

BEIS MOSHIACH

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WHEN THE REBBE RASHAB'S KAPITEL WAS 122...

A MESSAGE
OF PEACE & UNITY

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KSAV YAD KODESH

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THE MIRACLE OF PERACH
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WE CANNOT EXPLAIN WHAT HAPPENED, WE CAN CHANGE THE FUTURE

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A WAR TO RESTORE
TRUE & LASTING PEACE

יחי אדוננו מודנו ורבינו
מלך המשיח לעולם ועד



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🌐 **BMoshiach.org**
✉ **info@BMoshiach.org**
☎ **718.778.8000**
📖 **editor@BeisMoshiach.org**
🏠 **To advertise:**
ads@bmoshiach.org

About the Cover:

The Rebbe encouraging the singing after davening, right before saying a sicha.



Editor: **Levi Liberow** • Managing Editor: **Shraga Crombie**
Director: **Rabbi M.M. Hendel** • Rabbinical Advisor: **Rabbi Yaakov Chazan**

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The Rebbe's Opinion On:

When The Rebbe Rashab Said Kapitel 122...

Portions from the Rebbe's farbrengen of Chof Mar-Cheshvan 5742, when the kapitel in Tehillim of the Rebbe Rashab was 122, the same as the Rebbe's this year. The Rebbe focuses on the unique lesson of that year's kapitel which is also very much applicable this year as well:

Since this year marks the beginning of the 122nd year since the Rebbe Rashab's birthday, the appropriate chapter in Tehillim is Ch. 122. This is the distinction of this year compared to all past and future years. And since this chapter is said the entire year, the lessons derived from it are especially applicable to the whole of this year.

Psalm 122's contents are about the idea of peace and love for a fellow Jew. For example, verse 8 states: "For the sake of my brethren and friends, I ask that there be peace within you." Likewise, verse 3 states: "Yerushalayim that is built like a city in which [all Israel] is united together." This expresses the general idea of unity and love of a fellow Jew, as our Sages have interpreted it: "a city that is joined together — a city that makes all Jews friends." This unity engendered by Yerushalayim is not just

in spiritual matters, but also expresses itself in physical things.

This concept is also expressed in a passage in the Talmud (Taanis 5a) "The Holy One blessed be He said: 'I will not enter the Yerushalayim of Above (i.e. the heavenly Yerushalayim) until I can enter the Yerushalayim of below (i.e. the earthly Yerushalayim). Is there then a heavenly Yerushalayim? Yes. For it is written: 'Yerushalayim that is built like a city in which [all Israel] is united together.'" And Rashi explains that: "the Yerushalayim of below is built as a city that has a companion which is similar to it."

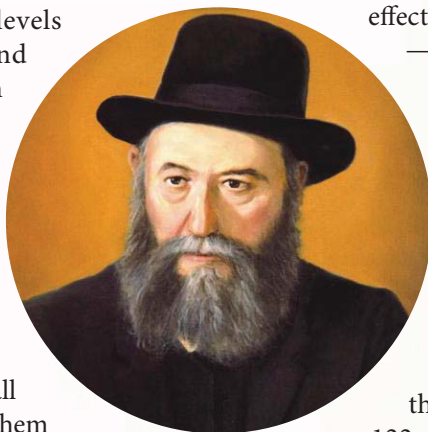
This Talmudic passage is clarified with reference to a commentary in Likkutei Torah on Shir Hashirim. It explains that the "daughters of Yerushalayim" mentioned in Shir Hashirim (5:16) refer to "the souls that have not yet descended to this world to be en clothed in a body..." When these souls

do descend below, they descend from the Yerushalayim of Above to the Yerushalayim of below, to fulfill their mission of converting the “below” (this physical, corporeal world) to a “*Yerushalayim* of below” (to make the physical world a fit dwelling place for G-d).

There are two general types of souls (“daughters of Yerushalayim”): those in the category of “the heads of your tribes,” referring to those souls on the level of Yerushalayim of Above; and those in the category of “your wood choppers and water drawers,” referring to those souls on the level of Yerushalayim of below.

...In other words: Despite the fact that there are different levels among Jews (“heads” and “water drawers”), and each category must perform the spiritual service suitable to it, there must nevertheless be unity between them. Indeed, the verse states: “You are standing today *all of you* before the L-rd your G-d, your heads... to your water drawers” — “all of you” meaning “to unite them as one.” Furthermore, the context of the above stated Talmudic passage is about G-d entering Yerushalayim of below (and then Yerushalayim of Above) — the idea of the final redemption. And our Sages have said: “Israel will not be redeemed until they will all be one (united) group” (Tanchuma Nitzavim).

But all is not clear. How is it possible to achieve true unity when Torah itself states that there are differences among Jews — heads, wood choppers, water drawers etc.? However, our Sages have taught that the preparation and preliminary to Mattan Torah (Giving of the Torah) was the unity of Jews. This is seen in the verse relating their encampment at Mt. Sinai which states (Shemos 19:2) “And Yisroel encamped there before the mountain,” on which our Sages point out that “encamped”



(יִצְרָאֵל in Hebrew) is singular tense, teaching us that they were ‘as one man with one heart.’ Only when they were united did G-d consider them fit to receive the Torah, This unity was effected by “Yisroel encamped there *before the mountain*,” Mt. Sinai on which G-d gave the Torah. It was the revelation of “And G-d descended on Mt. Sinai” which effected the complete unity of Jews.

So too in our case. Unity between the different categories of Jews is affected when “You are standing today all of you *before the L-rd your G-d*, your heads... to your water drawers.”

The standing “before the L-rd your G-d” effects that it should be “all of you” — “to unite them as one.”

Jews must be united all the time, as evidenced by the inclusion of the verse “For the sake of my brethren and friends I ask that there be peace within you” in the prayers said every day (in “Ein Kelokeinu”). Nevertheless, the fact that this year we begin to say Ch.

122 of Tehillim (corresponding to the Rebbe Rashab’s birthday, as explained above), which includes this verse and others speaking of unity and love between Jews, is an indication that such unity and love should be emphasized and strengthened this year.

In practical terms, this means to intensify working in those areas connected with Ahavas Yisrael, in a peaceful and serene manner. And just as the idea of peace is mentioned several times in this chapter, so too one must not be content with just one effort in this area, but must continue many more times. If one speaks truly from the heart, his words will surely enter the person’s heart the first time. And if not, one should examine oneself, for perhaps the problem lies within himself! ■

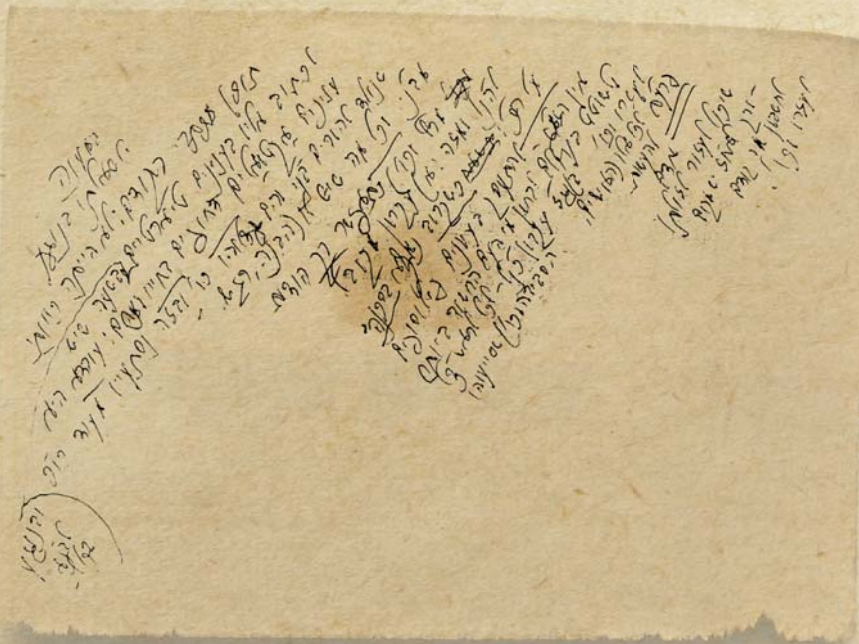
(Reprinted from *Sichos in English*)

From The Rebbe's Pen



When a Relative Is In Danger...

A response to an individual who was corresponding with the Rebbe about his desire to focus on humanitarian aid in general. The Rebbe explains to him why he must focus on assisting his own Jewish brethren first:



במענה לשאלתו בנוגע תוכן מכתבי הקודם:

לא הייתה כוונתי לכתוב אליו בענינים טיארטיים ובנוגע לבנ"א [=לבני אדם] בכלל - בשעה שיש ענינים אקטואלים דחופים בחייו ומהם:

עובדא היא שנולד להורים בנ"י [=בני ישראל] והם גדלוהו כו' ובוה נסתעייו מעוד כו"כ מבנ"א, וכל מה שיש לו (הבנה, רגש, מרץ וכו') נתאפשר רק הודות להנ"ל ומזה:

(א) עקרון מקובל על הכל: כשקרוב נמצא בסכנה אין הזמ"ג [=הזמן גרמא] - להתעסק בעיונים פילוסופים ולשוטט בעולם לבחון מי העם החשוב ביותר לעזרו וכו'.

(ב) וגו' עקרון כנ"ל - לכל לראש צ"ל פרע"ח [=פריעת חוב] לכל אלו (האישים, הסביבה וכו') שסייעוהו להעשות אדם שיכול לעזור לזולתו - ורק לאח"ז יש מקום לחשבון מי קודם לעזרו וכו'.

In response to your question regarding the content of my previous letter:

My intention was not to write to you about theoretical matters concerning mankind in general at a time when you are facing actually pressing matters to be reckoned with in your own life.

Of them is the fact that you were born to Jewish parents and raised by them. In this, they were assisted by many more Jewish people. Being so, everything you possess (your intellect, emotions, energy, etc.) was made possible only thanks to the aforementioned people.

The logical conclusion to arrive at from this is:

a) A universally accepted principle is that when a relative is in danger, it is not a suitable time to probe into philosophical studies and wander the world to see who is the most important nation to be helped, etc.

b) Another universally accepted principle as the one above, is that first and foremost one is indebted, and must therefore extend help, to all those (individuals and the environment, etc.) who helped him become a person who can help others. Only after that may one consider who else is to be helped and in what order etc. ■

IS PSYCHOLOGY KOSHER?

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

Q. As a yeshiva bachur, one of the things that bothers me the most is the way psychology is so widely accepted by the whole frum world including the most extreme yeshivishe and frum communities including rabbonim! From the little bit that I know, psychology may be at odds in many ways with Torah hashkafa. How come gedolei Yisrael throughout the generations didn't use psychology if it is okay!? Can you please advise me on this issue?

A. There is an assumption implicit in your question that rabbonim in the past have not used psychology. This is not the case. Though the specific field of psychology as an independent subject of study and practice has been formally developed only in the 1870s, the concept existed before. We have many examples of great tzaddikim who made use of its services (e.g. The Rebbe Rashab consulted Dr. Freud).

As for the further developments in the world of psychology, this is no different than developments in the field of medicine where we make use of them on the basis of what Chazal (Eicha Raba 2:13) told us: יש חכמה בגוים תאמין – “If you

observe wisdom in the nations of the world, you may believe.”

True, we need to be particularly cautious when it comes to the discipline of psychology as it can involve reliance on doctrines which are inconsistent with Torah. At the same time, it should be noted that this issue is less a concern with the psychology of today as opposed to yesteryear since it is much more scientific than philosophical. Still, we must exercise caution and proceed only with the advice of a Rav, etc.

One example of many: There are different views within psychology. Often the psychologist will highlight the fact that one may not be responsible for their shortcomings and things they go through. Some psychologists take the path that therefore one doesn't need to work harder to overcome their issues. Others take the approach that you *davka* have extra *kochos* to overcome.

[One general guideline in using therapy which can help very much in avoiding these pitfalls, is to use the services of a therapist who is shomer Torah and *mitzvot* or at least a believer, as can be seen in the Rebbe's guidance below.] ■

THE REBBE'S OPINION ON PHYSCOTHERAPY:

Rabbi S.B. Werner related:

Once I went with my brother-in-law Rabbi Yosef Levitin a”h (a great talmid chacham who was a rosh yeshiva at Torah Vodaath) to yechidus and among other things he asked the Rebbe, since he deals with youth and sometimes needs to send a boy to a psychologist, what is the Rebbe's opinion on psychologists, adding that Reb Yaakov Kaminetzky claims that it is a grave sin in the magnitude of *yehareg v'al yaavor*...

The Rebbe replied that in his opinion that is not so. And he said “One should go to a Jewish one, and if one cannot find a Jewish one, one may go even to a non-Jewish one.” My brother-in-law asked, what if there is a psychologist who is an observant Jew, but charges a lot of money, and one who is not observant but charges less money?

The Rebbe replied, “For a little money I do not want to argue with Reb Yaakov...” (Teshura - Werner)

In an English letter dated 25 Menachem Av 5745 (1985) the Rebbe writes:

“It would be advisable that you should talk things over with a Torah-observant psychologist.”



R' Mottel Greenbaum related:

I asked if perhaps I should undergo a course of psychotherapy, which is much less intensive and less time-consuming. The Rebbe responded, “*Kenst geyen fir, finef mol* – you can go four or five times.”

“Must the therapist be a Jew?” I inquired, to which the Rebbe replied, “*Es macht nicht ois tzi er iz a Yid oder a goy, ober er darfzayn a baal maamin* – it doesn't matter if he is a

Jew or a non-Jew, so long as he is a believer in G-d.” (*Here's My Story*)

*

In an English letter dated 8 Teves, 5747 (1987), the Rebbe replies to the question “**Does a therapist carry the status of a physician according to the Shulchan Aruch [Code of Jewish Law]?**” thus:

“Anyone who is trained (and formally attested) to bring therapeutic relief to a human being has the status of a physician in that area of his training and expertise. Furthermore, since medical science has become so specialized, the area of therapy, and also dietetics, have in recent years been researched and systematized, etc., much in the same way as an eye doctor and an ear doctor have become specialists in their particular field.”

Note also Teshura Sandhaus 5768:

“A Rebbe is obviously not in place of a psychiatrist. Just like if a person needs an aspirin, the Rebbe will refer him to a chemist, similarly, if someone needs psychiatric help, the Rebbe will of course not take the place of the doctor.”



See also English letter dated 8 Cheshvan 5713, (printed in Teshura Zirkind Miller, 12 Kislev 5779):

“If you mean seeking psychiatric advice through a visit or two, and the psychiatrist in question is one who understands the atmosphere in a Jewish religious home, there can be no objection to it. However, I would not recommend that you undertake a lengthy psychiatric treatment, since you yourself could do considerably more for yourself than any psychiatrist can do for you.”

Many more letters are published in *Healthy in Body Mind & Spirit* Volume 3. #5150

WE CANNOT EXPLAIN WHAT HAPPENED, WE CAN CHANGE THE FUTURE.

In a bitter yet hopeful interview, Mara D'Asra and member of the Crown Heights Beis Din **Rabbi Yosef Yeshaya Braun** tells Beis Moshiach's **Avrohom Rainitz** about how he found out about the war, the almost-unprecedented shaalos that rabbonim need to deal with in the face of this shocking situation, and what we could and can't do to help the situation



**IT'S NOT
EASY TO TALK
DURING THESE**

difficult times but rabbanim of communities don't have the option to remain silent. Since the first reports about the war on Simchas Torah, Jews around the world are

feeling confused and are seeking answers.

Despite being thousands of miles from the frontlines, in Crown Heights one feels the war atmosphere. The statement of Chazal "all Israel are guarantors for one another" has taken on new meaning. The fact that the war began in Tishrei, while thousands of guests from Eretz Yisrael were in Crown Heights, brought many halachic questions to Rabbi Yosef Yeshaya Braun, *mara d'asra* and member of the Badatz of Crown Heights. There were also questions in emuna and on the Torah perspective of the situation. Today too, weeks after the war began, he continues to receive complicated halachic queries from fellow rabbanim in Eretz Yisrael.

We spoke with Rabbi Braun to hear words of chizuk. Despite the many days that have passed, the pain is enormous, and he choked up several times during the conversation.

How did you find out about the outbreak of war?

The first reports came to New York Shabbos morning, on Shemini Atzeres, but the moment I first began to realize the magnitude of what occurred was when I sat down to the Yom Tov meal and two people came to my sukka and said war had broken out. They had received a Tzav Shemone (an emergency reservist call-up) and they asked whether they should fly out immediately on Shabbos or wait until motzoei Shabbos which is Yom Tov Sheini.

I told them they should leave as soon as possible and they could publicize the answer in my name. A minute after they left the sukka, I

caught myself – how did I send them away like that when they were going to the front? I rushed to call them back and asked that we say l'chaim and dance together. We danced and cried. They knew good and well where they were headed.

