

BEIS MOSHIACH

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THE REBBE'S DOLLARS MAKE THEIR ROUNDS...



THE SHLIACH WHO HAD NO FREEDOM OF CHOICE...

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF
FLORIDA SHLIACH AND
DIRECTOR OF THE ALEPH
INSTITUTE, RABBI SHOLOM
BER **לפסר** LIPSKAR



THE HIDDEN TZADIK WHO ALWAYS MADE THE REBBE SMILE

THE MYSTERY OF "CHARLIE
BUTTONS," REB TZADIK
HALEVI NASSOFER **לפסר**



THE MONTICELLO YOU DIDN'T KNOW

SARA GOPIN TALKS TO SHTERNA
SARA CHANOWITZ FROM
CHABAD OF MONTICELLO, NY



יחי אדוננו מורנו ורבינו מלך המשיח לעולם ועד



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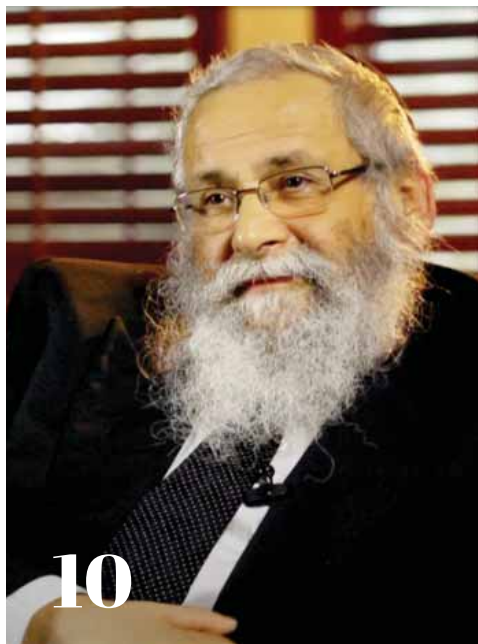
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Lessons From Hillel's "Tuition Crisis"

In the unique letter to an individual From Silver Springs, Maryland dated 29 Tammuz 5737 (1977), the Rebbe responds to questions the correspondent had on the Gemara's story of Hillel Hazaken's dedication to learning Torah (Yoma 35b) as it was published in a Chabad weekly publication called "A Thought For The Week" and connects it to the always relevant topic of tuition expenses for a Torah education.

...This is to acknowledge receipt of your comments on "A Thought of the Week" on the subject of Torah study, wherein you take exception to the story of Hillel and the doorkeeper of the Bais Hamedrash, as related by our Sages and cited in the said "Thought."

Needless to say, in relating this story and including it in the Torah (meaning - teaching, instruction), the Sages did not intend to focus on the doorkeeper's conduct with a view to condemn him. The real purpose of the story is to bring out a two-pronged lesson, both for those who are in the category of the doorkeeper and those who are in the category of seeking admission to the house of learning, as pointed out in the said "Thought."

In Defense of the Door Keeper

First of all, there are several points in the story which you have apparently overlooked:

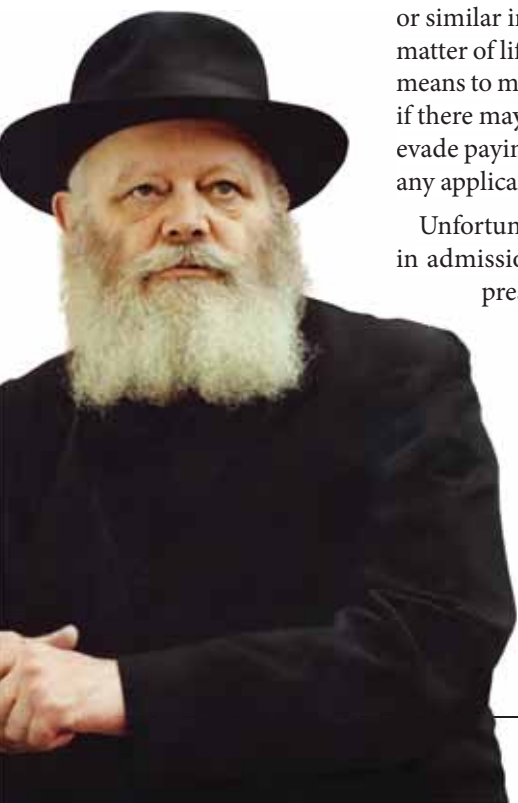
It should be self-evident that the doorkeeper had no idea that his refusing to admit Hillel would result in any danger to him (Hillel).

It should also be self-evident that the charge of a (relatively small) fee for admission was necessitated by the need to defray the costs of maintaining the school. It only reflects the general state of poverty of Jewish communities in those days which could not

“

Those who are in the category of the doorkeeper, those in charge of admission to a Yeshivah or similar institution ... should bear in mind that Torah study is a matter of life for a Jewish boy and girl

”



afford to provide free tuition to advanced students. This can also be seen from the poor economic situation of Hillel himself.

It may be assumed that had Hillel sought assistance or intervention, he could have gained admission without imperiling his life. But in view of his character and extraordinary humility, as related in various places in the Talmud and as indicated in this episode itself, it was out of the question for him to accept charity or any special favor.

Why Did Hillel Not Ask for a “Scholarship”?

He would only use his own hard-earned money for admission, and even if he could be admitted free, by way of a special “scholarship” as it is now called, it would be at public expense, which would not be acceptable to him.

A further mitigating circumstance is the fact that insofar as the doorkeeper is concerned Hillel had been paying the admission fee daily, prior to the incident. Undoubtedly, the doorkeeper did not know that Hillel was paying for it with half of his daily earnings, for true to his character, Hillel would surely not have boasted about it. It is therefore reasonable to assume that Hillel was well able to pay for his admission, but for some reason did not want to pay it on that particular day.

Yeshiva Administrations as The “Doorkeepers”

Now for the lessons of this story: Insofar as those who are in the category of the doorkeeper, those in charge of admission to a Yeshivah or similar institution, they should bear in mind that Torah study is a matter of life for a Jewish boy and girl and should seek every possible means to make it available to each and every Jewish boy and girl. Even if there may be a doubt that a particular applicant might be trying to evade paying for tuition, no child should be turned away; nor should any applicant be made to feel embarrassed in any case of hardship.

Unfortunately these principles have not always been fully observed in admissions to some Day Schools and Torah institutions in the present time.

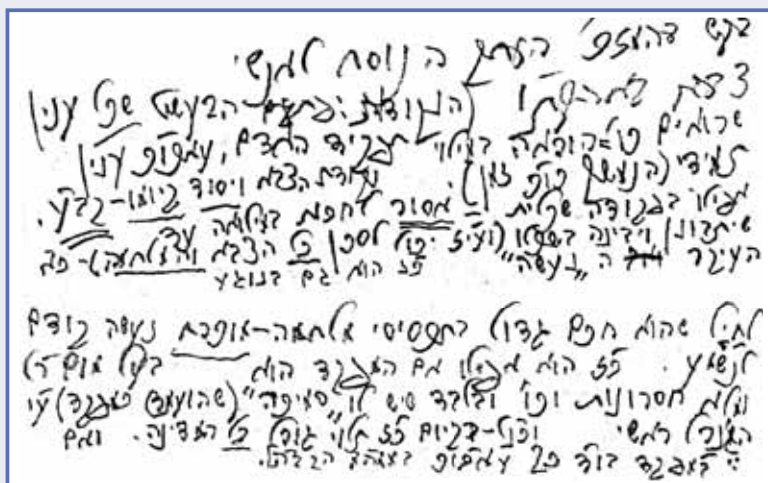
And for those who are in the category of seeking admission to Torah learning, the lesson is that no sacrifice should be too great when it comes to Torah study. Even those who have been learning Torah every day, and it is a question of missing just one day (as in the case of Hillel), the same sacrifice should be made not to miss even a single day of Torah-study. There is surely no need to elaborate further on the above.

(“The Letter and the Spirit” Vol 4 (Nissan Mindel Publications, 2017), p. 317)



The Foundation of an Army

This note was addressed to an individual who was scheduled to speak before soldiers in the IDF and asked the Rebbe what the proper message would be:



יבקש בהמזמך [ירות] העתק הנוסח לאנשי צבא באהקת"ו [=בארץ הקודש תבנה ותכונן (הנקודות: פתגם הבעש"ט שכל ענין שרואים כו' = הוראה במילוי תפקיד האדם, עאכו"כ [=על אחת כמה וכמה] ענין תמידי (הנמשך כו"כ [=כמה וכמה] זמן).

נקודת הצבא ויסוד קיומו - קב"ע [=קבלת עול]. אפילו בפקודה שכלית - אסור לחכות במילואה עד שיתבונן ויבינה בשכלו (ועי"ז יכול לסכן כל הצבא והמלחמה) - כ"א [=כי אם] העיקר ה"נעשה" כ"ז [=כל זמן] הוא גם בנוגע לחיל שהוא חכם גדול בתכסיסי מלחמה - מוכרח נעשה קודם לנשמע.

כ"ז הוא אפילו אם המפקד הוא בעל מוסר"ל ומלא חסרונות וכו' ובלבד שיש לו "סמיכה" (השועמד כמפקד) ע"י הג'נרל ראשי וכו"ל - בקיום כ"ז תלוי גורל כל המדינה.

ואם במפקד בו"ד [=בשר ודם] כך עאכו"כ בממה"מ [=על אחת כמה וכמה
במלך מלכי המלכים] הקב"ה.

Request from my secretariat a copy of a standard text of a letter sent
to army personnel in Eretz Yisrael ת"י.

[The main points are as follows:

- The teaching of the Baal Shem Tov that everything one sees and is made aware of is a lesson guiding him in fulfilling his role as a person, all the more so regarding a constant matter such as being a soldier (that continues for a considerable amount of time).
- The main point of an army and its founding principle which allows its continued existence is *kabbalas ol* (accepting the yoke/discipline).
- Even regarding an logical order - it is forbidden to delay implementation until one contemplates and understands it intellectually (and if this is done, one could endanger the entire army and the war effort) - instead, the main thing is "*naaseh*" (we will do).
- All of this applies even to a soldier who is a great scholar in military tactics - he too must do "*naaseh*" (action) before "*nishma*" (understanding).
- All of this applies even if the commander has defects, *Rachman litzlan* (G-d forbid), and is full of shortcomings, etc. Still, so long as he has been ordained as commander by the chief general, his orders must be carried out regardless of whether his subordinates understand them. And as mentioned above - the fate of the entire nation depends upon the fulfillment of all this.
- And if this is so regarding a commander of flesh and blood, all the more so regarding the mitzvos and orders of the King of Kings, the Holy One Blessed be He. ■





FAQ on the Order of Krias HaTorah

A selection of halachos of the topic of Krias HaTorah, by HaRav Yosef Yeshaya Braun, Mara D'Asra and member of the Crown Heights

Taking Out the Torah

Q. Can you please provide me with some clarity regarding taking out the Sefer Torah: Often the *amud* is right next to the Aron Kodesh and the *chazan* stands right there. But I've noticed that in shuls where the *amud* is a few feet away the *chazan* walks up to the Aron where the one who opened up the Aron hands him the *sefer* the second he takes it out. In some places the *chazan* waits till they bring him the *sefer*. What is the right way?

A. The *sefer* Torah is passed to the *chazan*, provided he is right there or if he is closer to the Bima. If he is indeed further, he should come closer [showing respect to the Torah]. #42925c*

Q. Can a child that understands the kedusha of a Sefer Torah do *pesicha* and hand the Torah to the *chazan*? If the only issue would be כבוד הציבור, disrespect for the congregation and the *ציבור* is okay with it would it be permitted?

A. This is not respectful to the Sefer Torah and should not be done.

Bringing the Torah to the People to Kiss

Q. Is it okay to walk the Sefer Torah through the congregation for people to kiss it before leining?

A. Out of respect for the Torah, it should not be taken out of the regular route for people to kiss. The congregants should approach the Torah instead. #17420*

Aliyos

Q. Can a wheelchair-bound person get an Aliya even though one must stand by an Aliya?

A. [Generally standing is required, but] one may be lenient, when there is a need. #39016*

Q. There are two people in our Minyan with the same name and father's name. Does the Gabbai need to call each of them for an Aliya with the grandfather's name as well? Eg. מנחם מענדל בן יוסף יצחק בן שניאור זלמן and מנחם מענדל בן יוסף יצחק בן שלום דובער

A. You may do so, but there's no requirement for various reasons, see Hebrew notes on website for more on this. #36811*

Two Aliyos in One Kriah

Q. A Levi who has *yahrtzeit* in the coming week, and is the only Levi present. Should he receive both Levi and Maftir? The question is how important it is to receive Maftir compared with the other considerations. Would it be better for him to step out and have the Kohen receive two Aliyos? Or should all the Kohanim and the Levi step out. Or is it more important to maintain the order of Kohen, Levi and Yisroel and he should forego Maftir?

A. If there are two Sifrei Torah (like on Yom *Tov* etc.) – he must leave by Levi if he wishes to get *maftir* [as getting another aliya on another Torah can arouse suspicions that the first Torah is *passul*].

One Sefer Torah – The *kohanim* should be *mochel* and leave [so as not to cause that the kohen to say an unnecessary *bracha*]. If it is not possible, the Levi may get two *aliyos*. See sources for explanation. #33198*

Joining a Minyan Where They Add Aliyos

Q. I understand that *minhag Chabad* is to not add Aliyos by Krias HaTotah on Shabbos, and it is possibly prohibited due to *brachos l'vatala*. Would it be permissible/advisable to get an added Aliya at such a Minyan? Would it be permissible/advisable to act as the Baal Korei at such a Minyan?

A. There is no issue with acting as the *baal korei* at a *minyan* on Shabbos day which is *mosif* extra *aliyos*. It is preferred not to get an added *aliya* at a *minyan* on Shabbos day

which adds extra *aliyos*. However, if they call you up, you should take the *aliya*. Best if you can read the *aliya* out loud in place of the *baal korei*. [See Tzmeach Tzedek on Orach Chaim Sec. 35 at the end.]

Hagbaha


Q. During Hagbahas HaTorah, how many columns are required at a minimum, and what is the maximum number of columns that can be opened?

A. One should attempt to show three columns. One should not open more under usual circumstances [see Toldos Levi Yitzchok Vol. 1 p. 271 for the Rebbe's father's custom].


Bringing the Torah Back

Q. Are all the people who got *kibudim* around the Sefer Torah supposed to walk behind the Sefer Torah as a sign of honor as I've seen customary in many shuls, or should it be brought back by one person on its own?

A. Only the *magbiah* and some say also the *golel* [must do so]. Even so, there is room to be lenient that it's not necessary if the Sefer Torah isn't put back right after *hagbaha*, unless the *magbiah* was holding it till יהלל. The Rebbe [who regularly said *maftir*] accompanied the Sefer Torah on Yom *Tov*, when there was hardly any time between the end of *haftorah* and returning the Sefer Torah, but not on Shabbos. #42925a* ■



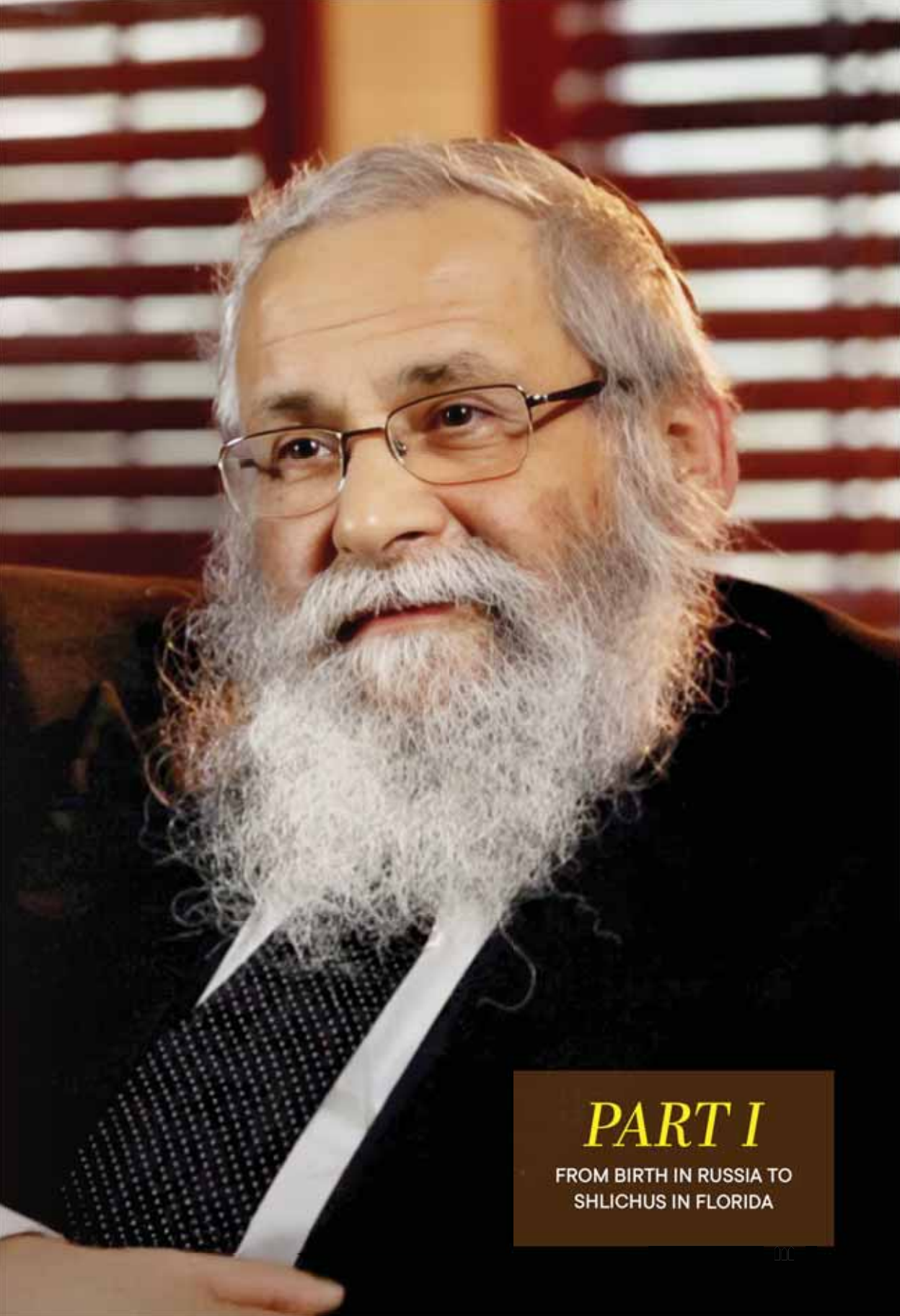
THE SHLIACH WHO HAD NO FREEDOM OF CHOICE...



