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הִי תְהֵא שְׁנַת פְּלֹאֹת אֲרָאֵנוּ

יחי אדוננו מורנו ורבינו מלך המשיח לעולם ועד

CAN I COVER THE SHOFAR DUE TO COVID CONCERNS?

A compilation of timely and practical halachic questions regarding Rosh Hashana and the blowing of the shofa, from Halacha2Go.com and AskTheRav.com

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

ELUL SHOFAR OVER THE PHONE

Q. I give a Tanya Shiur over the phone every morning due to the current situation. Is there an inyan to blow shofar — now in Chodesh Elul — to be *mezake* Yidden that definitely won't hear it otherwise? If yes, must I make a disclaimer that this isn't the ideal way of doing it?

A. In the Sicha of Balak 5744, the Rebbe mentions that even the blowing of the Shofar of Elul should not be listened to through electronic devices etc.

The reason for that – explains the Rebbe – is that the sounding of Shofar in Elul is [amongst other reasons] done in order to encourage the Yidden to do teshuva etc.

Now, it appears that in a case where one wouldn't hear the Shofar otherwise, it would not be an issue to do it over the phone or video call etc.

In such a case, it is indeed proper to make a disclaimer and explain that, (a) this is not the appropriate method for shofar and whenever possible a person should try to hear it in person and (b), that on Rosh Hashana, of course, one must *only* hear the Shofar in person.

COVID & SHOFAR BLOWING

Q. I see many articles about Covid & Shofar blowing, and many are suggesting putting a mask over the end of the Shofar. From what I understand from the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch, anything attached to either end would make the blowing on Rosh Hashana *pasul*. My question is:

1. Is it a kosher Shofar blowing on Rosh Hashana with a mask or cover on the end of the shofar?

2. If I were to blow in one room & the people listening would be in an adjacent room or behind a partition, is it a problem that

they might be hearing an echo rather than the original sound?

Answer:

The Shofar may *not* be covered.

In a normal case, the people behind the partition or in the next room (definitely if the door or windows are open) should be able to distinguish between the sound of the shofar and an echo and it should be okay if they can tell that they are hearing the shofar. If that's not the case or the shul/room where the shofar is produced an echo it's problematic. #10813*

Q. Should I remove the sticker on my new Shofar?

A. It's a good idea to remove the sticker so in case it cracks under the sticker you will notice it. Additionally, there could be a concern that the sticker could affect the sound of the shofar. #5524*

SHOFAR USED BY A NON-JEW

Q. My father received a shofar from a non-Jewish friend of his. The shofar had been used by this man during his prayer ceremonies with his congregation. Is the shofar allowed to be used by us or would it be considered "*treif*" from being used for non-Jewish praying previously?

Also, are we allowed to keep it in the house since it was used in this way?

A. The Shofar should not be used. While strictly speaking it should be destroyed, there's room to be lenient and not destroy it. #10524*

ROSH HASHANA FOODS

Q. Can garlic cloves be used in a salad dressing or dip on Rosh Hashana?

A. Garlic may be eaten on Rosh Hashana. #5673*

Q. Can one eat pickles on Rosh Hashana?

A. We avoid eating on Rosh Hashana foods that were cooked in vinegar or has an overall vinegar taste. This would include most pickles as they are pickled in vinegar; as long as the vinegar is detectable, it should be avoided.

RABBI DOVID RASKIN SOUNDING THE SHOFAR NEAR THE REBBE'S ROOM, ELUL 5752





Levi
Liberow

HEADS OR TAILS, NOTHING ELSE

*Don't walk in front of me, I may not follow
Don't walk behind me, I may not lead.
Just walk beside me and be my friend
Together we will walk in the way of Hashem*

— popular Jewish kindergarten song

ONE of the Rosh HaShana wishes (which is the reason behind eating a head of an animal or a fish at the *seuda*) is that “we should be for a head, not a tail.”

An animal has more than just a head and a tail. Leadership isn't always a walk-in-the-park. What if someone just wants to be himself, not a leader nor a follower?

Why is being a “head” such a blessing?

IN my last column (*Chabad and Mainstream Judaism* — issue #1228), we began discussing a troubling situation in which Chassidus, and Chabad and particular, is presented by some people (usually not so innocently) as not “mainstream Judaism,” thus encouraging young men and women who first showed interest in Yiddishkeit in and through a Chabad House, to keep searching elsewhere.

In that piece, I explained that “mainstream Judaism” is not necessarily the correct path and that the desire to be “mainstream” over seeking the truth is not a Jewish value by any stretch of the imagination.

Actually, the Baal Shem Tov came to fix the deviation of “mainstream” Judaism of the path of the Torah in a host of areas starting from the wrong approach to davening and learning Torah. In many of these areas “mainstream Judaism” has advanced greatly towards the truth and other areas still need improvement which is where we enter the picture.

It's easy to complain about what others are doing to undermine you, but it doesn't solve the problem. What is *our* contribution to the problem and how can we fix it?

A Yiddish expression has it that “*der fish shtinkt fun kop* — the fish stinks from its head.”

This problem — as does the problem of Chabad Chassidim just wanting to be Jews like all other frum Jews, who respect and admire Shluchim/kiruv professionals but live a vibrant community-life and “stick to their own” — comes from an *internal* warped understanding of Chassidus and our role as leaders of the Jewish world.

One of the reasons this happens is because we too sometimes view Chassidus as an “add-on” to Yiddishkeit which greatly enhances it, but not as the basic framework of Yiddishkeit.

There is a saying attributed to a great Israeli rabbi of the previous generation which includes both admiration and critique of Chabad: “Chabad is an integral and important movement within Yiddishkeit, the problem with Chabad is that they think that their way is the only way.”

This statement, said by an outsider, encapsulates an important principle in Chabad outreach:

Our outreach efforts must come from a place of complete conviction that the *derech* of Chabad that was revealed to us by the Rebbeim is the ultimate way to serve Hashem and is fit for every Jew!

The Alter Rebbe said that he never intended his way to be something that belongs to a particular group of Jews — it is for everyone. Similarly, the Rebbe Rashab in his famous Yud Tes Kislev letter (published at the beginning of the Hayom Yom) makes a point to emphasize that within Chassidus itself, Chabad Chassidus is the original *Toras HaBaal Shem Tov!*

[Let's not confuse this with the need to respect and grant legitimacy to other *derachim* that are within the framework of halacha: this is not about right and wrong — all *derachim* that are in accordance with halacha are right, but this is about good and better. In this matter, the *derech* of Chassidus Chabad is the best way for a Jew to achieve a deep and honest connection with Hashem.]

SOMETIMES, however, it's hard to lead. It's hard to be an example and to feel like a leader when everyone around you looks different. But the greatest blessing one can have is to live true to himself and his true capabilities and powers.

Jewish leadership, according to Chassidus, is not a personal choice. In a refined way, this desire to be “mainstream” is very much like

// IF YOU'RE NOT A LEADER YOU ARE AUTOMATICALLY A FOLLOWER. IT ISN'T POSSIBLE TO BE IN BETWEEN; ONE CANNOT EXPECT TO DECIDE HIS WAY OF LIFE UNLESS HE CHOOSES TO BE A LEADER. IF HE GIVES UP LEADERSHIP, HE WILL — CONSCIOUSLY AND NOT — ADOPT VALUES, STANDARDS AND BELIEFS OF OTHERS WHO WILL TAKE THE REINS.