A few minutes later, someone else showed up with a question. His mother was alone in Eretz Yisrael and aside from him, there was nobody to help her. She had called several times and he wanted to know whether he could answer the phone on Shabbos. In response to my asking, he said that if he answered her call he could help her by pulling strings and arranging help for her.

Throughout Yom Tov, dozens of people came with questions. When I went to 770 for hakafo, the questions were nonstop. As I stood at the Rebbe's bima in the middle of hakafo, my son came over with a list of questions that the women in the women's section were asking.

As the questions kept coming in, I realized this wasn't another military scuffle, but something on a different scale. Shocking.

The rabbanim in Eretz Yisrael have reported about very difficult questions they were asked.

Boruch Hashem, I wasn't asked to pasken on the horrific questions which rabbanim in Eretz Yisrael need to pasken these days, but rabbanim, friends, contacted me to discuss and clarify the halacha. These were questions they never had to deal with and one just cries to read them. For example, one of my colleagues wrote me: Among the hostages taken by Hamas is the wife of a kohen. They took her and her two sons, three and five, into captivity. Hamas left the children on the border and they were found and rescued, but the woman was missing and was apparently taken captive. Her husband asked, after she is released, is she allowed to return to him as his wife when the halacha is that a cap-

tive is forbidden to a kohen. [As this was being written, Rabbi Braun reported to me that he was contacted by that rav who said the woman had been killed by the terrorists, may Hashem avenge her blood. AR]

The following question was sent to me by a rav in Eretz Yisrael, a very good, personal friend of mine: The army asked me what the Torah view is – if Hamas leaders were surrounding themselves with the hostages [as human shields], could they be bombed even though it would kill hostages?

What does one answer to such questions?

Fortunately, I wasn't asked this question. I sent him a five-page article on the subject for him to read and decide.

These are definitely tough questions but to say the truth, although it is hard to find answers, in the end it's possible. One needs to analyze, do research, contemplate and think, and answers can be found. There is another type of question which is much harder, for which I have no answer. I refer to questions about what happened – why did this happen, how did this happen, why on Simchas Torah, etc.

Some think they know and they have all sorts of explanations. Not only do they have all sorts of interpretations and explanations, and not only do they know earthly calculations, they also know heavenly calculations... I don't



know and I'm not looking to know. The Gemara says that when someone dies, the first three days are for crying, not for eulogies. Eulogies include lessons learned from what happened and regarding this, Chazal say the first three days are not appropriate for this. It's a time to be pained over this horrifying event. Although weeks have passed since the start of the war, not all the dead have been buried, not to mention the hundreds of missing and kidnapped people. In the language of Torah this is called, "his dead is placed before him." It's not the time to look for answers.

And there are questions which cannot be answered. With 1400 Jews killed *al kiddush Hashem*, injured, tortured, widows and orphans, bereaved parents, we do not understand and one cannot explain it.

G-D LOVES US AND HAS MERCY ON US

Nevertheless, what can be said in response to the questions? Instead of dealing with what we don't know and cannot know, we need to focus

on what we do know. I'll say it first in points and then I'll try and explain.

We know that Hashem loves every Jew like parents who love their only child born to them in their old age.

We know that no evil descends from Above, but sometimes, the good is hidden, not apparent.

When we think about the Torah's outlook, which is true and eternal, our reaction to all events will be completely different.

The Baal Shem Tov said that Hashem loves every Jew like parents who love their only child born to them in their old age. In addition, Hashem is also called "Merciful Father" which means the source of mercy. Last month [Tishrei], we emphasized again and again in our tefillos, beyond that of our daily tefillos, "Avinu Av HaRachaman." In the Aseres Yimei Teshuva we added "Who is like you, Merciful Father," and on Simchas Torah we said, "Merciful Father, do good with Your desire with Tziyon," and in Yizkor we said again, "Merciful Father, who dwells up Above, with His prodigious mercies."

We believe with complete faith that Hashem is not merely merciful but is a "Merciful Father," the source of mercy. Sometimes, His mercy is in the upper, concealed realms. Therefore, we daven, "Merciful Father" and speak about the "upright, sincere pious ones... who gave their lives for the holiness of Your name." We add the words, "who dwells up Above" because in situations like these, His great mercies dwell up Above and are not revealed below.

This is the first point we need to think about and really integrate into our psyches.

The second point is that we need to know and believe that no evil descends from Above. Furthermore, on the higher planes of true reality, everything is good. We repeat this point every year on the night of Tisha B'Av while crying over the tzaros and suffering that the Jewish people endured during the churban

which were so horrifying that we say, "From the mouth of the Supernal no evil goes forth," or as the Rebbeim put it, "No evil descends from Above." This is part of the foundations of faith and it includes the saying, "Everything Hashem does is for the good."

I know that it sounds shocking. How can we call these atrocities good? We don't understand it, and it is hard to say it, but we need to believe it.

There is a Toldos Aharon Chassid by the name of Akiva Gruman who lost his young son. After the shiva, he learned Igeres HaKodesh in Tanya, chapter eleven, "L'haskilcha Binah" and read the moving and empowering words of the Alter Rebbe "that in truth, no evil descends from Above and everything is good." The words touched him and he poured his emotions into a moving song with the words of the Alter Rebbe. When you hear it, the heart cries and the powerful words infuse you with encouragement.

The Alter Rebbe adds a very important point, that when we believe and internalize the belief that everything Hashem does is all good, this belief changes reality from hidden good to revealed good. So, it's very important to talk about this point and internalize it, not only because it's true but because it's the way to change reality.

TRUSTING IN HASHM FOR VISIBLE GOOD

You've spoken about what happened and how to look at this shocking event, but what about the uncertain future? Enemies are at the south and north and the residents of Eretz Yisrael are in danger of a multi-front war.

Along the lines of what we spoke about before, about what we don't know and what we do know, as far as the future there's more that we don't know than we do know. At the same time, we do know that we can change the reality to open, revealed good: 1) with emuna that everything Hashem does is good, and 2) through simcha, and 3) with good thoughts and absolute trust that it will be open and revealed good.

I will emphasize that regarding the past, we are commanded and we have the ability to believe that everything is good. As for the future, we don't need to accept the reality of a hidden good and we need to demand and cry out, "ad mosai" and also do everything we can, spiritually and materially, so that the situation will be openly good.

There are several spiritual things we can do to turn the hidden good into revealed goodness: 1) We mentioned what the Alter Rebbe says, that when we believe and internalize that no evil descends from Above and everything is good, "with this belief, everything really does become good, even openly." 2) We have the ability to change reality with positive thinking in general and especially absolute trust that it will be visible, revealed goodness.

It's a known thing that when you think thoughts of despair and depression, this itself causes us not to feel well. When a person thinks that way, he becomes hopeless. When you think positively, you become more happy and the person himself feels well. When he feels well, he radiates positivity and makes other people feel good too.

Spiritually, a positive thought has tremendous power to change reality, to change the future. This idea is sourced in several places and one of them is the verse in Tehillim, "One who trusts in Hashem, kindness surrounds him." When trusting in Hashem that things will be openly good, this itself causes Hashem's kindness to surround us.

This war broke out on Shemini Atzeres (Simchas Torah), right after we finished reciting "L'Dovid Hashem" for fifty days in a row. It has so many pesukim that are encouraging, and saying this felt like the *refuah* preceding the blow. We repeated that we have nothing to fear and that when "Hashem is the stronghold of my life, who shall I fear?" We said, "If a camp encamps against me, my heart shall not fear; if a war should rise up against me, in this I trust."

As Chassidim, we are familiar with the saying of the Tzemach Tzedek, "Think positively and it will be good," which was said to R' Michael Bliner who wanted a bracha for his son who was so critically ill that the doctors had given up. As he stood in the Rebbe's room he thought: who know what's happening now with him when the doctors said it was a matter of hours. Then the Rebbe told him to think positively.

The Chassid later said that not only did the child recover but even after that, any time there was some challenge involving his children, he would picture the Rebbe's face and remember what he said, to think positively and it will be good, and so it was!

In the Igros Kodesh of the Rebbe Rayatz it has the complete wording of what the Tzemach Tzedek said. "Arouse the power of trust in Hashem with simple faith, that He, blessed be He, will save your son. Thought is effective. Think positively and it will be good."

In an amazing sicha of the Rebbe, which was edited and printed in Likutei Sichos for parshas Shemos, volume 36, he explains that positive thinking is itself bitachon. The Rebbe stresses and differentiates between emuna and bitachon. Emuna is for the past, that what happened was all for the good. Bitachon is for the future, that a Jew strengthen his trust that it will be open, apparent good. As it says in Chovos HaLevavos, "The essence of bitachon is the serenity of the one who trusts, that his heart relies and trusts the One whom he trusts that He will do the good and proper thing for him."

It's important to stress that bitachon is casting one's burden on Hashem, being sure that Hashem will help him even when there is no natural way, because as long as there is a natural way, it's not bitachon but hope. In one of the sichos, the Rebbe quotes the Rebbe Rayatz, and is worth repeating here:

"One's trust in G-d can be called complete only when there is no shadow of an indication as to where help will come from, nor is there any

physical source for it. People say that a drowning man clutches at a straw. But when there is still a straw to hang on to — that is, when there is still a shadow of a physical indication that one may yet be helped, even if only physically and even if only partially — this cannot yet be called a complete trust in G-d.

“When there is a shadow of an indication, what one has is hope (*tikvah*). This is the word that appears in the Scriptural phrase, **es tikvas chut ha’shani** (‘the cord of crimson thread’), where *tikvah* means ‘cord.’ The crimson thread served as a sign to indicate the house of Rachav, so that when the soldiers of the Children of Israel approached it they would know that they had to save the people who lived there. This sign is described by the above phrase, because even though it was a visible and overt sign, all kinds of things could happen to it — the cord could break, or the wind could blow it away, or whatever. Hence the use of the word *tikvah* (cord/hope), alluding to her hope that everything would work out well and that the cord of crimson thread would remain intact. For the term ‘hope’ is appropriate in relation to something that tangibly exists, like the straw of the man who is drowning in the ocean.

“By contrast, trust (*bitachon*) in G-d is what one has when he is without even a shadow of an indication that he will be saved. He does not even have a straw to clutch at. He has only his trust in G-d.”

The Rebbe Rayatz goes on to say:

“If even then, as he places his trust in G-d, he is embittered and sad; a silent melancholy veils his face and whoever sees him can tell that his heart is burdened by a grievous anxiety, according to the teaching of our mentor, the Baal Shem Tov, when a person places his trust in G-d but is agonized and worried and sighing, he has not yet attained a complete trust in G-d. For when one’s trust in G-d is complete, his unfavorable — or even (G-d forbid) bad — situation should not affect his heart by causing it distress or, certainly, melancholy.

Rather, he should do, according to the Torah and mortal understanding, whatever he is able to do, and place his trust in G-d. He should not have even a shadow of a doubt that G-d will help him, inasmuch as His Providence watches over every single created being [...]. All their affairs and even all of their most trivial motions are under the eye of His specific supervision, and it is this Divine Providence that gives life and strength to every living being in the heavens and on earth.”

In Chassidic literature there are many stories that illustrate what true trust in Hashem is. One of the well-known stories is about the students of the Baal Shem Tov who were at an inn when a policeman entered and banged on the table and left. The innkeeper explained it was a sign from the *poritz* that they he had to pay the rent; otherwise, he would be thrown in prison. Although he didn’t have the money, nor any natural way of obtaining it, he was absolutely calm, trusting that Hashem would help him.

When the policeman came a third time with a final warning, the innkeeper left for the *poritz*’s estate. The *talmidim* asked him whether he had obtained the money. He said he hadn’t but he trusted in Hashem to provide him with the money.

The *talmidim* watched him as he walked and saw him stop near a passing carriage and the farmer sitting in it exchanged some words with the innkeeper and the farmer moved on. A few minutes later, the farmer returned, spoke to the innkeeper again and gave him money.

Afterward, the *talmidim* found out that the farmer wanted to close a deal with him and pay him. The Jew wanted the sum he owed the *poritz* which the farmer was unwilling to pay. At first he drove away but then he came back, knowing him as an upstanding person and he gave him the entire sum.

There is much that can be learned from this story. What pertains to us now is the absolute serenity of the innkeeper even though he had



RABBI BRAUN IN THE INTERVIEW WITH BEIS MOSHIACH

no natural means of obtaining the enormous amount of money that day! That's real bitachon!

Now too, we need to strengthen our trust in Hashem. Although we don't know how it is possible to annihilate Hamas and save the hostages, Hashem is *kol yachol* (omnipotent). We need to trust that there will be an outright victory with our wiping out our enemies and the unconditional release of all the hostages, with no damage from missiles, etc.

It is important to stress that it is Hashem who will save us, not the government, not the army, just Hashem! If, previously, there were those who relied on the army, well, recent events have shown that although it is the most technologically advanced army, "Not by might, nor by power, but by My spirit alone, says Hashem," and "if Hashem does not guard the city, the guard watches for naught."

It says, "We will no longer call the work of our hands a god." We usually think about some idol that idol worshippers bowed to, but the truth is, any reliance on the army is a type

of idol worship, "the work of our hands" that we consider a god.

We need to know that "the L-rd your G-d is the One who goes forth in the midst of your camp" and He is the one who gives us the big victories in all of Israel's wars. He is the one who will give us a complete victory this time too. We need to pray that this victory will be the final stage before the Geula shleima.

EACH OF US CAN AND MUST STRENGTHEN TRUST IN HASHEM

This absolute trust sounds like something that pertain only to people on a high level. What can we do?

You might be right that this absolute trust is a very high level. Indeed, it is said in the name of the Baal Shem Tov that when Hashem wants to punish someone, he takes away his bitachon, so it's not easy to attain absolute trust. However, if we assume we are unable to be so trusting all the time, we can definitely achieve this bitachon occasionally by trying to think good thoughts when we think to ourselves and also in how we

talk to others. It's also important to be among people with bitachon who see and talk positively, and not with gloomy people.

Hanging around gloomy people is never healthy, especially these days. In a certain way, someone who thinks negatively and talks negatively is "helping" Hamas win, because that's one of their goals, to fight us psychologically too, and to make us afraid and despair. We need to fight that and be optimistic, baalei bitachon, and b'simcha!

BEING B'SIMCHA TO HELP THE HOSTAGES

It's one thing to be optimistic and to have bitachon in Hashem, but how is it possible to be happy at this time?

It says in the holy Zohar that the divine flow that we receive from Hashem is given to us in accordance with our state of mind. When we are joyous, Hashem provides for us with a glowing face, and when we are sad, Hashem provides for us accordingly.

The Rebbe quoted this Zohar during the Yom Kippur War. Like today, the state of mind of Jews at that time was very down. The Rebbe said we need to make every effort to be happy despite the difficulty, because when it's difficult for us, we need Hashem to smile at us even more with visible goodness.

The Rebbe demanded being b'simcha to the point that when the elder Chassidim went to the Rebbe with a pidyon nefesh on behalf of Klal Yisrael, the Rebbe was not pleased with the wording. He said, "Why do you need to draw down on me a state of melancholy? I am presently in a state of joy! This is a time to take pidyonos? Let them go to the tziyun and read the pidyon!"

As for your question, you are right that it's difficult to be happy in these situations but since Hashem demands this of us, He certainly gives us the ability. Since this entire war began on Simchas Torah, when we are commanded to

be happy, and continued throughout the final days of Tishrei which are also days of joy when we do not say *tachanun*, surely Hashem wants us to be happy and He gives us all the *kochos* to be able to do so.

When Hashem commanded, "rejoice on your festivals," it's a mitzva for everyone and for every year, even 5784. Hashem did not make 5784 an exception.

Our friend R' Nesanel Leib of France, who lost his son at the beginning of the war, publicly said on Simchas Torah, before he knew about his son's death, that he was going on tahalucha to bring joy to Jews in other shuls. When he saw that people were having a hard time dancing because of the news, he said to them, "Whoever doesn't cry at this time, it's a sign that his neshama is flawed, but if you don't dance, you don't understand what a Jew is."

Rabbi Shlomo Yosef Zevin recounted in the name of the Chassid, R' Asher, a relative of the Tzemach Tzedek, a powerful story about the holy Rabbi Meir of Premishlan. Once, his daughter was very sick and when it came time for hakafof on Simchas Torah night, he was very joyous. People went over to him and told him to pray for his daughter who was in critical condition. The tzaddik said, "Ribono shel olam, You commanded us to blow the shofar on Rosh Hashana and Meir'l did so; You commanded us to fast on Yom Kippur and Meir'l did so; You commanded us to sit in a sukka on Sukkos and Meir'l did so. You have made Meir'l's daughter sick and Meir'l must accept this with joy because 'man is obligated to bless... just as he blesses for the good,' and the Gemara says, 'to accept it with joy.' However, now we are required to rejoice on Simchas Torah and the halacha states, 'we don't mix one simcha with another.'" The sick girl began to sweat and was healed.

