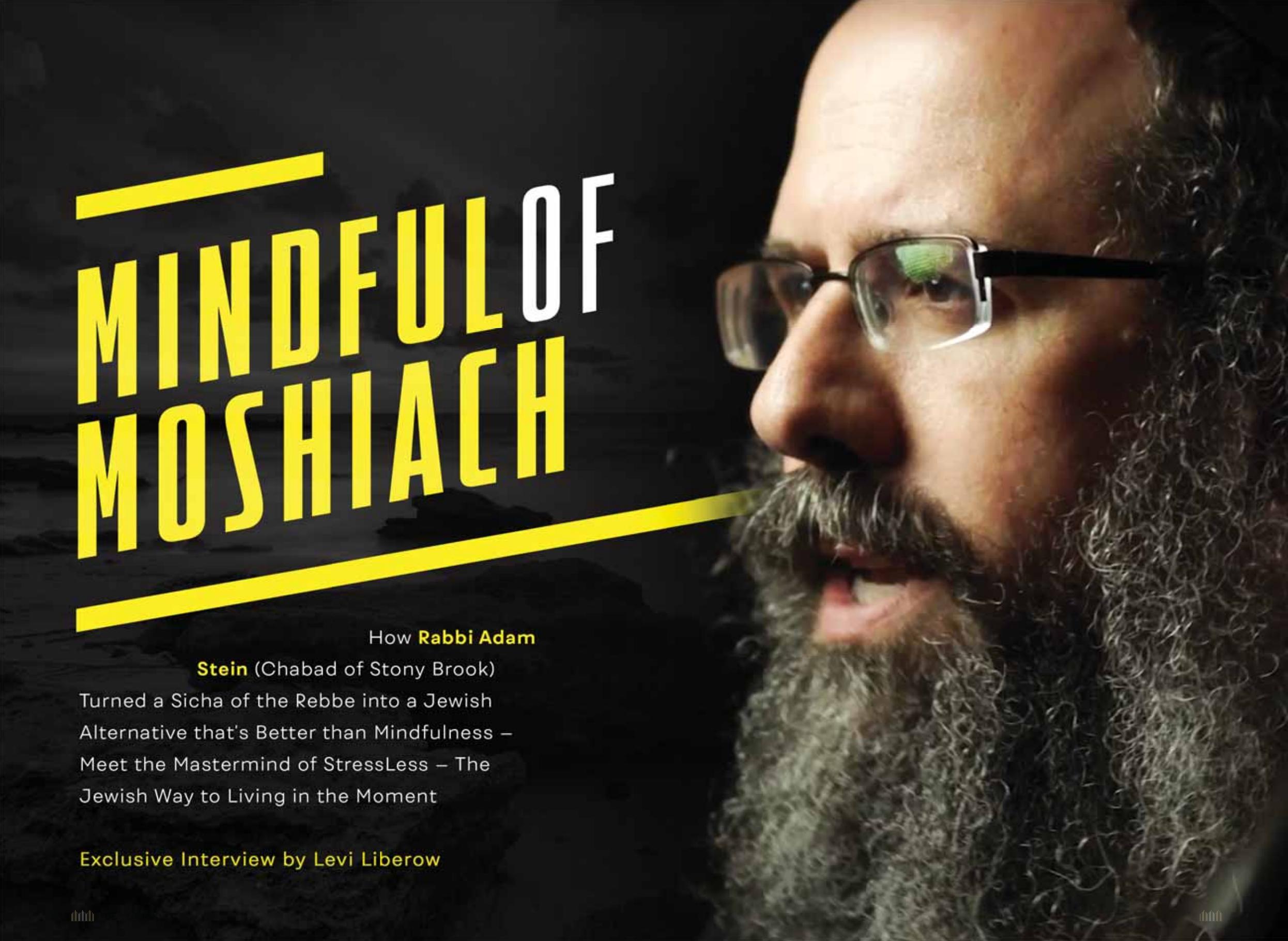
Rambam describes this era in the very last Halacha of his Mishneh Torah:

"At that time there will be no famine or war, no jealousy or rivalry since there will be abundant good and all the delicacies will be as plentiful as the dust of the earth. The only occupation of the entire world will be to know G-d..."

### FIGHT COVID, NOT EACH OTHER

This brings me to talk about our Moshiach & Science conference last month on 13 Iyar, the yahrtzeit of Rabbi Yisroel Aryeh Leib Schneerson ז"ל, the Rebbe MHM's youngest brother. The Rebbe MHM's הסכמה וברכה (in Adar, 5753) to make these conferences has kept them—and ourselves—going for almost three decades strong.

