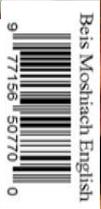


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Bringing Moshiach Values
Into Our Homes

no. 1287



THE SIN OF THE GOLDEN ROUND

THE REBBE'S BATTLE FOR JEWISH PRIDE

A Chassid of STERLING SILVER

Rabbi Y. Carlebach's Inspiring Kinus Address

STRAWBERRIES Not Apples & Pears!

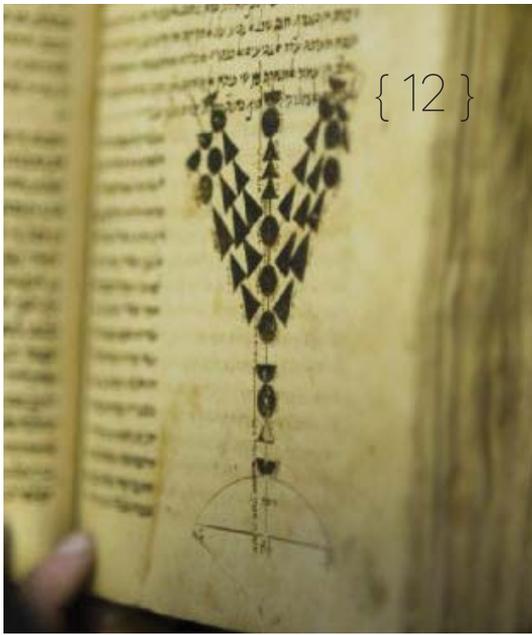
The Chassidish Vibe

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It's Okay to Laugh, Seriously!

The Power of a Penny
BESURAS HAGEULA

SARA GOPIN TALKS TO GITTY STOLIK



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R' Hirsch Pekkar was born in Dnepropetrovsk in 5696 (1936), when R' Levik, the Rebbe's father, was the rav of the city. He survived the war and moved in with family in London and made a living as a silversmith making designer jewelry. The fire in his melting pot and in his soul brought him to the Rebbe and he never left...



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BESURAS HaGeulah

THE REBBE ON THE IMMINENCE OF THE REDEMPTION

THE NEWFOUND POWER OF A PENNY

נר. חלק משיחת נר א' דחנוכה תשנ"ב - במעמד "פרסומי ניסא" עולמי
49. At the "Chanukah Live," Kislev 25, 5752 – December 2, 1991

On the eve of the first light of Chanukah 5752, Jews from more than six locations around the globe gathered together via satellite to publicize the miracle of Chanukah. The highlight of this annual "Chanukah Live" celebration was the Rebbe's address, in which he spoke of the lessons we can take from the satellite which gives two people from the farthest corners of the world the ability to connect to and help each other. This unprecedented technological innovation helps a Jew understand how his "little" mitzva performed on one side of the world is of international importance and may affect the lives of many millions of people around the entire globe:

...This is also one of the primary purposes of the invention of the satellite technology: increasing the unity of all mankind,

by enabling people to help and assist one another, even when geographically distant from each other,

in offering both material help as well as spiritual assistance — i.e., using satellites to further increasing efforts to promote justice, honesty, peace and unity worldwide by enabling worldwide gatherings such as the present one.

* * *

What was said previously is of particular relevance in our period,

— a time during which the hope and the "I believe every day that Moshiach will come" is felt with greater intensity and vigor than ever,

to the point that we can literally observe the unfolding of true and complete Redemption through Moshiach Tzidkeinu —

{...זוהי גם אחת המטרות העקרויות של "ל'גן"
- כדי ש'על ידו יתוסף יותר באחדות האנושיות
כלה,

ל'עזר ול'סיע א'חד ל'שני גם כ'שנמצאים ב'רחוק מ'קום
זה מ'נה,

הן ב'נוגע ל'עזר ו'סיע ג'שמי, והן ב'נוגע ל'עזר
ו'סיע רוח'ני, ל'הוסיף יותר ב'עניני צ'דק ו'ישר שלום
ו'אחדות ב'כל העולם.