Am Yisrael seeking to be “like all the nations is the house of Israel.” A Jew can try to reject his Jewish gene for leadership and water it down to a culture, a philosophy, or a nationality like all others, but then he is living in denial — he is a leader.

A Chassid of the Rebbe is, by definition, a leader within Yiddishkeit and he cannot choose to be a Jew like all others who personally goes in the way of Chabad and lives his life to himself.

It isn't possible because the world is divided into leaders and followers. If you're not a leader you are automatically a follower. It isn't possible to be in between; one cannot expect to decide his way of life unless he chooses to be a leader. If he gives up leadership, he will — consciously and not — adopt values, standards and beliefs of others who will take the reins.

“Walk beside me” is good for “be my friend,” but walking in the way of Hashem requires one to take the lead, because the “tail” is everything behind the head. ■

Inside:
The story of
the Rebbe's
black shofar

Reb Yaakov Yosef Raskin sounding the shofar at the Rebbe's minyan, 25 Elul 5742

Rebbetzin Chana's Second Family

Just months before her saintly husband passed away, **Rebbetzin Chana** got to know the Raskin Family – R' Yaakov Yosef, his wife **Druzia**, and their children – who selflessly supported her in those hard months. Beis Moshiach presents heartwarming snippets and anecdotes of the special correspondence and relationship that continued later. Special for Vov Tishrei, the Rebbetzin's yahrzeit.



SHNEUR ZALMAN LEVIN ◦

ANYONE WHO HAS BEEN IN A HOSPITAL AT

the side of a loved one or has encountered difficult situations in life, endured times of hardship and penury, can tell of relationships that formed between families and people when the difficulty, the pain and stress brought people together and made the bond strong and deep.

This is the background to the special soul connection that formed between the family of Rabbi Yaakov Yosef Raskin and the Schneerson family, Rabbi Levi Yitzchok and his wife Rebbetzin Chana, the parents of the Rebbe. This bond began to be woven in the final weeks of R' Levi Yitzchok's life and deepened as his condition worsened.

In the final four months of his life, starting right after Pesach 1944, the Raskins had the rare privilege of being able to accomplish much in the work to save R' Levi Yitzchok and his wife and to move them from their city of exile Chili to Alma Ata and after that, to serve and aid them in Alma Ata.

In R' Levi Yitzchok's final days, he was supported by the Raskins. They did all they could to help alleviate his pain. They accompanied him on his final journey, to the cemetery in Alma Ata where they found a free space. There, they buried him and built an enclosed clearance around his grave, so non-Jews would not be buried near him. That day was 20 Av 5704.

The description of that time is worthy of proper treatment but is not the subject of this article. The relationship did not end there; it continued with Rebbetzin Chana, a refugee who ran for her life in fear of the Soviet regime, and the Raskin family. It became stronger two years later when Rebbetzin Chana managed to escape the Soviet Union under a forged Polish identity. The Raskins escaped in the

same way. Rebbetzin Chana later settled in the United States, living not far from 770, where she was visited every day by her son who later became the seventh leader of Chabad. The Raskins eventually arrived in Eretz Yisrael and settled in the new village that was founded for Lubavitcher immigrants, Kfar Chabad.

Despite the physical distance, the connection between the Rebbetzin and the family continued, mainly through letters that were sent from New York to Kfar Chabad and back. All the more, when the Raskins visited Crown Heights, they would utilize these visits to reminisce together with her about those difficult days in exile in Kazakhstan.

SPECIAL BOND

A pivotal part of the bond between the families was channeled via Dovid Raskin, the son of R' Yaakov Yosef, who arrived in 5710 and then spent decades in the Rebbe's presence first as a tamim in yeshiva and then as a general in the Rebbe's army.

The Rebbetzin was especially fond of R' Dovid not only because he was the "son of," but also in his own right, for the help that he personally provided to her husband.

One can say that the person who encouraged this unusual relationship between the Rebbetzin and the young man was the Rebbe. It was shortly after R' Dovid arrived in New York when the Rebbe told his mother that if she needed something, she could ask R' Dovid for his help (or R' Berek Junik who also arrived in New York at that time).

Indeed, for many years, R' Dovid Raskin was a faithful "bridge" between the families. One example is where R' Dovid wrote to his father in Kfar Chabad a few months after arriving in New York:

"Today Rebbetzin Chana from Europe, mother of Ramash, met me and inquired about you, how you are doing and how Tzivya is [the daughter, Tzivya Bravman]. She asked that when I write to you, that I send her regards."

This is what R' Dovid wrote his father in the middle of the winter 5711:

"I gave regards to Rebbetzin Chana and she said that she would probably write a response because she wants to know how you are, especially my mother. In general, she is very friendly. I go to her quite often."

R' Dovid went on to write:

"She told me that a few weeks ago, she spoke with the Rebbe about you and my brother Menachem Mendel... In general, when she gets a letter, she surely talks about it with him [the Rebbe] because he visits her every day, sometimes twice a day. She told me so."

The Rebbetzin kept up a correspondence with the Raskins of Kfar Chabad and complimented them on their son who learned in yeshiva not far from her: "...I often see your son Dovid. From what I can see, and from what I was told [and perhaps her son the Rebbe was the source of the information] his understanding in Nigleh and Chassidus and his conduct in general are good."

R' Yaakov Yosef often wrote to the Rebbetzin. As though they were one family, he informed the Rebbetzin about details of important family events. The Rebbetzin responded.

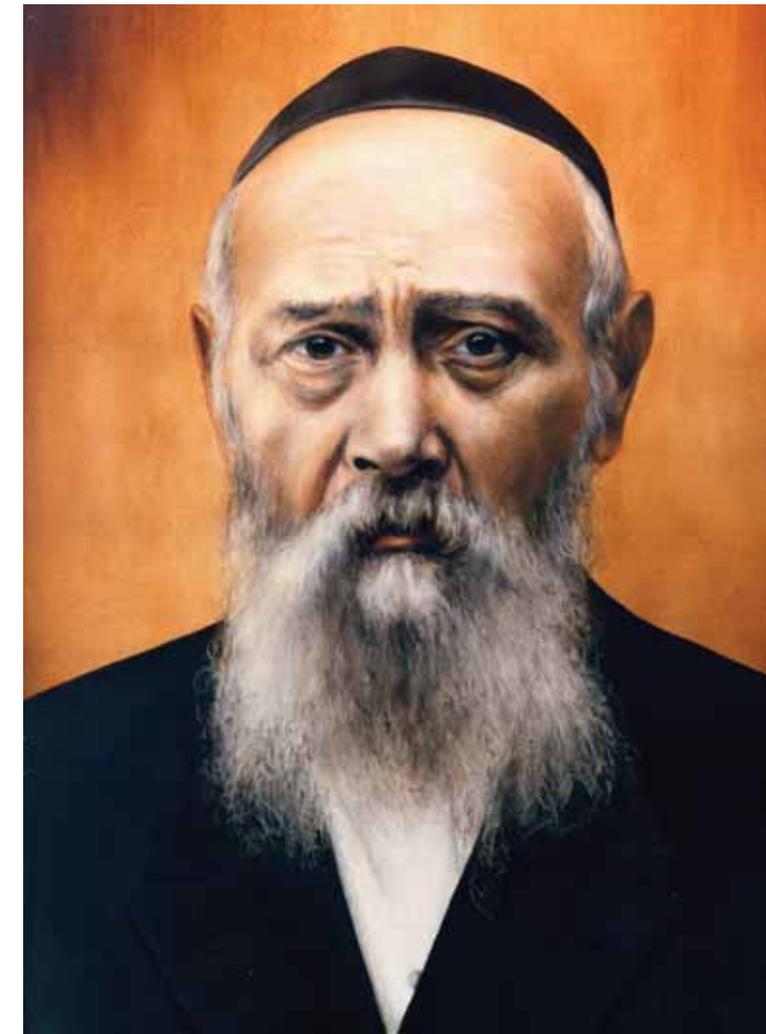
Typical is what he wrote to her many years later, in 5722, "My heart rejoices greatly when

I receive a letter from her honor, which is as dear to me as a sealed treasure. All her letters are preserved by me in a special case in my library of sefarim."