This year, however, it looked like we would not be able to make a conference because the whole world was shut down. For the past ten years or so, we have been making them in



# MINDFUL OF MOSHIACH

How **Rabbi Adam**

**Stein** (Chabad of Stony Brook)

Turned a Sicha of the Rebbe into a Jewish  
Alternative that's Better than Mindfulness –  
Meet the Mastermind of StressLess – The  
Jewish Way to Living in the Moment

Exclusive Interview by Levi Liberow

## LEVI LIBEROW ◦

### I WAS NOT EVEN A TODDLER

when the Rebbe sent us Chassidim into a shock wave of activity promoting the imminent arrival of Moshiach back in 5751, so I cannot speak of how the Rebbe's words were received *then*, but to be honest, I don't think it's so relevant.

What's more relevant is how they will be received *now*, and I allow myself the liberty to experience "*nun-aleph nun-beis*" from a non-historical perspective, from learning the sichos and trying to understand what I need to do to tune myself – and the world around me – into the Rebbe's reality.

Week after week, in the weekday sichos and Shabbos farbrengens, the Rebbe gives us a glimpse into this reality and makes it clear that it's not about what's *going to happen* – rather it's about what's happening *now*.

We've been in this situation for almost three decades, and – if I may say so – I feel that in many ways we are still looking at the Rebbe's *Besuras HaGeula* and promoting it as a promise for a future, when it's really an unfolding of a *present* reality.

I've been looking out for someone out there who is prepared to "challenge the system," and that's why I sat down (virtually) with **Rabbi Adam Stein**, Shliach of the Rebbe at the campus of Stony Brook University, for a candid discussion on his revolutionary program "*Living in the Moment*."



I'm holding in my hand a 68-page letter-size pamphlet, which reads as follows on its title-page: "**Living in the Moment – Six steps to being a *p'mimi*, living *b'tzem*, and revealing the *Yechida*.**"

The title page continues to promise "**Live a life devoid of stress, worry and anxiety,**" and in small Hebrew letters right under it "translates" that phrase to contemporary Chassidic lingo: "*The service of the war of refining the world in a manner of rest and calmness.*"

I'll admit that I came across this *kuntres* a while back, but dismissed it as another one of many booklets that come out every week and didn't even bother to open it up. However, about two years ago when Chabad.org launched an all-new course called "**Stress-Less: The Jewish Way to Living in the Moment**" and I heard that it's a useful tool to "Living with Moshiach," I started looking into it and now I finally took the time to hear about the program, its origins and its intended goals from the mastermind himself.

### A CHOSEN NESHAMA

**Let's begin with some back-story: Who is Rabbi Adam Stein? Where do you come from, what brought you to the Rebbe, and how did you find yourself behind this program?**

"I'm a product of Chabad on Campus. I was a student at the University of Massachusetts at Amhurst. The Shliach there, **Rabbi Chaim Adelman**, would wander around campus and invite people for Shabbos. He kept inviting me many times over the course of two years, but I never went. After spending a semester in Israel as a student at the University of Tel Aviv, I came back, accepted the Shabbos invitation and it just clicked.

"I felt something special about Shabbos and about the farbrengens, and I began going every week. Eventually, I got myself tefillin, went to yeshiva in Israel and became frum."



R' STEIN WITH JEWISH STUDENTS ON CAMPUS

When I ask Rabbi Stein what year this was, he says "this was in 1991," adding with a smile: "I'm a *nun-aleph nun-beis* Yid..."

"I hopped around from one yeshiva to another, finally finding my place at Yeshiva Ohr Sameach in Yerushalayim. To make up for the Chassidus, I joined a ba'al teshuva yeshiva in Har Nof run by Rabbi Baruch Kaplan for a while, and later continued studying Chassidus at Yeshivas Toras Emes with Rabbi Zalman Notik, may Hashem send him a *refuah shleima*."

"Coming from a Chabad House on Campus, I always wanted to learn in a Chabad yeshiva. And although I ended up learning in Ohr Sameach, I never lost that desire. The *nigleh* in Ohr Sameach was great, but I really wanted Chassidus and a Chassidishe atmosphere.

"I remember once, at a farbrengen, I really took to heart that fact that the Rebbe Rashab picked all the *neshamos* who would go to Tomchei Tmimim and I said to myself, 'I want to be such a *neshama!*'

"And so, I vowed that ultimately I would transfer to a regular Tomchei Tmimim. And after 3 years, I switched to Tomchei Tmimim in Kfar Chabad and entered shiur gimmel, learning *nigleh* with Reb Meir Gruzman and Chassidus with Reb Zalman Gopin."