But how can we rejoice when thousands of families are sitting shiva for their cruelly murdered relatives while hundreds of other families don't know what happened to their loved ones?

As Jews, we are sometimes required to balance two opposing and even contradictory psychological states. That's because alongside the simcha that is required of us, when doing mitzvos of the Torah, that same Torah commands us to feel pain over the tzaros of the Jewish people and to bear the burden. This is why, even if we personally were not hurt by these atrocities, according to Torah we should be deeply pained because we identify and share in the pain of the families that were affected.

At the same time, in order to bring some healing to their pain and to fix the current reality and make it better, we need to exert ourselves and have simcha. This simcha, which doesn't come from a frivolous attitude, G-d forbid, and doesn't demean the memory of those who perished, is just the opposite; it's a product of avodas Hashem, with great difficulty, which is meant to change the difficult reality to a good one.

ADDING IN TORAH STUDY AND SAYING TEHILLIM

What else can we do to change the situation?

To counter the "hands are the hands of Eisav" which we saw in its full ugliness in recent events, we need to intensify the "voice is the voice of Yaakov." Our *koach* is in our mouth and we should be intensifying the sound of Torah study, the sound of tefillos and Tehillim.

Sometimes, one of our big problems is that we don't believe in ourselves. As Jews, we have enormous powers and one chapter of our Tehillim can cause miracles and wonders on the battlefield. The Rebbe Rayatz writes in his reshimos in the name of the Tzemach Tzedek, "If you knew the power of verses of Tehillim and their effect up Above, you would say them constantly! Know that chapters of Tehillim shatter all barriers and rise up, elevation upon elevation, without any interference, and prostrate before the Master of the worlds and have their effect with kindness and mercy." Each

one of us has this *koach*! Just sit and say Tehillim and you have the power to accomplish great things.

I heard from Rabbi Yossi Paltiel who was a little boy before the Yom Kippur War that when he heard the Rebbe's sichos about the special power that little children have to annihilate the enemy, he concluded that he, a little boy from Crown Heights, was considered a great tzaddik by Hashem!

He's definitely right. Children have powers like big tzaddikim, but not just children. We too, when we say chapters of Tehillim, have enormous powers. If only we appreciate the power we have and use it!

OUR TIME IS PRECIOUS AND CAN HELP DECIDE THE BATTLE - WE CANNOT WASTE IT

Some are in cities far from the front or even out of the country and they want to feel a part of the painful situation. They constantly read reports about what is going on in Eretz Yisrael. Is this a good thing?

It's hard to tell people not to read the news at all, although that would be best and what should be done. In situations like these, it's natural for people to want to be connected and know what is going on. Someone who doesn't want to know what's happening, well, that's a problem too. But it's definitely worthwhile to minimize the news that you read for two reasons. One, your reading the news doesn't help anyone. Two, while you read the news, you could have actually helped by learning Torah or saying Tehillim.

This is being said particularly to those who are addicted to the news, who refresh the news pages every few minutes so they won't miss the latest information. It's an addiction and it's important to deal with this as soon as possible.

Today, they say that in Eretz Yisrael there is no front and rear, because we are all on the frontlines. This is definitely true for all Jews; we are all soldiers on the frontlines of this war.



There are soldiers with weapons on the Gaza border and soldiers with Torah and Tehillim in Crown Heights. Think about it – just as soldiers on the frontlines don't pause in the middle of fighting to read the news, we too, cannot stop in the middle of learning or saying Tehillim to read news updates.

In one of the sichos, the Rebbe says that wasting time on the news is contrary to intellect! Because all the information you will get from news updates cannot help the soldiers on the frontlines, but if you say a chapter of Tehillim or learn Torah and do mitzvos, you can actively help the success of the war!

They tell about the Chassid, R' Heishke Gansbourg who went to the Rebbe Rayatz in New York before 1948, when war broke out. His father had written to him, "You have two brothers fighting on the front lines now and your blood isn't redder than theirs. Return to Eretz Yisrael!"

He asked the Rebbe Rayatz and was told: A deserter is not a soldier who is not on the front lines; a deserter is a soldier who is not fulfilling his duty. Your brothers have a job over there; your job is over here. Remain here and do your job!

We need to know we have a job. If it's the tmimim, they need to learn full sedarim and add to it. If it's Anash, they need to increase

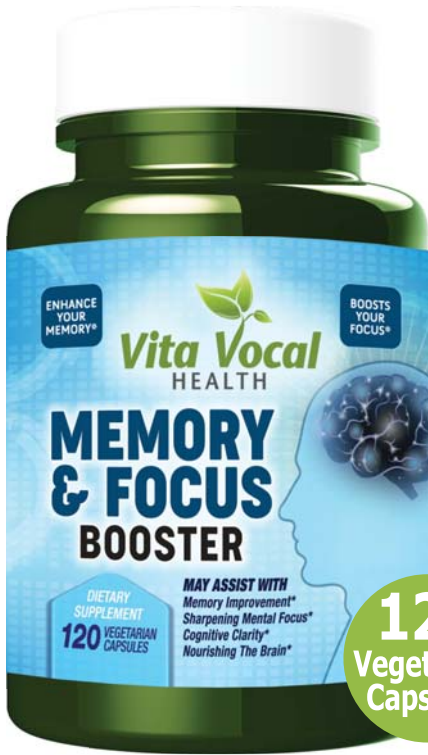
learning Torah and doing mitzvos and saying Tehillim. All this, obviously, along with adding in the Rebbe's mitzvaim which are all permeated with the main point, the Besuras HaGeula and kabbolas pnei Moshiach Tzidkeinu. This is our job. If we do it, then we are soldiers fulfilling our job. If we don't do it, we are deserters in war time!

This year, we say chapter 122 in Tehillim, the Rebbe's chapter. On the pasuk, "Our feet were standing within your gates, Yerushalayim." Rabi Yehoshua ben Levi says, "What is this that is written, our feet were standing within your gates, Yerushalayim; who caused our feet to stand in war – the gates of Yerushalayim who were occupied with Torah." In order to win in war, we need to increase Torah study!

With Hashem's help, we will soon see a mighty, miraculous victory in war and the main thing is, may we immediately merit the hisgalus of the Rebbe MH"M which will be the Geula shleima. As the Rebbe said in his letter about picturing the Geula when he was a child, "such a redemption and in such a manner that through it will be understood all of the suffering of galus, the decrees and the slaughters... in a manner that with a whole heart and complete understanding 'he shall say on that day, I thank you Hashem that you were wrathful to me.'" May it be teikef u'miyad mamash! ■

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40 HOURS OF A SAFE ROOM THE REBBE





TERROR IN WITH HASHEM, & A CHITAS

Mrs. Perach Filo, a survivor from Kibbutz Be'eri and her daughter **Iris Altbaum**, a member of the Chabad community in Petach Tikvah relate the great miracles that they say on the fateful Simchas Torah

MRS. PERACH FILO WAS BORN 75

years ago in Hungary, shortly after the Holocaust. As a child, she and her family moved to Eretz Yisrael. At first, they lived in Beer Sheva. A few years later, they moved to Kibbutz Be'eri where she lived all these years and raised a family.

In her words: The day before the massacre, there was a nice event at Beit HaAm where we celebrated the birthday of the kibbutz (where over 1000 people lived). I spoke and told about coming to the kibbutz and acclimating over sixty years ago. Looking back now, it was actually a goodbye party.

Shabbos morning, Simchas Torah, around 6:30 there was a siren which jolted me out of my sleep. It's commonplace in this area, unfortunately. From the beginning and throughout every minute, I had a miracle. Let's start with on the way to the fortified room (there are only fifteen seconds to get there). For some reason, I took a bottle with some water that I saw on the way, which I wouldn't normally do since we are usually in that room for only a short time. Right before I clicked close the door, I took a thick blanket from the bedroom (which was very helpful to me later on).

I heard many explosions, an enormous amount. I did not remember anything like that happening before. After half an hour, I got a text that terrorists had entered the kibbutz and we should lock ourselves in our fortified rooms until the next text.

We had stories like this in the past but I realized that things were different now. It developed at a dizzying pace. Terrorists getting in is something I wasn't familiar with but I had thought of it more than once.

A few years ago, some terrorists exited a tunnel in the area and entered Eretz Yisrael. I told my daughter, "What's the fortified room worth if terrorists come and I can't lock it?" We brought a locksmith from Sderot who worked for hours and drilled until he made a lock for me. To me, this was one of the biggest miracles that happened. There is no way I would have been able to keep the door closed for all those hours without it.

I wrote to Oren, my son, who lives on moshav Kelachim, "They're going to kill me. I'm afraid."

He tried reassuring me. "It will end soon. I will try and come. If I was able to, I'd be there already." As the day went on, he texted me that he was on his way with three tanks and soldiers from Duvdevan, to get me. He would come soon and I shouldn't open the door until they said my name.

We have an internal app for residents of the kibbutz called "Mekomi." People began reporting about the horrors, the shooting. With residents' reports, I followed the progress of the terrorists. They started on the side close to Gaza and moved on from there. Unfortunately, they worked very thoroughly, going from house to house. It took some hours until they reached my neighborhood on the eastern side of the kibbutz.

I wondered what was going on, where was the army, where was everybody.

Fear. Helplessness.

Then, emuna and bitachon came to the fore, which were so powerful that I didn't know I had it in me. I am not religious. My mother came from a religious home, my father less so, but they distanced themselves because of the Holocaust. I grew up in a home with hardly any Judaism but despite it all, over the years, I connected and became closer.

My youngest daughter, Iris, left life on the kibbutz, became a baalas teshuva and a Chabadnikit. She and her husband Uri Altbaum have a beautiful Lubavitcher family. Slowly, without even being able to realize it, I absorbed things, mainly through the grandchildren, Yossi, Mendy and Shneur.

For example, I remember when my grandson was just three, he said, “Savta, come and say a bracha on the four minim.” I told him I don’t know how. He said, “I will say it and you say after me.” They taught me about Judaism, about the Rebbe, about simcha, about positive thinking, amazing things. I connected to places inside myself I didn’t know existed and that I could actually connect to them. In the moment of truth, I was able to access the only place that could save me. It’s a fact that nothing can save us but emuna.

I remembered that in the fortified room there was a small kit that Iris had given to me with a picture of the Lubavitcher Rebbe and a small

book of Tanya, Tehillim. I said to myself, it’s not enough that it’s here in this room; I need it close to me, that the Rebbe protect me. I felt around in the dark and found it. I put it on my heart and said to the Rebbe, “Dear Rebbe, you watch over my heart! Nothing should happen to it... thank you!”

I also took a picture of myself and put it on social media, “Apparently, there really isn’t anyone to rely on. I’ve enlisted the Lubavitcher Rebbe and I’m praying.”

SEARCHING IN THE MIDDLE OF SIMCHAS TORAH

The daughter, Mrs. Iris Altbaum, of Anash in Petach Tikva, spoke to *Beis Moshiach*:

I grew up on kibbutz Be’eri and lived there until after my army service. I began taking an interest in Judaism through a good friend who became a baalas teshuva and a Lubavitcher. A few years earlier, by divine providence, the connection with her which had been severed



was renewed just at the right time... when we began to get close to Judaism. Before I married, my husband and I became baalei teshuva and Chassidim of the Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach.

Over the years, we didn't forget kibbutz Be'eri. Every year on Chanuka, we would go with the boys and do a central menorah lighting with music and great simcha.

During the assault on the kibbutz on Simchas Torah, my mother felt the need to speak to me. Since she knew she would be unable to reach me by phone on Shabbos/Yom Tov, she called my father-in-law who is not yet religious either, and asked him to try and reach me quickly.

My father-in-law went from Tel Aviv to Petach Tikvah to look for me. I wasn't at home. I was at a friend for the Yom Tov meal and then planned on going to shul for hakafos. When my father-in-law saw that I wasn't at home, he went to shul to look for me. My friend, who recognized my father-in-law, went out to him. The rav of the kehilla, Rabbi Chaim Hillel Raskin, also went out to see how he could be of help.

My father-in-law told them what was going on. My friend said she would do what she could to find me. The Rav told her to tell me that it was pikuach nefesh and I should call my mother and be in touch with her constantly.

She went back into the shul and asked, "Does anyone know where Iris is?" By Divine Providence, I had told someone the night before where I would be and the friend found me quickly.

When I was told the situation, I didn't grasp what was going on but knew that something had happened and my mother was distraught. It took me another few moments to understand that the rabbi had told me explicitly to call her on Shabbos.

I called and realized that this wasn't something that had taken place but was happening now. My mother was terribly frightened. The terrorists, according to the app, were very

// MY MOTHER WAS TERRIBLY FRIGHTENED. THE TERRORISTS, ACCORDING TO THE APP, WERE VERY CLOSE TO HER HOUSE. SHE WAS AFRAID TO TALK AND WE SWITCHED TO COMMUNICATING VIA WHATSAPP.

close to her house. She was afraid to talk and we switched to communicating via whatsapp.

"The terrorists are in Pessi's house."

"They are in the house next door," she reported, and my heart was pounding.

She wrote, "They are breaking in the door of the house. I hear them inside. They are at the door of the fortified room, trying to break in."

I was paralyzed with fear and couldn't breathe. I wrote to her, with the encouragement of my friend, that she was safe and they wouldn't get to her. They wouldn't be able to break the door of the fortified room and, with Hashem's help, nothing would happen to her.

I said Tehillim, chapter 121, over and over. I couldn't look at the sefer I was holding. I just kept on saying, "Shir La'maalos, Shir La'maalos."

After fifteen minutes, my mother suddenly typed, "It became quiet."

I wrote her, "Boruch Hashem," and began saying "Mizmor l'soda, Mizmor l'soda" over and over.

She wrote, “I hear them talking outside.” When they moved off, she continued to write to me and I kept strengthening her.

All day, we wrote using whatsapp, from 12:55 until 6:11. Then her phone ran out of power and she couldn’t charge it. During these hours, the terrorists entered the house and tried to break into the fortified room. That repeated itself four times! Each time, I strengthened her that she was protected and everything would be all right, with G-d’s help.

She wrote back, “I know. I feel protected. I am protected. The Rebbe is watching over me.”

FORTY HOURS OF TERROR

Back to Mrs. Filo:

I found half a package of crackers in the fortified room. I didn’t know how much longer I would have to be there and divided the food. Every few hours I ate two crackers and took a small sip or two of water.

At some point, around one or one-thirty, the terrorists came to my house. I heard screaming in Arabic, explosions and shooting. For many hours I had no quiet from the terrorists; they were trying to break in, to drill, and blow open the door. For nearly forty hours there was no break in their attempts to get me! I heard people speaking Arabic during those two days and terrible noise from outside. They also tried to break through the window of the room and were unsuccessful. I was extremely tense, even in a panic. Every minute was a miracle.

With all this hell going around me, I sat down and took a deep breath and kept on saying, “Thank you HaKadosh Baruch Hu, thank you Elokim, I am protected, I am protected, thank you Borei Olam and for your angels. Thank you Lubavitcher Rebbe and thank you to all your Chassidim, the Chabadnikim all over the world who are praying for me. With Hashem’s help, nothing bad will happen to me.”

I said it over and over, dozens of times. In the meantime, the terrorists continued with their explosions, in all directions. My fortified room shook. At some point, they shouted at me from the direction of the window and tried to convince me to come out. I shrank into my seat and continued thanking Hashem and telling him, “Thank You very much, I am protected, Borei Olam, thank you very much Rebbe.”

After five hours of writing to Iris who helped and encouraged me all that time, my battery was used up. I was without electricity, without a phone, without a clock, without food, with no one. I was alone, Me and my Creator. I kept saying, “Thank You Elokim and the Rebbe.” This is what gave me strength.

All this time I was in a small room, two meters by two meters (six feet by six feet) and saying, “Thank you Rebbe, I am protected” while a real war was going on outside. Only afterward did I find out that twelve terrorists had holed up in my house against our forces, right over my head.

Then I heard some heavy equipment, maybe a power shovel, that began dismantling my entire house. Among the big miracles I experienced, something surreal and unbelievable occurred. A tiny crack appeared in the door of the fortified room but the terrorists did nothing with it. They were destroying the entire house and dust was starting to enter the room. Me, with a lung fifty percent functional; that’s all I needed, not being able to breathe.

For hours, boom, boom. I thought I would cave in, there was no choice, but I said to myself, not yet. I saw that despite everything, the room was still intact.

Even after I got out, I was sure the terrorists had destroyed the entire house. I learned that the IDF had brought a d9 bulldozer to eliminate the terrorists.

If not for the powerful Divine Providence that was upon me I would not be here. The

hours passed and my son did not come to extricate me. I did not understand this. At first I thought he was helping evacuate the wounded but after some hours I thought something had happened to him.

I finished all the water and crackers, down to the last crumb. I also need medication on a regular basis and wasn't breathing well. I had no strength. I felt I was on the verge of fainting and that I wouldn't manage without food, water and medicine. The darkness in the little room was very hard for me. I didn't know what was where.