ה'אמור ל'עיל ש'ך ב'מיוחד ל'תקופתנו זו

- ש'התקנה וה'אני מ'אמין ב'כל יום ש'יבוא היא ב'יתר
ש'את ו'ב'יתר ע'ז,

ו'עד ש'נראה ב'מוחש הג'אלה ה'אמתית וה'שלמה ע'ל-
י'די מ'שיח צ'דקנו -

an era during which the world in its entirety will be fully illuminated by the true light, brought forth by the revelation of Hashem's glory in an utterly complete manner

{שָׁאוֹ יְהִי הָעוֹלָם כְּלוּ מוֹאֵר בְּאוֹר הָאֱמִתִּי דְהַתְגַּלוּת כְּבוֹדוֹ שֶׁל הַקְּדוֹשׁ-בְּרוּךְ-הוּא בְּתַכְלִית הַשְּׁלֵמוֹת.}

— a phenomenon that satellite technology gives us a taste of so close to the Redemption. —

In these days especially, the more we add in the matters of Torah and mitzvos which are likened to light — primarily including lighting the Chanukah candles, especially when done with such worldwide publicity — we hasten even more and actually bring about the ultimate Redemption.

{וּבַיָּמִים אֵלֶּה, כָּכֵל שְׂמוֹסִיפִים יוֹתֵר בְּעֵינֵי תוֹרָה וּמִצְוֹתֶיהָ, "נֵר מִצְוָה וְתוֹרָה אוֹר", כּוֹלֵל וּבְמִיחָד עַל-יְדֵי הַדְּלָקַת נֵר חֲנֻכָּה, וּבִפְרָט בְּאִפְּן שֶׁל "פְּרָסוּמִי נִסְאָ" בְּכֹל הָעוֹלָם, מְמַהֲרִים וּמְזַרְזִים עוֹד יוֹתֵר וּמְבִיאִים בְּפִעֵל אֶת הַגְּאֻלָּה הָאֱמִתִּית.}

The Rebbe ended the talk with a lesson which, given the nature of the time, is all the more potent::

The mitzva that possesses a unique quality to hasten the Redemption is the mitzva of *tzedaka*, as our sages teach "Great is *tzedaka* for it hastens the Redemption."

הַמִּצְוָה שֵׁישׁ לָהּ סִגְלָה מִיַּחַדַּת לְקִרְבֵּי אֶת הַגְּאֻלָּה, הִיא, מִצְוַת הַצְּדָקָה - "גְּדוּלָּה צְדָקָה שֶׁמְקַרְבֶּת אֶת הַגְּאֻלָּה".

Therefore, it's clear that we ought to further increase in the mitzva of *tzedaka*,

וּמִזְוָה מוּבָן שֵׁישׁ לְהוֹסִיף עוֹד יוֹתֵר בְּמִצְוַת הַצְּדָקָה,

and better yet that the increase in *tzedaka* be immediately, so that the Redemption (coming through it) will also come immediately...

וּמָה טוֹב שֶׁהֶהוֹסְפָה בְּצְדָקָה תִּהְיֶה תִּיכָף וּמִיָּד, כְּדִי שָׁגֵם הַגְּאֻלָּה שְׁבֹאָה עַל-יְדֵי מִצְוַת הַצְּדָקָה תְּבוֹא תִּיכָף וּמִיָּד.

Especially since "there is none ... among us who knows for how long the exile will endure"

וּבִפְרָט שֶׁכִּינּוּן שֶׁ"אֵין גּו' אֲתָנוּ יָדַע עַד מָה",

and it may well be that the only thing missing to bring the Redemption is nothing more than the giving of several coins to *tzedaka*! ...

הֲרֵי יִתְכַן שֶׁהַדְּבַר הַיְחִיד שֶׁחָסֵר לְהַבְאֵת הַגְּאֻלָּה אֵינוֹ אֶלָּא נְתִינַת מַטְבְּעוֹת אַחְדוֹת לְצְדָקָה!...

As the Rambam expresses this idea in the form of a definitive halachic ruling:

וּבְלִשׁוֹן הַרַמְבַּ"ם - פֶּסֶק-דִּין לְהִלְכָה -

"Every individual must see himself... and the entire world hanging in the balance — half meritorious and half liable.

"צְרִיךְ כָּל אָדָם שִׁירָאָה עֲצָמוֹ . . וְכֵן כָּל הָעוֹלָם חָצִי וְכֹאֵי וְחָצִי חַיֵּב . .