"After some time, I moved on to learn in 770. After getting married and spending some time in Kollel, my wife and I were brought out by **Rabbi Chaim Grossbaum** to service the Jewish student population at Stony Brook University where we are until now. "

**When did you begin your involvement in *nun-aleph nun-beis* sichos and with the whole Moshiach issue?**

"Coming from Ohr Sameach, I saw Lubavitch and wanted to get closer to Chabad and be a Chabadnik because I loved Chabad and I loved Chassidus, but seeing the whole controversy going on in Lubavitch about Moshiach and the Rebbe and Yechi in 1992-1993 put me off somewhat. To me — looking from afar — something about it just didn't sit well with me.

# MOMENTS With The Rebbe

## A BIGGER DEAL THAN THE SPUTNIK MISSION

(RIGHT) RABBI NISSAN MINDEL STANDING ON THE RIGHT, AT THE CEREMONY OF THE FRIERDIKER REBBE RECEIVING AMERICAN CITIZENSHIP IN 5709 (1949).



(BELOW) THE REBBE COMING OUT TO THE LAG B'OMER PARADE IN 5750 (1990), RABBI MINDEL IS AWAITING THE REBBE ON THE RIGHT-HAND SIDE.



**1.** Rabbi Dr. Nissan Mindel, a true Chassid fully devoted heart and soul to the Frierdiker Rebbe and to the Rebbe *Melech HaMoshiach*, was an individual who was extremely talented and pioneered the translating of many fundamental titles of Chabad Chassidus literature into the English language and by extension in to many other languages once they were available in English. His translated and original works spanned from the inner meaning of the Yomim Tovim and Jewish tales, through Chabad history and the Jewish-Chassidic outlook on life.



RABBI MINDEL STANDS BEHIND THE REBBE DURING THE SPECIAL DISTRIBUTION OF THE BILINGUAL TANYA WHICH WAS TRANSLATED MOSTLY BY HIM. THE REBBE THEN TOLD HIM: "THE WORLD IS AMAZED OF THE SUCCESS OF THE RUSSIAN SPUTNIK MISSION, BUT THE TRUTH IS THAT THE PRINTING OF THE TANYA IN ENGLISH — A BOOK THAT UNTIL NOW WAS 'LOCKED' TO THIS WESTERN WORLD — IS THE TRUE REASON FOR EXCITEMENT; THIS IS A MASSIVE STEP IN THE DIRECTION OF DISSEMINATING THE WELLSPRINGS OF CHASSIDUS OUTWARD."

**2.** Rabbi Mindel wrote the following revealing anecdote about working for the Rebbe: "It was not humanly possible to keep up with the flow of mail arriving at the Rebbe's door. So it was even in the earlier years. Being so, I suggested to the Rebbe that all letters of routine nature (such as birthday wishes or weddings and bar Mitzvah blessings, etc.,) should be signed with a rubber stamp carrying the Rebbe's signature, something that would definitely save the Rebbe much precious time..."

"The Rebbe completely negated this idea, saying: 'How can I send my heartfelt wishes to a person in such a superficial way, and how would that person feel...?' And so, the idea came off the table as quickly as it came on."



(LEFT) AS A MEMBER OF THE REBBE'S SECRETARIAT, RABBI MINDEL WOULD HAVE THE ZECHUS TO RECEIVE THE DALET MINIM FROM THE REBBE ON EREV SUKKOS.





**Rabbi  
Zvi  
Homnick**

## THERE IS NO LOVE WITHOUT SAYING NO TO SELF

**MISNAGED:** Chassidim claim that everybody has to learn Chassidus in order to acquire bittul. I have learned Mussar my whole life, and in my opinion it brought me to a greater realization of what a nothing and nobody I am than I would have gotten through learning Chassidus.

Chassid: You remind me of a saying I once heard from a wise older Chassid.

Misnaged: Really? What did he say?

Chassid: The only thing worse than a “somebody” with opinions is a “nobody” with opinions!



**ONE** of the points discussed in the previous installment (it pays to reread before continuing) regarding the operations and functions of the intellect is that although intellect itself is inherently objective, since it is only a tool and has no independent say regarding the data inputted or the conclusions reached, it can never be truly objective since it is fully controlled by the will of the “self.” The degree to which it is free to explore the objective truth of reality depends on which starting perspective the “self” chooses to adopt. This is one of the reasons that the Alter Rebbe begins

the Tanya with introducing us to the reality that we have two selves, and they have extreme opposing perspectives and agendas. In fact, the two are at war to achieve total conquest over the entire “city.”

The animal soul is totally and absolutely self-centered, which is why its most primal instinct is that of self-preservation. The G-dly soul is totally and absolutely G-d-centered, which is why its most primal instinct is to return to its source, thereby obliterating its own sense of self (super-bittul). As a result, the overarching will of the animal soul is to be a *yesh gamur* (the best and biggest self it can be), and the overarching will of the G-dly soul is to be *battul b'metzius* (nullified out of existence). However, both of those souls are forced to modify their wills in the face of the fact that they only exist in the context of a larger reality over which they have no control.