HE WAS A BABY SMUGGLED OUT OF RUSSIA WHO WENT ON TO BE ONE OF THE MOST RESPECTED SHLUCHIM OF THE REBBE WHOSE WORK EXTENDED FAR BEYOND THE PULPIT OF "THE SHUL" AT BEL HARBOR, FLORIDA THROUGH THE ALEPH INSTITUTE THAT REACHED U.S. SERVICEMEN ABROAD AND JEWISH PRISONERS BEHIND BARS.

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF **RABBI SHOLOM BER ה"ו לIPSKAR**, A SHLIACH WHO WAS PROUDLY DEVOTED TO THE REBBE'S PRIMARY SHLICHUS OF KABOLAS PNEI MOSHIACH TZIDKEINU

AVRAHAM RAINITZ



PART I

FROM BIRTH IN RUSSIA TO
SHLICHUS IN FLORIDA

“I am traveling with you, but it should be b’simcha! Because if it’s not b’simcha, what purpose would there be in taking me with you?”

With these words, the Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach accompanied the young couple, Rabbi **Shalom Ber Lipskar**, and his wife **Chani**, as they went out on shlichus to south Florida in 5729. These decisive words were transformed into the life’s compass of someone who eventually became one of the most influential and well-known shluchim in the Chabad world.

On numerous occasions, Rabbi Lipskar would review the Rebbe’s words and explain their meaning, and while the Rebbe would be with them whether they are b’simcha or not – he demands the simcha as a condition for the success of their shlichus.

On Shabbos Kodesh Parshas Tazria-Metzora, the fifth of Iyar 5785, Rabbi Shalom Ber Lipskar suddenly returned his soul to its Maker. His passing at the age of seventy-eight stunned and shocked his thousands of friends and supporters throughout the world. R’ Lipskar was a true Chassid and leader, the Rebbe’s shliach with all his heart and soul.

While he had close relationships with numerous affluent benefactors, he was never drawn to all the material temptations of this world, choosing to live a simple life. His Chassidic behavior and conduct, such as walking in the city streets wearing his kapota and tallis, even in the sweltering heat of south Florida in the summer, radiated a sense of *yiras shamayim* and had a powerful influence upon his immediate environment.

While in recent years, he was considered one of the most successful shluchim anywhere, when he administered an empire of educational institutions in one of the wealthiest places in the world, nevertheless, at the start of his shlichus, he was compelled to deal with the most difficult situations, both material and spiritual. Only with the strength of the Rebbe’s brachos, and in the merit of the inner negation

of his personal will to the ultimate purpose of shlichus, was fulfilled the pasuk “And your beginning shall be small, but your end shall increase exceedingly.”

The Infant Who Escaped From Russia

The life story of R’ Shalom Ber Lipskar began in 5706, in the city of Tashkent, Uzbekistan. This was the period of the great escape of Chabad Chassidim from the Soviet Union. His father, R’ Eliyahu Akiva Lipskar, was one of the Chassidim who joined the getaway operation.

A few months after Shalom Ber’s birth, his parents took a serious risk and smuggled him with the rest of the family over the border. The young family secretly made its way to the DP (displaced persons) camps in post-war occupied Germany, when they dressed the baby in infant girl’s clothes, as he was recorded in the forged passports as a ‘female’...

At the conclusion of the harsh and difficult journey, the Lipskars arrived with their son in the free world.

In the early Yuds (fifties), the family settled in Toronto, Canada. In this new environment, far from the terror of the Communist regime, the parents built their lives anew, based on the tenets of Chassidic teachings. The couple dedicated themselves to Jewish education: the father served as a devoted teacher, while the mother was a beloved counselor and instructor. The two of them even did a great deal of work for the Chabad summer camps, providing young children with a little taste of a real Jewish experience.

Even in his youth, Shalom Ber stood out with his sharpness of mind and intense curiosity. When he reached yeshiva age, he was sent to learn at the local branch of Yeshivas “Tomchei Tmimim.” Later, he continued his studies at the Central Lubavitcher Yeshiva in 770, where they noticed the tremendous skills and vitality of the Russian-Canadian bochur, appointing him as one of those seven students chosen to



Rabbi Lipskar and Mr. Mel Landow at dollars distribution with the Rebbe

give over an in-depth Talmudic pilpul once a week before the other talmidim.

In 5728, he received his rabbinical ordination and shortly thereafter, he married his wife Chani (nee Minkowicz), also a member of a Chabad Chassidic community from Canada.

From the very start of their joint spiritual journey, the young couple was prepared to go out on whatever shlichus mission was placed upon them.

The Strength To Go Out On Shlichus

Going out on shlichus was a major element in their formative private yechidus with the Rebbe, which left an indelible impression on the young couple.

After the Rebbe instructed R' Lipskar to check into the field of education, he received

three offers for shlichus in the field. One of them was to move to Miami.

Rebbetzin Chani Lipskar later said that before the yechidus, they explained to her that during the private audience, you simply listen to the Rebbe's words. Nevertheless, when the Rebbe chose the shlichus in Miami for them, she couldn't restrain herself... "It just hit me suddenly, and I blurted it out without noticing what I was doing," she recalled in an interview.

She turned to the Rebbe and said: "I want to fulfill the will of the Rebbe and carry out his shlichus. But it's going to be very hard for me. First of all, I don't know if I'll be able to succeed on shlichus. Secondly, it will be most difficult for me to leave my current location." In her interview, she added: "I loved living where I was residing at the time." Her husband, R' Lipskar, stood alongside her, facing the Rebbe with a pale expression on his face.



In response, the Rebbe raised himself slightly from his chair, reached out his broad hand and said with a wide grin filled with love: “*Ich fahr doch mit eich*” (I am traveling with you). He then added a vital condition: “*Ober s’zahl zein b’simcha*” (But this must be with joy). He continued: “*Veil oib nisht b’simcha, vos darft ir mir mitnemen?*” (Because if it’s not with joy, why do you need to take me with you?)

R’ Lipskar always emphasized that the Rebbe didn’t say that if they won’t be b’simcha, he won’t come with them, rather he asked why they would take him to such a place without simcha. The message was clear: Simcha is the tool for success on shlichus, and this is what will bring the Rebbe’s brachos.

“During the yechidus,” Mrs. Lipskar recalled, “the Rebbe asked me: ‘Do you help your husband?’”

“I try,” I replied. I was embarrassed to say, ‘Yes, I do.’

“The Rebbe then looked at me again, gave a pleasant smile that I remember to this day, and said: ‘Well then, if you are trying, then you need to do more.’ He then added something important: ‘However, you are his partner, you are his partner.’ I really feel that this is a partnership – a full-time partnership...”

A Life-Changing Meeting

Some time later, R’ Lipskar and his wife arrived at their destination: the sun and fun capital of the world, Miami Beach, Florida.

While those years in the Sunshine State were years of material plenty and demographic prosperity, in contrast, Florida also knew a spiritual downfall among many young Jewish people. South Florida was known as a “retirement home” for the elderly, not as a center of Torah. Although the local Jewish community was firmly established, it was mainly egalitarian or even assimilated.

Torah-based educational institutions for young children were few in number.

With this background, the young couple, instilled with the fire of shlichus, landed in Miami. The reality of the situation was very difficult and challenging. The Miami of those days was a far cry from the Miami of today. Meat and dairy products had to be brought from very long distances, and in most cases, the dairy products spoiled before reaching their destination...

R' Lipskar even encountered direct opposition from the local Jewish establishment. When he met with members of the Jewish Federation, he was received quite coldly. "We don't need people like you here; you're not wanted here," they said, and escorted him out without letting him return. Yet, these tremendous difficulties did not discourage him, in fact, they actually hardened his determination to illuminate Miami's spiritual darkness.

R' Lipskar began his shlichus as a staff member with the yeshiva established in Miami Beach. He was soon appointed as principal of the city's Chabad Talmud Torah – a very challenging position for a young married man still in his early twenties. He invested long days and nights in administering the educational institutions: advancing learning programs, convincing parents to register their children, while raising the necessary financial resources to maintain the institutions. Even then, his ability in speaking to people's hearts became quite prominent. "Touching the soul," in the words of his friends and acquaintances, whether he was facing a young student or a philanthropic tycoon.

The Rebbe Said: I Have Met A Jew Whom G-d Has Given Strengths That Even I Don't Have...

One of the most influential stories of that period is connected to a seemingly chance meeting that became a historic milestone for Jewish education in Florida: Shortly after his arrival in Miami, R' Lipskar began teaching

a weekly Torah class. One of the participants was David Lifschitz. A local tennis champion, he mentioned that he plays regularly with Mr. Mel Landow, owner of a large wholesale sales network of electrical appliances.

Looking for an opportunity to put on tefillin with Mr. Landow, R' Lipskar arrived at the tennis courts and proposed a deal: If David won the match, Mel would put on tefillin... Landow, who was an excellent tennis player in his own right, agreed to the deal – and lost. As soon as the match was over, Landow put on tefillin.

The spiritual experience touched Landow's heart, and he started participating in weekly Torah classes dealing with the Rebbe's sichos. Nevertheless, he refused to put on tefillin again, claiming that it was "not relevant" for him.

Two years later, in 5732, when the school was experiencing some serious financial difficulties, Landow invited R' Lipskar to his home and informed him of his intention to make a donation of half a million dollars to build a new facility for the Jewish day school – an unprecedented amount at that time. R' Lipskar quickly and happily reported these developments to the Rebbe.

A few days later, the Rebbe's secretary, Rabbi Chodakov, called and suggested that R' Lipskar should try again to put on tefillin with Landow. R' Lipskar expressed doubts if he would agree. Suddenly, he heard the Rebbe's voice on the line. The Rebbe noted that he was about to travel to the Ohel, and this would be an appropriate time for putting on tefillin... The Rebbe also recommended using a nice-looking pair of tefillin with attractive boxes.

R' Lipskar came to Landow's tennis court and explained to him that the Rebbe is going to the Ohel, and he will surely pray for him if he will put on tefillin. To his great surprise, Mr. Landow consented, and from that day forward, he began putting on tefillin every day.

Later, R' Lipskar arranged a meeting between Landow and the Rebbe. Landow

brought plans for the school in Miami to the meeting, together with plans for a big and most impressive project that he wanted to kick off in Eretz Yisrael, including golf courses, conference facilities, and a spa. In his meeting with the Rebbe, Landow displayed pride in his development plans for the Holy Land.

The Rebbe responded with a challenging question: When you host a guest in your home, what do you show him: the library and the living room – or the bathroom?... When Landow replied, “The library and the living room,” the Rebbe asked him: “Then why are you building a ‘bathroom’ in Eretz Yisrael?” referring to the spa. The Rebbe reasoned that there are far more important things to do in Eretz HaKodesh.

The conversation deeply moved Landow’s soul. Instead of empty words of praise, the Rebbe gave him a loving sense of truth and a demand for responsibility. That nighttime meeting lasted well over an hour, and at its conclusion, Landow left the room filled with excitement, his mind churning away. “No one had ever spoken that way to me before,” he told R’ Lipskar, “but he was absolutely right.” The two spoke until the wee hours of the morning about the future of the Jewish People. R’ Lipskar felt that he was bearing witness to a moment of change – a Jew of considerable affluence suddenly directing his heart not to a contribution of a building of stone, but a spiritual construction of young neshamos.

The following day, Rabbi Chodakov gave over a message to Landow from the Rebbe, an extremely rare one in its significance: “I have met a Jew whom G-d has given strengths that even I don’t have... through which he will bring hundreds of thousands of Jews back to their roots. A person usually doesn’t see a building’s foundations, but here, I have seen strong and deep foundations.”

The day after, a letter arrived from the Rebbe in which he explained his “un-American” approach in the meeting – instead of showering Landow with accolades and compliments, he challenged him with new projects because he

believed in his ability to accept the suggestions in the proper spirit.

In his letter, the Rebbe expressed his hope that Landow understood what he really meant – an invitation to join a tremendous educational shlichus.

Not only did Landow understand, he believed it and accepted it. He assumed this great new visionary mission with all his might, and within a short period of time, he announced that he would be making a contribution of \$500,000 – an incredibly large sum of money back then – for the establishment of an additional Jewish educational center in Miami Beach.

The new institution, named “The Landow Yeshiva Center,” served as an all-purpose facility combining kindergartens, a Talmud Torah, elementary and yeshiva high schools, turning over the years into an infrastructure for thousands of growing Jewish students throughout south Florida.

Thus, from an unexpected beginning on a tennis court, a revolution in Jewish education was born when R’ Lipskar, as director of local Chabad institutions in constant contact with the philanthropist, skillfully navigated the fulfillment of the Rebbe’s vision.

At a Critical Moment In His Life, The Secretary Whispered In His Ear: You Have A Shlichus!

During the early years of R’ Lipskar’s shlichus, there were also some complex and difficult personal challenges, including those of an economic nature. There were days when they simply didn’t have what to eat, and when they returned home, they prayed to Hashem that they wouldn’t discover that their electricity had been cut off due to continual lack of payment...

In the mid-Lameds (seventies), Rabbi Lipskar was diagnosed with a heart murmur. At that time, a new modern medical procedure had been developed to treat this condition. The person selected to carry out this procedure was

the chief cardiologist at Mount Sinai Hospital in Miami.

Once the operation had been completed under general anesthesia, R' Lipskar was wheeled into the recovery room. In the meantime, his wife returned home to bring a few things. During that period, they lived on North Meridian Boulevard, a distance of just three city blocks from the hospital.

After enough time had passed, his wife called to ask about his condition, but there was no answer. She hung up and tried again. Another patient who shared the room with him woke up and answered the phone.

"How is my husband?" Mrs. Lipskar asked.

R' Lipskar was right near him, sleeping quite soundly.

"Fine, please wake him."

The man tried to call to R' Lipskar by name, but he failed to respond. "Listen," he said, "your husband isn't waking up."

"This doesn't sound right. Please call a doctor or a nurse," she urged him, and she quickly made her way back to the hospital.

After the staff tried unsuccessfully to wake him, an emergency was declared. The doctors and nurses started coming in with resuscitative equipment, and they asked his wife to leave the room. She ran to the nurses' station and said that she needs to make an urgent telephone call. She dialed the number of the Rebbe's *mazkirus*.

Rabbi Chodakov picked up the phone, and the *shlucha* expressed her fear to him over what was happening. "Please go urgently to the Rebbe. This is an emergency!"

"At which number can I reach you?" Rabbi Chodakov asked.

After a few minutes, the secretary called back. "I need to speak with your husband."

"With my husband? Did you hear what I said? They're still trying to revive him. You can't speak with him!"

"Did *you* hear what *I* said? I have instructions from the Rebbe to speak with your husband," he repeated. "The Rebbe has a mission for him..."

When she heard this, she calmed down a little. If the Rebbe has a mission for him, she thought, he'll be all right...

Mrs. Lipskar, who knew how to act with determination in critical situations, decided to return to the room where they had just asked her to leave. She arranged for the telephone conversation with the Rebbe's secretary to be transferred to her husband's room, and she placed the receiver near his ear. The first thing that R' Lipskar remembered hearing was Rabbi Chodakov's voice...

Around this time, Professor Yirmiyahu Branover, a Nobel Prize candidate for his work in the field of magnetohydrodynamics, had just left the Soviet Union.

"The Rebbe said that you have to call the University of Winnipeg to organize a welcoming ceremony for Professor Branover when he comes to visit there," Rabbi Chodakov said to him. R' Lipskar could hear the Rebbe's voice in the background, instructing Rabbi Chodakov what to say to him...

In addition to the initial difficulties the Lipskar couple experienced in those early years, a fire broke out in their home when the *shlucha* was still in the house. When they went in for *yechidus* shortly thereafter, the Rebbe inquired how she was, even asking if there were any remnants left from the fire. Only then did the Rebbe add by saying: "After a fire, one becomes wealthy..."

Rabbi Lipskar himself noted: "After that fire, we never again had a problem paying our electric bill..." ■

To be continued...