STEADY GUESTS OF THE REBBETZIN

R' Dovid Raskin often visited the Rebbetzin on President Street. He would talk to her about various subjects. These visits were greatly appreciated by her since she was alone nearly all day. One would think that they would reminisce about that momentous period in distant Alma Ata when they were brought together in hardship, but this was not the case.

PORTRAIT OF RABBI LEVI YITZCHOK SCHNEERSON Z'L BY CHABAD ARTIST R' ELOZOR KALMAN TIEFENBRUN



One time, the Rebbe asked R' Dovid that when he visited his mother not to talk to her about Alma Ata so as not to bring up painful memories.

When R' Yaakov Yosef Raskin visited the Rebbe for Tishrei 5716 and had yechidus, the Rebbe asked him what time his father passed away, before or after sunset. From this he concluded that the Rebbe had refrained from asking his mother all those years so as not to cause her pain; such amazing sensitivity...

One year, erev Pesach, the brothers Dovid and Yehuda Leib Raskin went to Rebbetzin Chana's house to search for chometz. As they were busy doing this, the door suddenly opened and in walked the Rebbe. The two were quite discombobulated and they hurried to hide themselves in another room.

The Rebbe realized that they had quickly hidden and he said to his mother, "It is erev Pesach and I see that they are checking for chometz. May it be a kosher and happy Pesach and may you merit to celebrate again next year." From their hiding place, they heard the Rebbetzin ask the Rebbe to repeat the bracha which he did, "*derleben iber a yor*."

THE REBBE ASKED FOR MEMORIES OF HIS FATHER

Six years passed since R' Levi Yitzchok passed away and for Chof Av 5710 the Rebbe held a farbrengen for his yartzeit.

A few days earlier, the Rebbe asked Dovid Raskin to write what he remembered of his father, in the last period of his life. The Rebbe said he especially wanted any divrei Torah of his father, if he remembered any, and to submit his memories of him for the yartzeit.

R' Dovid, who was only seventeen when he had been with R' Levi Yitzchok, apologetically said that he did not remember much of those days. The Rebbe reacted with surprise, "But you were one of those who were involved with

him and surely you know ..." The Rebbe asked him to ask his father to write any practices, stories, Chassidus or anything he heard from R' Levi Yitzchok.

R' Dovid asked the Rebbe, "Perhaps it would be worthwhile for me to speak with 'der mama' [Rebbetzin Chana] to refresh my memory of those days?" The Rebbe said no, he did not want to cause her pain.

R' Dovid did as the Rebbe asked and wrote what he remembered, "This is what remains in my memory about the gaon, Rebbi Levi Yitzchok Schneerson."

After detailing the Rebbe's father's travails, he described Reb Levi Yitzchok, "In general, when he came, with Hashem's help, to Alma Ata, he was a man of stature: his beard was white, his face shone and simcha and bitachon were apparent on his face that now he would get back to himself. And the joy that he was now in the company of Anash and there was whom to speak to, and it was not at all apparent that he was sick."

Then Dovid described the final days, "In the last week he was unable to walk and it was necessary for him to lie in bed. He wasn't told about his sickness; they would just give him medication to calm him. The medication was merely sweetened water because the doctors said they had no cure for him.

"In the final week, he was not even able to put on tefillin himself and I put tefillin on with him a few days. After putting on the tefillin, he would touch the knot of the head-tefillin to check that they were in the right place ... This is the way it was until 20 Av and on 20 Av he went up to heaven..."

R' Dovid signed this with his name and his mother's name, Dovid ben Dreizel.

HIDE THE INFORMATION

The story is already known about the passing of Rebbetzin Chana's son, R' Yisrael Aryeh Leib

who passed away in Liverpool. The Rebbe did not want to cause his mother pain over the passing of her son and he did all he could to hide the information from her.

The Rebbe warned R' Dovid to make sure that she heard nothing about it, and R' Dovid quickly wrote to his parents so they would not inadvertently write to her about this:

"I ask that what I write to you, you do not publicize to anyone, even in confidence. Actually, there should be no need to write about this at all, as you see that I did not write about it until now." This is what he wrote to his father, revealing a secret (that today, is known to all): "Of course, they came up with ways to ensure that letters did not go directly to her so that she would not know about the letters [about the passing of her son]."

R' Dovid wrote to his parents about the Rebbe's warning:

"When I gave her the letter, apparently she told the Rebbe and yesterday, when my friend Dovber Junik was by the Rebbe ... the Rebbe told him to tell me, 'Tell Dovid to write to Eretz Yisrael not to write to my mother anything about this.'"

R' Raskin added his own observation that since the Rebbe said "write to Eretz Yisrael," and had not said, "write to his father," that the Rebbe wanted Anash in Eretz Yisrael to know about this.

A LITTLE LEVI YITZCHOK WAS BORN

Rebbetzin Chana had tremendous nachas when she heard that Lubavitcher families named a son after her husband. Today, "Levi Yitzchok" is a common Lubavitcher name but back then, in the early years of the nesius, people mainly used the names of the Rebbeim.

The Rebbetzin sometimes asked or hinted that she would be very glad if certain families named their children for her husband who was moser nefesh for Torah and mitzvos.

R' Yaakov Yosef Raskin told about one of these instances in a letter that he sent to the Rebbetzin after a baby was born to the family of Rabbi Chaim Shaul Brook, in 5712.

"When I received from my son, the tamim Dovid, about the fact that her honor had requested regarding the name of her late husband zt'l zy'a, I told my friend R' Chaim Shaul Brook in confidence and now, when this baby boy [a grandson] was born, they decided to name him Levi Yitzchok for length of days, in the name of his honor, her husband, zt'l, and I was the mohel."

All this gave the Rebbetzin much nachas and she was quick to share the news with her son, the Rebbe. In the case of the Brook family, she did not suffice with a thank you letter but went out to buy an outfit for the baby that had been named for her husband.

"Mazal tov in my name to Mr. M. Mendel Brook and his wife on the birth of their son Levi Yitzchok, for long good days and may you receive much nachas, materially and spiritually. I am sending a gift for the baby. May he use it in good health and enjoyment. Chana Schneerson."