It was quiet outside and I felt around for the window. I was about to faint. I managed to get the window open and, ah, I finally got to breathe some air. I looked up at the sky which was a deep blue and saw birds in a unique formation, hundreds, almost not moving. I thought maybe they were planes on the way to Gaza and if so, in another minute there would be missiles flying again, from Gaza toward the kibbutz.

I fell back into the room, banged myself up a bit and sat down. I think I fainted. For how long? I don't know. When I woke up it took me a long time to figure out where I was and what was happening. I thought I was somewhere else and with other women until I came back to reality.

I had no idea how much time passed since I last opened the window. I knew I had no choice but to get up and do something. I was so weak and there was no way I would survive. I barely had the strength to stand on my feet. It was still quiet and starting to get light outside. It was early Monday morning.

I was never light on my feet, certainly not at age 75. How would I climb up to the window? I knew it wouldn't be easy. I found a basket in the room and knew it was too weak to hold me. I found a strong stool but it was too low. I found an antique sewing machine and used it to climb. I threw the blanket outside so I'd have a soft landing.

PICTURES OF THE HOUSE - BEFORE AND AFTER



Elokim helped me! I didn't know what I was doing and where I was going. I was afraid to jump out but I was just as afraid to stay in the room.

I managed to reach the window; I really don't know how, with superhuman strength. It wasn't me who climbed up to the window. Hashem is the one who picked me up and put me there. Even twenty years ago, there's no way I would have managed.

I sat on the windowsill and looked out. Nothing looked the same as what I usually saw out my window. The houses are fairly close to one another in our neighborhood. Each one is a house and garden. I looked at the house opposite me and there was no garden and not much of a house, just the remnants of a house, and I didn't know what happened. I said to myself, now is not the time to understand. I breathed; thank you Hashem.

I lowered the mattress that I had with me. I pulled on the edge of the mattress and jumped down. I hurt myself but I landed. I had a very big miracle. There was broken cement and steel from the destruction of the house. In retrospect, it was that which helped me get up. If not for the iron bars, I would not have been able to get up and stand on my feet. It saved me. I said thank You to Hashem again.

I saw that I wouldn't be able to go around to the front of the house. Everything was destroyed. I passed by the neighbor's house and called her name but did not hear an answer. I got to the other side of the house and saw near the entrance a small table with half a bottle of grape juice. I drank it down and it revived me.

I tried to fill the water bottle from the faucet there but there was no water. I sat in the garden for a few minutes to rest. It was quiet all around. I reached the back of the house and only then did I realize that my entire house (aside from the fortified room) was demolished.

I left cautiously, and looked past the bushes that separate between us and the road. I didn't see anyone. I saw a car with the driver's door open but was afraid to go over and look.

I continued walking. There is a path to an old building which now serves as a studio. I suddenly saw a big bottle of mineral water on the ground. I said, "Thank You Hashem." I really needed that. I was dehydrated. I drank and went in the direction of the road, walking slowly, barefoot, with the blanket helping me cushion the road and the rocks.

I slowly crossed the road and saw no one. I suddenly saw an electric scooter with a key in the ignition. I thanked Hashem again and got on it. There too, a bottle of water was waiting for me. Thank you Hashem who takes care of me all along.

I rode toward the gate of the kibbutz, not far away. I didn't have my glasses and wasn't sure whether I was seeing soldiers or not. I was afraid and took a left, along the length of the fence. I said to myself, if they weren't our soldiers, they would have shot already. I went back and saw soldiers in the distance. I yelled to them, "Are you soldiers? Are you Tzahal? Can you help me?"

They said yes, and I rode toward them. They supported and helped me, were so wonderful, and they told me, "You are a heroine."

I saw someone from Be'eri, the son of a big family on the kibbutz and I asked him, "How is your family? Are they all right?" He said, "Some of them."

They really took care of me. They brought me food and drinks and checked that I was okay. They put the phone in the charger and I called Iris.

Then they asked, "Do you want to speak to your son?" I said, "Of course I want to but I'm afraid he won't answer." I didn't know



what was going on with him. Meanwhile, he called and I spoke to him. It turned out that he had come to help me. He was only a hundred meters from the house but they didn't let him get closer because of the heavy fighting with the terrorists that went on for many hours.

Within less than half an hour we met. We got a military escort with armed soldiers to a quieter spot in the direction of his house, and in the meantime, Iris and her husband also came in our direction.

Every step I made was an open miracle. How did I deserve this? I don't know.

The emuna, which I didn't know was in me, strengthened me so much and saved me.

TERRIFYING NEWS AND ROCK SOLID FAITH

Back to Mrs. Iris Altbaum:

After her phone was no longer working, I tried to be in contact with anyone I could reach at the kibbutz. I heard that people were being removed from the kibbutz and I pleaded that they go to her house and see how she was doing.

The answer I kept on getting was that there was heavy fighting with bullets flying and it was impossible to get close. I did not imagine for a moment what we heard later on, that a gang of twelve terrorists had holed up in our house! For

about forty hours there was heavy exchange of gunfire. It was only Sunday afternoon that the IDF managed to take control over the terrorists and there was some quiet.

I was constantly in touch with security forces and with whoever could help me, grasping at any bit of information that I could obtain.

At some point, I was told that they were sending in a force to get her out. I sent them a picture of her. I was sure she was in the fortified room. I sat there and said, "Mizmor l'soda" again and again. I was sure she was fine and they would just take her out of there and call to say she was fine.

After about forty minutes of praying and anticipation, they weren't getting back to me. I called a friend who tried to help and find out what was happening. They told me, "Unfortunately, it's impossible to find a match to what they found in the fortified room."

That sounded terrible! Although they hadn't officially told me that the 'story was over,' this wasn't good news. And yet, they told me that her glasses were found on the pavement outside the house. This gave us hope and the strength to continue believing that she was alive. Maybe she had been able to run away? Even if, G-d forbid, she had been kidnapped, at least she was alive.

I called a rabbi and told him that I heard something terrible. I asked what I was supposed to do. The rav questioned me from every angle about what I was actually told. It wasn't an official announcement but it was very difficult.

The rabbi said we knew nothing for certain, we had no clear information, and for now, we wouldn't address the news, just about the glasses outside, which gave us hope that she was alive and, with Hashem's help, all would be well.

I felt that this was a huge test of emuna and bitachon in Hashem. The rabbi paskened not to relate to the information we received and we chose to believe.

We continued to believe, to hope, to pray, and not give in. We had a most difficult evening.

At the Rebbe, Yom Tov was also over and our son was there on Kevutza. And in Berlin, where my oldest son and his family are on shlichus. We prepared to talk to the children and decided to tell them only the part about emuna, that everything would be fine. The entire family believed with strong faith and said, "Ima, Savta will be fine; there's no other way. Hashem is protecting her; the Rebbe is protecting her. We're sure she's fine."

I repeat, we chose emuna and didn't give in one inch. It was very, very strong. I kept saying, *Ima briah u'shleimah, briah u'shleimah, yiheyu beserot tovot* (Ima, healthy and whole, healthy and whole, there will be good news).

We went to sleep at six in the morning with horrible feelings.

At 7:06 on Monday, I got a phone call from someone in the kibbutz who said to me, "Your mother was saved!"

I called one of the soldiers who said to me, "She's not with me; write down this number." I called and said, "I understand that my mother is with you. I'd like to speak to her." He said to me, "I'm sorry but she's being examined now to make sure she's okay. Write down this number."

I felt like a little child crawling toward a certain goal and as she gets closer, the parents move the goal away so she will crawl further. That's what I felt Hashem was doing to me. He almost, almost brought me to her and it was like He was saying, "Believe another a little bit, believe another little bit..."

Boruch Hashem, finally, after a few minutes, with my emotions through the roof, I spoke with my mother. Later I learned that the rescue team from whom I had gotten that report, had been at a different fortified room and nobody had gone to her throughout those two days, so the rescue team somehow got the message that there was nobody to save and they didn't check the house again. Moreover, there were still terrorists in the area.

After less than two hours, we met and we brought her to our home. When we were on our way, I began to shout to my husband in the car, "We withstood the test! We withstood the test!" We did not stop believing for a minute that everything would be all right.

I feel that in the merit of our emuna she was saved. Bitachon and emuna literally revived my mother time after time.

SHARING THE EMUNA

Since that nightmare, Mrs. Perach Filo has been interviewed by various media.

"I came with faith that my story could strengthen a lot of people."

Perach's amazing story has reached tens of thousands of viewers, listeners and readers of all backgrounds. The story of a miracle, emuna and bitachon. The saying, "Think positively and it will be good" was illustrated most graphically for us.

She talks about the Rebbe everywhere. "In the merit of emuna, the extent of which I didn't know I had internalized, I was saved. Thank you Rebbe!"

IS IT TIME TO SPEAK ABOUT "ONE KINUS HASHLUCHIM"?

I would like to start by being open and honest: when I wrote a few months ago that I would stop writing public opinion pieces, I meant it. There is a time and place for everything and I felt that *Shnas Hakhel* was the time for it. Yet, with the war raging in Eretz Yisrael - and it being obvious that even during *Shnas Hakhel* we were not able to accomplish the necessary *achdus* between the Shluchim - I decided to write the following thoughts on this very sensitive subject.

I was especially encouraged when I saw the following answer of the Rebbe (Igros Vol. 34 p. 21, #11,607) that the Rebbe wrote to Rabbi Yisroel Leibov (director of Tzach in Israel who wrote to the Rebbe about how much could be accomplished if all the *askanim* of Anash were united):

“(If they were united) Moshiach would have already come. Therefore, the *yetzer hara* is very active and uses all types of reasoning and tactics - which are completely illogical (to keep the divisions active) and — as of now — has been successful *Rachmana litzlan* to create a civil war (amongst the *askanim* of Anash). Hashem should have mercy.”

This article is being written with the following premises and foundations:

(1) *Achdus* is the vessel for all brachos. These include brachos for Anash, Shluchim, and Klal Yisrael.

(2) The greatest *nachas* that we give our Rebbe (our father) is if his children are united.

(3) It is impossible to go out into the world and advocate for *shalom* and *achdus* when there is a blatant *machlokes*, within a Chassidus which is based on “Luba” (love), in the public eye.

(4) The *machlokes* is turning off our children from getting involved in shlichus and Yiddishkeit in general.

In short: Klal Yisrael is in a desperate time of need and this *machlokes* needs to stop.

As someone who has participated in “*achdus* negotiations” in the past, and also has seen first-hand the terrible results of *machlokes*, I have learned a few things:

(1) We all must realize that both sides are functional and can continue in this current state for years to come. Thus, the thought that one side will just stop on its own and cease to exist is wishful thinking.

(2) In order to forge ahead with *achdus*, it is imperative to forget the past and not get stuck in “who was right and wrong”. The bright future, instead of the dark past, must be the guiding light.

(3) There will always be two groups of people who will try to prevent the *achdus*: (a) The “purists” — those who feel that “giving in” is a sign of weakness and forsaking the truth. (b) The “*mecharcherei riv*” — certain influential individuals that benefit (more influence and power) from active *machlokes*. They feel that their influence will be diminished if unity happens and they will come up with all different reasons why “their side” should not “give in to terror.”

(4) An objective third party is of utmost importance.

(5) Some type of compromise in which each side feels that their dignity remains intact must be part of the solution.

(6) Not every detail can be ironed out at the beginning of the process but a system must be set up in which these details will be worked through down the line. Too many times “perfectionism gets in the way of productivity”.



I have also personally seen the following:
(1) When the two sides finally agree to meet, they find out that their disagreements are not as big as they originally thought. With respectful negotiation built on mutual trust and goodwill the differences can be ironed out. (2) Both parties are happier in the long-term and short-term with peace and *achdus*. (3) Their ability to truly inspire others grows exponentially.

I have heard, and read, many people’s thoughts of possible practical “solutions” but have chosen not to share them here. The reason is that I do not want those personal thoughts to distract from my core message and intent in writing this article: It is vital that *everyone* – yes, EVERYONE — should make their voice heard loud and clear that they would like to see the “leadership” take any steps necessary to work this through.

Speak to your local Rav, Shliach, Senior Shliach, Vaad HaKinus member, or anyone that you feel could make a difference and share your thoughts and feelings about the above. I am urging people with influence and money to get involved and give over the message: Things need to change by this upcoming Kinus!

I know that there may be some people rolling their eyes and thinking to themselves that this is impossible to accomplish.

I would like to ask you the following questions: (1) Do you know of Shluchim that have made *achdus* together after years of *machlokes*? Are they happier? (2) Do you know of communities where the Rabbanim had *machlokes* for years and made *achdus* almost overnight? (3) Did you ever think that Israeli citizens would unite overnight after months of bitter demonstrations?

It could happen because it must happen. The Rebbe is ready to be *nisgaleh* and we must do our part to make him feel welcome.

Davening for the safety and security of Klal Yisrael and for the *hisgalus* of Melech HaMoshiach!





PARASHA Of The Future

RABBI NISSIM LAGZIEL

OPEN INVITATION TO DIVINE REVELATION

BEGIN WITH A GRIN

What does a frugal person bring to his guests?

A watermelon.

Why a watermelon?

Because it's something to eat, something to drink, and its seeds are a snack too!

PINING FOR REVELATION

This week, we will read parshas Vayeira which begins with Hashem appearing to Avrohom and the visit of three angels. This Shabbos is also 20 Cheshvan, the birthday of the Rebbe Rashab. The connection between these two things (the beginning of Vayeira and the Rebbe's birthday) has to do with a famous Chassidic story related in the HaYom Yom for 9 Cheshvan.

When the Rebbe Rashab was four or five, he went to his grandfather, the Tzemach Tzedek, on Shabbos parshas Vayeira, to get a bracha for his birthday. The child began to cry and asked, "Why did Hashem appear to Avrohom and does not appear to me?" The Tzemach Tzedek answered, when a Jew of 99 decides to circumcise himself, he deserves to have Hashem appear to him.

The question is what is the lesson for us?

What can we learn from Hashem's appearing to Avrohom and what can we learn from the young future Rebbe who yearned for such a revelation?

Children are taught that Avrohom deserved this G-dly revelation because of his mesirus nefesh, circumcising himself at such an old age, not a simple thing. Even the Tzemach Tzedek's answer highlights the greatness of this deed. But in a surprising sicha, the Rebbe reveals a new explanation of the verse, an explanation which teaches us how this G-dly revelation can be something each one of us can have.

From the wording of the verse at the beginning of the parsha, "And G-d appeared to him... and he was sitting in the entrance to the tent in the heat of the day," the Rebbe learns that sitting in the entrance to the tent, "to see whether there was any passerby that he could bring into his home," as Rashi says, is what caused the G-dly revelation! Not the mitzva of mila at 99, not endangering his life to do G-d's command, but the humane act of hospitality, care and concern for others is what precipitated the G-dly revelation!

According to this, the message for all of us is simple and clear. "The deeds of the fathers are a portent for the children." Just like Avrohom merited G-d's appearance to him by doing the

mitzva of having guests, so too, each of us can merit the same by having guests!

Hospitality ("Eshel") includes food, drink and sleeping accommodations or escorting the guest. Food and drink for a Jew includes two things, physical food and drink and spiritual food and drink, both of which we need to provide. One can say that concern for another's spiritual needs brings the G-dly revelation even more than providing material needs. After all, with spiritual hospitality, we draw a Jew close to G-d so it's obvious why the result will be a G-dly revelation because by bringing a Jew close to Him, He comes close to us and will draw us close to Him, measure for measure!

There are thousands of Jews out there who are hungry and thirsty. (Amos 8:11) "Not hungry for bread and not thirsty for water, but to hear the words of G-d," and we need to provide them with bread and water, Nigleh of Torah which is compared to bread and water, and Chassidus, the inner dimension of Torah which is compared to milk, honey, wine and oil.

INVITE HIM IN AND HE WILL COME

Sounds wonderful but the question is, there are thousands of Jew who bring guests under the wings of the Shechina, thousands of shlu-chim of the Rebbe who are mekarev Jews of all backgrounds, and we've never heard that anyone would claim that G-d appeared to him like He did to Avrohom. The Rebbe provides three answers to that.

One, it is very possible that those who host and are mekarev Jews are not aware that G-d appears to them in some way or another, but that does not change the reality that the revelation occurred. The Rebbe brings the analogy of the Rebbe Rayatz about the wise men traveling in a wagon harnessed to horses who speak deep, wise ideas among themselves. The horses think about the hay that awaits them. Obviously, the horses' thoughts about hay have no effect on the wisdom being spoken. Even if

we have the eyes of horses and are not aware of a revelation, it doesn't change the reality and truth of a revelation!