THE OVERALL TZADDIK WITH POLISHED BUTTONS

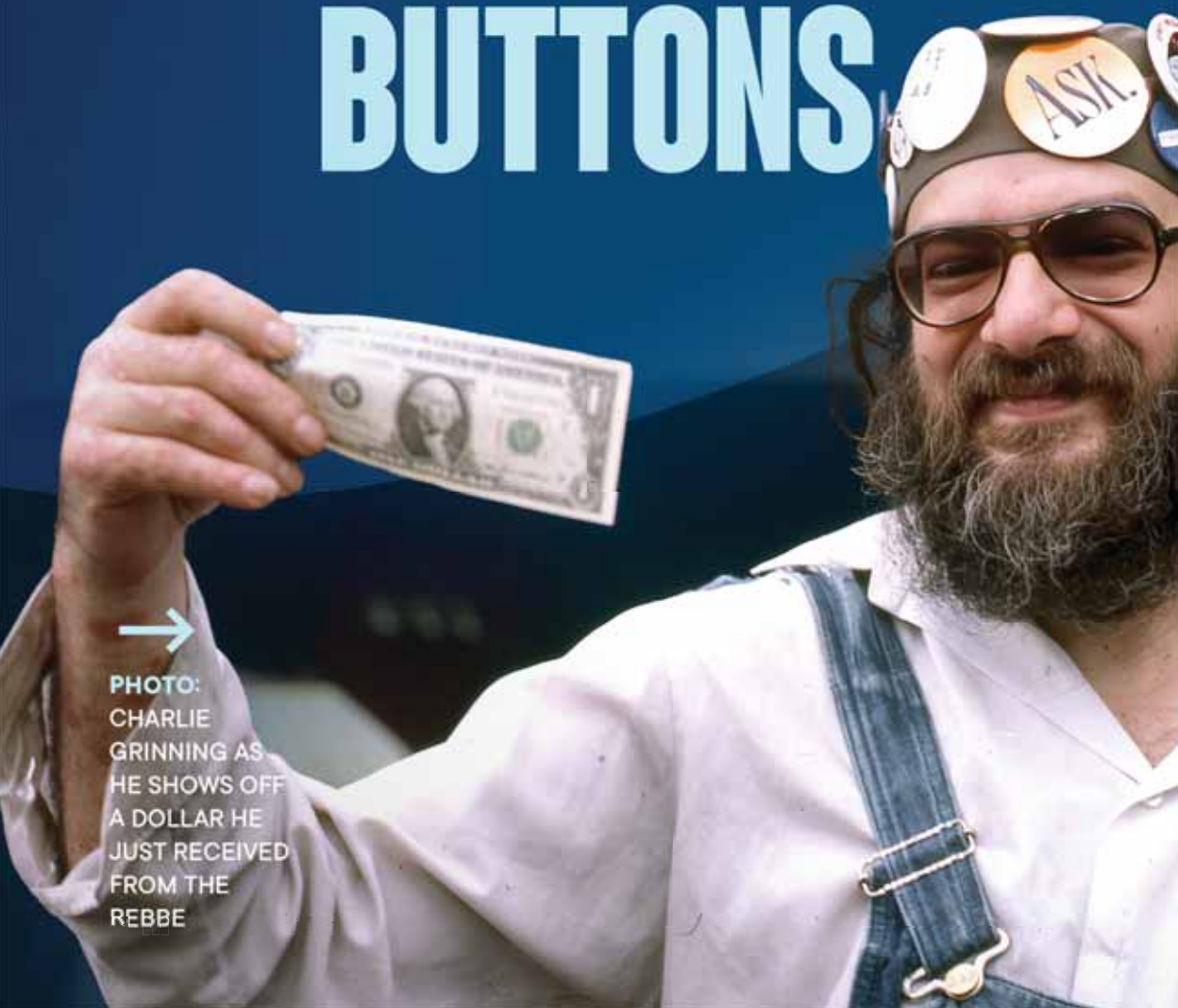


PHOTO:
CHARLIE
GRINNING AS
HE SHOWS OFF
A DOLLAR HE
JUST RECEIVED
FROM THE
REBBE

EVERYONE KNEW HIM AS "CHARLIE BUTTONS," BUT HIS REAL NAME WAS TZADIK HALEVI NASSOFER, WHO PASSED AWAY RECENTLY AT NEARLY 81 YEARS OLD. CHARLIE WAS PART OF THE CROWN HEIGHTS LANDSCAPE FOR DECADES AND IT SEEMS THERE ISN'T A CHABAD CHASSID, ADULT AND CHILD ALIKE, THAT WASN'T TOUCHED BY HIS JOY-BRINGING PRESENCE. ■ **WHO WAS THIS MAN? WHAT WAS BEHIND HIS CONSTANT HAPPINESS AS WELL AS HIS MYSTERIOUS PERSONA?**

SHNEUR ZALMAN LEVIN



Rabbi Beroka of Chozaah used to frequent the marketplace of Lefet, and Eliyahu HaNavi would often appear to him there. One day, Rabbi Beroka asked Eliyahu: "Is there anyone in this marketplace who is destined for the World to Come?"

"No," Eliyahu replied.

In the meantime, two men entered the market. Eliyahu said to Rabbi Beroka: "These two are destined for the World to Come." Rabbi Beroka approached them and asked: "What is your occupation?"

They answered: "We are cheerful people [jesters], and we cheer up those who are sad."

This story, found in Gemara Taanis, perhaps reflects the life and character of Tzadik HaLevi Nassofer, known to all Lubavitchers as "Charlie Buttons" - a colorful and unique personality in the Crown Heights neighborhood. He dedicated his life to bringing joy to Jews and putting smiles on the faces of many, including the Rebbe himself.

He passed away last week at the age of 81. Charlie was a unique and colorful figure who roamed Beis Chayeinu - 770 - and the broader Crown Heights community for decades. He became well-known for his unconventional outfit - denim overalls and a white shirt, adorned with countless colorful button pins bearing Jewish symbols and messages. Hence, the nickname "Charlie Buttons."

Community members recount that he would always greet everyone with kind words and a heartfelt "Boruch Hashem," spreading joy wherever he went.

Charlie's Life

Tzadik HaLevi Nassofer was born on the 18th of Tammuz, 5704 (1944), to his

father Yisroel Eliezer (Izzy) HaLevi Nassofer, the son of Russian immigrants. Charlie was born in Nebraska, where his father served in the military. Later, the family moved back to New York.

His father opened and managed a sewing machine business but passed away at a young age when Charlie was only ten. He left behind Charlie and his two younger sisters. Their widowed mother raised the three children alone, working as a secretary and bookkeeper at the local Jewish center.

Charlie grew up in a neighborhood where Jewish families were a minority, yet Jewish awareness was present. They participated in local Jewish classes. He was a good and bright child, well-liked and academically inclined, studying technology in both high school and college.

His distinctive first name - Tzadik - stood out from childhood. Few knew his real name, as he eventually became widely known as "Charlie Buttons."

As a young adult, Charlie lived in Manhattan, where he first encountered Chabad shluchim who distributed Shabbos candles as part of the Neshek campaign. He once said how a Chabad woman came to distribute Shabbos candlesticks at a weekly singles group that met in various Manhattan shuls. Inspired by the idea, Charlie wanted more to share with others and was directed to Rabbi Kastel in Crown Heights. He took the subway there, where Rabbi Kastel asked him to put on tefillin and join events - and that's how he came to Crown Heights.

From then on, he became a frequent visitor and eventually a permanent fixture in the neighborhood and at 770.

Charlie never married but devoted his life to bringing joy to Jews, embracing the Chabad community as his extended family.

A well-known anecdote recounts how, one day a year, after the annual Gemilus Chesed dinner, Charlie showed up dressed in the

uniform of the Chesed organization, for an entire day - a show of gratitude and support, instead of his usual denim overalls.

Colorful Personality

Over the years, Charlie became a well-known figure in Crown Heights - easily recognizable by his thick beard, baseball cap, perpetual denim overalls, and especially his dozens of button pins with Jewish and Chassidic messages, such as the Rebbe's ten mitzva campaigns, Tzivos Hashem, and Camp Gan Israel. He wore them proudly, spreading smiles and good vibes.

Charlie dedicated most of his time to community celebrations - for decades he appeared at nearly every bris, wedding, or bar mitzva in Crown Heights. He never needed an official invitation; he always knew where to go and was always welcomed warmly.

He would greet the celebrants with a heartfelt "Mazal Tov," would say a l'chaim with them, and sometimes deliver a brief speech in English in his unique style. Topics he was passionate about included the coming of Moshiach and shleimus ha'aretz. When he spoke about these, his voice would boom with excitement, and he often raised his hand to form an 'L' shape - for Lubavitcher Rebbe.

He would then take out dozens of colorful balloons to give to the children, brightening the celebration even more.

"How did you come to make people happy at weddings?" Tammy Holtzman once asked him.

"I knew Rabbi Dworkin z"l, the rabbi of Crown Heights. He told me it's a big mitzva to bring joy to grooms and brides. Since then, I've been attending weddings every night, bringing balloons to increase the happiness."

"Charlie was an inseparable part of our childhood in Crown Heights," wrote one community member. "He taught us about real simcha and simplicity. We learned from him that we don't need a lot to bring joy to others;



Bringing a smile to the Rebbe's face

it's enough to have a balloon, a smile and a big heart."

Charlie also had a fixed "route" on Friday nights: he would go to every *shalom zachar* gathering in the neighborhood, drink a shot of mashke, say "Ichaim" to honor the new baby, and bless the parents.

"I'm happy when others are happy," he said. "I'm not especially happy myself. I was fired from my job a number of times and it was frustrating. I attended numerous weddings but I myself am still not married. I told the Rebbe I hoped for improvements in my life. He told me: 'It's never too late.' I still hope to have a job and a family. Meanwhile, even though my situation isn't joyful, I love bringing joy to others.

"At first, I only attended weddings, mitzvas simchas chassan v'kalla. Then I thought, it's a shame I don't attend the *vort* too; I bring joy to the chassan and kalla there. From there it went to brissin, shalom zachars, melava malkas, etc. When asked how he found out about all these events, he replied: "I have angels. Some are regular, some not so much."

Charlie added, "It's exhausting to attend so many events each night. Some people are kind

and offer me a ride. Others pass me by in their cars, heading to the same event - and they just don't care," he said with disappointment.

Despite his unusual appearance, the Rebbe always encouraged and uplifted Charlie. He gave him a sense of belonging, love, and acceptance, which kept Charlie returning again and again.

Often, the Rebbe would look toward Charlie and smile. This was especially apparent at the end of farbrengens, during the distribution of 'kos shel bracha,' or on Sundays during the 'dollar distributions.' Charlie would approach the Rebbe, receive a dollar or a blessing, and then raise his hand in the familiar 'L' sign, shouting, "Long live the Lubavitcher Rebbe!"

Charlie once shared how he lost his yarmulke while swimming at Long Island beach. "I wrote to the Rebbe," he said.

"And what happened?"

"The Rebbe sent me a new yarmulke," he answered.

In his early years in Crown Heights, when he took the train on Fridays, Charlie would often see the Rebbe walking from his home to 770.



Getting a Tanya from the Rebbe

“I would tell him things,” Charlie said. “I told him about myself and what I do. And the Rebbe would respond.”

“What did he say?”

Charlie fell silent.

“That was the essence of his life,” said one acquaintance. “The Rebbe’s personal attention gave him the drive to keep spreading joy and good deeds, knowing the Rebbe was proud of him.”

“At every farbrengen, just after everyone answered ‘Amen’ to the Rebbe’s blessing, Charlie would shout his own loud, rolling ‘Aaaaamen!’ that echoed through the hall, making even the Rebbe smile.”

A Children’s Book About Charlie

Charlie Buttons’ colorful character extended far beyond the boundaries of Crown Heights - and often made headlines and coverage in Chabad and even general media.

One of the memorable stories is his surprising participation in California’s grand Lag B’Omer parade in 5771 (2011). That year, the Rebbe’s shluchim in Los Angeles organized an impressive unity parade on Pico Boulevard,

with thousands of children participating from throughout the region.

Suddenly it was announced over loudspeakers about the parade’s “guest of honor” - a special Grand Marshal who had come from New York: Charlie Buttons! Hundreds of children cheered as Charlie appeared at the parade entrance, sitting confidently atop an open American car and waving his hands in all directions.

“Thousands of smiling faces welcomed Charlie,” news sites reported, “and he, in response, quickly blew colorful balloons and distributed them to the enthusiastic children.” For many of the young participants, this was the first time they had the privilege of meeting the “famous Charlie” about whom they had heard stories. Overnight, Charlie became the darling of California’s children, just as he was beloved by New York’s children.

In 5776 (2016), an illustrated children’s book was published titled “Charlie Buttons and Yossi’s Baby Brother’s Sholom Zochor” - a book telling the adventures of Charlie at a wedding, bris mila, and sholom zachar from the perspective of a boy named Yossi. The book was written by Yaffa Leba Gottlieb, who said she was greatly influenced by Charlie’s character. Part of the book’s proceeds went

“Yechi Charlie!”

Recently, I wrote an editorial about activism (Issue #1456) - contrasting positive models with less positive ones. I intended to return to this subject and elaborate further and I still do. But in the meantime, the Chabad community lost one of its most beloved figures: a person who was neither a mashpia, shliach, rabbi, nor even an average, run-of-the-mill Chassid. Yet no one doubted Charlie's love and dedication to the Rebbe and his shlichus.

I believe Charlie represents the kind of activism we must emulate. No, I don't mean you should start wearing buttons on your hat and overalls on your shoulders. I don't mean you should necessarily repeat the same speech that Charlie delivered hundreds, if not thousands, of times at every Siyum HaRambam, shalom zachar, l'chaim, wedding, and subway car (he attended every one...) — a speech which I remember to this day because we memorized it as children in camp.

But I think we should all embrace the spirit of who Charlie was.

Charlie wasn't a regular person - but that's exactly the point. The message from Charlie is that a Jew, a Chassid, has to be obvious, just like Charlie was. No one had any doubt about what Charlie represented. It has to be clear to anyone who meets us exactly what we represent. If we believe in something, it should not be a secret. And if it's right to believe in it, then it's right to

talk about it and to teach about it proudly just like Charlie Buttons.

At the same time, we must not cause antagonism. We must come with a smile and with charm, so that even if people don't agree with you the first time, they're still happy to see you again. Charlie was different from everyone else, yet he was loved by all. I'm sure not everyone at every shalom zachar or wedding he visited connected with some of his signature phrases like “*Kever Never! Rebbe Forever!*” But everyone connected to Charlie himself. Everyone loved him. And if someone thinks fondly of such a person, he can also ‘swallow’ and eventually digest things he thought he cannot.

This is the type of activism that brings Moshiach - being unmistakably who you are while remaining genuinely lovable.

And remember this: “*The Lubavitcher Rebbe is the Messiah of this generation, the Lubavitcher Rebbe is the Messiah of all generations. Let the word of the Messiah spread forth to all the nations: Israel is one land, one Torah, one people, and shall not be divided by the President of the United States and politicians in Israel as is being done; piece, by piece, by piece. There shall be no peace until Israel is one, for it says in the Torah: “From river to river, from sea to sea, from the river of Egypt to the river of Euphrates. Then the Messiah shall be revealed!”* ■

— Levi Y. Liberow

directly to “Charlie's Balloon Fund” - a special fund that helped finance the balloons Charlie distributed to children at celebrations.

Brochures about Moshiach would prominently stick out of the front pocket of his overalls. When he was on the train, he would do “mivtzaim.” Before he got off the train he would announce: “Here is the home of the Messiah.”

People on the train would ask him questions, and he in turn would ask back if they know who the Messiah is.

“Well, do they know?”

“Not all of them.”

“So what do you do then?”

“I tell them!...”

In His Later Years

In 2020, when his health deteriorated, Charlie moved to live in a Satmar nursing home in Williamsburg. Even there, in the new place, he didn't abandon his way of life. Groups of tmimim and community members from Crown Heights organized special visits to him during holidays, brought him mishloach



Charlie at his 80th birthday celebration

manos on Purim and the dalet minim on Sukkot.

The last time he appeared at 770 was last year, when he turned 80. The farbrengen was organized for him by tmimim, young married men, and senior citizens, during which the crowd said 'l'chaim' in his honor and wished him heartfelt blessings. At the end of the evening, Charlie was presented with a touching surprise gift: a large, framed picture of himself receiving a dollar for tzedaka from the Rebbe - with the Rebbe looking at him and smiling broadly toward him. Charlie looked at the picture and tears choked him up. He hugged the picture warmly - and thanked all those present from his heart. This was apparently his last great joy in this world.

Charlie's funeral took place on Friday, 11th of Iyar. Despite the short notice and timing - erev Shabbos - hundreds from the community - many of whom remember him from a very young age - gathered in the courtyard of 770 to escort Charlie on his final journey. The funeral departed from 'Beis Chayeinu,' the place that had been home to him for over a jubilee of years.

He was buried in the Mount Hebron cemetery in Queens, and community members ensured there would be a minyan to escort him with final honor.

...

"Charlie reminded us that everyone can be a shliach and contribute their unique part to the world. With Charlie this was expressed in spreading joy and smiles; telling everyone about the coming of Moshiach; and bringing a smile to the Rebbe's face," says one of the Crown Heights community members who knew him as a child, forty years ago. "Charlie expressed the tmimus and true joy of a Chassid. He reminded us, amid all the seriousness of life, that the Aibishter also loves simple joy."