This is where it becomes necessary for the will to turn to the intellect to determine “what am I?” and “who am I?” within that larger context. In order to address those questions rationally, the intellect needs to have the natural ability of “the mind rules over the heart,” otherwise, the emotions will operate entirely on instinct and crash headfirst into some very painful walls put up by the outside reality.

Reality dictates that you can't just do whatever you want. Even the smallest child with the coarsest animal soul, growing up in the most self-absorbed culture, learns this very quickly (starting from about age two). In order to get what you really want for yourself from the people and the world around you, it is necessary to bend your will in many areas and restrain your natural emotions. It is the job of the mind to decide what is worth pursuing and how much to invest in it, and what is worth forgoing and how hard to fight your own baser drives and self-destructive tendencies.

The same holds true for the G-dly soul. Hashem's Will forces it to exist against its own will and operate within the created reality, and more so to inhabit the “city” of a body and animal soul, and even “conquer” its seven emotional faculties, so the first thing that it needs to do is take control of the human intellect and its ability to rule over the heart.

Before it descended into this world, when it was up in Gan Eden, it used its intellect to grasp ever higher levels of the greatness of G-d and its own nothingness, and direct its emotions to ever higher levels of love and fear of Hashem, even as it “ruled the heart” restraining those emotions from expressing its true will for self-obliteration. Now, it has to nullify its own will to lose itself within the “Oneness of G-d” in order to carry out its mission of revealing the “Oneness of G-d” within the body and animal soul, and ultimately the entire world. It needs to address the questions of “what am I?” and “who am I?” in the context of its mission and the true reality as expressed in Torah and especially Pnimiyus HaTorah as explained in Chassidus.

The answers to those questions will impact the emotions, mainly the emotion of love. As Chassidus explains, although love is one of seven emotional faculties (or three, or five, depending on the context), it is the one that drives all the rest. That is because emotions are where “will” meets “reality.” Your percep-

tion and sense of yourself in relation to others and reality in general can only find expression through building internal bridges to the outside world by way of the feelings of attraction and connection to the other. You also have to be able to feel avoidance in order to protect self, or anger towards those things that get in the way of what and who you care about, but that is only an outgrowth of the need to connect.

However, in order to build a true love connection with another that is a two-way street, not a means to exploit the other for selfish purposes, the mind has to rule over the heart and infuse the emotions with some of its natural bittul so that it's not just about me and what I want. In fact, secular researchers have discovered that the longest lasting marriages and the ones that report the highest level of relationship satisfaction are the ones where the people rate sacrifice as an important ingredient in a relationship. I can't truly say yes to loving you unless I can say no to my self.

If that is the case with human relationships, which the animal soul is naturally drawn to, all the more so if it is to channel the super-love of the G-dly soul. Since that super-love is an outgrowth of the totally selfless super-bittul of the neshama, it is not just about saying no to a specific selfish behavior or habit that interferes with the relationship, it's about saying no to the very idea of wanting anything for myself. Or in the language of the Zohar, *iskafia sitra achara*, subduing the “other side.”

“Iskafia” as presented in Tanya is not really about self-denial, but rather about self-transformation, or “iskafia” that leads to “is'hapcha.” This is when it comes from a higher understanding of “what am I?” and “who am I?” in relation to the G-dly reality, based on an understanding and appreciation of the greatness of G-d and nothingness of self, and how all of

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# PARASHA Of The Future

RABBI NISSIM LAGZIEL

## CONQUERING THE LAND OF THE MIND IN THE ERA OF GEULA

### BEGIN WITH A GRIN

*A lady sits down on a train. The man sitting next to her turns to her and says, “Lady, that is the ugliest baby I have ever seen. That baby looks in a mirror, it’s going to shatter. You oughta put a bag on that baby’s head. That baby is just ugly.”*

*The woman, horrified, stands up and shouts for the conductor. “Conductor, this man has insulted me.”*

*“I’m so sorry, ma’am,” the conductor replies. “What he did is totally unacceptable on this train. I will deal with him later, but for now, please come with me. We’ll give you a nice seat in the first-class carriage — and a banana for your monkey.”*

### NEVER MIND A SHARE IN THE LAND

After forty years of wandering in the Sinai desert, the Jewish people arrive at the border of the land. In the distance, they can already see large parts of the long yearned-for land. Here, before they enter, Hashem commands Moshe to arrange the division of the land and to establish how the tribes will divide the territory they conquer from the seven nations.