Two, a neshama has two parts. The bulk of the neshama is above the body while a very small part of the neshama is within the body. This essential part of the neshama which is called the *mazal* of the neshama, sees and hears spiritual, G-dly things, which we cannot see. But this spiritual vision, "drips" into the neshama within the body and has an effect on our improving our ways. Even if it seems that we don't see, the mazal of the neshama sees and that has an effect.

Three, the complete revelation of the name of G-d will take place in the true and complete Geula as we've already explained many times. The mitzva of hospitality, materially and spiritually, is a mitzva which has a special *segula* to hasten the coming of the Geula, thus bringing about a revelation of G-d.

However it may be, if we want to see G-d, if we want to learn a lesson from the Rebbe Rashab, host guests, materially and spiritually!

TO CONCLUDE WITH A STORY

We will end with a story about hosting which teaches us not only what to give, but how to give, so that the recipient doesn't feel like a parasite. One of the big donors to Chabad mosdos in our generation was R' Shmuel Rohr z'l. At the Chanukas Beis Chabad in Basel, which he donated, he told a moving story which taught him about giving and mainly how to give.

During World War II, when he was ten years old, his parents had to escape the city and left him with a friend in Basel. This man gathered his children around the table and said, "We got a new child in the family today. Shmuel will be one of our children and since he is the oldest, his place at the table will be next to me."

Good Shabbos! ■

SHABBOS

11/04

כ' חשוון

CANDLE LIGHTING	SUNRISE	LATEST SHEMA	MIDDAY	SUNSET	SHABBOS ENDS
5:31	7:29	10:04	12:39	5:48	6:32

ג' פרקים: הלכות טומאת מת פרקים ו-ח פרק אחד: הלכות קדוש החודש פרק יח
ספר המצוות: מ"ע קד

SUNDAY

11/05

כ"א חשוון

SUNRISE	LATEST SHEMA	SUNSET
6:30	9:04	4:47

ג' פרקים: הלכות טומאת מת פרקים ט-יא
פרק אחד: הלכות קדוש החודש פרק יט
מ"ע קד: ספר המצוות

MONDAY

11/06

כ"ב חשוון

SUNRISE	LATEST SHEMA	SUNSET
6:31	9:05	4:46

ג' פרקים: הלכות טומאת מת פרקים יב-יד
פרק אחד: הלכות תעניות פרק א
מ"ע קד: ספר המצוות

TUESDAY

11/07

כ"ג חשוון

SUNRISE	LATEST SHEMA	SUNSET
6:32	9:05	4:45

ג' פרקים: הלכות טומאת מת פרקים טו-יז
פרק אחד: הלכות תעניות פרק ב
מ"ע קד: ספר המצוות

WEDNESDAY

11/08

כ"ד חשוון

SUNRISE	LATEST SHEMA	SUNSET
6:33	9:06	4:44

ג' פרקים: הלכות טומאת מת פרקים יח-כ
פרק אחד: הלכות תעניות פרק ג
מ"ע קד: ספר המצוות

THURSDAY

11/09

כ"ה חשוון

SUNRISE	LATEST SHEMA	SUNSET
6:35	9:07	4:43

ג' פרקים: הלכות טומאת מת פרקים כא-כג
פרק אחד: הלכות תעניות פרק ד
מ"ע קד: ספר המצוות

FRIDAY

11/10

כ"ו חשוון

SUNRISE	LATEST SHEMA	SUNSET
6:36	9:07	4:42

ג' פרקים: הל' טומאת מת פ' כד-כה, הל' טומאת מת פ' א
פרק אחד: הלכות תעניות פרק ה
מ"ע קד: קיג, ספר המצוות

The Chassidische Vibe

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

WOMEN AT THE FRONT: NETIVOT
MRS. CHANI LIPSH, SHLUCHA TO WESTERN NETIVOT RELATES THE MIRACLE OF THE TOWN ON SIMCHAS TORAH

NOT A CLICHE: FEAR NOTHING BUT FEAR ALONE
ARIELLA DASHIFF-ELHARAR

WHO REALLY RELEASED YEHUDIT & NATALIE RAANAN FROM HAMAS CAPTIVITY?
SARA GOPIN

SALUTE
The Beis Moshich Government For Soldiers in Tziva Hashem

HIM OR NOT HIM?
AN ILLUSTRATED STORY OF THE REBBE RASHAB FOR CHILDREN

THE FASTEST WAY TO BRING MOSHIACH
CHILDREN LEARN ABOUT GEULAH

SHLICHUS UNDER THE WINGS OF THE REBBE RASHAB

SPECIAL FOR CHOF CHESHVAN: INTERVIEW WITH ROSTOV SHLUCHA MRS. FAIGY STOLIN

יחי אדוננו מורנו ורבינו מלך המשיח לעולם ועד

Everyday Heroines

SARA GOPIN

WHO RELEASED YEHUDIT & NATALIE RAANAN FROM HAMAS CAPTIVITY?

THE IDF has been battling the barbaric terrorists of Hamas for over three weeks. There's an eerie feeling inside of me, but I'm visualizing the unlimited light that will shine upon us as soon as we've passed through this darkest part of the tunnel leading us right into the Geula Shleima!

The miracles that are happening all around us are clear proof that evil is about to disappear and good will prevail! Ten days ago, on 5 Cheshvan, Hamas released the first two hostages, Yehudit and her daughter Natalie Raanan. They were handed over to the Red Cross, who brought them back into Eretz Yisrael. There are 210 hostages to date, eight of them are relatives of Yehudit.

THE POWER OF BITACHON

On Motzoei Shabbos (of Parshas Noach) I received this email from my friend Yona Rivka Kimelman of the Lubavitch kehilla in Chicago: "B"H B"H B"H!!! Our dear friend Yehudit and her daughter Natalie were just safely released B"H - just like all of her friends envisioned! We farbrenged with joyful l'chaims and thanks to Hashem this past Sunday at our Rosh Chodesh gathering that Yehudit would always attend! Now we're expecting the immediate safe release of all of the hostages and a safe return home of all of our soldiers who will be celebrating a

complete resounding victory culminating with the Geula Shleima!!! Expect miracles and they will manifest!!!"

Yehudit is part of the Lubavitch community in Evanston, which borders Chicago, and attends the Shabbos services regularly. Ahuva Coates, a close friend of Yehudit who is also part of the Lubavitch kehilla in Evanston, made a "vision board" for bringing home all of our captives who are waiting to be released and redeemed. She did this on 25 Tishrei, ten days **before** Yehudit and Natalie were freed. She shares, "At our Rosh Chodesh farbrengen we envisioned them surrounded by goodness and kindness, and protected by Hashem's light. We gathered in achdus with other women, giving Yehudit and Natalie brachos for strength, encouragement and bitachon. My friend's son blew the shofar at the farbrengen too. The achdus, davening, 'amens' and simcha stormed the heavens for their release!

"As a group we made sure that Yehudit's and Natalie's mezuzos were all kosher. My husband and I went to Yehudit's apartment and took down the mezuzos in order to be checked. (By hashgacha pratit I had her righteous gentile neighbor's phone number and she allowed us to come in.) One of the mezuzos was found to be *posul*, and my husband immediately re-

placed it, and affixed the other ones back in place too.

“There were moments that I felt my bitachon weakening... I kept reminding myself that Hashem will fight this battle and win this victory. I kept saying this tefilla, which is a segula for protection:

בשם ה' אלוקי ישראל מימיני מיכאל
ומשמאלי גבריאל מלפניי אוריאל מאחוריי
רפאל ועל ראשי שכינת א-ל.

“On Friday morning, 5 Cheshvan, I reached out to our friend Tziona Adler and said, ‘We must make a welcome home sign for Yehudit and Natalie to show Hashem our bitachon.’ It’s on a very large canvas, expressing our love for her and Natalie. Three hours later we heard the wonderful news of their release!”

NON-STOP HISHTADLUS

Leah Kustiner, of the Lubavitch community in Chicago, shares: “These past two weeks have been a rollercoaster for Am Yisrael... and for us in Chicago it really hit home. Hearing the news threw our tight-knit circle into a spiritual frenzy, doing anything we could around the clock to help Yehudit and Natalie. For two weeks we didn’t stop.

“At home my children and I immediately grabbed our Tehillims and said more and more Tehillim, besides dividing them in WhatsApp groups and in person. We gave tzedaka with their names in mind online and in our pushkas, by *hafrashas challa* and candle lighting, and danced with simcha for their release. Our *hishtadlus* was constant, since all anyone could think about was bringing salvation for our good friend and her daughter, who were in such a dark place.

“At our Rosh Chodesh farbrengen, which Yehudit attends, we celebrated her and her daughter’s imminent release, safe and well, saying Tehillim and giving brachos. We planned



URI RAANAN, RABBI SCHANOWITZ, RABBI MOSCOWITZ

the event of welcoming them back, with joy and thanksgiving, in the same place. Although at this point they were still captives of Hamas, we knew that Hashem would take them out and return them. Yehudit is such a high neshama, with amazing strength. We had bitachon that her emuna would pay off!

“I was in touch with Yehudit’s mother, Tamar. She told me that she’s not giving up and that she’s doing mitzvos in their merit and has emuna that they will return! I also contacted Uri Raanan, Yehudit’s ex-husband, and asked him if we could affix mezuzos in his home, and if he would put on Tefillin in their merit. He agreed, and I called Bassie Moscowitz of Northbrook, Illinois, asking for assistance. Her husband Rabbi Zelig Moscowitz, together with Rabbi Yosef Schanowitz, contacted Uri directly and went to his home on Thursday, 4 Cheshvan. The **next** morning, 5 Cheshvan, Yehudit and Natalie were released!

“For us to witness the news that Yehudit and Natalie were freed was a miracle that I cannot stop thanking Hashem for! When I spoke to Yehudit for the first time after her return, she told me that she felt my presence when she

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WOMEN AT THE FRONT: NETIVOT

We continue our "tour" of the South of Eretz Yisrael and this time Netivot. The residents of the southern town which was home to the holy Baba Sali have endured dozens of rockets since the start of the war. In a conversation with The Chassidische Vibe, the shlucha in the western part of the city, **Mrs. Chani Lipsh**, relates the miracle of the town on Simchas Torah, the shocking hits, the amazing awakening, and the unceasing shlichus even and especially during wartime.

CHANI CHATAN ◦

AM Yisrael was tremendously shaken up since the war broke out on the morning of Simchas Torah. Terrible feelings of tremendous pain along with fear and difficulty functioning affects most of us. It's not easy. When we were taught as children that the final moments of galus are like the pains of childbirth, like those moments before morning when the darkness is thick and dark, and it seems like the sun will never shine again... we never thought that this galus has even lower points that we could sink to. Even so, there's also the clear sense that this galus has undoubtedly outlived its usefulness and we are absolutely marching

forward to Geula! It simply cannot be otherwise.

I spoke with shlucha, Chani Lifsh, who is on shlichus in the western part of Netivot. Since the expulsion from Gush Katif, Netivot has sustained hundreds of missiles and mortars. Miraculously, it was saved on Simchas Torah from the barbaric murderers who skipped over it. Although the city suffered some loss of life nobody was hurt by terrorist shooting.

OUR SHLICHUS

We are working here for 25 years. Our outreach encompasses the cycle of the year and the

variegated population. We hold giant Mesibos Shabbos for children of the neighborhood every Shabbos, farbrengens on Chassidische dates, and prepare food and clothing packages for the needy. We are always looking ahead; every event or program is planned well in advance so we are always busy.

YOM TOV MORNING

The night of Simchas Torah was full of simcha and dancing. The atmosphere was very uplifting. Late at night, people dispersed to their homes to get some sleep before the following day of simcha and dancing.

The next day, early in the morning, like everyone who lives in the south of the country, we were woken up to the sound of explosions. Unfortunately, we are used to that. We didn't get overly excited and some people continued sleeping. I wondered whether this was a military action and if it was, why it was done on Yom Tov.

The gabbai of the shul, who is a military man, resolved my questions when he showed up and told us in great terror what was going on and instructed us to stay home and lock the doors. The intensity of what he was saying was so beyond anything we knew that I myself didn't realize the extent of what was going on.

I looked at the many challos that we had worked to bring home erev Yom Tov and I couldn't reconcile with the idea that people wouldn't get them. I decided to go and give them out. Not being able to see the news, I didn't understand the terror that people were feeling. Many of them didn't want to open the door, at first. There was a family who only after a long conversation from behind the door opened up and told me they thought it was a trap, and maybe there was a terrorist with me that forced me to tell them it was only me so they would open up.

I went home and knew we had to stay holed up at home until we received updates. With

Hashem's kindness, the terrorists did not end up entering the city. Tragically, however, a building not far from us sustained a missile hit and a woman's father, husband and son were killed. In a tiny consolation, one of them was brought to the hospital in critical condition where they were able to say Shema with him a moment before he died.

Along with the tremendous sorrow, we allow ourselves to also say thank you. It's not easy to say thank you when the earth is hemorrhaging but we are slowly understanding that "in every single generation, they rise up to destroy us and HKBH saves us from their hands." Every day, we hear more testimonies of people whose lives were saved. I heard a story of a girl who hid in a prickly bush and the terrorists, miraculously, did not see her.

GETTING TO WORK

My husband often meets Israeli soldiers who belong to the "search and rescue" unit, combat soldiers who are now in a high state of readiness (may Hashem protect them all and bring them back safe and sound). Now, as we speak, he is on his way with the children for another round of mitzvaim with our dear soldiers. He tells me about hundreds of people who put on tefillin, about requests for tzitzis, Chitas on microfilm that they can put in their pocket, various *tashmishei kedusha* they are suddenly asking for, etc. They openly say that they are inspired by all the miracles that occurred thus far and for those that, with Hashem's help, are yet to come.

Every day, we see hundreds of soldiers, from different backgrounds, who are all very inspired to Judaism, and this is one of the miracles of this war. We had just been so split and distant from one another and suddenly, everyone is united, everyone is praying, and all are asking for one thing – Moshiach!

I see that people here in the neighborhood are inspired. For example, last Shabbos, we



didn't have a minyan Shabbos morning. We went out to look for people and the streets were deserted. Many left the city to get some distance from all the chaos. It was those who are not observant, those who look so distant, that came and completed the minyan and stayed in shul until Shabbos was over. They realized that they and we are not different and the fact that they have a phone in their pocket on Shabbos doesn't prevent us from considering them our brothers.

I'll give you another example of people who are still not observant and suddenly, I see them not making a move without asking the Rebbe through the Igros Kodesh. Not only that they write to the Rebbe; they even merit opening to on point, encouraging answers. I think that if not for this war, we would not be able to achieve such a high level of dialogue and connection with those who are seemingly so very far.

TIME TO FINISH THE JOB

The miracles, large and small, are what power us on. Along with the enormous pain, these miracles encourage us to see that Hashem has not abandoned us and that He is here to lead us immediately to the Geula.

The hora'ah for us is that now is the time to find where I can contribute to hasten the Geula. For one, it could be volunteering to help the needy. For another it could be being with the children so the husband can go on mitvzaim. Each one knows where she can be of help. There are no big or small deeds; each one does the maximum to bring about the hisgalus and I am sure that immediately we will meet on clouds on the way to the Beis HaMikdash. ■

SARA GOPIN, CONT. FROM P. 39

was in that 'nowhere place,' giving her chizuk and simcha, and that the Rebbe was sending me to her.

"As soon as they heard the wonderful news Rabbi Moscowitz and Rabbi Schanowitz went back to Uri Raanan's home. He put on tefillin again, and had another mezuzah affixed on his doorpost, as acts of gratitude to Hashem.

"We look forward to the grand celebration when all of the hostages will be released and return home! Bitachon in our imminent

redemption will bring the same results, and it will come right away!"

On the surface it may appear that the flurry of international diplomatic activity is what brought Yehudit and Natalie's freedom from captivity. But we know the real truth - it was mitvza tefillin and mitvza mezuzah! The Rebbe Melech HaMoshiach gave us these mitvzaim which bring unimaginable *geuladik* outcomes and our Geula Shleima!

This story must be publicized!!!

saragopinart@gmail.com

Shlichus Under The Wings of the Rebbe Rashab

Mrs. Faigy Stolin, the Rebbe's shlucha to Rostov tells us first-hand stories from shlichus in the Rebbe Rashab's city ■ Special for the Rebbe Rashab's birthday on Chof Mar-Cheshvan



FOR eight years, Rostov was the capital of Chabad Chassidus. Between the years 5676-5684, when the Rebbeim, the Rebbe Rashab and the Rebbe Rayatz lived there, many Lubavitcher Chassidim flocked there. Yeshivas Tomchei Tmimim from Lubavitch also moved to Rostov, and the city became a famous Chabad center. Today too, Rostov hosts many Chabad Chassidim who come every year to visit the tziyun of the Rebbe Rashab.

For Chof Cheshvan, the birthday of the Rebbe Rashab, shlucha Mrs. Faigy Stolin, gives us a peek into life on shlichus. It's nonstop work with bittul and devotion to the meshaleiach. She tells moving stories and about the Rebbe Rashab's part of their shlichus.