One of his acquaintances who participated in the funeral adds: "He was a person who knew how to bring joy to every Jew. There are people who teach Torah through their analytical ability, there are those who through their personality show what Ahavas Yisrael is. Charlie taught us that one can be a jester in the positive sense - to bring joy and a goodhearted feelings to everyone." ■

Times for Brooklyn NY

שבת קודש
פרשת בהעלותך
Behaaloscha

י"ח סיון
SHABBOS JUN 14

Candle Lighting 08:11

Shabbos Ends 09:19

ג' פרקים הלכות שבועות • פרקים ד-ו
פרק אחד הלכות רוצח ושמירת נפש • פרק יא
ספר המצוות מצוות לא תעשה סב

עלות השחר 03:35 • הנץ החמה 05:24 • קריאת שמע 09:10
חצות היום 12:56 • שקיעה 08:29 • צאת הכוכבים 09:04

י"ט סיון
SUNDAY JUN 15

ג' פרקים הלכות שבועות • פרקים ז-ט
פרק אחד הלכות רוצח ושמירת נפש • פרק יב
ספר המצוות מצוות לא תעשה רמח-רמט

עלות השחר 03:35 • הנץ החמה 05:24 • קריאת שמע 09:10 • חצות 12:57 • שקיעה 08:29 • צאת הכוכבים 09:04

כ' סיון
MONDAY JUN 16

ג' פרקים הלכות שבועות • פרקים י-יב
פרק אחד הלכות רוצח ושמירת נפש • פרק יג
ספר המצוות מצוות עשה ז

עלות השחר 03:35 • הנץ החמה 05:24 • קריאת שמע 09:10 • חצות 12:57 • שקיעה 08:30 • צאת הכוכבים 09:05

כ"א סיון
TUESDAY JUN 17

ג' פרקים הלכות נדרים • פרקים א-ג
פרק אחד ספר קנין • הלכות מכירה • פרק א
ספר המצוות מצוות עשה צד

עלות השחר 03:35 • הנץ החמה 05:24 • קריאת שמע 09:10 • חצות 12:57 • שקיעה 08:30 • צאת הכוכבים 09:05

כ"ב סיון
WEDNESDAY JUN 18

ג' פרקים הלכות נדרים • פרקים ד-ו
פרק אחד הלכות מכירה • פרק ב
ספר המצוות מצוות עשה צד

עלות השחר 03:35 • הנץ החמה 05:24 • קריאת שמע 09:10 • חצות 12:57 • שקיעה 08:30 • צאת הכוכבים 09:06

כ"ג סיון
THURSDAY JUN 19

ג' פרקים הלכות נדרים • פרקים ז-ט
פרק אחד הלכות מכירה • פרק ג
ספר המצוות מצוות לא תעשה קנז

עלות השחר 03:35 • הנץ החמה 05:25 • קריאת שמע 09:11 • חצות 12:57 • שקיעה 08:30 • צאת הכוכבים 09:06

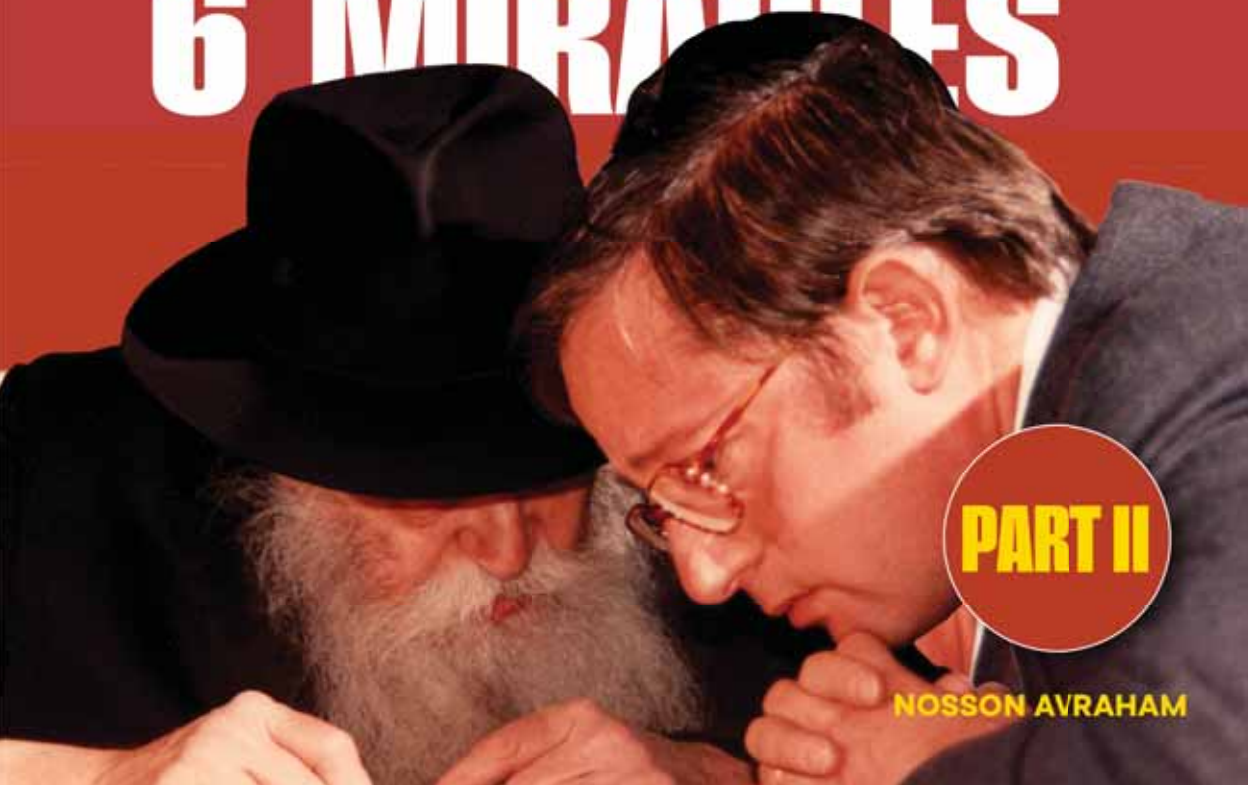
כ"ד סיון
FRIDAY JUN 20

ג' פרקים הלכות נדרים • פרקים י-יב
פרק אחד הלכות מכירה • פרק ד
ספר המצוות מצוות עשה צה

עלות השחר 03:35 • הנץ החמה 05:25 • קריאת שמע 09:11 • חצות 12:58 • שקיעה 08:31 • צאת הכוכבים 09:06

HOW A STORY OF THE REBBE PUBLISHED IN BEIS
MOSHIACH SAVED SIX JEWISH SOULS FROM ASSIMILATION

1 STORY, 6 MIRACLES



PART II

NOSSON AVRAHAM

In the previous installment: A story of the Rebbe that was published in Beis Moshiach saves five Jews from assimilation. In the meantime, Shimon, a yeshiva bachur is drawn into a relationship with a non-Jewish girl and he feels trapped and unable to leave her.

Shimon sat for a good long time on one of the benches in front of Beis Chayeinu, trying to recover from this encounter. His life passed before him in his mind like a moving picture. *Am I in a dream from which I will soon awake?* he thought to himself.

The buds of a true spiritual awakening began to blossom within him. *It's forbidden for you*

to do this, he heard a tiny voice ordering him. *Father in Heaven, please help me get out of this mess.* In his thoughts he saw himself sitting at farbrengens, thirstily drinking the words of the rabbanim and mashpiim.

He recalled his moments of hiskashrus to the Rebbe, the nighttime Krias Shma, and the fact that as a tamim he never let a morning pass

without going to the mikva. He remembered learning the Rebbe's sichos and maamarim each morning. All these recollections penetrated his being like a sword. He looked at the tmimim going in and out of 770, saw their gentle and peaceful faces and his heart filled with envy. *What have I come to? How have I reached such a state?* He burst into sobs from the depths of his troubled soul.

It was only some time later that he gathered the strength to go into 770. He soon found himself joining a minyan for Mincha, although his thoughts were somewhere else entirely.

When he finished davening, he sat down on one of the benches in a state of pensiveness. Suddenly, he noticed a copy of *Beis Moshiach* lying on a nearby table and began to look through it in an almost absent-minded manner. He recalled with a sad sense of nostalgia how he would wait in yeshiva for the magazine to come out every Wednesday and read all the articles, including the *Chassidim Ein Mishpacha* column. He smiled bitterly as he thought where they would write his name when he married his non-Jewish girlfriend...

He was quickly turning the pages, when his eyes picked up the word 'assimilation.' He went back to that page and saw a story told by Rabbi Heschel Greenberg, the Rebbe's shliach in Buffalo, about how the Rebbe saved a Jew from assimilation. As he read the story, it turned out that he had the same name as this Jew and the non-Jewish girlfriend in the story had the same name as his girlfriend. The story ended with the Jew deciding to leave his gentile companion...

Shimon was shocked. This was the third message he had received that day – a sharp and clear message.

Tears rolled down his cheeks for a long while and he didn't try to stop them. A number of bachurim were sitting and learning near him and they looked at him in puzzlement. They tried to find out if he needed help with something, but he gently rejected them. *I've*

already got my help and these tears are the result, he thought to himself.

He didn't waste much time. He got up from his place, traveled to his apartment, and brought all his things to 770. He then bought an airline ticket for a flight out of New York scheduled for the next day. In the meantime, he destroyed his mobile phones to prevent the woman from having any way to contact him.

"My heart pounded uncontrollably," my friend Shimon said as he recalled the chain of events in that telephone conversation lasting until the following morning. "Since leaving everything behind I entered yeshiva where I learn from morning until night. During my free time I do mivtzaim with other Jews. G-d saved me!"

• • •

Indeed, "any wide-ranging effort and labor [in outreach] pursued wisely and with friendship is never fruitless."

Three stories publicized in *Beis Moshiach* – six Jews saved from assimilation among the nations of the world.

These are only a few stories among many I have encountered during my years of writing for the magazine.

Here's another example: I interviewed Rabbi Dr. Bar-Ami, who was privileged to have the Rebbe give him a spiritual segula for childbirth. Since then, I have been flooded with calls from people who wanted to contact him, for who knew if there would be another appointed time? Dozens of sweet little Jewish children were born and happy Chassidic families were established in the merit of publicizing this story in *Beis Moshiach*...

Fortunate are we, how good is our portion that this is our shlichus and objective in *Beis Moshiach* – to publicize the words of the Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach, his path, and his teachings to spread the announcement of the Redemption. ■



3 DOLLARS THAT CAME JUST IN TIME...

THERE HAVE BEEN MANY WONDROUS STORIES ABOUT THE "REBBE'S DOLLARS" MAKING THEIR WAY FROM PLACE TO PLACE, AND BY DIVINE PROVIDENCE, THE REBBE MAKES CERTAIN THAT THEY REACH THE HANDS OF THOSE WHO NEED THEM AT THE TIME THEY NEED THEM MOST. HERE ARE THREE SUCH STORIES IN PREPARATION OF GIMMEL TAMMUZ

BY MENACHEM ZEIGELBAUM



If you want to learn about the intense longing to receive a dollar that came from the Rebbe's holy hand, there's the touching and poignant story of Mrs. **Shani Cohen-Orki** of Beer Sheva:

Shani grew up in a traditional and faith-filled Jewish home. From kindergarten to third grade, she learned in Chabad institutions. Afterwards, however, she transferred to secular public school, and from there she enlisted in the Israel Defense Forces for a lengthy stint of military service.

Once as she was watching television, she saw a film about the Rebbe, and she began to recall fondly memories from her childhood. She quickly realized where her soul belonged. She opened her computer, and after a brief search on the Internet, she came across the "Igros Kodesh" website. "While I didn't really understand what 'Igros Kodesh' were or what you do with them, I wrote to the Rebbe and asked for a bracha," she said.

It was here that the process started, when she resolved to keep Shabbos, followed later by the observance of other mitzvos. During this entire period, she continued to write to the Rebbe.

In one of her letters, she wrote to the Rebbe that she felt that she was at a crossroads, and she needed to decide what kind of home she would establish. In the answer she received, the Rebbe replied that she must build a Jewish home based on the foundations of Torah and mitzvos with a young man who studies Torah.

At this stage, she began learning at "Midreshet P'nimiyut" in Tel Aviv, and sometime later, she again received instructions from the Rebbe to look for a shidduch. "In his letter, the Rebbe had written to someone that he doesn't understand why he isn't writing, as he customarily did, on the subject of shidduchim, adding that it is a mitzva from the Torah to establish a proper Jewish home! I read the letter, and I was stunned."

Not long afterwards, Shani received an offer of a shidduch with a bachur named 'Cohen.' She wrote about this to the Rebbe and asked for a bracha to continue with the shidduch process. The Rebbe responded with a very moving correspondence dealing with Birkas Kohanim, which must be fulfilled with love, and accordingly, G-d also bestows His spiritual influence upon the kohanim with love and good in its most revealed sense. "It was clear to me from this letter that things were moving in a positive direction," she recalled.

"As a baalas teshuva, I encountered numerous difficulties while I was organizing the wedding. However, I was privileged to receive answers from the Rebbe during the process, and they gave me renewed strength to get married in the most Chassidishe way possible."

• • •

"As I continued my spiritual journey towards a Chassidishe way of life, I read countless letters in Igros Kodesh, watched films of the Rebbe, and enjoyed hearing stories of his miracles. As a result, I constantly davened in my heart that I too would merit to receive a dollar from the Rebbe, and I even wondered to myself how I could possibly obtain a dollar that the Rebbe himself had held in his hand and given for a bracha.

"During the time prior to our wedding that my chassan was in 770, I asked him to try and bring me a dollar from the Rebbe upon his return. I had been longing for three years to receive one as a bracha. My chassan explained that this would be no easy task; he tried several times to get one, but his efforts had failed to bear fruit.

"When he arrived back in Eretz Yisrael, my chassan got in touch with Rabbi Avi Ben-Shimon and asked for his assistance in the matter. R' Avi immediately made contact with various people in an effort to locate a dollar for me.

"On the day of the wedding, as is customary, I came to 770 in Kfar Chabad to daven Mincha

of 'Erev Yom Kippur' near the Rebbe's room. As soon as I got out of the car, a middle-aged Jew suddenly approached me and asked if I was 'Shani.' I replied that I was, without realizing from where he knew me. Right then and there,

“ Having heard about the Rebbe's great spiritual strength and the power of his brachos, Kobi very much wanted to have a dollar from the Rebbe. For a whole year, he “nudged” the shliach at the University of Haifa, Rabbi Tanchum Rivkin, to help him in obtaining a dollar. As expected, the task proved quite difficult; many people simply didn't want to “let go” of the dollars they had received.

he pulled out a picture frame containing a dollar from the Rebbe and said that it was for me. I was overcome... I didn't understand where he had come from or how I had merited to receive this dollar. He proceeded to tell me that he had been a photographer in 770 and when he heard my story, he was deeply moved. He therefore decided to respond to my chassan's request and brought me a dollar.

“My mother, who was standing near me and knew how much I wanted to receive a dollar from the Rebbe, was so overwhelmed that she burst into tears.

“Throughout the chuppa, I held the Rebbe's holy dollar in my hand. As soon as I removed my veil at the conclusion of the ceremony,

Rabbi Avi Ben-Shimon approached and handed me another dollar. 'Give this to your husband...', he told me.

“This is the tremendous gift that the Rebbe gave me on the greatest and most important day of my life, in addition to the privilege of marrying a Chassidic young man...*Hodu laHashem Ki Tov!*”

THE DOLLAR FOR THE STUDENT

When someone really wants a dollar from the Rebbe – he gets it. Why? Because the Rebbe hears and listens to the heartfelt cry of a Chassid, and when a tzaddik knows what his Chassid feels in the depths of his soul, he makes certain through his great love to send him the means to receive the Rebbe's bracha in the form of a dollar.

Kobi Rabinowitz is the former chairman of the Students' Association at the University of Haifa. Recently, Kobi participated in a “Maamakim” program sponsored by “Chabad on Campus.” Having heard about the Rebbe's great spiritual strength and the power of his brachos, Kobi very much wanted to have a dollar from the Rebbe. For a whole year, he “nudged” the shliach at the University of Haifa, Rabbi Tanchum Rivkin, to help him in obtaining a dollar. As expected, the task proved quite difficult; many people simply didn't want to “let go” of the dollars they had received.

As part of a group trip to Crown Heights, Kobi came to 770. At a certain point, he turned quite openly to one of the local Anash residents, the Chassid R' Mordechai Fogelman, and asked if he could have a dollar. Why did he specifically ask him? Kobi himself didn't know...

Deep in his heart, R' Mottel felt that Kobi's desire was honest and sincere, and he asked him to wait a few minutes. He went home, took a dollar out of the special bundle saved in his private archives, and gave the treasured token of the Rebbe's bracha to Kobi...



THE DOLLAR FOR THE FATHER

If we're already discussing someone who occupied a position with the Students' Association, we also have **Nati Peretz**, former chairman of the Students' Association at Ashkelon Academic College and current director general of the Center for Academic Studies in Ohr Yehuda. He too has a very special story:

"Rabbi Chilik Kaplan, the Rebbe's shliach on the Kiryat Ono campus, kept prodding me to come to an event he was organizing, which he called an 'intimate evening with singers.' Nati, he added, 'I'm not extending an invitation to everyone, but I'm asking *you* to come.' He called me several times and urged me to come and bring a friend along with me. After so many requests, I felt that I simply couldn't turn him down, and I arranged to come together with a companion.

"When we arrived, it turned that this was a fundraising event... The shliach had invested a great deal of effort in the evening's program, including music and entertainment. As the evening continued, an auction was held for dollars from the Rebbe at a cost of 7,700 shekels. At the time of this event, I had been married for two years, yet my wife and I still didn't have any children. The friend whom I had brought with me suddenly turned to me and said, 'Come, let's buy a dollar. We'll split the cost and you can take the dollar for yourself.' Surprised, I said to him, 'Are you into such things? I'm not so much.' But my friend wouldn't relent. 'We're buying a dollar, and what will be, will be.' I was convinced. We bought the dollar and I took it home.

"This story took place a few years ago – in Teves 5778. Three months ago, I was blessed with the birth of a son... Naturally, Rabbi Chilik participated in the bris ceremony and our joy was boundless." ■



Chassidim, Don't Be Selfish With Your Rebbe Dollars!

Over the years, the Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach distributed hundreds of thousands, perhaps even more, of dollars, most of which were given out at the well-known dollars distribution that took place each Sunday. On each occasion, thousands passed by, some of whom even received two or three dollars.

Any reasonable person can understand that these are not your average garden-variety dollars; these are a segula and bracha for all things good. Some of the dollars were even given for a specific purpose, e.g., children, health, parnassa, etc. Chassidim felt that these dollars concealed some very special brachos.

How much are these dollars “worth”?

They have no financial value greater than the bill's value, but their spiritual value is great indeed. “He who takes a small coin from Iyov,” says the Gemara, “is blessed.”

However, as in every marketplace, the supply and demand establish new facts – and they aren't always appropriate.