“To these shall you divide the land as an inheritance according to the number of the

names,” is how the Torah starts the command about dividing the land. At first glance, the meaning of “to these” is that every Jew is deserving and will receive a portion in the land. However, a quick peek at the Sifri on the verse tells us the exact opposite, that by saying “to these” it indicates a number of exclusions (and not those) “... excluding kohanim ... excluding leviyim ... excluding converts and slaves ... excluding women,” and more. Indeed, in parshas Korach we learned that the tribe of Levi will not get a portion in the land or the spoils of war, though, like many things, this will (possibly) change in the time of the Geula.

The Smag (Sefer Mitzvos HaGadol, lavin 277) writes that in the future, the tribe of Levi will receive a portion in the promised land. There are commentaries (Rashbam Bava Basra 122a) who want to prove this from the prophecy of Yechezkel. Yechezkel describes (chapter 48) the sight of Yerushalayim in the era of the Geula. He describes its borders, walls, dimensions, and even its gates. He counts and enumerates the gates of Yerushalayim (thirteen in number to correspond to twelve tribes and one to correspond to the Nasi, i.e. Moshiach): the gate of Reuven is one; the gate of Shimon is one; the gate of Levi is one; the gate of Yosef is one, etc.

The (uncommon) mention of Levi as one of the tribes as well as a mention of the tribe of Yosef as one unit (i.e. not divided into Menashe and Efraim) teaches us, according to Rashbam, that in the future, in the era of the Geula, the tribe of Levi will receive a portion in Eretz Yisrael (like the other tribes) while the tribe of Yosef will become one unit and receive (just) one portion.

The question is, how can an explicit prohibition in the Torah be overturned? It is a prohibition listed as one of the 613 mitzvos of the Torah, the very Torah that will never be changed, not even in the era of the Geula!

Aside from this, if the tribe of Levi really deserves a portion in the land, why don’t they get one now? And if they don’t deserve one, what will change in the Geula?

The Rebbe answers these questions while explaining the exact word choices of the Rambam on the subject in ingenious simplicity. The Rambam writes (Shemitta and Yovel 13:10) that “the tribe of Levi are warned against getting a portion in the land of Canaan.” The wording “land of Canaan” sounds a bit odd. Why not call it Eretz Yisrael?

From this, the Rebbe learns, that the Rambam holds that the prohibition to inherit in the land of Eretz Yisrael refers only to the land of Canaan and not to the entirety of Eretz Yisrael. The phrase “land of Canaan” refers to the land of the seven nations: the Canaani, Chitti, Emori, Prizi, Chivi, Yevusi and Girgashi, while the term “Eretz Yisrael” refers to the promised land, the entire Eretz Yisrael as promised to Avrohom at the “Covenant of the Pieces,” the land of the ten nations which also includes: Keini, Kenizi and Kadmoni.

That means that according to the Rambam the prohibition of inheriting by the tribe of Levi is only in the land of the seven nations. In the new lands we will get in the Geula, in the land of the three nations, the tribe of Levi can get a portion and this does not contradict

the command of the Torah because the Torah never forbade it!

It turns out then, that the tribe of Levi will not receive its portion in Savyon or Hertzliya but somewhere in Jordan ...

### MINDING THE NEW LAND

What is the reason for the difference? Why in the land of Canaan, no; and in the lands of Keini, Kenizi and Kadmoni, yes? The tribe of Levi was set aside to serve Hashem. Therefore, they were separated from the ways of the world (Rambam ibid, 12), which is why they do not inherit in the land. Is conquering the land of Canaan more “the ways of the world” than conquering the land of the three nations? Why?

Chassidus explains that the seven lands which we received at the initial conquest of the land correspond to the seven middos, the emotional faculties, while the three lands we will receive in the future correspond to the three intellectual faculties, *chochma, bina, daas*.

According to this, it turns out that the difference in the division of the land is not a technical difference but an essential difference which teaches us about the service and role of the Jewish people here in the world. Today, in galus, our main role is to serve Hashem through middos. In Yemos HaMoshiach however, we will get a “promotion,” and we will serve Hashem also through the three faculties of the intellect. The difference between avodas ha’middos and avodas ha’mochin is vast. While the emotions relate to others, the intellect relates to the person himself. In the work of refining the middos, a person relates to the world around him while in the work of the mochin, a person secludes himself in order to conceive and grasp intellectual ideas. This essential difference is also expressed in the way the middos and mochin are “conquered.”

The “conquering” of the middos is accomplished through war, i.e. birur and getting involved, the person descending to interact with

The

# CHASSIDISHE VAIBE

THE BEIS MOSHIACH MITSVAH N'ISREI U'VNOS CHABAD



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יחי אדוננו מורנו ורבינו מלך המשיח לעולם ועד



# WHEN IT'S HARD TO TALK THE TALK...

Chabad speech therapist Yael Shalom opens a window to the world of many people who regularly deal with embarrassing situations caused by impediments in their verbal communication skills, revealing how these sufferers feel, and clarifying the difference between developmental stuttering and a permanent stammer.