ROSTOV IN THE PAST

We arrived in Rostov eighteen years ago, my husband Shmuel, who is rabbi of the city, and

myself, expecting the birth of our first child. The shlichim, Rabbi and Mrs. Chaim and Nechami Friedman were already here and we joined to help them in their work.

Before we arrived, we had a few offers of shlichus in different cities in Russia. The fact that the Rebbe Rashab is buried in Rostov definitely influenced our decision to go there.

Rostov was always a Jewish city. Until World War II, there were fourteen shuls and entire streets populated by Jews who held respected positions in the city.

Rostov was also the capital of Chabad Chassidus for several years. The Rebbe Rashab came here because of the first world war. The Rebbe Rayatz, the Rebbe and Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka, were also here.

ROSTOV NOW

Today, we and our six children work alongside the devoted Rabbi and Mrs. Chaim and Kaila Danziger with *achdus* and with the *koach* of the *meshaleiach*.

There is a central shul which cantonist soldiers built 150 years ago and another shul that was returned to the Jewish community by court order. Boruch Hashem, there are many local kosher products. There is programming for all ages: preschool, elementary school, for youth, families and seniors. This includes seminars, shiurim, Sunday school, a summer camp for children of southern Russia, and of course, programs around the cycle of the year.

The fact that the Rebbe Rashab's house is here, the first Chabad mikva in the world constructed according to his view, and his tziyun (which was renovated with the help of Anash from around the world) adds to the Jewish pride here.

On Rosh Chodesh and special dates in the Chabad calendar, the community gathers for a moving tefilla at the Ohel of the Rebbe Rashab. For some Jews, these tefillos are their connection to Judaism. We see how the Rebbe Rashab helps us succeed in our shlichus.

WONDERS

Until corona, many guests and groups would come to Rostov, men and women from all over the world. Once corona began, and especially now because of the political situation, guests aren't coming the way they used to and we are the representatives to bring the tefillos to the Rebbe Rashab.

Boruch Hashem, we've been able to pray for ourselves and for many other Jews and to see miracles and wonders.

I was expecting a baby when corona began and I was very nervous about the situation. Moreover, the doctor who cared for me with previous births moved to another city. Of

course, I went to the Ohel of the Rebbe Rashab and asked for a bracha from the Rebbe MHTM that I find a good doctor. A good friend in the community who is a doctor himself, connected us with a Jewish doctor who is the director of the largest hospital in all of southern Russia.

From the moment we met, he was unusually devoted to us. He was available to us at all times, for every need. He told us about his parents and about his great-grandfather who had been a rabbi. He was really a "doctor-friend" as the Rebbe recommends. We felt that the Rebbe's bracha was with us.

Our son Avrohom Shlomo was born on 15 Tammuz 5780. The next morning, the doctor put on tefillin as he held the baby. We've been closely in touch ever since. It's almost a year now that he's been learning Tanya with my husband every Wednesday, and we visit him before every chag. Last Rosh Hashana, he committed to putting on tefillin every day; the *koach* of the Rebbe, the *meshaleiach*, and the *koach* of a shliach from birth.

One of our acquaintances also received heavenly assistance. Four years ago, she was told that she had a malignant disease. Until then, she wasn't particularly connected to the community. This news led her to pray by the Rebbe Rashab and immediately after that, we wrote together to the Rebbe in the Igron Kodesh. The answer was very interesting. The Rebbe thanked N'Shei Chabad for the candle they sent him for Beis Nissan, the birthday of the Rebbe Rashab, and he blessed them.

Boruch Hashem, she underwent successful surgery and had no need for additional treatment and today she is healthy. She is a regular participant in the women's weekly shiur.

BLESSED FRUITS

My husband and I put a lot into the students of the Ohr Avner school and their families. Many graduates go on to excel at the mosdos in Moscow and have become Chassidim and shlu-

chim of the Rebbe. Some of them have already married and have beautiful Jewish homes.

A few years ago, a sweet boy from second grade by the name of Sasha, decided to undergo a bris on Chof Cheshvan. His name became Sholom Dovber.

Sholom was an excellent student who won several math competitions and had a shining future ahead of him. A year ago, Sholom decided to join the Chayolei Beis Dovid and he is a tamim in Moscow.

We had another student by the name of Sholom Shpiraner who was full of chayus and Jewish pride. Unfortunately, he was killed in a car accident five years ago which was a heart-break for his parents, the families of shluchim, and the entire community.

Following his passing, his parents committed to strengthening their Shabbos observance and other mitzvos. About a year and a half after his passing, they had a baby who was named Yisroel Yaakov. At his bris there wasn't a dry eye. Today, Yaakov is learning in our preschool. Also many friends of Sholom a'h committed to strengthening their mitzva observance. A close friend of his, who was his camper in camp, promised him the summer before his passing that he would have a bris mila. Within the year,

the friend had a bris and his name became Sholom Dovber. He is one of the activists in our community.

Along with the privilege and joy of being shluchim, there are challenges to deal with. It is hard to live far from family. Boruch Hashem, the wonders of technology make this much easier. Our family even visited our city quite a few times and this definitely helps.

Another difficulty is the fact that our boys leave for yeshiva at a young age, right after bar mitzva. They have to shlep since our airport hasn't been open for the last year and a half and the nearest airport is six hours away. Their leaving home is a very big challenge but when they are doing well, boruch Hashem, it makes it a bit easier. Here too, we see the bracha of the Rebbe and the *koach* of the son of a shliach who is made of special stuff.

I'd like to mention our dear parents, the Stolins of Natzrat Ilit and Rabbi and Mrs. Moshe and Sarah Gelbstein of Kfar Chabad and the entire extended family who are always devoted to us whether shopping or sending whatever it is we need in Rostov, or hosting our family in the heart of Eretz Yisrael. May Hashem repay them! Whatever is ours on shlichus, belongs to them! ■

ARIELLA DASHIFF, CONT. FROM P. 47

when a siren goes off, most of our thoughts will stray into undesirable areas, but slowly there will be glimmerings of positive thoughts which will continue to increase until they become most of your thoughts.

FOR YOUR MIRACLES, YOUR WONDERS AND YOUR SALVATIONS

In order to insert Hashem's sovereign rule into our awareness and to prove to the animal soul who is the boss and more, that Moshiach is so close, the Rebbe said to relate and spread

miracle stories (and certainly not to weaken and frighten people with negative, frightening videos and news). This is something whose impact we can't even begin to grasp. The atmosphere around us is the atmosphere we create, and through thought the psyche resides in the physical or spiritual space we direct it to. What a powerful tool! In slightly different words, pay attention to what you put into your head because in the case of thoughts, the head is the feet and why walk into harmful places? Instead, go up to heaven, to the source of kindness and mercy and from there draw life. ■

ARIELLA DASHIFF ◦

I tried coming up with different titles for this article like, “Don’t Fear the Fear,” or “Lo Lefached Klal,” but realized that people are not afraid of fear but of missiles, and it’s a bit pretentious to ask not to be afraid at all. In the end, I hoped that somehow I would succeed in helping someone deal with the fear and get out of it in the future without it making an impact.

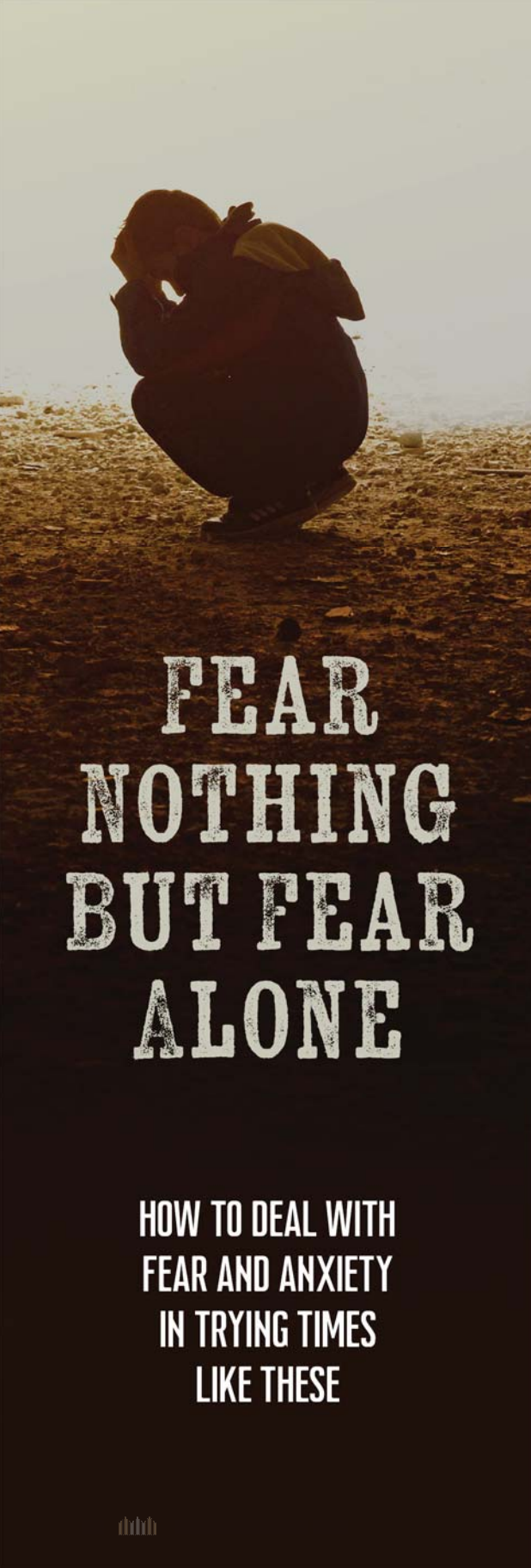
We are in a tough situation and it’s only natural that we be fearful, but this fear is paralyzing and unpleasant, and beyond that, it’s not even helpful. It doesn’t help us function in daily life in a way more suitable to the situation.

There is one advantage to this flaw, in that fear has a mechanism, a mode of expression in the psyche, and as such there is something we can do to help ourselves.

CHANGING THE PLAYING FIELD

We will start with a true confession, that we, at our advanced ages, are afraid! Even very afraid. Literally quaking. This confession greatly helps diminish the dimensions of the fear. How is that possible? The answer is that the moment we look at the fear, an emotion in the heart, with a mind perspective, we move the game from the playing field of emotions to the playing field of logic, and logic is cold and doesn’t get too excited.

That means to contemplate the fear. Where do I feel it? When does it occur? What bodily sensations (not thoughts; we’re not getting into ‘why’ and ‘of what’ we are afraid) do I feel (like choking, racing heart), and look at all this like a doctor looking at the condition of a patient. In other words, examine and map out with real curiosity, “Aha, that’s interesting. When I’m afraid I tend not to speak nicely,” etc.



FEAR NOTHING BUT FEAR ALONE

**HOW TO DEAL WITH
FEAR AND ANXIETY
IN TRYING TIMES
LIKE THESE**

Now, we are in a place of managing the feelings, defining in our minds what there is, and what there isn't. This way, it's possible to start managing the reactions – to utilize the power of action. By moving from fear to logic and action, one's emotions slowly calm down because we're not preoccupied with them.

Another reason that this exercise is effective is because it doesn't push away the feeling and have you say, "I'm not afraid," but it manages it.

DOING LOTS OF GOOD

Another thing that happens to the body in partnership with the animal soul, is that when we are afraid we are flooded with adrenaline. There is an approach in healing trauma called somatic experience that many professionals use to prevent and to heal trauma and post-trauma. This flooding of adrenaline is a system that Hashem put inside of us, and its purpose is to put our inner animal into fight or flight mode. If logic prevails over the animal soul and stops it from taking action, this is the point where the body experiences trauma. We won't get into the reason for this, but this explains the feelings of irritation and aggression during tense times.

Professionals have noted that there are people who exit pressured situations with post-trauma, while others go through the difficulty and carry on, strengthened. A story like this happened in the US when a group of children was taken as hostages when terrorists took over a school (Hashem yishmor). Most of the children experienced post-trauma and a small number did not. Researchers decided to see whether there were differences that are in man's control so as not to experience post-traumatic effects.

The results of the research were astonishing. The children who did not experience it were the ones who took an active role in the situation towards the rescue of themselves and their friends! We, as Jews with a G-dly soul, and as Chassidim, can (and should) use this

system of the animal soul to serve Hashem. At times like these, it is a very good idea to take action, to do good deeds, all sorts, and mainly to fight Hashem's wars under the leadership of the Rebbe, and win! Mivtzaim, spreading Yiddishkeit, helping displaced people, giving Zoom shiurim, collecting names of soldiers for a letter in a Sefer Torah, helping soldiers, etc.

The children feel as we do. Let's have them join in the good work. Today, now, we have been given higher powers, both in body and in soul, all to bring Moshiach. I saw that one of my daughters was tense about the situation but when she began doing things (helping families from the 'Gaza envelope', giving out neshek, etc.) it calmed her. She is still afraid, but action directs the energy to a good place. By the way, it also distracted her from unhealthy thoughts and imaginings, not to mention (or maybe, yes to mention) the fact that every good, holy deed illuminates the neshama and adds *chayus* and *koach!*

PATIENCE! RESULTS AREN'T BOUGHT IN THE STORE

In tense times there is a lot of talk about positive thinking, trust in Hashem, managing emotions and all this is good, but they aren't magical solutions! If you didn't accustom yourself to thinking positively and trusting in Hashem and now you are first starting to do so, the results won't be immediate. But I think people would be surprised, if they persisted, in how relatively quickly they would achieve results. The main thing - be consistent about it!

Avodas Hashem is not a "one and done" affair, since the animal soul needs to become accustomed, to understand a language new and foreign to it, which is why we need to know that every time we think a good, trusting thought, it moves the animal soul a little bit in the right direction. So, in pressured times, maybe

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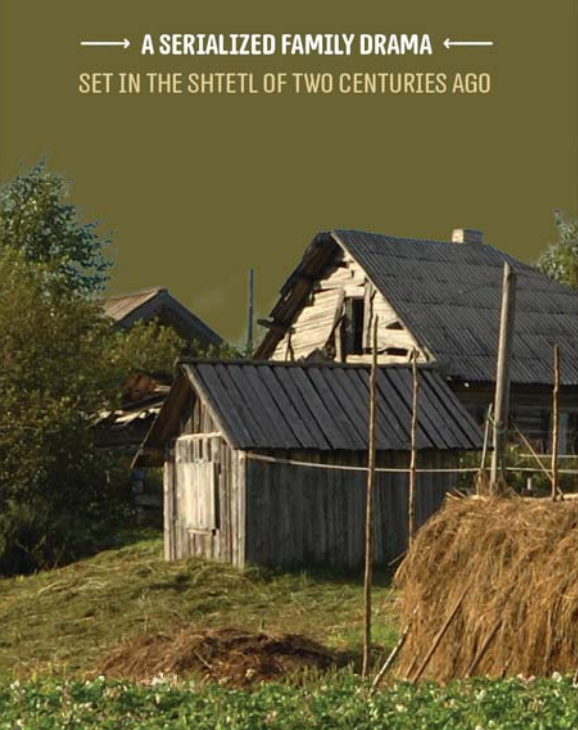
A. SHEMLI

THE SECOND HOUSEWIFE

→ A SERIALIZED FAMILY DRAMA ←
SET IN THE SHTETL OF TWO CENTURIES AGO

58

RECAP: *Shmuel played archery games with the grandchildren, and Yossel used the time to speak with Pesach Tzvi about the tension between him and Pessia. He explained to him that they must always continue to speak with one another, even if they disagree on something. Pesach Tzvi begins his drasha on the siyum of Gemara he was learning, but it was cut short when word arrived about a fire in the village.*



SHMUEL ran without stopping, hoping and praying that it was just a small local fire that could easily be controlled. With each passing moment he got closer to the scene, he realized that it was something far more serious due to the amount of smoke billowing upward.

When he came to the street where the tailors shul was located, it was difficult to get any closer. People were standing in every corner, pressed together, completely shocked. They watched the huge flames still raging. They

spoke, they cried, and they yelled. Shmuel pushed his way through, and he quickly understood that the shul could not be saved. However, he must do what he can to save people and the Sifrei Torah.

A few yards ahead, closer to the fire, the street was less crowded. The intense heat and the clouds of smoke were suffocating. The water pump and its barrel were sitting in the adjacent street. People tried together to extinguish the fire in the area of the *aron kodesh*. Yaakov the grocer stood a bit too close to the fire, clutching a Torah, looking stunned, tears filling his eyes, making streaks of soot on his face. On the ashes, near Shimshon's home, there lay a blanket covered with disorderly piles of siddurim and Chumashim safely removed from the shul. While the shul structure remained standing, the flames continued to peek through the windows, licking them from the outside. The door was already completely consumed, leaving a gaping black opening.

"Are these all the sefarim?" Shmuel inquired.

"That's all of them," Dov groaned near him.