In the 33 years that passed since we have not been *zoche* to get dollars from the Rebbe, new generations have been born and grown who were not privileged to have received a dollar for a bracha from the Rebbe, and they long to

have their own dollar as a source of spiritual blessing. In addition, many baalei teshuva who have since adopted a Torah observant lifestyle also wanted a dollar from the Rebbe. For them, such a dollar is worth the world, and they are prepared to give a great deal to obtain one.

On the other hand, many people received numerous dollars from the Rebbe over the years – some even have dozens or hundreds of these dollars – and they have protectively kept this valuable treasure. Thus, it is understood that they have a hard time parting from it. Truth be said, how can I possibly give someone else a personal bracha I had received from the Rebbe's own holy hand?

This brings us to a test in our Ahavas Yisrael, an attribute by which we have been raised and educated and which serves as the start of our daily Avodas Hashem. From the Rebbe's standpoint, the giving of the dollar is in order that the recipient should then give it (or its equivalent) to tzedaka. “Tzedaka” does not only mean giving to a public soup kitchen, a Chabad institution, or a shliach struggling to keep his head above water. First and foremost, “tzedaka” is giving to someone lacking, someone in need – and there are countless people who want this so much, yet they don't have...

“Dinners” for Chabad institutions today benefit from the contributions of single dollars from the Rebbe sold for thousands. You can also find (regrettably) “Rebbe dollars” being sold on public consumer sales websites to the highest bidder. These are plain wheeler-dealers in merchandise, and they’re prepared to sell them for \$770 apiece (it’s a good thing that Beis Chayeinu’s address isn’t 1874 Eastern Parkway...). But more than that, they take advantage of the zealous desire of people to hold something that the Rebbe himself personally gave.

I have often heard Jews who have come close to Yiddishkeit through Chassidus, people who cast away their previous lifestyle, longing for a dollar from the Rebbe. However, they can’t create “something” out of “nothing” nor are they able to obtain one, were it not for the generosity and kindheartedness of those who have many such dollars in their possession. Yet, such people are few in number...

Fellow Chassidim! Why would you want to sell a holy dollar from the Rebbe just to “hit the jackpot”? Why would you trade one away and thereby turn such a treasured and sought-after sacred item into a piece of commercial merchandise measured merely in monetary terms? How doesn’t your hand tremble when you hand over a dollar you received from the hand of the leader and Moshiach of the generation?

A fervent call of love and affection to all Anash: Yes, you too are sitting on goldmines, and deriving pleasure from the light shining from your safety deposit box: The segula and bracha of the Rebbe are spiritual. When you give one of his dollars to someone else, it’s comparable to lighting one fire from another – it detracts nothing from your own light

“ I have often heard Jews who have come close to Yiddishkeit through Chassidus, longing for a dollar from the Rebbe. However, they can’t create “something” out of “nothing” nor are they able to obtain one, were it not for the generosity and kindheartedness of those who have many such dollars in their possession. Yet, such people are few in number...

while illuminating and providing warmth for others. When you give a dollar from the Rebbe, the bracha is transferred to another without diminishing anything from you. This is the time to go over to your safety deposit box, this is the time to open your wallet, remove the locks of fear, and give from your personal treasure to Chabad institutions, to shlichim dedicating their lives every day to the Rebbe’s inyanim. The dollar you give will be sold in return for generous contributions towards continuing their holy work. Give to those in deep despair, those longing for children, those in need of parnassa, or even those simply yearning to have such a valuable treasure for themselves. Bring them this great segula and illuminate their lives.

This is a great bracha, and you have no bracha greater than that. In G-d We Trust.■



The Model of Tzivos Hashem

Stories of our Rebbeim and their Chassidim.
In this installment: more on Chapter 41 and 49

Kabbolas Ol as the Model of Tzivos Hashem

לא די לעורר האהבה לבדה לועשה טוב,
ולפחות צריך לעורר תחלה היראה הטבעית
המסתתרת בלב כל ישראל שלא למרד במלך
מלכי המלכים הקדוש ברוך הוא

*The basis for serving Hashem is fear and
"Kabbolas Ol Malchus Shamayaim"*

In the months after the Rebbe lunched the youth movement of Tzivos Hashem, which strives to educate Jewish youth to be "soldiers" in Hashem's "army," a Jewish-American educator wrote to the Rebbe of his reservations about the "Tzivos Hashem" Campaign, on the ground that it is based "on the glorification of the military and an aggrandizement of arms, wars and battlefields."

In a long letter (dated 26 Teves 5742/1982), the Rebbe explained what was behind the decision of using specifically this model of an army:

"The question is: Since the term "Tzivos Hashem" would seem to some people to "smack" of "militarism," what were the overriding reasons that outweighed such reservations as you expressed in your letter?

Could not the same results be achieved through other means or other methods?"

"This brings us to the core of the problem.

"As an educator, you know that children need motivation, but that is only one aspect of the problem. The most important aspect, in my opinion, in this day and age, is the lack of Kabbolas Ol [acceptance of the yoke], not only of Ol Malchus Shomayim [the yoke of the sovereignty of Heaven], but also general insubmission to authority, including the authority of parents at home and of teachers in school, and the authority of law and order in the street. There remains only the fear of punishment as a deterrent, but that fear has been reduced to a minimum because there has in recent years been what amounts to a breakdown of law enforcement, for reasons which need not be discussed here.

"On the other hand, American children have been brought up on the spirit of independence and freedom, and on the glorification of personal prowess and smartness. It has cultivated a sense of cockiness and self-assurance to the extent that one who is bent on mischief or anti-social activity feels that one can outsmart a cop on the beat, and even a judge on the bench; and, in any event, there is little to fear in the way of punishment."

The Rebbe continues:

“Since, as mentioned, the root of the problem is the lack of Kabolos Ol, I thought long and hard about finding a way of inducing an American child to get used to the idea of subordination to a higher authority, despite all the influence to the contrary—in the school, in the street, and even at home, where parents—not wishing to be bothered by their children—have all too often abdicated their authority, and left it to others to deal with truancy, juvenile delinquency, etc.”

“I came to the conclusion that there was no other way than trying to effect a basic change in the nature, through a system of discipline and obedience to rules which she/he can be induced to get accustomed to. Moreover, for this method to be effective, it would be necessary that it should be freely and readily accepted without coercion.

“Thus, a “pilot” Tzivos Hashem was instituted. It immediately proved a great success in getting the children to do good things in keeping with the motto V’Ohavto L’Reacho Komocho (Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself), coupled with love and obedience to the “Commander-in-Chief” of Tzivos Hashem, namely Hashem Elokei Tzivo’os (the G-d of Hosts).”

As and aside, the Rebbe adds:

“The Tzivos Hashem Campaign has a further reward, though not widely applicable to Jewish children attending Hebrew schools. This, too, has already been alluded to by our Sages, in their customary succinct way, by saying that a person born with a violent nature should become a (blood-letting) physician, or a Shochet [ritual slaughterer], or a Mohel [circumciser]—in order to give a positive outlet to his strong natural propensity (T.B.

Shabbos 156a). Thus, children that might be inclined to aggressiveness, and hence easy candidates for street gangs, and the like, would have a positive outlet by diverting their energy in the right direction.”

Confusing the Mind About Diamonds

וְכֹן בְּהִכָּנֵה זֶה יִתְחִיל לְלַמֵּד שְׁעוֹר קְבוּעַ מִיָּד
אַחֵר הַתּוֹפֵלָה

Immediately after prayer, one should study a regular Torah lesson, with the preparation of devotion to G-d

The Chassidishe Gvir Rabbi Manish Monezsohn was a great and wealthy dealer of precious stones who had business connections even with royalty. Nevertheless, his daily schedule was such that he would not begin to engage in his business matters until after studying Chassidus, a lengthy Chassidishe davening, and a fixed study session after prayer. By the time he finished his spiritual daily routine, it was already midday.

Once, people came to him with a large order from which he could have made a great profit, but he was busy in the middle of prayer or study and therefore could not attend to it. After the customers waited for a long time—until two in the afternoon—one of his family members came to tell him that they were waiting for him with a large order.

Reb Manish remarked: “They don’t give a Jew any peace... I haven’t yet put on Rabbeinu Tam’s tefillin, and they’re already confusing my mind with diamonds!” ■

(Toras Menachem, Vol. 5, p. 207)



Parasha Of The Future

Get A Taste Of 'Heavenly Bread' Now

BEGIN WITH A GRIN

A man moves into a new neighborhood closer to his workplace so he can walk to work.

On his first day walking to work in the morning, he's walking past a house and in the window he sees a woman hit her son over the head with a loaf of bread.

Each morning as he walks to work he sees the woman hit the boy over the head with a loaf of bread. Everyday it's the same. Then one day as he's walking by, he's surprised to see the woman hit the boy over the head with a cake.

Overwhelmed with curiosity he knocks on the door and when the woman answers he asks her. "I hope you'll forgive the intrusion but I had to ask. I walk by here everyday on my way to work and each day you hit the boy over the head with a loaf of bread. But today you hit him with a cake."

She says, "Today's his birthday!"

Heaven-Sent

One of the things we encounter this week in Parshas Behaaloscha is the manna, the mysterious desert bread that fell to the Jewish people during their journey in the wilderness, bread that fell for forty years and since then... has disappeared!

Is this the end of the manna? Will the manna never return? Will we merit to taste this heavenly bread? After all, in this week's parsha, the Torah describes the manna with

the words: "And they made it into cakes, and its taste was like the taste of oil cake." This sounds much more tempting than a chocolate croissant and a cup of coffee, and even more than a slice of shoulder roast alongside a glass of fine wine, doesn't it?!

An interesting fact about the manna is that the manna is called in the Torah: "bread from heaven." In Tehillim, Dovid HaMelech calls the manna: "grain of heaven" and "bread of the mighty." In light of the above, there are opinions among the early authorities (Sefer

Chassidim) that the Jewish people recited a very special blessing over the manna. We are all accustomed to blessing “Who brings forth bread from the earth” over bread made from wheat (or another type of grain) that grows from the earth, but what blessing do we recite over “bread from heaven” made from “grain of heaven”?

Rabbi Yehuda HaChassid rules that the blessing over the manna is: *Hanosein lechem min ha'shomayim* (Who gives bread from heaven)!

This sounds a bit funny - how can one rule on something that will never happen? After all, no one has manna, you can't buy it at the supermarket, and you also can't order it at the finest bakeries, and even if you search on Amazon, it's likely you won't find someone selling “bread from heaven.” So what is the point of Rabbi Yehuda HaChassid's ruling?

The Rama of Fano, in his essay “Shabbasos Hashem,” presents a marvelous, innovative idea that somewhat explains Rabbi Yehuda HaChassid's puzzling ruling. Everyone knows that in Yemos HaMoshiach, a grand feast will take place, a dreamlike and magnificent feast known as: “the feast of the Livyasan and the Shor HaBar.” It's reasonable to assume that as a first course they will serve the Livyasan (a fish, right?!) and as the main course they will serve ribs of the wild ox (and regarding desserts perhaps we'll discuss another time...) but what bread will they eat at that feast? Over what will they say “HaMotzi”? After all, there is no feast without bread, and no bread without a blessing!

The Rama of Fano explains that at this feast they will eat manna! Bread from heaven! And then, indeed, they will bless over it, “*Hamotzi*

lechem min ha'shomayim (Who brings forth bread from heaven)!

A Taste Of Heaven

But where will we get manna from? Did someone hide manna for emergency purposes thousands of years ago?

The Yalkut Shimoni (Yirmiyahu, remez 267) solves the mystery: “And this is one of three things that Eliyahu is destined to establish for Israel: the jar of manna, the flask of purification water, and the flask of anointing oil.” Eliyahu is destined to bring the jar of manna that Aharon HaKohen placed for safekeeping before G-d during the time of the Mishkan, and we will eat from that jar.

Another possibility is that just as Moshe, the “first redeemer,” brought down the manna in his time for his generation, so too Moshiach Tzidkeinu, the “final redeemer,” will bring down new manna for the Jewish people in his generation. Because who wants to eat bread that's thousands of years old...

All this is good and fine, but what does this teach us today and now? We don't have manna, and we are hungry for bread of another kind...

The Rebbe explains that even today there is manna! It is, indeed, not physical manna, and we don't recite a special blessing over it, but it is “bread from heaven,” and it also nourishes and satisfies. The bread is a metaphor for Torah study, as the verse says: “Come, eat of My bread.” Bread from the earth alludes to the study of the revealed Torah, while bread from heaven symbolizes the study of the inner dimension of Torah, the teachings of Chassidus.

Just as in the desert, all the Jewish people, without exception - tzaddik, beinoni, and rasha - ate the manna, so too today, all the Jewish people, without exception - tzaddik, beinoni, and rasha - need to “taste and eat” from the teachings of Chassidus. And just as then, the eating of manna by the wicked effected a significant positive change in them, the bread from heaven “burned within them” and gave them no inner peace until they repented, so too, today, the study of Chassidus by each and every Jew will effect, without doubt, a significant positive change in their conduct.

On one occasion (Shabbos Parshas Pinchas 5746, Vol. 3 p. 145), the Rebbe explained the comparison between Moshe, the first redeemer, and Moshiach, the final redeemer, in a similar manner. Moshe gave ‘manna’ even to servants and maidservants, due to his great humility (which we also read about in this week’s parsha), and likewise Moshiach, who will be greatly humble, will also engage with and influence even the most distant ones, and give them to taste the true taste of “bread from heaven,” the Torah of Chassidus, sweeter than honey.

Specifically through spreading Chassidus everywhere and to everyone, we can merit to already sit at the feast of the Livyan and Shor HaBar, and taste physically from that wonderful “manna”!

To Conclude With A Story

We’ll end with a mysterious story about eating manna in the previous generation. Rabbi Yaakov Moshe Charlop zt”l (d. 1951), was one of the great rabbis of Yerushalayim in halacha, a rosh yeshiva and also a major mekubal. One of his deepest sefarim is called *Lechem Abirim*. In the introduction to the sefer it says: “I called the work by the name *Lechem Abirim*, for reasons hidden with me.”

What might be those hidden reasons?

Mrs. Chava Dina Bari-Schlesinger a’h, the youngest daughter of Rabbi Yaakov Moshe Charlop, related that when she was a small child, one evening vigorous knocks were heard at the gate of the house. At the door stood a group of Kabbalists who were in constant contact with Rabbi Charlop. They appeared very excited and requested to speak urgently with the rabbi. The Kabbalists demanded that all household members leave the room, but they allowed her, since she was a child who doesn’t understand, to remain.

When the door was closed, the head of the group related that they found in sefarim that unique individuals worthy of it could find remnants of the manna, and whoever merits to eat from it will merit great and special insights in Torah. Also, the discovery of manna remnants would be a sign of the speedy approaching of the Geula.

The group members went out to search for it in the Sinai desert, and after tefillos with certain kavanos and extensive searches, they merited to find what they sought. In one of the rock crevices, they found a hidden layer of manna, and immediately hurried to the rabbi’s house to tell him about the shocking discovery.

Rabbi Charlop was very excited and asked to see the manna. The head of the group opened his dusty bag and took out from it a jar with a little food of white color. They divided the manna among themselves, and each of those present said a bracha and ate a little with tremendous kavana. (What bracha they recited she didn’t remember, but the Rama of Fano rules as mentioned above that one says, “Who brings forth bread from heaven”).

It’s possible that the book *Lechem Abirim* contains within it the revelations that came as a result of eating the manna.

Good Shabbos! ■

The Chassidishe Vibe

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

THE MONTICELLO YOU DIDN'T KNOW

SARA GOPIN TALKS TO
SHTERNA SARA
CHANOWITZ FROM CHABAD
OF MONTICELLO, NY

BE LIKE A JEWISH MAIDSERVANT!

YAFFA REINITZ

A TIME TO BE TESTED

WE HEARD FROM A MOTHER,
A DAUGHTER, AND A TEACHER
ABOUT WHAT THEY SAY OF
THE FINALS SEASON

יחי אדוננו מורנו ורבינו מלך המשיח לעולם ועד



When a Summer Home Turns into a Chabad House

“Thirty-four years have passed since the Rebbe MH”M shook us up on Koach Nissan with the words: ‘**Do all you can!**’ - And, even when something unexpected falls into your hands, that means **you can!**” With these inspiring words Shterna Sara Chanowitz opens our interview.

We met in her home in Crown Heights as she and her husband were packing up to go to Monticello where they are on shlichus. “My in-laws were shluchim in Monticello for twenty-eight years, when it was the hardest, and they brought many Yidden closer to Yiddishkeit. But **our** shlichus there was totally unplanned...”

“In nature you feel a certain connection to Hashem, and that’s what led us to purchase a summer home,” she says. “Monticello is a town within the picturesque Catskill region in upstate NY, where many frum and Chassidishe families who live in the city have summer homes. What’s little-known about Monticello is that there are many local Jews who grew up there. We have special events catered to them and to the not-yet-observant Jews in the area.

“Last year, at our Lag B’Omer bonfire, several men put on tefillin for the first time! After hearing their passionate Shema Yisrael, my own Shema Yisrael will never be the same... Afterwards one of them broke up with his non-Jewish girlfriend and is presently learning in a yeshiva in Eretz Yisrael. The holy Rashbi of our generation ignited his neshama!

“While doing mitzvaim in the area we met a couple, the wife had always lit Shabbos candles, and I feel that in that zechus we bought their house and it became a Beis Chabad. It was small, and old, but something unexplainable drew us to buy it. The night before we closed on the sale I dreamt that the Rebbe was walking me straight into this house, as a bright light was emanating from his holy body.

“Running two homes is not always easy,” she adds. “But my husband and I are making it work. We do our best, without asking questions and trying to understand, and rely on Hashem.”