BLUMA LANDA ◦

## IF MOSHE RABBEINU WAS

**concerned about approaching Pharaoh due to his slowness of speech, what would a three-year old child suffering from a stammer say? How can we help him maintain his self-confidence? Will this condition eventually disappear? One can only hope.**

There's a phenomenon of developmental stuttering, which starts suddenly among children between the ages of two and five. Maybe this is the brain doing a growth spurt, perhaps some emotional trauma or difficulty. In any case, this phenomenon arouses much fear among parents, when they reveal one fine day that to their horror, their child is actually stammering. He gets stuck in the middle of a word, repeating syllables, making considerable effort, yet unable to say what he wants to say. The stutter often creates a very unpleasant situation, including concern and pity for the child, who really can't understand what's happening to him. Advice comes from virtually every direction, and we turned to a professional in this field to get some reliable information.

**Yael Shalom** is a speech therapist working in this field for over thirteen years. She began her journey in Chabad during her professional studies at the University of Haifa. During her vacation time, she would come to study Chassidus at Machon Alte in Tzfas, and later for a year and a half at the Ohr Chaya women's college. Today, she works at Ohr L'No'ar Chabad in Kiryat Malachi (an affiliate of the Chabad vocational school in the city), a learning institution for students undergoing rehabilitation after psychiatric treatment and hospitalization. Yael attends to these youngsters and teaches them the foundations of interpersonal communication, normal

speech, establishing social contacts, and more. In addition, she offers therapy to children and adults suffering from a variety of speech maladies at her private clinic in Rechovot.

In this interview, Yael exposes us to the tools for dealing with stuttering in children and additional speech disorders. Nevertheless, she also considers it important to note first that this article is not a substitute for professional advice or treatment, if required.

**Yael, give us a little background. What examples have you encountered?**

"Besides those cases of stuttering that we'll soon speak about, we also encounter children with various other disorders in the development of their speech: limited vocabulary, difficulty with sentence structure, grammatical gender, incorrect pronunciation, repeatedly mixing up or omitting letters, etc.

"There is also a fair share of cases of problems in verbal expression, e.g., a child's difficulty in organizing his thoughts, describing what he thinks and feels, and difficulty in understanding and deciphering simple instructions."

**You surely have come across some children whose speech was totally normal, even better than usual for their age group, until they began stammering.**

"Of course. However, we must make a distinction between the phenomenon known as 'developmental stuttering', which is considered a normative and passing stage, and a permanent stammer, something that the child can *ch"v* endure for the rest of his life. For each general rule, there are thousands of exceptional cases. Therefore, parents must keep their fingers on the pulse and not ignore the warning signs. If the stuttering continues for more than three months, then the parents should defi-



**Raizel  
Liberow**

## TIPS FOR CALMER PARENTING

**YOU** know the saying that goes ‘I was a professional at parenting until I became a mother’? Nothing tests our patience and our limits like mothering does!

In Chassidus, the intellectual faculties are referred to as ‘parents’ while the emotional attributes are called the ‘offspring’. While our children naturally have big strong feelings, our job as parents is to remain the rational, intellectual ones; calming, guiding, and educating our progeny.

But how to remain calm when all we want to do is shout? Here are some things that I’m trying to work on as we travel down this scenic route together:

### EYE TO EYE:

One of my kids has a habit of saying “Mommy, Mommy, Mommy...” a thousand times when he needs something, which could drive any person a little bit nuts. One thing I’ve noticed is that when I stop what I’m doing and look at him in the eyes when I respond, he feels listened to and then runs off to play.

Children are bubbling with things to share and stories to tell. When we take the time to just look into their eyes, see the emotions they are sharing and just listen; it can prevent small incidents from turning into gigantic tantrums and can give us a window into their lives and souls.

### A CHANGE OF SCENERY:

Often, I feel like I can be a more present mother when we go somewhere out of the house. Something about leaving the mess and the laundry behind and just venturing out into nature; can help me to simply enjoy the kids and have a great time together.

There is something about the simplicity of nature that brings out the purity within us and our children. It reminds me of the story of the simple shepherd whom the Baal Shem Tov and his students observed, spinning cartwheels and throwing up coins as gifts to Hashem as he tended to his flock on the rolling, grassy hills. Stepping out of the ordinary confines of our daily grind and spending time soaking in Hashem’s wonders, can do amazing things for our mood and sanity.