"Where's the other Sefer Torah? You have two, don't you?" He got closer, hiding his face with his hands due to the intense heat.

"The second scroll is at Dov's house," Yaakov called out hoarsely. "As is the pasul one."

"And no one was injured," Shmuel said/asked.

"No one," Akiva replied this time. "The shul was empty."

In a flash, he decided to go in through the burned-out entrance. He lifted his arm, folding his elbow over his head, protecting both his yarmulka and his face. He had to see for himself that it was totally empty inside. He also had to look one last time at the corner where he learned with Moishe'le for hours on end.

A split second after he passed under the doorpost, the right half of the outer wall collapsed inward with the rumbling sound of wood

cracking open and a roaring fire consuming the piles of wooden planks from every direction. Startled, Shmuel moved a step back, then jumped away after touching a burning piece of wood.

In the fiery flames there sat a man bent over a Gemara, immersed in his learning, his right hand holding the sefer, supporting his head with the left. "This can't be," Shmuel told himself. His eyes opened wide as he went completely pale, catching his breath.

The person lifted his eyes and looked at Shmuel. It was Moishe'le! He didn't smile, merely gazed at him in astonishment. He appeared as if he didn't understand, gesturing with his hand as if he was asking "What?" Shmuel collapsed into a faint.

Yossel also ran without stopping, short of breath. Enough, the situation is quite serious. He's twenty-two years younger than his father, yet he can't manage to catch up with him. Ach! The closer he came to the scene, the more crowded, hot, and noisy it got – really noisy. He didn't see anything. He was looking for just one person. He'll get an update on everything else later.

After a few ill-mannered pushes and considerable use of his elbows, Yossel got close enough to identify that among the individuals standing in front of the burning synagogue was his father. At that moment, he stopped and breathed heavily and loudly, eventually managing to calm down. There were several people standing there around Shmuel, the fire illuminating their faces. He noticed Yaakov, Shimshon the wagon driver, and Akiva. Are they talking? Is it possible?

He took another deep breath when he discovered that he calmed down a bit too soon. His father walked into the shul, and the wall collapsed. The fire that had previously been just peeking through the windows spread everywhere at once, the flames licking up everything. For a brief second, he was still able to see as his father fell to the ground.

“Tatte!” he yelled, wildly pushing aside anyone who was in his path. What is this? Everyone is there and no one sees him?

Pesach Tzvi slowly came closer in stunned silence. He didn’t push, he merely looked from afar with eyes wide open at what was once the Tailors’ Shul. One moment, it was standing erect, and a second later, it folded in on itself. People stood and cried openly in the street, others were angry or screamed for some other reason. The sun was rapidly setting, but the whole region remained illuminated with a mystifying yet bright and pleasant light.

Pinye the chazzan passed through the nearby streets, proclaiming in a powerful voice in the melody of ‘Eicha’: “The Rav asks that people not forget to daven Mincha and accept upon themselves to fast tomorrow! ‘And the entire House of Israel, shall bewail the conflagration that Hashem has burned...’” Minyanim were organized in every corner.

Pesach Tzvi thinks about the beautiful Shabbos he spent there, about the “*cheder sheini*” where he had not been able to daven – and now would not. With tears in his eyes, he turned away. When he passed near the small alleyway where Mendel lived, he decided to go in.

“He doesn’t feel well,” his widowed mother sighed. “The smoke was very bad for him...”

“Mamme,” Mendel groaned hoarsely. “Let him come in.”

“Pesach,” Mendel said, preserving his strength, his face pale as he held a damp cloth over his nose and mouth. “In the *cheder sheini*, under the fourth window from the right, there’s a carton of Tanyas.” Pesach Tzvi nodded. He quickly left Mendel’s house and approached the shul from its western side. The outer wall of the *cheder sheini* was still intact, although the windows were shattered. The heat was still quite intense, and no one was standing there.

In a spur-of-the-moment decision, he took a deep breath of air, held it, and jumped inside

// BACK AT THE ESTATE, AS IN ALL OTHER HOMES IN THE VILLAGE, THERE WAS A HEAVY AND SERIOUS ATMOSPHERE, AND THE SMELL OF BURNING WOOD FILLED THE AIR EVERY TIME THE WIND BLEW IN THE PROPER DIRECTION.

through the fourth window on the right. The carton, a small one, was exactly where Mendel had said. The blaze had already broken through the inner door, ravenously licking at the benches, sending out invasive tongues of fire. He quickly tossed the carton outside, jumping out after it. He picked it up and moved away from the flames, coughing as he tried to fill his lungs with clean air.

When he started feeling stronger, he wondered where he could put the carton. He finally decided that Shimshon’s house across from the shul would be the most appropriate place. “You can’t bring it now,” an unfamiliar figure nudged him. “The *rosh ha’kahal* is here.”

“That’s right,” Pesach Tzvi thought to himself. “If the *rosh ha’kahal* is there, it wouldn’t be fitting for me to go in with a carton of Tanyas...” He chose not to delve into the matter any further.

Back at the estate, as in all other homes in the village, there was a heavy and serious atmosphere, and the smell of burning wood filled the air every time the wind blew in the right direction.

Zalman hired the mikva attendant’s two bored and overgrown sons to put back all the equipment left in the field, preferring instead to remain close to Shmuel if he needed him. The daughters-in-law put their little ones to bed, and the lobby was filled with chairs, folding tables,

tablecloths, and another few hundred items taken for the Lag B'Omer seuda near the river.

Aidel and Pessia sat on the living room sofas, quietly reciting Tehillim, showing worried looks on their faces from time to time. Tzadok and Gronem sat near the table and tried to learn, constantly being drawn into the discussions about the fire. The daughters-in-law slowly joined everyone – each one after their children had fallen asleep. Sophia, pale and quiet, served cups of tea and some cookies.

Aidel desperately hoped that they managed to save the bench she and her father used. She felt uncomfortable with this thought, preferring to daven that the aron kodesh could possibly be salvaged. However, the uncomfortable feeling didn't change her inner prayer. "The bench, Hashem!" Her father's little corner. "Please."

At around ten o'clock, Yossel came in, tired and sooty. Leah Zissel became anxious. "Are you all right?"

"I'm fine," he smiled, "Baruch Hashem, the whole village is fine. Only one person was injured and that naturally was our father..."

"Shmuel?" Aidel jumped to her feet, her face turning pale.

Yossel was alarmed by his faux pas, as he had forgotten that Aidel was there! "Everything's fine," he quickly reassured her. "He received a slight burn on his leg and inhaled a large quantity of smoke. The doctor is there treating him."

Aidel bent over and put on her shoes. "Where is he exactly?" she inquired.

"He's at Shimshon's house, across from the shul, and he begged that you shouldn't come," Yossel pleaded. "He's lying down and getting his strength back. Zalman is close at his side, and he'll be back here at home in another few hours. Everything is all right – really!"

Aidel sat down again, as if she wasn't sure whether she should believe him. "And the shul? The Sifrei Torah?" Mirele asked cautiously.

Yossel sighed. "Baruch Hashem, they managed to save all the sefarim, but the shul – of blessed memory. The structure was completely destroyed, leaving a huge pile of soaking wet ashes."

Aidel felt as if she had been slapped in the face. Her prayers had not been answered and the last vestige of her father had gone up in flames. Extremely upset, she got up and left the living room, preferring instead to deal with her pain alone.

"The shver's wife," she heard a voice quietly calling her as she was already starting to climb the staircase. She turned around in surprise. It was Pesach Tzvi, also quite sooty, standing at the foot of the stairwell, holding a wooden box. "Could you possibly open the storeroom for me? I want to put a box of *sifrei kodesh* in there," he asked softly.

"These are the *sefarim* from the fire?" Her eyes opened wide. "So, it's possible to put them in the living room!"

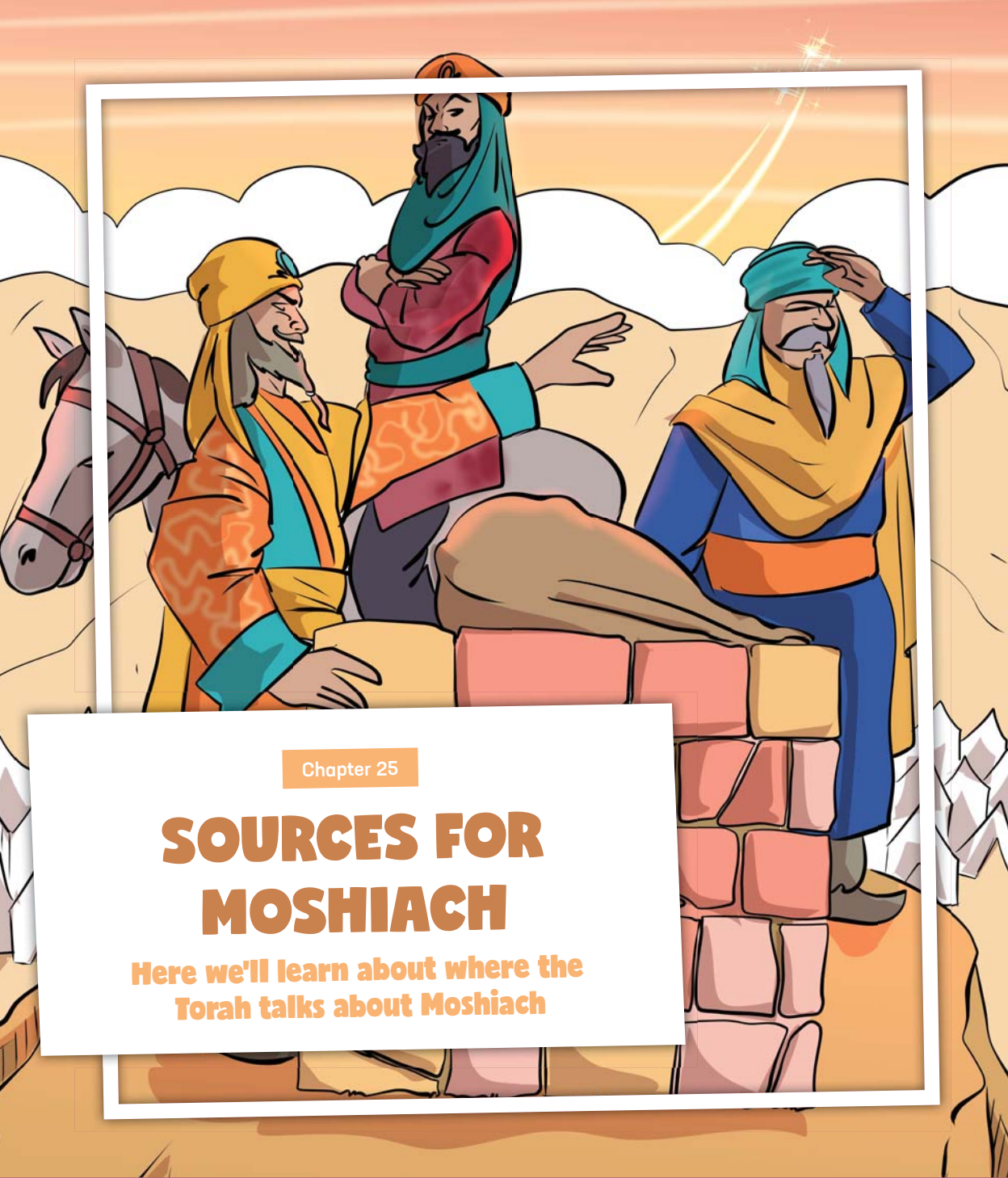
"These *sefarim* should actually go into the storeroom," Pesach Tzvi gently insisted, lowering his gaze.

Aidel shrugged her shoulders and went upstairs. She took the keychain out of the drawer and then went downstairs to open the storeroom for him. He went in and hid the box properly behind some other things.

"These are *sefarim* that Shmuel wouldn't want to be here?" she whispered suspiciously as she walked up the stairs. Pesach Tzvi blushed. "Is there a chance that the shver wouldn't want to save holy *sefarim*?" he smiled.

Aidel did not reply. She locked the door and hoped that she had done it properly. She now has more important things for which to mourn. ■

To be continued...



Chapter 25

SOURCES FOR MOSHIACH

Here we'll learn about where the Torah talks about Moshiach

One of the thirteen Principles of Faith is the belief in the coming of Moshiach. The Rambam writes that one who does not believe in the Geula, denies the Torah. In this chapter, we will learn about where in the Torah we are promised about the coming of Moshiach and we will understand why it is necessary to write it in several places and once is not enough.

► THE GEULA: EXPLICIT IN TORAH

The Torah hints to the Geula and Moshiach in several places. In the Neviim (Prophets) the Geula isn't hinted; it's spoken about openly and explicitly many times. As the Rambam puts it, "All the sefarim are full of this thing."

There are three times that the Torah promises clearly about the coming of Moshiach. The Rambam enumerates these three times and brings them as clear proof from the Torah that we are obligated to believe in the coming of Moshiach. Let's begin.

The **first** source that Rambam brings is in Devarim where the Torah says, "and the L-rd your G-d will return your captives and and have mercy on you; and He will return and gather you from all the nations where the L-rd your G-d scattered you there." It says here clearly that in the future, Hashem will have mercy on the Jewish people and gather them from exile.

► DOUBLE PROPHECY

The **second** proof of Geula is a bit surprising. It wasn't said by Hashem himself. Not even Moshe Rabeinu said it. We heard it from someone who wasn't a big tzaddik; it was the wicked Bilaam.

Balak, king of Moav was angry. Very angry. He had paid a lot of money to Bilaam the Midyanite for him to come and curse the Jews in the desert. Three times, he built altars, brought sacrifices and waited patiently to hear the curses emerging from the famous prophet's mouth, but nothing happened.

Actually, a lot happened! Not only didn't Bilaam curse but he blessed the Jewish people three times with wonderful blessings.

"Scram," said Balak to Bilaam. Bilaam turned to go but at the last moment, he had something more to say. He began with, "I will advise you about what this people will do to your nation at the end of days."

The Rambam explains this prophecy of Bilaam at length and we will learn it in brief. Bilaam tells Balak that in the future, the Jewish people will vanquish his nation and will destroy the nations that started up with them. They will do this with a great king who will rule them and lead them to victory.

The interesting part is that many verses in this prophecy were written doubled. Here are some examples: When Bilaam says he sees the greatness of the Jewish people in the distant future, he says, "I see it but not now; I behold it but not soon." When he talks about the king that will arise he says, "A star has gone forth from Yaakov, and a staff will arise from Israel."

When he describes what the king will do to the nations of the world, we found doubling again, "which will crush the princes of Moab and uproot all the sons of Seth. Edom shall be possessed, and Seir shall become the possession of his enemies ..."

The Rambam explains that Bilaam was referring to two kings who would arise for the Jews, fight their enemies, and save them. The first king was Dovid, who fought many wars over our enemies. The second king is Moshiach, who will save us from tzaros and our enemies.

► A MITZVA – NOT FOR NOTHING

The **third** proof: When the Jewish people entered Eretz Yisrael, the Torah says they should set up six cities of refuge to take in those who killed by accident. Three cities were set up in Eretz Yisrael and three cities

on the other side of the Yarden. The Torah then goes on to command that when Hashem expands the borders of the land and gives us the lands of other nations, we should add another three cities of refuge in those new lands.

The Jewish people entered the land and set up six cities but we never got the additional lands that the Torah talks about and we never fulfilled the mitzva of adding cities of refuge.

It is not possible that Hashem commanded us to do something that we could never do. If the Torah speaks about three cities which we need to set aside when we get additional lands, it has to happen. Hashem will certainly give us those additional lands so we can fulfill this mitzva.

This is additional proof that the Jewish people will return to Eretz Yisrael and not only that but we will get more than the original Eretz Yisrael. This will take place with the Geula shleima.

► “GEULA” AND “MOSHIACH”

We saw that Rambam brings three proofs about the coming of Moshiach but do we need three proofs? Wouldn't it be enough if Rambam brought just one proof? The Rebbe explains that each of these proofs has something that the other proofs do not have.

The advantage of the first proof, “and the

Lord your G-d will return your captives,” is the only place where the promise of Geula is said explicitly. The other two proofs were said as a hint. Bilaam spoke about a great king who would destroy Moav but did not say who this king would be and when he would come. We understand it only because he doubled the wording.

In contrast to that, in the first pasuk that Rambam brings, it says explicitly that after galus, Hashem will gather all the Jews to Eretz Yisrael.

The second proof, from Bilaam's prophecy, has a great advantage in that Bilaam doesn't suffice with a general promise about the Geula but emphasizes that Moshiach will come and redeem us.

We've already learned that Moshiach is an essential part of the Geula and there cannot be a Geula without Moshiach. So, the first proof is not enough and we must have the second proof too, so that we know that the Torah promises, aside from the Geula, Melech HaMoshiach too.

What is the third proof coming to add when we understand already that a Geula will happen and it will happen through Moshiach?