A “Pact” with Hashem

Shterna Sara talks about her family’s strong Chassidic roots, “My father Reb Sholom

Horowitz grew up in Geula, Yerushalayim, and is a direct descendent of Reb Shmuel Shmelke of Nikolsburg and of the Chozeh of Lublin. He comes from a family of very musical Leviim who are well-known for their melodious tefillos and niggunim. My father's father, Rabbi Pinchos Horowitz ob"m, was a Chassid of Zhvill, but was also very close to the Rebbe, and sent my father to learn in Tomchei Tmimin in Lod.

"My mother's father, Rabbi Yaakov Friedman ob"m, was born in Lithuania and learned in Slobodka, and was a true 'oved Hashem.' The Nazis *yemach shemam* murdered his wife and two children, and incarcerated him in unbearable conditions in labor camps. But he miraculously survived.

"My mother's mother, Yehudis ob"m, was a great woman from a prominent chassidic family in the town of Dinov. When the Nazis came to kill her family she was at her older sister's home nearby helping out with her two little children. Ahavas Yisrael was what saved her. Bubby Friedman was a woman of few words and a lot of emuna.

"Being born into a family of Holocaust survivors had an indelible impact on me, even though my grandparents rarely spoke about the horrors they went through. But there is a well-known story of Zeide Friedman's bravery securing wheat and baking matza in a Nazi labor camp," Shterna Sara shares. "He made a 'pact' with Hashem that if Hashem saves him he will dedicate his life to helping the sick and the poor.

"Zeide Friedman began to rebuild his life. He married Yehudis in the DP camp in Poking, Germany, where their first daughter, Sara Rochel Hertzal a"h, was born. She grew up to

be an unforgettable, dedicated rebbetzin and shlucha of the Rebbe in Eretz HaKodesh.

"Getting close with Lubavitch, Zeide Friedman wrote a letter to the Frierdiker Rebbe asking where to go, to the United States or to Eretz Yisrael. The Frierdiker Rebbe replied that he should come to the US. He relocated in Boro Park, and was blessed with two more children, one of them my mother. Zeide Friedman kept his promise to Hashem and was a gabbai tzedaka who would help, with his heart and soul, anybody who ever knocked on his door." After a wistful pause, she adds, "That's the chinuch that I had, and **saw**, as a child."

Lighting Up the World

"I was born and bred in Crown Heights, and in our home we 'breathed' the farbrengens, mitvzaim, and brachos of the Rebbe," Shterna Sara says. "Upon finishing Beis Rivka Seminary I married Rabbi Yosef Dovid Chanowitz. We set up our new home in Crown Heights, where we were both very involved in chinuch. I was a teacher for many years, and my husband ran a Talmud Torah, as well as the Sunday Funday children's program in Monticello. He is also a Kosher Field Representative for the OK Kosher Certification.

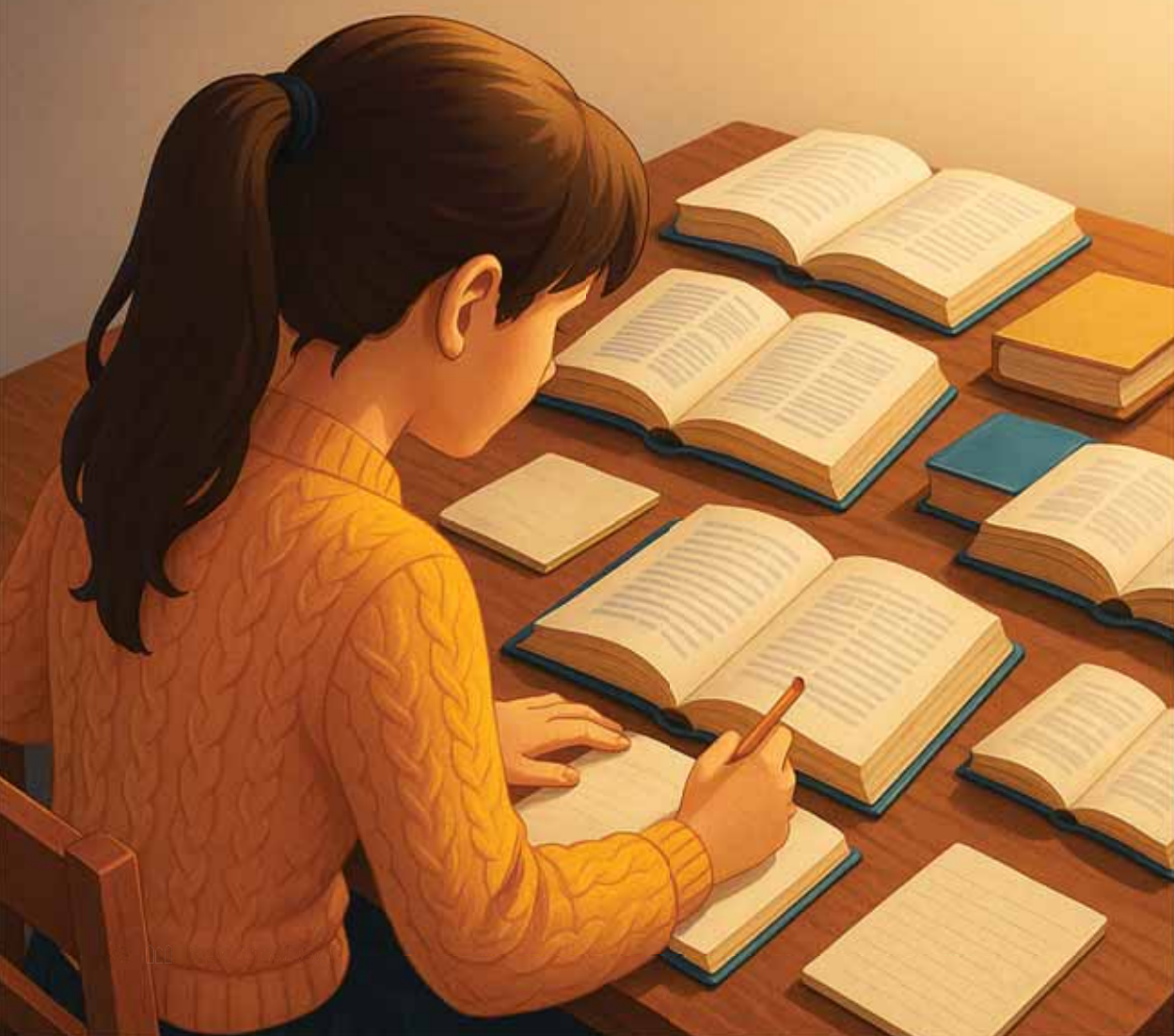
"There was a period in my life that I had a challenging health condition and was going to doctor's appointments in hospitals. At the time, I heard a vort that wherever Hashem 'places' you, that's where you have a shlichus. This applies, *lo aleinu*, if you find yourself in a hospital too...

CONT ON PG. 50

A TIME TO BE TESTED

IN HONOR OF FINAL EXAM CRUNCH TIME, WE HAVE INVITED PEOPLE TO TELL US ABOUT THE HEAVY BURDEN AND THE COPING REQUIRED BY MOTHERS AND DAUGHTERS ALIKE. WE HEARD FROM A MOTHER, A DAUGHTER, AND A TEACHER. YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO TEST IT OUT YOURSELVES.

BY Yael Schneerson



A WORD FROM THE MOTHER

Hello? Does someone out there hear me? The teachers, the principal, the department of education? What is going on with this plague of exams?

For the past two weeks, I've hardly seen my daughter. Either she's with her friends, learning until unacceptably late hours... or her friends come to our house and then lock themselves in her room. They polish off all the snacks, chatter, while intermittently learning for a test, a matriculation exam, and the like. The truth is that I can't seem to keep my head afloat.

Help at home? Of course, what's the question? Ah, you apparently meant the help that she is supposed to give me... Because I was thinking about my help to her, which I provide endlessly - whether it's watching her younger siblings to keep them from disturbing her studies, or helping her get up early. "Mommy, get me out of bed at half past five! I have to review for the final a little more! I hardly got a-n-y-t-h-i-n-g done!" (And no, I don't ask her what she did all afternoon in her room...) I help her by being an attentive ear for all her complaints against the teachers, the difficult exams, the complex learning material, where she succeeded and where she didn't, and her meager output compared to Dini, who's already holding in the middle of her second pre-exam review. Sometimes, I even manage to help explain one of Rashi's commentaries.

Help from her? Who has even heard of such a thing recently? Perish the thought of saying a word about the final exam crunch. If she would devote thirty minutes to folding laundry or ten minutes to doing dishes, how will she pass her matriculation exam in mathematics? This is an equation that can't be solved!

In theory, I think that a daughter needs to help at home, even a little, during final exams time as well. However, when I see her returning home exhausted after five hours of studying at her friend's house, I haven't the heart to ask her to wash even a teaspoon.

I don't think that we were that way at their age, in fact, I'm almost certain that we weren't. It's not that we didn't have tests, final exams, etc. However, there was considerably less pressure. Why? I don't know - but it's a fact. I remember myself cleaning the house a day before my history exam, reviewing dates as I scrubbed. Why can't our daughters do this today?

Yesterday, I went out with my youngest children to the playground. This hasn't happened for a long time now, because my daughter usually was the one to take them. However, as everyone knows by now, she has no time anymore...

The mothers represented in the playground were divided into two groups: The younger ones, still without older daughters who (usually) took the children (and perhaps also those who sometimes hire a babysitter now in the middle of reviewing for her tests), and the middle-aged mothers whose older daughters were now learning for some exam.

We sat and complained - about this unending period of exams, the pressure, the shortfalls, the state education department, and how things were when we were our daughters' age. A talk among mothers in accordance with this time of turbulence.

And then we suddenly saw her, a girl from the neighborhood, high school age, obviously in the middle of her own exams. I won't mention her name to avoid causing any embarrassment... She sat on the bench at the end of the playground with a workbook in her hand, watching from a distance as her younger siblings played. Between pushing the swing and encouraging one of the kids climbing up the high slide, she also managed to glance in her workbook.

We all "pounced" on her - *nebach*, she wasn't prepared for this attack. "What is this? How are you even here? Don't you have to study for an exam?"

"I'm learning here," she said quite simply, pointing at the workbook in her hand. "And I

learned earlier too. Whatever I can't complete now, I'll finish tonight."

The truth? It isn't pleasant to say, but we were all jealous of her mother at that moment...

And if some high-level official with the regent offices still has patience for my monologue, then I have a difficult question in statistics. My daughter wasn't able to solve it (fortunately, it wasn't on the test...), but maybe you people there will know the answer:

Statistically, one hundred percent of girls will need to run their own home during their lives, whereas maybe ten percent, possibly less, will be teachers in mathematics, English, biology, literature, and all the rest.

So, for G-d's sake, why isn't there a matriculation exam in home organization?

A WORD FROM THE DAUGHTER

What pressure, enough! This frightful period of exams has to end already. I have no time to breathe. I still haven't recovered from one test when it's followed by another one and another one waiting in the corner.

I feel that my brain has turned into a warehouse of *maamarim*, *pesukim* and *mefarshim*, and *l'havdil* words in English, mathematical equations, and historical dates – all jumbled together. I hope that I'll manage to assign everything to the correct exam.

It's been t-w-o w-e-e-k-s already! I eat, drink, sleep, breathe, and speak exams – and the end seems nowhere on the horizon. It's impossible to speak with my friends about anything except "Where are you holding with the learning material?", "What's the answer to Question #6?", "Would you like to learn with me tomorrow for our test in...?", "Isn't there anything else in life besides exams?"

And what's most unpleasant pertains to my mother: I hardly see the house anymore. Either I'm studying at my friends' houses all day or I'm closed up in my room together with them and learning there until further notice. Once, before this period of exams began, I would help

her at least twice a week to put the younger children to bed. And today? Ha... Not only does she have to put them to bed herself, she also has to watch them to make certain that they won't disturb me when I'm studying with my friends.

Dishes? When was the last time I did dishes? I don't remember. I hope that when this awful period has ended, I'll still have some recollection of how to do it... along with laundry and washing the floor. During normal daily life, when there's no flood of final exams, my mother always says proudly how I'm her right hand. But now? I'm not even her left hand.

So, what can I do? I don't know if you'll believe me, but at this moment, I would prefer to wash a mountain of dishes instead of solving complex math equations. However, what can I do when there's a h-u-g-e test the day after tomorrow and I've already set a time with Chani to come to her house? I must learn with her; she a genius in mathematics.

Apparently, there's nothing that can be done. I'm not the first and I probably won't be the last either to "disappear" on her mother during this intense period of exams. If the school wouldn't put us under such pressure, if the department of education would cut the learning material in half, then maybe it would also be possible to help a little at home even at this demanding time. Because between us, and maybe one day I'll challenge the math teacher to answer this question: If I would know how to solve equations with unknown variables, will the floor in my future home be any more sparkling clean?

A WORD FROM THE TEACHER

Everything in life has to be taken in its proper proportion.

This is my key phrase, one I that repeat to my students – morning, noon, and evening. However, somehow when exam time rolls around, this phrase vanishes behind mountains of textbooks and workbooks,

suddenly disappearing in fumes and smoke rising from the very concept known as final exam period.

Everything has its time and place (this is another phrase that my students hear from me often). A girl learning in high school is not meant to run her house; this is her mother's job. She is, however, expected to help at home. How much? It's determined on an individual basis, changing in accordance with each household's specific conditions – the family make-up, its size, the daughter's chronological place in the family, and other facts existing in the equation of each particular household.

By its very nature, the period of matriculation exams is far more demanding for the girls, and this is quite true. Most mothers with whom I am acquainted show flexibility with their daughters during this period, because each mother deems it important that her daughter should seriously prepare herself for her tests and attain good marks. Every mother clearly wants what is best for her daughter.

But sometimes it seems that this period is totally blown out of proportion for high school girls. With all due respect to all the pressure and the hours spent reviewing learning material, I still think that a girl who cares can also find the time to extend a helping hand during this intense period. Maybe it's not on the level she does it throughout the rest of the year, during calmer times from an academic standpoint. However, she still took all the hours of the day (and the night) and

dedicated them to learning for exams. In my opinion, that's a bit exaggerated.

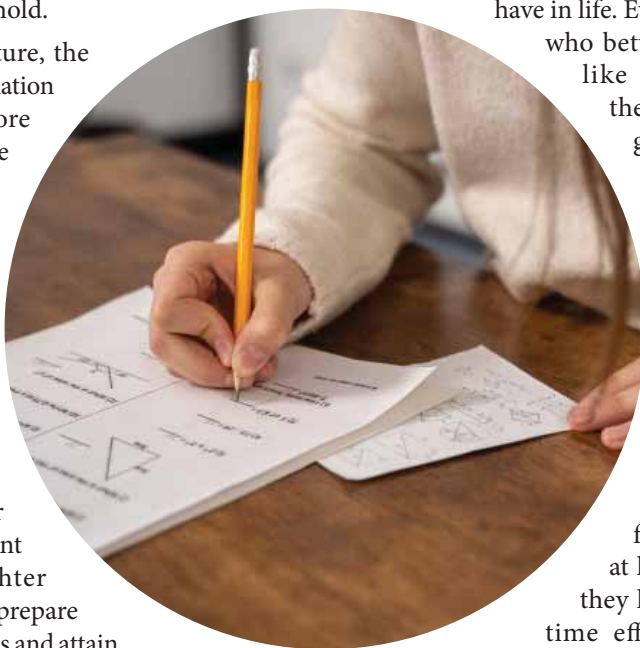
This is all without touching upon the delicate issue of how much of the time two or more friends meeting for the purpose of studying are actually doing just that as opposed to chatting and joking around. Granted, a student periodically needs a little break from learning, again within reasonable proportions, and each one should be making her own self-examination. Personally, I feel when a girl is learning to maneuver herself and find time between exams, if she still can help a little at home, this is the best learning she can

have in life. Even for the future,

who better than mothers like us know that there are extremely grueling times and also much calmer times. If not now, when will our daughters train themselves to achieve success even during troubled times, while doing their fair share to help at home? When will they learn to use their time effectively, setting priorities for certain tasks while finding free moments for important things even when they hardly have time to breathe?

It may be true that a list of words in English won't help you in planning a nourishing lunch in the future, and the math equations won't fold the laundry for you. However, if you look at this period of exams in the proper way, you will likely learn a great deal for your future life.

Good luck to everyone on their tests, including the test of life! ■





The Burdens We Carry In The Desert of Life

The work of Sefiras HaOmer is over. We received the Torah on Shavuos. So... now what? What comes next? What is our avoda moving forward?

Between Pesach and Shavuos, Hashem opened the channels for us, giving us energy from above to refine ourselves and prepare to receive the Torah. Now begins a new phase, to take all that growth and integrate it, to make it last.

This is not an easy process by any means. It requires trekking through our own personal *midbar*—the empty, dry places in our lives—and bringing the light of Torah there. Just as the Jews had 42 journeys through the desert, we each have our own stops along the way, each one marking a different stage in our personal avoda.

We all have our own baggage that we carry with us throughout our life. While traveling through the *midbar* the Leviim carried the parts of the Mishkan. This parallels our avoda, to take all the “stuff” we carry and figure out how to turn it into a Mishkan, a space for Hashem to dwell.

The Leviim were split into three families—Gershon, Kehos, and Merari. Each carried a different load, which represents a different aspect of avoda.

Elevating the Bitterness

Merari's job was to carry the beams of the Mishkan. The name Merari means bitterness. They represent the hard parts of life—the stress, the pain, the exhaustion. The things we've been dragging with us for years. It's no coincidence that the boards were the heaviest load to carry. Old grudges, hurts that never healed, guilt or shame that's still hanging around. Sometimes we're not even sure why we're still holding on, but we're stuck in defensive mode, not ready to let go.

The avoda of Merari is to take all that bitterness and lift it up. Direct your bitterness towards Hashem. Channel it towards teshuva, towards bittul and kabolas ol. These heavy beams are the framework on which the rest of our avoda is built.