The Rebbe too, sent blessings to the father, R' Mendel Brook, "I just received your letter in which you inform me that a baby boy was born to you, l'mazel tov, and he was named for my father z'l [here the Rebbe added in his handwriting] for length of days and good years. I hereby express my blessing that you and your wife raise him to Torah, chuppa and good deeds in expansiveness and peace of soul and body.

"May it be Hashem's will that just as you caused me pleasure by naming your son for my father, Hashem should grant you pleasure and nachas from your entire family and may you always report just goodness and kindness."



A Channel of Tears

from Riga to New York

Many Chassidim will spend this coming Tishrei far from home, stuck in their communities and yeshivos instead of being in 770.

91 Years ago, the Chassidim in Riga, Latvia were also torn from the Friediker Rebbe who embarked on his famous first trip to the United States.

Menachem Ziegelbaum shares the diaries and letters written by the Rebbe and Chassidim from both sides of the Atlantic, describing the great love between a Rebbe and a Chassid that no sea or pandemic can overpower.



HEAVY CLOUDS OBSCURED THE SUN IN NEW

York and the rain poured on the thousands of people who stood at Pier A of Battery Park for hours, waiting for the arrival of the Rebbe Rayatz. It was a historic visit to America.

Suddenly, the regal countenance of the Rebbe could be seen descending the plank of the ship, surrounded by policemen, not the Russian variety who led him to prison. Here, they were an honor guard for a renowned tzaddik who had come to visit the United States and see his Chassidim and American Jewry, and to raise funds for their brethren behind the Iron Curtain.

The Rebbe wanted to see and be seen by Chabad Chassidim and their mekuravim and strengthen them while urging American Jewry to observe mitzvos and study Torah, despite the open society and the difficulties in making a living without working on Shabbos.

"I FEEL THEIR LONGING"

Dozens of Lubavitcher Chassidim lived in the United States at that time and many more, who davened Nusach Ari, felt connected to Chabad and the Rebbe Rayatz.

The Rebbe had left Soviet Russia at the beginning of the previous year, 5688, and the longing to see him began to burn in the hearts of Chabad Chassidim in America. Rabbi Eliyahu Yochil Simpson, a distinguished Chabad Chassid in America, expressed this longing in letter that he sent to the Rebbe Rayatz.

The Rebbe responded on 22 Teves 5688:

I feel their desire to meet very much... And my entire aim is to be unified in absolute unity with Anash and the tmimim, in order that

MENACHEM ZIEGELBAUM ◦

we be able to fulfill the holy obligation that was placed upon us, all of us as one, in the will of my holy father... to illuminate the darkness of the earth with the light of Torah."

After Pesach 5689 it became known that the Rebbe decided to visit the U.S. at the end of the summer. Chabad Chassidim there began preparing for his arrival. They held meetings where plans were arranged so the visit would be organized and most beneficial.

BORUCH HABA LUBAVITCHER REBBE

Wednesday afternoon, 6 Elul, at 2:15, the *France* pulled out of dock and set sail as Rabbi Moshe Leib Rodstein, the Rebbe's secretary, shouted the priestly blessing from below.

Although it was intended as a short visit, the Chassidim left behind in Europe were devastated.

"After the great light vanished from view, we all remained standing in place, as though in shock, and each one shook his head toward his fellow without saying a word." This is what Rabbi Eliyahu Chaim Altheus, the Rebbe's faithful Chassid, wrote in his diary where he described the period of time that the Rebbe was absent from Riga.

The notice of this devoted Chassid was drawn to observe Dr. Dovid Zalmanowitz who stood there, brokenhearted:

"Who did not look upon the face of the latter standing by the train, separate from those standing around him, with no connection between him and them, and with a stormy and troubled face he gazed at the pure face of our Rebbe, and the moment the train began to move away, tears flowed from his eyes and with tottering feet and small steps he followed the train, without any outward signs of emotion."

R' Altheus wanted to be sure about what he saw and after the Rebbe left, he went over to him and asked in Russian, "Shalom Doctor, why are you so downcast?"

Dr. Zalmanowitz looked at him with tear-filled eyes. "You know Altheus, I have a high temperature and I am not allowed to leave my room but I could not possibly hold myself back from accompanying the Rebbe."



HISTORIC VISIT OF LUBAVITCHER REBBE IN AMERICA!

During the long voyage, the Rebbe did not rest. He kept on receiving telegrams which updated him on the preparations being made for his arrival. The Rebbe used his stay on the ship to write letters pertaining to the Jewish people. First, he wrote in the writing room but on Sunday, they moved a small writing desk to his cabin and then he wrote in his room.

Before he arrived, the Jewish newspapers in the United States went above and beyond and published especially festive articles in honor of the guest. *Der Tog* published a blaring announcement with the headline, "Lubavitcher Rebbe Kumt Haint un kein New York" (The Lubavitcher Rebbe is arriving today in New York).

There was an unusual reception with thousands of Jews crowding on Tuesday, 12 Elul onto Pier A in Battery Park, starting from six in the morning. Many thousands more waited near the home of Rabbi Simpson where

the Rebbe would be going in the afternoon. The pouring rain did not deter anyone. These Jews who came from the greater New York area joined the delegations of rabbanim and Jewish organizations from all over the United States of America.

Thanks to advanced efforts, some members of Agudas Chassidei Chabad together with officials from the immigration department and two journalists, were able to board a small boat that brought them to the large ship. The boats were attached and the Rebbe and his escorts descended to the small boat and sailed to the shore.

Newspaper photographers documented the historic event. Upon the Rebbe's arrival on shore, the chazan Shmuel Kantaroff sang "Boruch Haba" and was joined by many thousands. New York policemen provided security. Hundreds of policemen were deployed all around including some on horses.

After brief arrangements, the Rebbe's car set out with policemen hanging on both sides. As part of the larger procession, the car was encircled by police cars and motorcycles. The Rebbe and his entourage were escorted by hundreds

THE WRITING ROOM ON SHIP FROM WHERE THE REBBE SENT TELEGRAMS





ON
BEHALF
of Your
PEOPLE
ISRAEL

This week, they will represent us all for the Yamim Noraim tefillos and ask Hashem for a year of Redemption for Klal Yisrael. **Mendy Dickstein** spoke to six Lubavitcher Chazanim and Baalei Tefilla about their unique shlichus and came back with an answer to, "What is the part of davening that moves you most?"