► PHYSICAL, NOT SPIRITUAL

To understand this, we must first explain what a mitzva in the Torah signifies and how

DID YOU KNOW? GEULA IS LIKE A SHELTER

Why did Hashem choose to promise about the Geula with the mitzva of cities of refuge and not some other mitzva? The reason is that cities of refuge are very similar to the concept of Geula.

Just like the cities of refuge protect the murderer from the avenging relative, so too, the Geula is a safe space for the Jewish people from all the not-good things that we had in galus.



STORY TIME

A VERY IMPORTANT GUEST

The tzaddik, Rabbi Yisroel of Ruzhin, was known for his strong belief in the coming of Moshiach and his powerful longing for the Geula. One time, his household was waiting for an important guest, a tzaddik, to arrive; a relative whom they hadn't seen in a long time.

When the wagon was seen in the distance, one of the children exclaimed, "He's coming! He's coming!"

R' Yisroel, who was deep in thought at the time, suddenly looked alert. He ran to the closet, took out his Shabbos clothes and put them on quickly and they hurried to the door of the house. When the tzaddik saw the guest, he looked very disappointed. When he had heard, "He's coming!" he was sure this meant Moshiach, which is why he rushed to welcome him.

it surpasses the other parts of Torah.

Hashem appointed many prophets in Yisrael. The prophets receive the word of Hashem and transmit it to the Jewish people. Many of the things a prophet says are about the future, various promises that Hashem makes.

Usually, the promises that a prophet says from Hashem must happen. After all, Hashem said them. Despite this, there are times they don't happen. For example, if a prophet says that something not-good will happen to the Jewish people or to a certain person, this can change if the nation or the person does teshuva. Hashem will then cancel the bad decree and it won't happen.

The Torah, on the other hand, is Hashem's will and wisdom. Hashem's will is eternal and cannot change. Therefore, it is not enough that Bilaam prophesied about the Geula, because a prophecy is not as sure a thing as the Torah. It is the third proof which tells us that the Geula is a certainty. It will happen, without a doubt.

There is another, deeper point. Although

all parts of the Torah are Hashem's will and eternal and will happen, there is still a difference between a mitzva in the Torah and other parts of the Torah. What is the difference?

All of Torah is eternal but it can take place spiritually and not necessarily in the physical world. For example, the stories that the Torah tells us, happened thousands of years ago and we don't see them happening now, before our eyes.

The reason is that these stories are eternal and are constantly occurring on the spiritual plane, but they aren't constantly happening in the physical world. Only their lessons exist constantly. As for mitzvos of the Torah, it's not enough that they constantly exist spiritually; their eternal quality is on the physical plane. At every time, from Mattan Torah and forever, the commands of the Torah exist in this physical world and we must do them.

When the Torah says that the Geula is part of the mitzva of the cities of refuge, that signifies two things: 1) This cannot change and will definitely happen; 2) This will actually happen in our physical world.



BY LEORA NADTOCHY - FROM THE TZADDIKSTORY.ORG COLLECTION

HIM? NOT HIM!

Yaakov was a very smart young man. He was one of the best learners in his Yeshiva, and always had the most interesting ideas about whatever he was learning. He was creative and clever, and he knew it. Miles ahead of all the other students, he finished all of Shas when he was still a young bachur.

Yaakov was from a small village in Russia where many Lubavitcher Chassidim also lived. But Yaakov wasn't friends with any of them. He didn't consider himself a Chassid at all. Who needs Chassidus? he thought to himself. I don't need a Rebbe. I can learn all by myself.

"Come with us to see the Rebbe," one of the Chassidim invited him. "Don't you want to meet this special tzaddik?"

Yaakov laughed. "What do I need a Rebbe for?" he asked. "I understand Gemara just fine on my own, and when I do get confused, I can usually figure it out just by focusing a little harder. I'm pretty good at learning, if I may say so myself."

The Chassid shook his head. "It's about more than that," he insisted. "Chassidus is about your middos - knowing how to behave properly - connecting with Hashem. Learning Torah is very important, but a Rebbe teaches us how to work on ourselves and to see what Hashem wants from us most. Just come for Shabbos and you'll understand."

Yaakov tried to say no, but the Chassidim kept asking. Every day, they would visit Yaakov and invite him to join them for Shabbos. Finally, Yaakov decided to go, just to get them to stop asking.

"Fine," he said. "I'll come. But just for one Shabbos!"

That Friday, Yaakov went with the Chassidim to see the Rebbe Rashab in the city of Lubavitch.

While there, he found himself enjoying a Shabbos unlike any other he'd ever experienced. It was warm and welcoming. Yaakov had to admit - he liked it. The food was delicious, the singing was full of emuna, and the wisdom of the Rebbe Rashab was very inspiring.

On Motzoei Shabbos, Yaakov lined up with the rest of the Chassidim outside the Rebbe's office.

"Write the Rebbe a tzetl," one Chassid explained. "It's like a personal note. You can ask him anything you want."

Yaakov quickly wrote his letter and folded it into a square. It was strange, but Yaakov felt excited. He was looking forward to this one-on-one time with the great tzaddik. But when Yaakov finally went in, the Rebbe didn't even look up at him.

Yaakov didn't know what to do. For a minute, he stood there, watching the Rebbe. Then he slipped his note onto the Rebbe's desk. Yaakov thought about saying something, but the Rebbe seemed so focused on his *sefer*. Maybe it was better to just slip out and let the Rebbe learn.

But suddenly, the Rebbe stood up. He started walking back and forth, muttering in Russian.

Yaakov tried to make out what he was saying.

"It's him, it's not him. It's him, it's not him."

The Rebbe stopped and stared directly at Yaakov. "No, it's not him!"

Then the Rebbe sat back down, looked back at his *sefer*, and, again, acted as if Yaakov wasn't there.

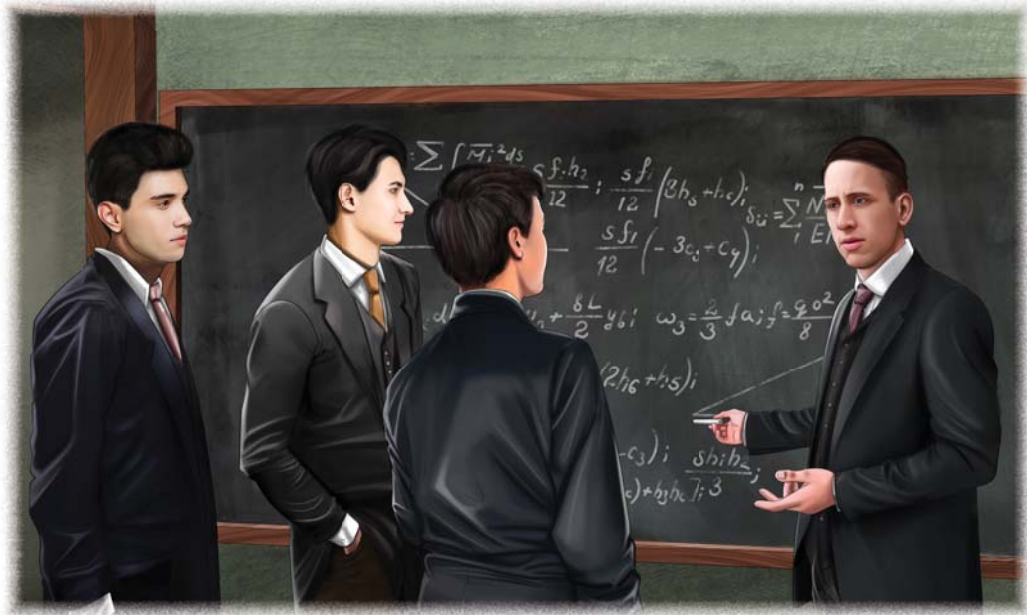
Confused, Yaakov decided to leave. He walked quietly out of the room and thought over everything that had happened. He didn't have any clues to help him understand what

was going on, so instead, Yaakov put the Rebbe and his strangeness behind him and returned to his normal life.

Months later, Yaakov was flipping through the newspaper, when he saw a local university had posted a complicated math problem. A few lines under the math problem promised that anyone who could solve it would win an amazing prize! Yaakov wanted that prize. He spent some time using his smarts and his knowledge of Gemara to solve the math problem, and then sent his answer to the university.

A few days later, a letter congratulating Yaakov came in the mail. Yaakov had successfully figured out the math problem and had won 300 rubles! This was a lot of money. He was also invited to meet the head of the university's math program to receive his prize. Yaakov started preparing for his trip. He scheduled a train ticket, found a place to stay, and let the head of the program know when to meet him.





Once there, the head of the program looked shocked. “You’re the one who solved the math problem?” he asked Yaakov. “Where did you study math? You’re obviously a genius - tell me which school you studied in.”

Yaakov shook his head. “I’ve never studied math. I learn Gemara all day.”

The head of the program started to laugh and handed Yaakov his prize money. “I can’t believe this,” he said. “No one’s ever solved that math problem before! It’s almost impossible. Only the very best mathematicians - people who spend their whole lives studying math - could figure that problem out. You’re truly a genius, my friend.”

Yaakov and the head of the program sat down to talk about math. The head of the program was surprised by how smart Yaakov was. He didn’t know Jews could be so clever. Russia has had a long history of being not nice to Jews.

“You should go to school here,” the man said. “I’m sure you’d be at the top of your class! We’ll even give you a scholarship, so your studies will cost you nothing. Please,

I insist - you have to leave the study of Gemara. With proper training, you could be one of the greatest mathematicians in the world. I’ll make sure of that.”

Yaakov got excited when he heard this. His heart rate picked up as he imagined his life filled with studying. It was a new challenge, and Yaakov couldn’t wait to get started. Not even a week later, Yaakov’s home in the small village where he grew up was packed away and shipped off to the university, where he would start the next chapter of his life.

In the beginning, Yaakov still learned Torah - in his mind, going to university didn’t have to be an end to keeping Torah and doing mitzvos. He kept his peyos and tzizis and always wore a kippa. But, as the months went on, and Yaakov became closer with his classmates, that started to change. Pretty soon, Yaakov looked like everyone else at the university - and none of them were Jewish. Yaakov even stopped going home to visit his parents! He didn’t want to be Jewish anymore. Those were the old-fashioned ways of the shtetl life. He even changed his name.

Yaakov was now “Ivan.” Ivan, the amazing mathematician.

Ivan was smart, and he was doing well in school. That seemed to be enough for him. Ivan was happy.

“We want you to become a professor,” the head of the program said one day. “We just need you to convert to Christianity, and then we can give you the job.”

Ivan was torn. He hadn’t lived as a Jew in a while. Converting shouldn’t be such a big deal, especially if it came with a great job! Ivan took a few days to think about it, and then eventually agreed. After all, his Jewish life was behind him! He had no reason to say no.

In the beginning, Ivan was happy. He was going to fancy restaurants, and he married a nice Russian woman. His life was the happiest it had ever been! His new friends didn’t even know he’d been born Jewish. But as the months turned into years, Ivan started feeling guilty about converting. One day, he realized he missed his old life. Ivan the Mathematician wanted to be Yaakov the

Jew again! But there was nothing he could do. In Russia, it was illegal for Yaakov to go back to living as a Jew - if anyone found out, he could be killed!

So, instead, Ivan went hunting. He had first started hunting as a sport, killing animals just for fun. He did it with his non-Jewish friends when he first converted, years ago. But now, it was something Ivan liked to do to calm down. He enjoyed the quiet time alone in the woods.

Ivan saddled his horse and hopped on. The two trotted slowly to the woods. He looked around at the green leaves and colorful flowers. He breathed in the smell of the tall grass. He was starting to enjoy himself, when his horse sped up. Suddenly, they were whizzing through the woods, branches and thorns tugging at Ivan’s clothing. His heart slammed in his chest. He tried pulling on the reins, begging his horse to slow down.

“Please,” he screamed. Ivan was terrified he was going to die. Tears fell down his face.

“Hashem,” Ivan screamed. “I’ll do teshuva. Please, save me!”



And, suddenly, the horse stopped.

That night, Ivan decided he was going back to being Yaakov, and he went straight to the Jewish community. He didn't even stop at home to say goodbye to his wife. Yaakov traveled until he could see the lights of his old village, glowing in the distance. He walked between the homes and knocked on the door of his old Rav, who was now many years older.

Yaakov spent hours telling his Rav about his plans to come back to Yiddishkeit. He told him story after story, until the Rav trusted he was telling the truth.

"You need to go to galus, exile, for one year," the Rav said. "That will help you make up for your sins. You converted and left Yiddishkeit - you need to do a real teshuva. Once the year is up, come back to me, and I will be happy to guide you home!"

The truth is, the Rav was nervous. He wasn't sure if he could trust Yaakov. It was illegal to help anyone come back to Judaism, and the Rav was worried that Yaakov was a secret agent, trying to get him in trouble.

Back at home, Yaakov's non-Jewish wife was growing worried. She hadn't seen her husband in a few days and decided to call the police, telling them how her husband had been acting strangely. They immediately started searching for him. For months, the police carried Yaakov's picture, trying to find him.

But Yaakov was moving from city to city. He started growing out his beard and peyos and always wore dirty clothes. He looked nothing like the wealthy, put-together professor he once was. One day, while Yaakov was at the local inn drinking hot tea, a group of Russian police officers burst into the restaurant.

"Show us your papers!" they demanded. "You look familiar!"

But Yaakov had no papers to show. He had thrown out his papers that showed he was not Jewish, and he had long ago thrown away the papers that said the opposite. In Russia, you needed to have your papers on you all the time. The police were allowed to ask to see them whenever they wanted, and you had to be ready to prove who you were. But Yaakov didn't have anything! He knew if anyone ever found out who he was, they would kill him.

"Get up," the policeman said. "You're coming with us."

Back at the police station, an investigator showed Yaakov the picture they had of him as a professor. His hair was shorter and there was no beard, but Yaakov recognized himself right away.

"I don't know who this is," Yaakov said.

The investigator picked up the image and put it next to Yaakov's face. Then, he started mumbling in Russian to himself.

"It's him... No, it's not him. It's him... it's not him. No, it's not him!" he said, staring right at Yaakov.



Yaakov couldn't believe what he was hearing. All these years, he'd never forgotten his visit to the Rebbe Rashab, and here was this policeman, saying the exact same words the tzaddik had said. Yaakov suddenly realized the truth of that visit all those years ago - the Rebbe wasn't ignoring him, he was saving him!

That night, after leaving the police station, Yaakov set right out for the Rebbe's home. Once he got there, he never turned back! He became a Chassid of the Rebbe Rashab, and lived the Torah-true life of the Chassidim.



*to bring
moshiach tzidkeinu!*

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TISHREI IN SAMARKAND

The Adventures of a Jewish Boy in Soviet Russia ... Rabbi Hillel Zaltzman



I need this Esrog. It's for all the Jews of Samarkand — the chassidim and locals!



Is that true? I'm charging 10,000 rubles for the Esrog. It was a big risk for me...



That's a fortune! More than a year's salary... But there's no choice, I'll pay it!

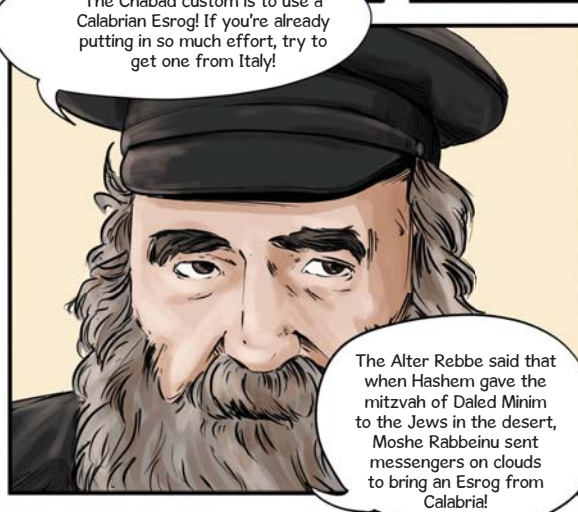
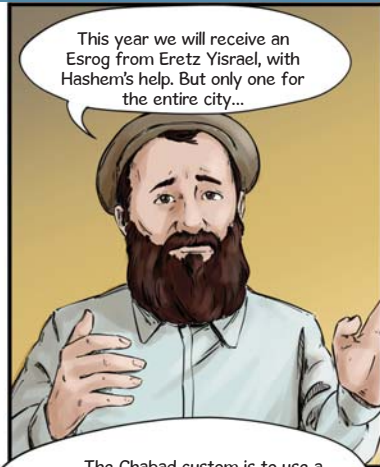


Only in his merit were the Jews of Samarkand and its surroundings able to do the mitzvah!

Wow! What a tremendous zechus! But what will be this year?

Recap: Building the sukkah comes by so easy in Samarkand, but obtaining the Daled Minim aren't nearly as simple...

Chapter 12



To be continued...



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