### I AM WHO I AM:

The weekdays are for accomplishing, creating, building and transforming. Shabbos is for just being – enjoying and reveling in that which we have created. No altering, no fixing, just appreciating that which we have. As parents, our job is to educate: to guide, assist, notice that which needs changing and work on improving it. Yet sometimes, there is a time to just be. Ignore everything that needs changing and just enjoy our children exactly as they are. To just



take a deep breath and embrace our children, play with them, have a great time with them – exactly as they are. Share silly jokes, draw pictures together, bake some cookies, read a book – just enjoy their company.

### THE TRIANGLE:

Sleeping well, eating well and staying active are all easier said than done but can have a really big impact on our mood and the way we function. We all love being our best selves and that is so much easier when we are well fed and well slept.

Taking the time to prepare healthy meals for yourself – not just the kid’s cereal and leftover pasta – is time worth spending. Treat yourself to some really fresh seasonal fruits and vegetables and take a few minutes to prepare them so they are ready to go when you are in a hurry. Some sourdough bread in the freezer, different cheeses, fresh herbs, healthy snacks – all to tempt you to take those few minutes to prepare yourself something nourishing so that you can then go and nourish your family.

### GOAL ORIENTED:

Sometimes in the daily grind, it’s easy to get stuck in a rut and lose sight of what the point of all of this is. It’s helpful to recharge ourselves with an inspirational shiur, a chavrusa with a good friend or learning something together with our spouse.

Realizing that the specific Shlichus of our times is to be *mekabel pnei Moshiach*, we can try to make that a focus as we go about our day caring for our children.

“Wow, Mendel! You shared the cars with your sister! That’s living Moshiach when all the kinderlach will want to share!

“You really wanted cereal but you made sure to finish Brachos first! Your Yetzer Tov is super strong getting ready for when there will be no Yetzer Hara at all!

“I saw that! You were going to say something not nice but then you changed your mind! Like when Moshiach comes, all the not good things will be turned into good things!”

May it happen now! ■

# THE GAMBLER

# THE

# SERIAL BY ETEL B.

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*Review: In the past – Raizele is offered a shidduch with Jeffery Gold. Aryeh is living alone in Tel Aviv. In the present – Hadas makes a cheshbon nefesh. Yonasan goes out on a short camping trip, when something goes wrong...*



**LATE Adar 5778, Tzfas.** “Stay here,” Limor tried to convince Hadas. However, Hadas was determined to return to the rented apartment in the Canaan neighborhood. Their belongings are there, and the location is more comfortable. In addition, Yonasan left...in order that she could return home, and it was important to her that he should feel that she appreciates his sacrifice.

The return was not easy. In the afternoon, she was busy with the children, while in the evening, she had a difficult time dealing with the deafening silence. She sat down

to prepare worksheets for her students and make summations for the class in Chassidus she would give over to the women after a break of two weeks. Every small rustling sound made her heart jump.

When she entered the bedroom, she felt herself gripped by an inexplicable sense of terror. She went into the kitchen and drank a few drops of a soothing homeopathic remedy. Suddenly, she recalled the homework she had received from a counselor who contacted Hadas at her mashpia’s suggestion.

“Try and think why you agreed to marry Yonasan. What were the qualities you found in him?” Her thoughts brought her back to a few years earlier.

She recalled how Yonasan energetically quoted concepts from *Dvar Malchus*, and enthusiastically recalled experiences from his shlichus. How she inadvertently spilled juice on him during their meeting, and how he was careful not to embarrass her. How she connected to his sense of humor, feeling that alongside such a happy person, her life would be more beautiful. How in the early days of their marriage, he would accompany her everywhere so she wouldn’t have to walk alone in the dark, and he would make her a healthy salad and tasty sandwiches before she went to her classes...



**LATE Elul 5699. New York.** “Raizy, my dear, Jeffrey is still waiting for an answer regarding a second meeting,” Eva reminded her at the Shabbos evening meal. “We’ll be seeing him tomorrow – in temple...”

“Tell him that I’m not interested,” she replied. “There’s nothing in common between us.”

“Think about it a little more,” Eva insisted, as she again listed the many qualities of Jeffrey Efraim Gold.

Raizele tossed and turned in bed.

For some reason, she recalled the moment that she received the *get*. Leibel looked totally miserable, as he handed her the folded paper. Raizele asked Zalman if her divorce might be halachically unfit, since he didn’t give it with a full heart. Zalman claimed that there are situations where it is permissible to force him to give the divorce, and he relies upon the *beis din*. But regardless, no one flogged Leibel nor did anyone threaten him with imprisonment. Still, despite Zalman’s assurances, Raizele had a restless feeling in her heart.

Oy, Zalman... Why hasn’t she heard anything from her brother? She sent him two letters once she realized that her stay in the United States posed potential risks. She asked him to get money for return tickets, but he hasn’t responded.