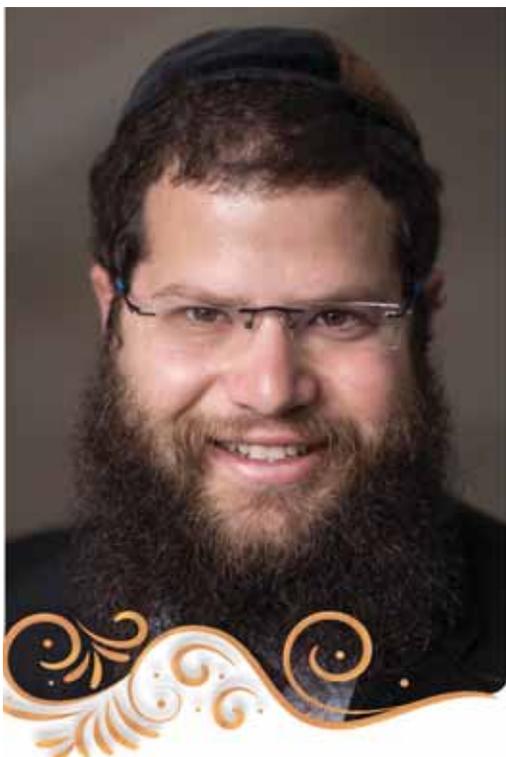


IN A FEW DAYS, THEY WILL REPRESENT

*the entire congregation and will be asking not only for themselves and their families but for all the Jewish people who sent them to plead and offer prayers on their behalf on the Day of Judgment. * Six Lubavitcher chazanim and baalei tefilla tell about the part of the tefilla that moves them the most.*

THE DRAMATIC MOMENT WHEN THOUSANDS ACCEPT OL MALCHUS SHOMAYIM

This Tishrei marks six years that I've been lead chazan in the central Chabad shul in Moscow in the Marina Roscha neighborhood. This shul is the central shul of all Russia and it is



R' DOVID CAYTAK

MENDY DICKSTEIN ◦

from here that the outreach activities extend all over the country under the direction of Chief Rabbi to Russia, Rabbi Berel Lazar.

Previously, I served as shliach tzibbur in shuls in New York, Brazil and London. Boruch Hashem, Hashem gifted me with a powerful, good voice and I studied voice with some of the great chazanim and those who know nusach ha'tefilla in our generation like Noach Schall, Naftali Hershtik and Raymond Goldstein with whom I studied privately for ten years. I also put an emphasis on the beauty and special flavor of nusach ha'tefilla and the traditional Chabad niggunim that have a very unique style. By the way, in recent years I've been teaching the next generation of baalei tefilla via whatsapp groups and private lessons.

Over the years in which I have served as chazan, I've had moving experiences. However, the pinnacle of my career is when I stand at the end of the holiest day of the year, in Moscow, and at the end of Neila I cry out, "Shema Yisrael" and "Hashem Hu HaElokim" with all my might. Behind me I hear a congregation of more than a thousand men, women and children proclaiming Hashem's unity with all their might. I am moved anew each time and I think about the history of mesirus nefesh that Russian Jews had and still have.

I get feedback and hear from a lot of people who were moved by my davening to tears. Each time, I feel the enormous responsibility that a shliach tzibbur has, having received a special gift from Hashem. When you get such a gift you need to use this great privilege and ability to arouse the hearts of Jews to their Father in heaven.

One of the tmimim once told me that on mitzvaim he played a recording of mine of Kol Nidrei. Someone not religious passed by and

was moved. He told the bachur that he is a Jew and thanks to the tefilla that he remembered from his childhood and was now hearing, he put on tefillin for the first time in his life.

"ANI MAAMIN' IN GERMANY

I am the chazan during the Yamim Noraim in Berlin, in the Beis Yisrael shul, by the shliach Rabbi Yehudah Teichtel. I've davened there three times on the Yamim Noraim.

My connection to the world of chazanus began by divine providence. Four years ago, I sang at a graduation concert at the school for chazanus in Petach Tikva. I sang "Omar Hashem L'Yaakov" composed by the legendary Gerrer composer, Rabbi Yaakov Talmud a'h, along with an orchestra and choir.

A video of that song somehow got to the directors of the Chabad shul in Berlin. Since my wife had been there on shlichus before we married, they contacted her and asked whether I would be the baal tefilla during Tishrei. The rest is history.

I'd like to bring your readers a bit behind the scenes of the tefillos of the Yomim Tovim. There are always those who ask the chazan to speed things up and those who want another cantorial piece and another special "shtikel" at the end of each section. I need to try hard to keep a middle ground in order to please everyone.

There is a part of the davening that I particularly relate to and will absolutely not shorten. They are the words, "Emes Ata Hu Yotzram" which are after "Unesaneh Tokef." I use the famous tune to "Ani Maamin" composed by Rabbi Ezriel Dovid Fastag who was murdered by the Nazis, and when I sing this in Germany, in Berlin specifically, I am greatly moved.

Two years ago, during the kiddush after the davening, I met a down-and-out Israeli who had complaints about the entire world. He told me that he had never heard such a composition in his life and he was very moved. Thanks to the



R' TZVIKA BERKOWITZ

davening, he managed to rise above his chronic unhappiness for a few hours. I was moved to know that I had managed to do something for a Jew; that's worth everything.

FATHER, SON AND CONTINUITY

I have served as the baal tefilla on the Yamim Noraim for twenty-five years in various communities. Last year was the tenth time I davened in the Chabad community Woodcliff Lake, New Jersey.

Twenty-five years ago, I was asked by the shliach in Riverdale, Rabbi Levi Shemtov, to daven there and that's where it all began. Since then, I've been to various communities including: Great Neck, Las Vegas, three years in Rabbi Nissan Mangel's congregation in Crown

Jews to fulfill the mitzva of shofar. We spread out through the hospital with a list and go to every room where there are Jews.

Two years ago, after we went to many rooms, with each patient a moving story onto himself, we got to a room where an old man was bed-ridden. He was a Holocaust survivor who used to live in Eretz Yisrael and used to be a senior officer in the IDF. He was attached to machines and was partially conscious. When he saw us, he was very moved and he began to murmur, with his remaining strength, how he hoped that someone would come and blow shofar for him and here we were.

He couldn't stop crying during the tekios and the atmosphere in the room was really intense. Even the Litvishe bachurim suddenly realized how great is the work of the Rebbe's shluchim and felt it a privilege to be a part of it.



R' BEREL ZUCKER

STANDING IN AWE BEFORE THE REBBE

When R' Mordechai Berkowitz got a phone call the morning of erev Yom Kippur 5745, he did not imagine what a significant position he would be getting. On the line was the gabbai from 770, R' Moshe Pinchas Katz who told him that R' Mordechai Dov Teleshevsky, who had been the chazan for Kol Nidrei for years, did not feel well and needed to be replaced.

Although R' Mordechai was a baal tefilla on the Yamim Noraim in various shuls for a decade, he did not feel worthy of being the chazan in the Rebbe's minyan in 770. However, those who know R' Katz know that when he wants something, you can't refuse him.

R' Mordechai, who wanted to believe that this was a one-time thing, called R' Teleshevsky and made it clear that he had no intentions of taking his "chazaka," but was doing this strictly as "*shlucho shel adam k'moso*" and next year, R' Teleshevsky would have the position back again. R' Teleshevsky began to cry and emotionally wished R' Mordechai success.

Erev the holy day, R' Mordechai stood near the amud, wearing his kittel. The Rebbe stood above and to his right on the platform. Near him, stood R' Shmaryahu Gurary who had the "chazaka" of many years of removing the Sifrei Torah from the aron kodesh and giving the Rebbe the first Torah.

With great emotion, he waited for that awesome moment of the removal of the three Sifrei Torah that mark the start of Kol Nidrei. Suddenly, there were calls for Hatzalah from all sides. R' Shmaryahu had suffered a heart attack and collapsed. For forty-five minutes, Hatzalah members tried to revive him as the Rebbe stood there on the platform and watched.

It was only after Hatzalah members took him to the kollel building and pronounced him dead that the Rebbe descended the steps to go to the aron kodesh, took the small Sefer Torah, thus signaling the start of Kol Nidrei.