Therefore, by preforming even one mitzva, he and the whole world together can be inclined to the side of merit, and bring about for himself and everyone salvation and deliverance."

עֲשֵׂה מִצְוָה אַחַת הֲרֵי הִכְרִיעַ אֶת עֲצָמוֹ וְאֶת כָּל הָעוֹלָם כְּלוּ לְכָף זְכוּת וְגֵרָם לוֹ וְלָהֶם תְּשׁוּעָה וְהַצְּלָה",

This simply means, that the act of a single individual—adult or child—in giving a single penny to *tzedaka*,

הִנְנוּ, שֶׁפִּעֲלָתוֹ שֶׁל יְהוּדִי אֶחָד, מְבַגֵּר אוֹ יֵלֵד, שְׁנוֹתָן פְּרוּטָה אַחַת לְצְדָקָה,

can cause for himself and for the entire world the "salvation and deliverance" of the true and complete Redemption!

גּוֹרְמַת לוֹ וּלְכָל הָעוֹלָם "תְּשׁוּעָה וְהַצְּלָה" דְּגְאֻלָּה הָאֱמִתִּית וְהַשְּׁלֵמָה.

From The Rebbe's Pen

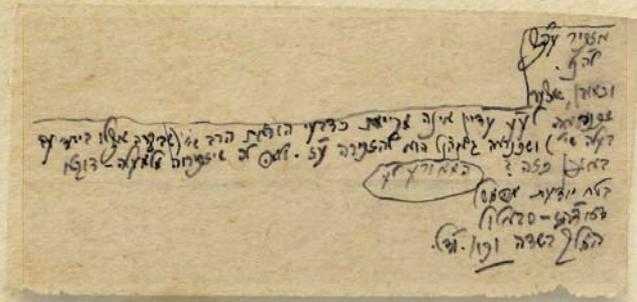


A Disturbing Reminder...

The Rebbe's response to a woman who went through a car accident and requested the Rebbe's bracha:

אזכיר עה"צ להנ"ל.

שמצער וכמובן, שכנראה לע"ע [= לעת עתה] עדיין אינה מקיימת כדבעי הוראת הרב שי' (שביקרה אצלו ביחד עם בעלה שי') ושכנראה גם המאורע ל"ע [= לא עלינו] הוא להזכירה ע"ז [= על זה]. ולמה לה שיוזכרה מלמעלה - דוקא באופן כזה?



בטח יודעת מהמשל דאדה"ז [= דאדמו"ר הוקן] - שבאלול המלך בשדה וכו'. וד"ל.

I will mention you at the *Tziyun* for blessings in the above mentioned.

It is self-understood, that it is disturbing that it appears that for the time being she isn't properly fulfilling the instructions of the rav שי' (whom she visited together with her husband שי') and it appears that also the unfortunate incident was intended to remind you of this.

Why should she be reminded from Above specifically in such a way?

She surely knows of the *mashal* (parable) of the Alter Rebbe — that in Elul, the King is in the field etc. — and the ramifications thereof are sufficiently known to those who understand. ■

SHABBOS

11/27

כ"ג נסלו

CANDLE LIGHTING	SUNRISE	LATEST SHEMA	MIDDAY	SUNSET	SHABBOS ENDS
4:12	6:56	9:19	11:43	4:30	5:15

ג' פרקים: הלכות תמידין ומוספין פרקים ו-ח, הל' ביאת המקדש פרק א פרק אחד: הלכות פסולי המוקדשין פרק ג
ספר המצוות: מ"ע מג. מד. מה. מו. מז. מח. נ. נא.

SUNDAY

11/28

כ"ד נסלו

SUNRISE	LATEST SHEMA	SUNSET
6:57	9:20	4:29

ג' פרקים הל' תמידין ומוספין פ' ט-י, הל' פסולי המוקדשין פ' א
פרק אחד: הלכות פסולי המוקדשין פרק ד
ספר המצוות: מ"ע קסא. מל"ת קמ

MONDAY

11/29

כ"ה נסלו

SUNRISE	LATEST SHEMA	SUNSET
6:58	9:21	4:29

ג' פרקים: הלכות פסולי המוקדשין פרקים ב-ד
פרק אחד: הלכות פסולי המוקדשין פרק ה
ספר המצוות: מל"ת קלב