Weaving in Our Emotions

The family of Gershon carried the cloth coverings of the Mishkan—beautiful, handwoven curtains made by skilled artisans. This symbolizes the avoda of the heart—our emotions, our passion, our middos. It's about experiencing real love and connection with Hashem.

These emotional qualities are hinted at in the details of the coverings themselves. One was made of linen, which in Hebrew is *shesh*, a word that also means “six”—an allusion to the six emotional attributes. Another was made from the skins of *techashim*, which Onkelos translates as *sasgona*. The Gemara (Shabbos 28a) describes the *tachash* as a colorful animal, and says that *sasgona* hints at *sas*—rejoicing—and *gavnin*—many colors. Again, we see a link to the emotional spectrum, with its many shades and tones, all rooted in the six middos.

When we turn toward Hashem (*ratzo*), He responds by shining His love back to us (*shov*), which then inspires us to turn back to Him with even deeper love. That's the avoda of Gershon: to awaken the heart, to stir the emotions, to build a vibrant relationship with Hashem.

Lighting up the Way

Finally, we come to the avoda of Kehos, which is the most refined and elevated of the three. They carried the *keilim*, the sacred vessels of the Mishkan, which represent our intellectual faculties, our chochma, bina and daas.

The aron held the *luchos*, the tablets, and it represents Hashem's deepest wisdom which

is completely beyond our understanding. The aron remained in the Kodesh HaKodoshim, closed at all times, untouched even by the Kohen Gadol on Yom Kippur. The menorah represents the revelation of Hashem's light to the world in a way that we can contain it.

The mizbeach represents the avoda of Torah study. The korbanos were separated into different parts. Some were eaten by an ordinary person, some by the Kohen, some parts were sprinkled on the altar, some were burnt entirely. Studying Torah involves a process of clarification, categorizing things as right or wrong, assur or muttar.

Together, the avoda of the Leviim is about connecting us to Hashem, in whichever stage of avoda we're holding. Each of the Leviim had their own role, but they all reflect different parts of our own journey. Merari reminds us that even the heaviest parts of our life—the bitterness, the pain, the stuff we wish we could drop—can become the foundation for something holy. Gershon teaches us to bring our emotions, our creativity, our love, into our connection with Hashem. Kehos shows us the power of clarity, bringing Hashem's light and wisdom into the world.

Shavuot isn't the finish line. It's the beginning of our journey into the desert, to bring light into the most desolate places. We've received the Torah, and now we carry it with us in our hearts. With every challenge and step forward, we're building a Mishkan inside ourselves, a place where Hashem can dwell. ■

(Based on Likutei Torah Parshas Naso, Naso es rosh b'nei Gershon)



The Model Of The Jewish Maidservant For A Happy Life

Basi, a young woman married for five years, came to me to talk about her relationship with her husband. She told me that she feels that her husband doesn't respect her, isn't sufficiently attentive to her needs, doesn't validate her opinions, and doesn't stop to find out what she wants. "Give me an example," I asked. "He didn't ask me if I wanted to go out for a walk, and he went out with his friends instead."

I asked her whether he knew that she wanted to take a walk with him, or only when he said that he was going out with his friends and she felt insulted. Did she initiate the conversation with him regarding what was bothering her?

She said that wasn't her job. She was waiting to see if he really cared about her because that was *his* job.

We began talking about how we connect in our spousal relationship, and how we are supposed to distinguish our role in said relationship. Does she just wait around or does she too have an active part to set in motion? And then I dropped the bombshell.

I told her that there's a "Jewish maidservant model" that can create a sense of order, helping her understand how she can receive more respect in her relationship with her spouse. She naturally recoiled at the mere suggestion. "Me?

A maidservant? What's the connection? That would only make things far worse?" I promised her that this is something quite revolutionary, and if she is open to the idea, perhaps she can eventually connect to it as well.

Stories Of Servants

The Jewish maidservant and the Canaanite slave of our times are the definitions of the spiritual state that constantly exists in Avodas Hashem. A servant processes his own soul through his work and his bittul towards his master with kabalas ol.

There are three levels that we fluctuate between in our relationships with G-d, our spouses, and our children.

A Canaanite slave: Loving the freedom and abandon to do whatever he wants, while satisfying the desires of his master even though he doesn't always feel like doing so.

We should take note of what's happening with a child, be he a toddler or an adolescent facing the daily struggles of life. How long will this last? The time will come when the struggles will cease, and then the aspiration for freedom and independence will burst forth with much strength and even defiance. In addition, as long as he continues struggling, he's not reliable, moving about in the world of

darkness with no light or illumination. Thus, having kabalas ol without a real connection doesn't actually work for an extended period of time.

A Hebrew slave: While he has no desire to do whatever he feels like, he enjoys learning Torah and connecting to G-d through fulfilling mitzvos. However, he still wants to be a part of the family that he serves. He has a connection and self-discipline – and these are the two values that are important to grow within us and through which to raise our children.

A Jewish maidservant: Confident where she is, she is wanted and loved. First, she is sold only to whomever guarantees her future. She enters the home and eventually will be included in the family unit. Thus, even when she provides service, they also relate to her with honor and respect, a full-fledged member of the family. She cooks in her master's house and serves complete dishes that have been fully processed without leaving any waste material. This is because she does a lot of 'coaching', going through and adapting various procedures.

A Jewish maidservant exists from the emotional perspective where she gives herself over to the family connection, and in order to make this connection, she needs to feel a sense of self-respect. If she feels like a slave, she won't manage to connect in the truest sense.

The key to the connection is self-respect. When a woman has respect for herself, she can establish a bond from a healthy place.

HOW DO WE REACH THIS?

In stages:

First of all, be a 'Canaanite slave' – start by connecting through kabalas ol, because a

proper connection in our personal relationships is at the heart of the bond, whether between us and G-d or between us and our loved ones. In Basi's case, even if she thinks that it's not her job to open the conversation and perhaps her husband does show a lack of sensitivity, it would be appropriate to start connecting even if they don't yet feel connected, because it's the right thing to do.

Afterwards, you can rise to the stage of being a 'Hebrew slave', and you can start enjoying the connection. Suddenly, Basi sees how natural it is to communicate with her husband, expressing what she wants and thinks without being offended.

Then, at the next stage, as a 'Jewish maidservant' – she really gives herself over to the connection and feels enough of a sense of belonging and self-esteem, as well as from her husband. She knows that the two of them have chosen this connection, and this is the essence of their avoda in the world and in building their home.

SUMMARY:

Strength – Taking action in the world through kabalas ol. This is a most basic and important stage in a servant's processing of his soul.

Connection – When you bring pleasure to the connection in your personal relationships, you become even more connected.

Choice – When you're in a relationship from a place of your choosing, the connection gets stronger, and you feel a greater sense of belonging and devotion. ■

“After asking the Rebbe for a bracha for a refua shleima, I took upon myself to give out neshek in the hospital. Suddenly I felt a whole new, and much deeper, connection to bentching licht. I wasn’t lighting by myself anymore, but ‘together’ with all of the other women and girls who took upon themselves the mitzva of lighting Shabbos candles! The world needs every single light!

“In the beginning I kept in touch with everyone personally in order to notify them of the time for candlelighting. Then I had the idea of creating a weekly online flyer, noting the times in different time zones in order for it to be suitable for worldwide distribution. Boruch Hashem, I’ve been doing this for the past fifteen years. The flyer is in memory of a dear friend and classmate of mine, Miriam Shmueli a”h, who passed away very young, and was devoted to the mitzvaim of the Rebbe *b’lev u’b’nefesh*.” She adds with chayus, “The Rebbe MH”M is lighting up the **entire** world!”

The Last Kindness

Shterna Sara continues. “Parshas Kedoshim begins with Hashem telling Moshe Rabbeinu ‘Kedoshim Tiheyu.’ Our bodies are holy and therefore it is prohibited to mar them in any way, after one’s life too, such as through the abominable pagan practice of cremation *ch”v*. Tragically, there are even ‘Jewish’ cremation services that are performed by a ‘rabbi.’ Hashem *yishmor*!

“Our involvement in securing a Jewish burial for the elderly began when someone came in to our Chabad House one day and told my husband that an elderly friend had just passed away and his ex-girlfriend was planning to have his body cremated. The news shook us up, until then we had zero awareness of how easily a cremation can happen, *rachmana litzlan*!

“For one month my husband and I worked closely with the Chesed Shel Emes organization, fighting back and forth with the ex-girlfriend to prevent the cremation. Boruch Hashem we succeeded!

“The Last Kindness is another very helpful organization, run by Rabbi Elchonon Zohn of the Chevra Kadisha of Queens. Their website, lastkindness.org, has pertinent burial information and offers counseling services for planning end-of-life decisions.

“Since that incident my husband and I have been visiting nursing homes on a regular basis and talking to the Jewish residents about the importance of having a Jewish burial. We come prepared with an authorization form for them to sign preventing the possibility of cremation, even if a ‘next of kin’ decides otherwise. I’ve met many lonely elderly Yidden who have no connection with their children, which makes them easy prey for others to make after-life decisions for them that are forbidden in Jewish law.

“Our work caused a commotion in one of the nursing homes,” Shterna Sara shares. “For a while we were no longer permitted to speak to the residents about their end-of-life decisions, but recently this sanction was overturned. Just this week the staff and director of the nursing home invited us to a meeting in order to hear what we have to say regarding the importance of respecting the holiness of the body through a Jewish burial. This was a major breakthrough! I daven that other concerned Jews will follow our lead and protect our elderly population.

“We are always giving in the names of anyone who needs help to the Rebbe, the ‘neshama klalis’ of all the Jewish people. The Rebbe feels their pain and will take care of all their needs!” Shterna Sara adds unequivocally, “Throughout my life I’ve always seen that if you live ‘with’ the Rebbe MH”M you’ll have massive blessings in everything you do!” ■



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Recap: *An unconscious Shmuel is brought home from the citadel.*



It took the commander nearly twenty minutes to explain to Shmuel that he's still alive, although his explanations weren't all that pleasant. When he finished, Shmuel was seated on a chair, stable and attentive to some extent. He managed to answer somewhat, but not directly to questions, even those requiring only a minimum of verbal response, as he was confused half the time.

His eyelids were almost completely shut. Everyone could see that he was really trying to maintain his alertness, lifting his head slightly, trying to open his eyes a bit more.

The problem was that every few sentences, his mind became foggy again and he lost his balance, risking falling out of his chair. He was supported by a soldier standing near him. He gave Shmuel a ringing slap, but it only brought him to for another minute.

The children stood clinging to one another, shrinking with fear. It was most painful for them to see their strong father so weak and beaten. However, after they had already given up hope of seeing him again, they couldn't stop mumbling their thanks to Hashem, praying that he would get through this stage and remain with them for some tender loving care.

THE SECOND HOUSEWIFE

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

BY ALUMA SHEMLI

“There’s no alternative,” the commander said angrily. “Misha, stand behind him with a dagger, and every time he starts to pass out, stick it in his wound.”

Pesach Tzvi began to tremble, translating the cruel order with some difficulty. Shmuel didn’t even show any alarm, as he was still quite dazed and groggy. He lowered his eyes, breathing deeply, totally confused.

“Commander,” the soldier Misha said with a slightly more humane look. “This will cause him to faint again from the pain. With the commander’s permission, I’d like to try something else.”

“Go ahead,” the commander replied with some hesitation, stroking his handlebar mustache. “But if it doesn’t work, we’ll go back to doing things my way and salt the wound.”

Misha bent down in front of Shmuel, trying to catch his eye. “Shmuel?” he gently slapped his face. “Shmuel?” Shmuel raised his head and looked at him, trying to open his eyes a little more.

“Look around, Shmuel. Look and answer me: Where are you? In a cell? Being interrogated? In a wagon?” he asked softly, placing his hand on Shmuel’s, not letting him doze off.

Shmuel lifted his eyes, looking around in confusion. He squinted tightly, trying to concentrate. Suddenly, his eyes began to light up a bit. “This is...my house?” He wondered quietly. Words came out of his mouth for the first time, not just a nod of the head. “Can this be?” He straightened up a bit, trying to check things out a little better.

Gronem pinched Tzadok’s hand with excitement. Pesach Tzvi gasped.

“Yes, Shmuel the Jew,” the soldier said. “You’re in your home.” After a moment, he added, “Look!” Shmuel straightened up some more, opened his eyes, and took a deep breath.

The soldier stood up, catching a glimpse at Shmuel’s sons and the servants, furrowing his brow. “The one with the hat, most resembling him. You must be his son, am I

**„ Aidel woke up,
although she didn’t
open her eyes. She
continued lying on her
side, all bundled up and
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felt...as if all her
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every move.**

right?” He whispered something loudly to the commander. Pesach Tzvi translated in a quiet voice. The brothers looked at one another. Yossel was the only with a hat, and he blushed with embarrassment.

The commander shrugged his shoulders. “Whatever you say, Misha. It seems that you’re doing all right...” he chuckled. “After this assignment, I’ll promote you to the rank of nursemaid...” he roared with laughter.

Misha motioned with his finger to Yossel to come closer. After he took a few steps towards him, the soldier motioned for him to stop. “Vodka,” he said, motioning with his hand as if he was raising a glass. Yossel dashed into the kitchen, returning with a glass of vodka in his hand, waiting for instructions.

“He doesn’t drink,” Pesach Tzvi mentioned, in Russian.

“All the better,” the soldier was pleased to hear. “Tell the young man with the hat that I want his father to see him. However, he must

remember that it is forbidden for him to speak with him or approach him.”

Pesach Tzvi translated, smiling to Yossel.

Misha took the glass, grasping Yossel by the hand, and placing him before Shmuel. “Shmuel the Jew,” he called to him, causing him to look up again. “Who is this?”

Shmuel’s eyes brightened. “Yossel...” he whispered. He straightened up in his chair, trying to reach out his hands, only to discover that they were bound. “Yossel,” a smile came to his lips. Yossel smiled, very excited. By now, Shmuel’s eyes were completely open.

Misha pushed the glass towards his lips. “Drink, Shmuel,” he ordered. Shmuel brought his face closer to the glass. He looked at it for a moment and grimaced. “Drink,” Misha firmly brought the glass closer as he muttered something. Shmuel opened his eyes wide in fear, looking at the soldier. He made a bracha and took a sip, but Misha forced him to swallow the glass’ entire contents in one gulp. He choked and began to cough, his face contorted. “Yeech...” He then straightened up, more alert. “So, what am I supposed to say in order to get out of all these ropes?” he suddenly remembered.

The commander looked at him, stunned.

“Good morning, Shmuel the Jew,” he chuckled.



Aidel woke up, although she didn’t open her eyes. She continued lying on her side, all bundled up and shivering. Her eyelids burned, and her muscles felt... as if all her joints were rusted solid, squeaking at every move.

She could hear voices downstairs. This was somewhat surprising with the aura of silence prevailing over the estate in recent days. Is it possible that Shmuel has returned? An encouraging thought snuck into her heart, but she quickly drove it out. For the moment, she had no strength to deal with the

disappointment, preferring not to get her hopes up.

The commander’s speech was short and to the point, and Pesach Tzvi immediately translated it. “You are going into house arrest until the trial. However, it’s important to emphasize that all the serious charges against you remain in force no less than before.

“The only reason for this is that the court was convinced that you do not pose a danger to the general public. If the justices change their position, you will immediately be returned to prison.”

The commander cleared his throat. “There is no possibility of leaving this estate. If you take one step beyond this door,” he pointed at the gate, “your blood will be on your head. Soldiers will be watching over this estate with orders to kill you, no questions asked. If you manage to evade them, the mighty army of His Imperial Majesty the Czar, will find you, no matter where you run!”

“It’s important to add,” he chuckled, “that a very large sum of money was placed in safekeeping with the court as bail in exchange for your release to house arrest. It would be a pity to lose it...”

He then pulled out a bundle of documents and other papers. He opened an inkwell and pulled out a quill pen. “Signatures!” he proclaimed.

The soldier Misha approached and began unleashing Shmuel’s hands. For the first time since that morning, Shmuel could breathe normally and relax his shoulders a bit. He carefully held out his hand, touched the wound on the back of his neck, and shrunk back in pain.

“Here,” the commander pointed, “and here, and here.” Shmuel stubbornly reviewed the documents, albeit partially, determined to verify what he was signing.

When everything had been concluded, the soldiers began to leave. The commander stretched his limbs. “Unshackle his legs, gather up all the ropes and chains, and come with me.”

Misha nodded. He slowly started making a pile of all of the equipment.

"What kind of people are these?" the commander sighed a moment before leaving. "They didn't even give us water..." Zalman chuckled when he heard the translation. He quickly went to the kitchen and returned with several bottles of vodka and a cloth bag filled with rolls. "Gronem," he whispered to him. "Bring a few gold coins to satisfy their covetous eyes..."

Misha brought a wide and thick restraint chained to an iron ball. "I have to shackle you to it," he said almost apologetically. "On which leg would you prefer that I clasp it?"

Shmuel thought for a moment. Finally, he replied: "The left leg."

The soldier removed the shackles connecting his two feet, replacing them with a single chain on his left leg. "It isn't comfortable," he smiled, "but it will remind you that you're still a prisoner and it will make it difficult for you to run, if you try to escape..."

Shmuel was silent, looking at him with a troubled expression on his face.

Just before he got up, his eyes still lowered, seemingly to the manacles, he whispered, "*Ich bin a Yid* [= I am a Jew], taking a deep breath. "Meshel ben Dvonya."

Shmuel looked at him quite pensively. "Can I set you free?"

He shook his head, a terrified look in his eyes. "Just daven for me that I should eventually merit to have a Jewish burial."

He then quickly got up, gathering all the chains and ropes. Just before he left, he looked around for Pesach Tzvi, the Russian speaker. "All this disorientation and lack of concentration is just due to the wound he sustained during the journey here," he gently reassured him. "I saw him this morning when we left the citadel, and he was completely healthy and lucid."