When R' Mordechai recalls those moments, he is sure that it was miraculous that he was able to utter the words of the tefilla:

"After forty-five minutes in which I stood between the Rebbe's piercing, pained gaze and the members of Hatzalah who tried to revive R' Shmaryahu, my neck was stiff as though cement had been poured in. I miraculously managed to conclude Kol Nidrei which was the longest Kol Nidrei of my life."

The following year, the gabbaim asked him to daven mussaf on the second day of Rosh Hashana instead of R' Teleshevsky who had not regained his strength. When the congregation enjoyed his davening whose sweetness was inspiring, the gabbaim asked him to be the chazan the night of Rosh Hashana too.

Perhaps the congregation was already used to his davening but R' Mordechai himself refused to become used to this new role:

"Every year, as Tishrei approached, I was struck with great fear of the responsibility of being chazan in the Rebbe's minyan. I was particularly afraid of Kol Nidrei when the Rebbe stood to my right with a Sefer Torah. Every year, I asked the gabbaim to let me be and find someone else."

Upon turning seventy, he considered retiring but when this thought came to mind he was reminded of the night of his rescue from Bergen Belsen:

"I have no doubt that whoever survived has a special mission. When I think about that, about



R' MORDECHAI BERKOWITZ

why Hashem chose to save me, my feeling is that Hashem designated for me this most responsible job of standing at the lectern in the Rebbe's minyan."

In recent years, R' Mottel moved to Florida where he spreads the wellsprings of Torah and Chassidus. Every week, he gives several classes in Tanya, Chumash, and Gemara in the Young Israel shul near his home. ■

“ EREV THE HOLY DAY, R' MORDECHAI STOOD NEAR THE AMUD, WEARING HIS KITTEL. THE REBBE STOOD ABOVE AND TO HIS RIGHT ON THE PLATFORM. NEAR HIM, STOOD R' SHMARYAHU GURARY WHO HAD THE "CHAZAKA" OF MANY YEARS OF REMOVING THE SIFREI TORAH FROM THE ARON KODESH AND GIVING THE REBBE THE FIRST TORAH.

MOMENTS With The Rebbe

EREV ROSH HASHANA WITH THE REBBE

1. The busy day begins with Shacharis with the Rebbe. This was one of the few weekdays a year the Rebbe davened with everyone even before he began doing so daily in 5748.



2. After Shacharis, the Rebbe proceeds to “Hatoras Nedorim” (the customary pre Rosh Hashana “annulment of the vows”), still wearing his Tallis and Tefillin. A minyan of Rabbonim from Anash and elder Chassidim ascend the Rebbe’s bima and sit while the Rebbe reads the nusach, after which the Rebbe thanks them saying *yasher koach* and wishes them a *kesiva v’chasima tova*.



3. Shacharis is followed by receiving of the Pani”m [the Hebrew abbreviation for *Pidyon Nefesh* — see about this topic in last year’s *Moments with the Rebbe* in the Rosh Hashana issue - #1184], when thousands pass the Rebbe to hand in their written requests for a good and sweet year. The Rebbe, standing at the door of his room, receives all and blesses each with a *kesiva v’chasima tova*.

4. A special *Pa”n Kloli* is presented to the Rebbe — a communal petition for blessing signed by thousands of Chassidim in which we request blessings for the Rebbe and for *Klal Yisrael*. After the Rebbe receives the *Pa”n Kloli*, he responds with a blessing for all Jews everywhere.



5. After midday, the Rebbe goes to the Ohel as customary on Erev Rosh Hashana. While during the year no one would be at the Ohel when the Rebbe was there, on Erev Rosh Hashana, many Chassidim would be there along with the Rebbe, saying *ma’aneh lashon* and getting a glimpse of the Rebbe’s holy face at such a holy place davening for *Klal Yisrael*. The Rebbe would remain there for many hours, reading *Pa”nim* and drawing Heavenly mercy for all of his people. ■

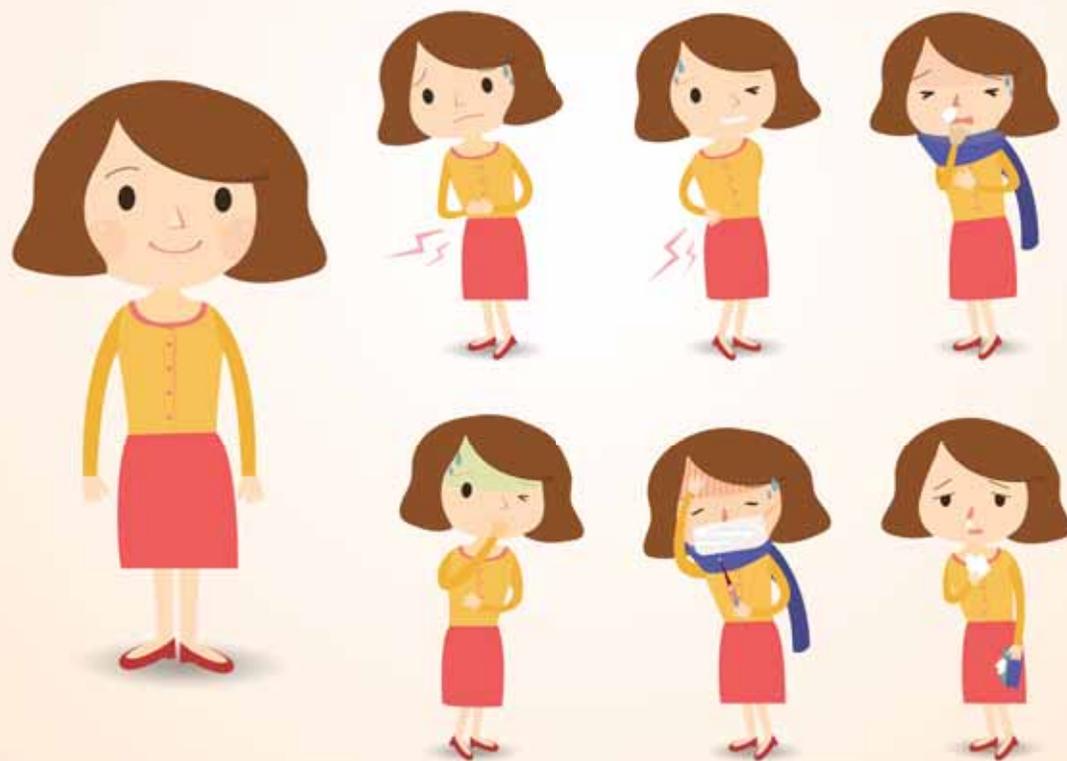
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CHASSIDISHE VAIBE

THE BEIS MOSHIACH MAGAZINE FOR N'SHEI U'VNOS CHABAD



יחי אדוננו מורנו ורבינו מלך המשיח לעולם ועד



The Symptoms of Wellness

The prayers and thanks release good vibrations of energy for me and my surroundings, drawing more good things upon me for which I can give thanks! Tamar Shur tells how she self-diagnoses her emotional wellbeing

EVERYONE wants to know about the indicators of a person's health in mind and body. It is extremely important for us to know what we need and what we can release.

We are insufficiently aware of how stress plays a prominent role in causing illness, doctors stand helpless in the face of a plague of stress spreading throughout the world, and in the best possible circumstances, medications merely suppress the symptoms (not to mention the person suffering the illness and his immune system), but they don't bestow life. Not a good and long life with health and joy, which I wish for every Jew, including myself, please.