She felt a dryness in her throat, and she decided to get something to drink. On her way to the kitchen, she heard voices coming from the living room. She tensed as her name was mentioned. Silently, she crept closer to the doorway.

“Raizy is too similar to my sister,” she heard Eva sigh. “You know, I don’t have many relatives...I lost my brother Nachum’ke in a pogrom...only Devora’le and I were left... While you and I turned to the land of limitless possibilities, Yosef and Devora stubbornly decided, despite our fervent urging, to emigrate to Palestine, a land of unending sorrow, dragging my mother with them... Poor Mother became ill there and passed away. Yosef hid from the authorities, and at the end of the war, they drafted him into the army and he was killed in action. And Devora..., oy, Devora’le, my obstinate sister. I pleaded with her to leave the poverty of Yerushalayim and come to us in New York. However, she refused to abandon the Holy Land...and eventually she left two orphans. A tragedy...” Her voice choked with emotion.

David coughed nervously. “I know that it’s important to you to provide your niece with a



# THE DECREE OF THE CANTONISTS

**The** green jeep stopped next to the shul with a squealing of the brakes. Out of the doors, which opened quickly, jumped two uniformed men who rushed to the shul.

Once they found out that it would be a few minutes before mincha would begin, they relaxed. They had been looking for a minyan in the area as they tried to beat the setting sun. With extraordinary divine providence, they ended up in our neighborhood and came to shul.

After Simcha spoke with them after the davening, he learned that the two soldiers had recently become interested in Torah and mitzvos and were trying hard not to miss a tefilla with a minyan. Simcha spoke to them for a long time and encouraged them to remain strong and to learn Torah every day.

Simcha gave them pictures of the Rebbe and took their phone numbers. After the men left, Simcha sighed. “There are so many young people who are looking to learn Torah and Chassidus despite any difficulties. We just need to help them.”

Since we had free time, Simcha told me about other times, when young Jewish boys served in the army which distanced them from Torah and mitzvos for many years. Here is the full story:

The “decree of the cantonists” which began a little less than two hundred years ago and lasted for painful decades, was the evil plan of Czar Nikolai. He ruled a mighty empire and hated the Jews.

The czar plotted against the Jews in various ways. He often made decrees against them but all the bitter, difficult decrees paled in comparison with the “decree of the cantonists.” Czar Nikolai decided to reeducate the future generation of Jews, the children and youth. He ordered that

every community provide a certain number of children to the Russian army for service that sometimes lasted decades!

Throughout this long period of service, the children had to eat army rations which were treif, hear the foul language of the gentile officers, and of course they could not learn Torah and do mitzvos. The majority of these children who were forcibly inducted had to undergo a forced conversion and live like gentiles. These unfortunate children were called “Nikolai’s soldiers.”

When they heard about the czar’s intentions, Jewish communal workers tried to bribe the czar’s officers and ministers but it was to no avail. The czar’s wicked plan was carried out.

The decree applied to children from the age of twelve and they had to serve until they were forty-three, a total of thirty-one years. A Jewish child drafted from the cheder left the army as a mature adult, empty of Torah and mitzvos and far from his family and community.

According to the law, the requirement to fulfill this law fell upon those who ran Jewish communities. They were the ones who had to draft the boys and send them to the Russian army according to the quota they were assigned. Of course, parents refused to send their children to the army and hid them.

Tragically, money-hungry people collaborated with the government and were willing, for pay, to kidnap children to fill the quotas. The kidnapers were known as *chappers*, for they mercilessly grabbed children and handed them over to the authorities, knowing that they would have to convert.

When the chappers were unable to lay their hands on draft-age boys, they would grab children under the age of twelve and declared that they were older.

The decree began under the leadership of the Mittler Rebbe but by the time it became widespread and began in earnest, he had passed

**“ Even after the decree was annulled, there were large communities of Jewish cantonist soldiers who were staunch in their faith but spent most of their lives in the Russian army and could not read and write. They barely knew the basics of Jewish life.**

away and he was unable to do anything to avert the decree and remove the threat from the Jewish children, aside from going to the gravesite of the Alter Rebbe in Haditch where he prayed.

At the beginning of Kislev 5588 (1827), the week before his passing, he said a maamar Chassidus on the topic of “understanding the taking of soldiers from the Jewish people by non-Jews.” He explained how it was possible that divine providence would place obstacles in the fulfillment of Torah and mitzvos.

Before saying the maamar, he said that he knew about the decree seven years earlier when he saw a great *kitrug* (heavenly accusation) against Jewish youth but he was unable to avert the decree.

In this maamar, the Mittler Rebbe explained that specifically when there are decrees, and nevertheless, a Jew fulfills mitzvos with mesirus nefesh, there is tremendous pleasure up above from those few mitzvos.