Everyone at once surrounded Shmuel, afraid to get too close. He looked particularly fragile, wet and shivering. He smiled as he stood up

and stretched his muscles. He momentarily lost his balance, but he regained his footing and made the bracha "Shehecheyanu," using Hashem's Name. Yossel was the first one to fall on his shoulders. Gronem was next, crying as he forgot to be his usual tough and inflexible. All the anger from that morning was swept away.

Shmuel suddenly froze in place, looking quite pale. "Aidel, where is she? Is everything all right?"

"She's sleeping," Tzirel's voice could be heard from the corner of the lobby. "I'll go upstairs and wake her, master."

"I'll go up to her," Shmuel stopped her. He tried to start taking his first step, almost falling. This ball really is heavy! "And I would be most happy if I could take a bath," he smiled with embarrassment. "As you can see, I haven't changed my clothes since last year..."

"Anything else?" Zalman asked, recalling the list of orders he would receive on a normal day. Shmuel had already started to climb the stairs, slightly hunched over and shrunken. The whole right side of his neck looked twisted. The iron ball followed him, one stair after another.

"What am I lacking, Zalman?" He turned around with a radiant and joyful look on his face. "I'm here with you. One more moment and I'll finally put on tefillin..." He was at a loss for words. Tears came in their place.

Aidel shut her eyes tightly. If she imagined that she could hear Shmuel's voice, her fever must be much higher than she thought.

Whoosh, boom. Whoosh, boom. Whoosh, boom. Something was hitting the wooden stairs at a regular pace, one every two seconds. She sat up in bed, afraid of wasting time on a wild feverish delusion.

A knock at the door. "Aidel?" The deep familiar voice she thought she would never hear again. "Aidel?" What was the matter with her? The handle went down, and the door opened. She covered her eyes and burst into tears. ■

To be continued...

Story Time

BY YOSEF SHIDLER ,FROM THE TZADDIKSTORY.ORG COLLECTION



RAMBAM - THE VERY BEST DOCTOR

It definitely wasn't the news that he wanted to hear.

According to his doctor, Rabbi Eli Silberstein's heart was beating an extra 40,000 times each and every day, an issue that could create lifelong health problems for the Chabad shaliach in Ithaca, New York.

Rabbi Silberstein made an appointment with another doctor, this one a heart specialist who made it crystal clear that the problem was serious and needed to be fixed as soon as possible. Within minutes, Rabbi Silberstein was scheduled for a special kind of surgery to keep his heart from being badly





damaged, a surgery so serious it could only be done in a hospital.

But then COVID came. Despite the seriousness of his illness, Rabbi Silberstein's procedure was pushed off because hospitals were overflowing with COVID cases and they couldn't take on extra patients. Rabbi Silberstein accepted the fact that his surgery just wasn't going to happen any time soon and that he was going to have to wait until things calmed down at the hospital.

While Rabbi Silberstein and the rest of the world waited for COVID to calm down, he came across a very interesting talk given by the Rebbe quite a few years earlier. The sicha discussed how the Rambam wrote that halachos and illnesses have something unusual in common – each one is connected to 83 different categories. With the gematria of the word machala – illness – also adding up to 83, the Rebbe noted that learning the 83 halachos of the Rambam has special the power to cure any kind of sickness.

Hmmm he thought.

Learning Rambam wasn't a new idea for Rabbi Silberstein, who knew that the Rebbe called on all Jews to study three perakim of Rambam every day. Some days he did manage to get in his three perakim, but there were others where it just didn't happen.

Rabbi Silberstein decided right then and there that he was going to do three perakim of Rambam every day, no matter what. There were times when keeping his promise was more than a little challenging, but Rabbi Silberstein kept on pushing himself, the words of the Rebbe's sicha ringing in his head.

As the weeks went by, COVID calmed down its power on the world a little bit. Finally, the day arrived when the specialist called Rabbi Silberstein to reschedule his heart procedure.

Since it had been several months since he had last seen Rabbi Silberstein, the specialist asked him to come in for another test to measure his heart rate.

We need to check to see where things are up to he explained...

One day after the repeat test, Rabbi Silberstein got a very unusual phone call. As soon as he picked up the phone, he could hear that the specialist, who normally seemed very sure of his himself, was completely in shock.

"You had only one extra heartbeat in 24 hours," said the specialist. "I've never seen anything like this before."

It's like magic the surgery happened all by itself?

Knowing that the specialist was Jewish, Rabbi Silberstein told him how he was studying the writings of the Rambam, known in English as Maimonides. He also explained how the Rebbe had said that learning the Rambam could bring about miraculous results, including curing illness.

But while Rabbi Silberstein had no doubt that his heart really had gotten better because of his learning, the specialist wasn't convinced that that had actually happened.

"That's very nice, all that Torah learning and all that, but maybe there was some kind of mistake in the test," said the specialist. "I want you to take the test again in a few months and let's see what it says."

Rabbi Silberstein kept up with his daily dose of three perakim of Rambam. A day after he took his third test to measure his heart rate, a nurse called him back to share the results with him.

"The doctor asked me to tell you that there wasn't even a single extra heartbeat this time around," said the nurse.

"Oh, and he asked me to tell you to please send his regards to the Rambam."

Rabbi Silberstein wasn't the only one person who went through a health miracle after taking on the daily study of the Rambam. After being told by his doctor that he had

cancer, Cohen Binayminov from Queens New York went to the Ohel to get a bracha from the Rebbe to try to come to terms with the sickness that had taken over his body.

Confused and frightened, Cohen tried to put his thoughts together so that he could ask the Rebbe for a miracle, but as he sat in the Ohel, he saw something that drew his attention.

There was this man, who was learning something on his phone. He had no idea what he was learning but he had never seen anyone with such excitement on their face, so he went over and asked him what he was learning.

It turned out that the man was learning Rambam on an app called Daily Torah Classes with Rabbi Yehoshua a"h Gordon. Knowing that the Rebbe had spoken about the importance of learning the Rambam, Cohen downloaded the app on his phone right away and promised himself that he would learn Rambam every day.

I'm sure you can imagine how difficult it would be for a sick person who is in the hospital and often in pain to learn three perakim of Rambam a day, but Cohen kept reminding himself that the Rambam was just a finger away, on his cell phone. Things got even worse when COVID took New York City by storm. Cohen was so sick that his doctors gave up on him, sure that his end was near. But even then, Cohen never stopped learning, even on the days when he couldn't eat and could barely breathe.

"I had Rabbi Gordon's shiurim always going on my phone," said Cohen. "I was connected to the Rambam and to the Torah. I would say, 'Hashem, I only have today. There are no guarantees for tomorrow but today is a day that I am not going to give up on my learning.'"

Each day, Cohen davened to Hashem from his hospital bed, asking for the strength to get through that day. No matter how hard



it was to just get through a single hour, Cohen did his best to make each day count.

And then somehow four months had passed, and Cohen was still alive and still learning the Rambam every day. He was given a new treatment for COVID called convalescent plasma that saved his life and just days later, Cohen was well enough to leave the hospital, standing up and walking out on his own two feet. And he was back home, in his own house and with his own family, Cohen knew that nothing could hold him back from his daily learning of the Rambam.

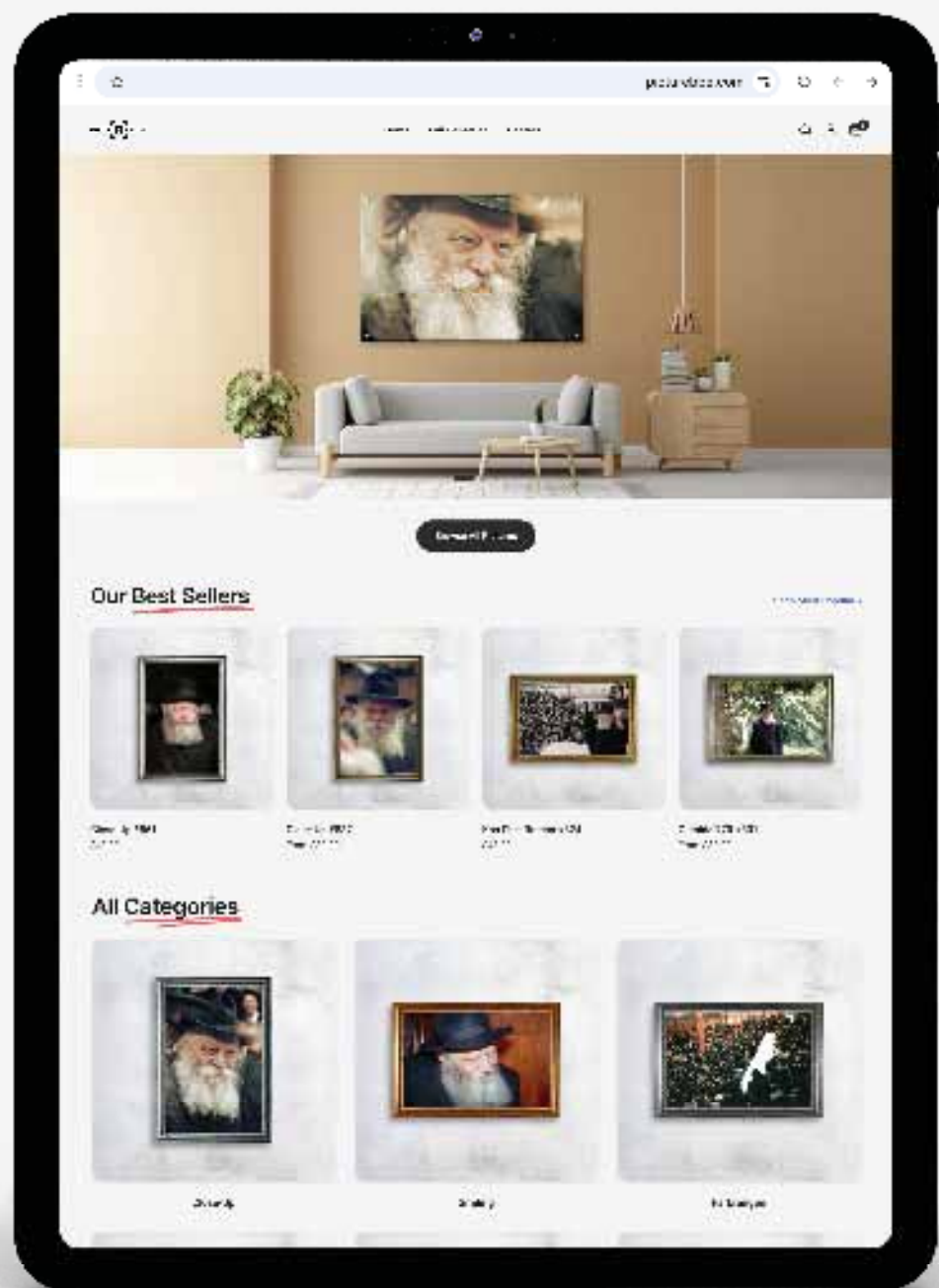
"If I could learn while I was sick, I was definitely continuing now that I was healthy and I would speak on Shabbos, telling people how learning the Rambam helped me recover from my illness," said Cohen.

Just a few months later, Cohen's shul started a daily Rambam shiur. Doctors, lawyers, businessmen and others started rearranging their schedules, with some even coming later to work so that they could stay and learn Rambam together. Cohen

marvels at the fact that everything that happened, from his miraculous recovery to his shul's Rambam shiur, started with an app dedicated to sharing divrei Torah.

"I wake up in the morning, put my kids on the bus and look forward to my Rambam shiur," noted Cohen. "This isn't just an extraordinary end to the story, it is also an extraordinary beginning. Maybe this was what the Rebbe intended when I went to the Ohel - that one day, there would come a day when the Rambam would come all the way to Rego Park."

While it's hard for any of us to imagine just how many wonderful things that can happen by learning the Rambam, the Rebbe understood the incredible power of the Rambam's writing. It might seem hard at first to learn three perakim every single day, but just ask Rabbi Silberstein and Cohen Binayminov. They'll tell you how learning the Rambam made their lives not harder, but much, much easier.



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ECHOES OF COURAGE

WHAT DO A BOY FROM
A SECRET CHEDER IN
COMMUNIST RUSSIA
AND A MYSTERIOUS
ELDERLY MAN HAVE
IN COMMON?

15

CANDY COLLECTION

Recap: Eretz Yisrael, present day: Mendy, Moishy and Zalmey decide to organize a play about Russia and they request permission from the principal to perform it at the old age home. Russia, year 5684 (1924): A slip of the tongue forces Reb Shalom to reveal to Avremel the location of the Rebbe. They begin walking in that direction, not noticing the men who are following them.

Yerushalayim 5785

“Has anyone seen the document?” asked Moishy, and everyone was frightened. If they didn’t find it quickly, it wouldn’t be good. What would they tell the manager?

The children began searching for it all over the bomb shelter, in drawers, the closet, under and on the table, but they couldn’t find it.

“What shall we do? The manager sounded so annoyed when he spoke about this document and if we don’t give it back to him, he may not agree

BY: Y. KIRSHENZAFT

to have the play in the senior center!" said Zalmy.

"Try and remember where you put it," said Mendy, which is what everyone says when something disappears.

"I sat here," began Moishy, "and the paper was on the table, and then I took it and put it in this closet," he said, pointing at one of the closets. They opened the closet but nothing was in it.

"Help! There's nothing here!" shouted Mendy hysterically. "My entire collection!"

"What collection did you have there?" Asked Moishy and Zalmy in unison.

"A collection of candy wrappers! Whenever I ate one, I put the wrapper in the closet and now, my entire collection vanished!"

Moishy and Zalmy tried not to laugh, but Zalmy blurted out a line that irritated Mendy.

"Oh, that was your collection? Oops."

Mendy got up threateningly and asked Zalmy, "What did you do with my collection? Where is it?"

"I'll explain! I'll explain!" said Zalmy, and he began to explain.

"Yesterday, I opened this closet and saw it full of garbage, so I threw it all out."

"You threw my collection into the garbage?!" asked a horrified Mendy.

Moishy got up and stopped the argument.

"Guys, we can continue to argue and we can try to find a solution that will save us from the manager. Zalmy, is it possible that you threw the document in the garbage along with all the wrappers?"

"That makes sense," said Zalmy. "Our only option is to look through the garbage."

"Search the garbage?" exclaimed Mendy. "Do you want the entire block to think you are a sanitation worker?"

"Relax," said Moishy. "I wasn't referring to the massive, neighborhood garbage bin. I meant the bomb shelter's small trash can."

They went over to the trash can and began searching, and there, among the broken pretzels and discarded Bamba, sat a folder paper.

"Boruch Hashem, we found it," said Moishy, and he took out the paper. He opened it and breathed a sigh of relief. Yes, it was the document.

He took the last cup from the closet and was about to pour himself a cup of cold juice when the manager called.

"What's happening," he asked impatiently. "Are you coming?"

"Y ... yes," said Moishy. "There was an unexpected delay."

"Okay, I'm waiting for you in my office."

Moishy hung up and asked, "Who here has a camera?"

"Not me," said Zalmy.

"I do," said Mendy, "but it's very old and I'm not sure it works."

"Run and bring it here, quick," said Moishy and Mendy dashed out of the bomb shelter.

A minute later he came back with the camera. He had turned it on but it didn't seem to be working properly.

"You know what?" said Moishy. "I think I'll take a picture with my father's phone."

"No way," said Zalmy and Mendy. "Do you want your father to see this document?"

"It's not a bad idea," said Moishy, and he ran off. "The time has come to share this with someone," he said as he ran.

He returned three minutes later, along with his father.

"Wow!" said Moishy's father. "You've made yourself a palace here!"

"Abba, we don't have time" said Moishy, impatiently. "We need to take a picture of this document and bring the original to the manager."

Moishy's father took a picture and the three boys ran out.

"Thanks, Abba," Moishy managed to say as he ran.

They arrived at the senior center and went to the manager's office and sat down. The manager looked at them coldly and said, "I know everything you did now, with the document."

Russia 5684

Shulem and Avremel were on their way to the hotel where the Rebbe was staying. They did not notice two pairs of eyes watching them from among the foliage. Two KGB agents walked quietly in order to find out where the two were headed.

It turned out that R' Chonye was right to be concerned ...

R' Chonye was leaving his house in order to take care of some urgent matters, including finding a new shochet who would do Lubavitcher shechita, after the previous shochet was caught. He also hoped to find a new melamed who would teach a class in Leningrad after the previous melamed had also been caught. He walked quickly and cautiously and then noticed them up ahead. Shulem was walking along with Avremel. They were speaking the entire time and did

not notice that R' Chonye had seen them. Nor had they noticed the two KGB agents following their every move.

R' Chonye decided to see where Shulem and Avremel were going. He suspected they were heading toward the hotel where the Rebbe was. He was following them when he suddenly noticed another two people following them.

As he wondered whether this was a coincidence, he saw that at the next turn the same thing happened. I'm in a three-way surveillance situation. In another few minutes, they will arrive at the hotel. I must stop them before that.

He formulated a plan. Even though he knew he was endangering himself, he began walking faster until he passed the two agents and reached Shulem and Avremel. He walked with big steps and "accidentally" knocked Shulem down.

Shulem didn't realize who had knocked him down which is why he called out, "Hey, watch out!" Then R' Chonye turned around and responded in an annoyed tone, "You watch out!"

Shulem, who was smart, saw R' Chonye and heard what he said and immediately got the hint. He got up, brushed himself off, and as he walked he whispered a few words to Avremel. Avremel took the next corner while Shulem continued walking a different way.

R' Chonye, watching what was going on, realized that Shulem had gotten the hidden warning. He was pleased with Shulem's cleverness. He continued on his way but didn't notice that the two agents continued to follow them.

To be continued



WHITE WATER

CHAPTER #29



OR
OT

OROT.ART



MY MILESTONE

My Masterpiece