I also undergo tests, and I too want to know all about the indicators, but not for the same reason. I realize that the process I am going through will make me healthy, and measuring these indicators simply makes this possible for me or provides new direction for treatment and avoda. I don't do these checks every week or even every month. This obsession reminds me of those who listen to the news every hour on the hour, as if this might change something, or if hearing another new piece of unpleasant news will *"help you forget, perhaps, for a while, your drab wretched lives."*

I don't listen to the news at all.

If war breaks out, my husband tells me that there will be air-raid sirens, and when Moshiach comes, I'll already hear the shofar on my own.

HEALTH INDICATORS – PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL

Yet, regarding the most important indicators, no one asks any questions.

Few people truly understand that the body's integrative structure works as one overall system that influences its various components. A despondent frame of mind can lead to a runny nose, sad occurrences within the family are

liable to trigger infection, and living with the constant stress of fulfilling tasks with feelings of maltreatment and self-induced pressure can cause terminal illness. The indicators I check on a daily basis are those pertaining to my spiritual tranquility. Indicators of laughter and faith, indicators of simcha and confidence – well, you already get the idea. If my spiritual avoda is as it should be, it also must lead to proper direction regarding matters of my physical health – and vice versa...

I check whether I've been under stress today, and if I have, what was the root cause and how I can prevent it from happening tomorrow. For me, stress is bad, as it cooperates with the "sick cells" within me.

I check whether I have been thankful this morning, and if not, I immediately start thanking, praising, and lauding all the miracles and wonders that G-d has done for me. The prayers and thanks release good vibrations of energy for me and my surroundings, drawing more good things upon me for which I can give thanks.

I check whether there has been enough simcha in our home today, and if not, I provide some reinforcement with the help of music and dancing, even if I'm not really in the mood. Joy fills the body with positive energy and releases healthy hormones.

I check whether the degree of love has remained on a high level, and if it isn't there, I quickly give a few hugs, a lot of good and encouraging words, and even take in a few of them myself. For me, love is very healing.

I check whether the food I eat is good for me, and if not, it simply will find its way out – and that's a pity... Good, wholesome, and healthy food in proper portions and at the proper time will be good for me and give me strength.

I check whether I have empowered my body in a proper manner and in proper measure, because it strengthens me.



Sara
Gopin

"OPEN YOUR EYES!"

IT'S been quite an overwhelming year, but Baruch Hashem we are at Erev Rosh Hashana, joyously anticipating a new illumination. Equipped with 2020 vision, we are now able to perceive the dichotomy between what is visible, and the awesome tikkunim that are transpiring behind the scenes on a spiritual level. Our beloved King has left the palace to be with each one of us personally, and to help us become capable of seeing much more than meets the eye.

Almost half-a-year has passed since the Pesach Seder, when so many of us were absolutely certain our "exodus" from Egypt would signify the end of the corona pandemic. The life-threatening virus kept spreading, but the atmosphere of Eretz Yisrael was purified when the lockdown of the Israeli government forbade opening businesses and public transportation for several Shabbosos. The outdoor and "porch" minyans, on weekdays and on Shabbos, continue to imbue the streets with holiness.

In Sivan we were all optimistic, as it seemed that the coronavirus was under control. The rules of social isolation were relaxed, and baruch Hashem the shuls reopened and increased their allowance for participants in the minyan. As Tammuz began, the second wave of the coronavirus spread quickly throughout Eretz Yisrael. The restrictions resumed, but simultaneously the increased awareness of human fragility aroused a yearning for unity. On a global level, too, even nations with a long history of

strife and bloodshed began to work together to find a cure for the pandemic.

We entered the Three Weeks of mourning, which is a time of Divine severity and judgment. When the new moon was blessed after Tisha B'Av, there was an anticipation that, in the days of consolation that follow, covid-19 would finally disappear. Yet we all remained vulnerable as the virus relentlessly targeted its victims. But at the same time there was an unprecedented wave of spiritual awakening that continues to touch Jewish neshamas everywhere.

What can we tell ourselves now, as we prepare in total uncertainty for Rosh Hashanah? The King may be coronated slightly different this year, since we are still suffering in the corona "journey." Yet there is no doubt that our prayers will be more fervent than they were in previous years, when we had a false sense of security.

In the words of Rabbi Yitzchok Ginsburgh shlit'a: "In the month of Elul, we rectify our sins of ignoring matters to which we should have given our thoughts and hearts. Thus, we merit that in this month, the hidden places in our souls open up." As Yidden we are gifted to be spiritually attuned and therefore have a deeper understanding of the inner dimension of everything that transpires, within ourselves and within the world. Especially in Elul, the month of Divine mercy, we have the inherent capa-

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Review: In the past – Raizele is in New York. Aryeh and Yeshaya establish an underground organization. Aryeh poses as an observant Jew – and feels torn over it. In the present – Yonasan gets his tefillin back after going on a hunger strike. Hadas is worried and tries to strengthen her trust in Hashem.

NISSAN 5778 (2008), the forests of **Martinia**. "This is comparable to a king that enters a country with his dukes and advisors. Some of the citizens of the country chose a duke to govern them, while others chose an advisor. One wise man said, 'I choose only the king, because the king remains, while everybody else passes.'" Yonasan quoted the parable from memory and then began to explain points from the *maamar* "B'yom Ashtei Asar."

“Please get in. We have to move fast. Afterwards, we have to get rid of the vehicle. You must get out of here right away!”

“And you?” asked Aryeh, looking with horror at the motionless bodies.

Yechezkel, Rafi, and David came out of the bushes and got into the vehicle. Eli and Binyamin were already sitting up front.

“Quickly, another moment and there will be a powerful blast here!” Yeshaya pleaded, as he pushed Aryeh towards the vehicle.

Aryeh got in, confused. Yeshaya slammed the door after him. Yechezkel grabbed the steering wheel and hit the gas pedal. The truck zoomed forward and quickly got away from the tracks.

“Yechezkel, stop! Yeshaya might be hurt! He wasn’t thinking clearly!” Aryeh cried, as he realized the serious situation behind them. Yechezkel ignored his pleas.

Suddenly, there was the sound of a tremendous explosion, and the entire area illuminated with a blinding light. After a few moments, another explosion was heard.

“Yeshaya!” Aryeh screamed, as he looked in astonishment at the skies as bright as mid-day. Then, everything was soon enveloped in darkness.

“Let me out!” he yelled, reaching his hand for the door handle. However, strong hands held him from behind.

They crowded together in the truck. Aryeh breathed heavily, trying to collect his thoughts and process all this information. There had been a battle of some kind, but with whom? Yeshaya had decided to remain behind. Why? Had he been injured in the explosion? Was someone following them?

The truck continued along the muddy road. They could see the lights of a settlement from a distance. One of the new settlements.

“Try and get on to the highway, so we can leave less tracks,” Aryeh asked the driver.

Yechezkel turned the steering wheel and brought the truck onto a paved highway. Aryeh realized too late that they were willingly heading into a trap. The British had heard the explosion and set up roadblocks.

“Get rid of the vehicle,” he remembered Yeshaya’s instructions. He looked out the window and saw a deep valley along the left side of the highway.

“Stop!” he ordered.

Yechezkel slammed on the brakes. The vehicle came to a screeching halt along the side of the road.

“We’ll push it into the ravine.”

They pushed the truck with all their might until its wheels were off the road. They jumped out of the way and watched as the vehicle rolled down the embankment until it disappeared from sight.

“That’s it. Now, let’s run back to the grove,” Aryeh ordered in a quiet and tense voice.

They ran through the wooded area, careful not to get entangled among the tree trunks and branches. The lights of the settlement were getting closer. Aryeh’s mind worked feverishly, looking for a possible hiding place.

Would the settlers provide them with a place of refuge? There was no way of knowing, and it would be inadvisable for them to endanger themselves. The settlement residents completely turned their backs on them, leaving them to face the battlefield alone. The grove was not thick enough to serve as a hiding place, and the British were likely to bring bloodhounds with them...

They continued to run – aimlessly. ■

To be continued...

Yossi & Mendy Discover



ALL ABOUT THE SHOFAR



Avremi: “Excuse me,” said a man with a red and white striped tie. “Do you know when mincha begins?”

I had no idea what this stranger wanted from me (since I don’t speak English) but his confused look made me hurry up and call for Feivish, the gabbai of the shul who speaks six languages fluently. I figured that Feivish would understand this man and I was right. Feivish answered that mincha would begin in five minutes and got into a long, pleasant conversation with him.

As Feivish and the tourist talked, I stared at the man’s tie. The pattern on the tie was familiar but I couldn’t identify it and since it isn’t polite to stare at a stranger’s tie, I had asked Zalmy who arrived.

Zalmy didn’t need more than a second to say that the pattern on the tie was a copy of the American flag with wide red and white stripes and white stars on a blue background.

This led me to conclude that the language that the man was speaking was English and that he had just landed from America, coming straight from 770.

But Zalmy explained that the United States is a huge country and is actually made up of many states and this American probably came from a state so far from 770 that it would take several hours of flying to get there.

I took the opportunity to learn the difference between “America” and the “United States,” and why Americans have so many stars on their flag and don’t choose a better design (a blue crown on a yellow background that says “Moshiach” in red, for example).

Zalmy, the Chassid, patiently explained it to me.



600 DINARS OF GOLD

The night of Rosh Hashana, Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai had a dream in which he was told, “This year, your sister’s children will have to pay a very high tax, 600 gold dinars. This will be the tax for all rich people.”

R’ Shimon bar Yochai did not reveal his dream to anyone but decided to save his nephews from a great financial loss. How would he do this? Through the mitzva of tzedaka.

Moshe and Yosef sat in the office of their successful silk store. They were rich and baalei tzedaka and chesed. Whenever the tzedaka collectors were sent by R’ Shimon, they happily gave the amount that R’ Shimon said they should give.

Gabboai tzedaka arrived. Moshe and Yosef welcomed them. They went to the drawer where they kept their money and took out the amount they were used to giving, but this time ...

“R’ Shimon asks for more.”

“How much more?” they asked, and they were told a sum.

Yosef and Moshe gave the amount they were told but wondered, what happened this time? Why was R’ Shimon asking for so much?

R’ Shimon, who did not want to reveal the real reason, answered with a hint. “If a person merits, then he gives money to ‘hungry Yaakov’ (meaning, a poor Jew). If he does not merit, then he gives his money to ‘satisfied Eisav’ (meaning, a rich non-Jew).” R’ Shimon also said, “This year, write down every coin that you give to tzedaka.”

Yosef and Moshe did not understand his answer but did what he said. Throughout the year, they gave whatever he asked for and they wrote it down.

The year was coming to an end. A unit of soldiers came to the gates of the city led by a commander who had the rank of a major-general. This commander craved money and he decided to demand a lot of money

from the rich. His deputy and the soldiers went from business to business and demanded the amount that the commander specified.

Yosef and Moshe were in their store, looking with satisfaction at their beautiful selection of merchandise. They smilingly dealt with their customers. Suddenly, out the window, they noticed a group of soldiers marching toward the store. Yosef and Moshe looked at one another and turned pale. They did not expect this to be anything good.

The deputy commander entered the store with his men and sternly said, “You must pay a tax, 600 gold dinars!”

The store-owners’ eyes widened in surprise. “600 golden dinars?! That’s a huge sum! We can’t pay that,” they said quietly though firmly.

The soldiers took out handcuffs and led the two merchants to jail.

“You will remain here until we get the full amount of money!”

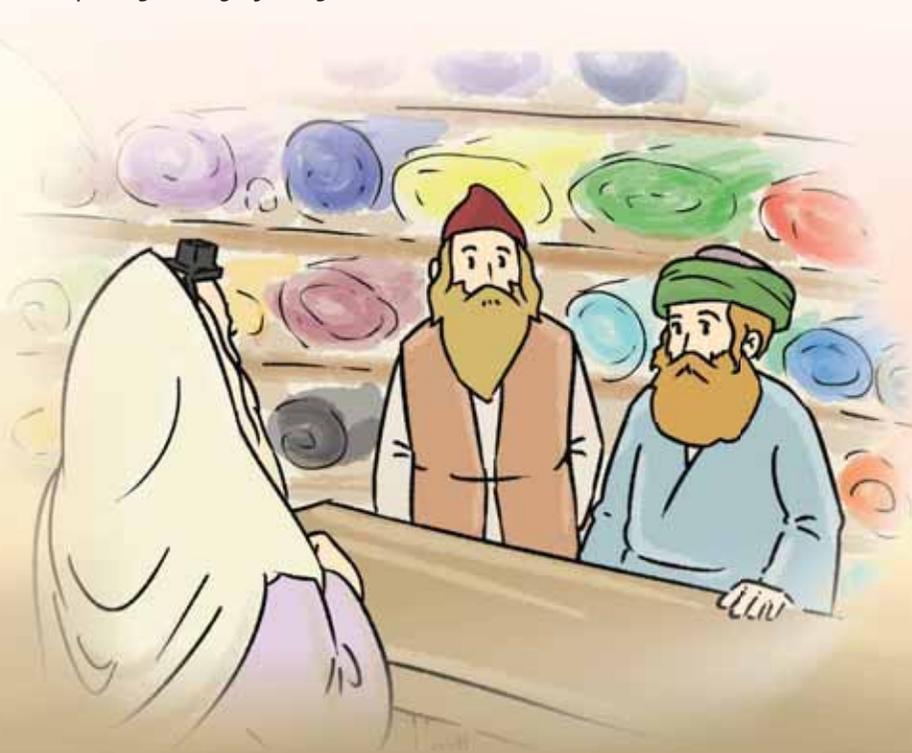
The wives of Moshe and Yosef, who waited for them to come home after a day’s work, wondered where they were. They soon found out that the two of them were in jail.

“Let us go to R’ Shimon bar Yochai and ask him what to do,” they said.

“Moshe and Yosef are in trouble! They were asked to pay a huge amount as a tax. Since they did not give it, they are in jail.”

R’ Shimon smiled for he had prepared for this. “Bring me the accounting book where Moshe and Yosef wrote

wrote



6 • The HAUNTED HOUSE

A few weeks later, Reb Baruch was learning in Reb Yoel's Bais Hamedrish, and preparing himself for his turn to enter the Rebbe's room...