TUESDAY

11/30

כ"ו נסלו

SUNRISE	LATEST SHEMA	SUNSET
6:59	9:21	4:29

ג' פרקים: הלכות פסולי המוקדשין פרקים ה-ז
פרק אחד: הלכות פסולי המוקדשין פרק ו
ספר המצוות: מל"ת קכ

WEDNESDAY

12/01

כ"ז נסלו

SUNRISE	LATEST SHEMA	SUNSET
7:00	9:22	4:29

ג' פרקים: הלכות פסולי המוקדשין פרקים ח-י
פרק אחד: הלכות פסולי המוקדשין פרק ז
ספר המצוות: מל"ת קלא

THURSDAY

12/02

כ"ח נסלו

SUNRISE	LATEST SHEMA	SUNSET
7:01	9:23	4:28

ג' פרקים: הלכות פסולי המוקדשין פרקים יא-יג
פרק אחד: הלכות פסולי המוקדשין פרק ח
ספר המצוות: מל"ת קלב

FRIDAY

12/03

כ"ט נסלו

SUNRISE	LATEST SHEMA	SUNSET
7:02	9:24	4:28

ג' פרקים: הלכות פסולי המוקדשין פרקים יד-טז
פרק אחד: הלכות פסולי המוקדשין פרק ט
ספר המצוות: מ"ע צא

THE TIMES ON THIS PAGE ARE FOR BROOKLYN, NY

CHANUKAH FAQ'S

A collection of frequently asked practical question on the mitzva of kindling the Chanukah candles, by Rav **Yosef Yeshaya Braun** shlita, Mara D'Asra and member of the Badatz of Crown Heights.

THE MENORAH

Q. Is a menorah with one branch slightly higher than the other branches (about 1/8 of an inch) kosher?

A. While they should *l'hatchila* be all on the same level, if the difference in height is very minimal and not easily discernible you may continue using this menorah.

[Generally speaking, as long as the candles appear separate and are not round as in a circle, many Poskim maintain its Kosher (see photo on opposite page). In the case above, it is surely okay even according to those that are more stringent on the matter.] #12308*

Q. How far apart must Chanukah candles be from one another?

A. Poskim mention that there should be at least a finger's-breadth between each Chanukah flame.

Q. If so, when the candle-holders are attached to each other—without a finger's-breadth between each “cup”—is such a menorah less *mehudar*?

A. The reasoning behind this rule of a finger's-breadth (“*etzbah*”), is so that the individual flames of a menorah should not appear or become like a “torch/bonfire.” This is especially problematic when using wax candles, because as the candles melt, they tend to merge into one candle/flame if positioned too closely to each other.

Accordingly, as long as the wicks are positioned in such a way that there is no possibility of such merging to occur, one needn't be concerned how close the candle-holders are. This is especially true if one uses glass cups for each candle—because no matter how close the candles are, they will not become into one flame (because the glass separates). #11797*

Q. Can I dispose of old menorahs and oil cups in the trash?

A. Yes. However, it's best to wrap them first in something and then discard. #6466*

THE OIL

Q. Is it not ideal to light the menorah using pomace olive oil?

A. Correct. It is kosher, like all oils are, but not ideal (*mitzva min hamuvchar*). The same is true regarding refined olive oil. The best is extra virgin olive oil which is like *Shemen Zayis Zach*, with which the original miracle of Chanukah occurred. #2024*

Q. Is it preferable to prepare Chanukah candles by yourself over buying ready-made ones?

A. There is no halachic requirement to prepare the wicks yourself, though some are particular to do so for various reasons (see Hebrew references below). Clearly, if the ready-made ones burn better, they are halachically preferable.

Note however, that often the ready-made ones might have other deficiencies in terms of various *hiddurim* (though some of these *hiddurim* are questionable as there are many who maintain that there is really no significant benefit in doing so). For example, there are those who are particular to use only extra virgin olive oil (and some opine that it must be edible oil as well). Other *hiddurim* are using oil that is liquid not gelled, using wicks that are not coated, using old wicks, amongst others.

Besides the above-mentioned, it's recommended that there be a reliable *hechsher* confirming that everything is genuine and kosher in the ready-made candles. #12156*

THE PLACEMENT

Q. If for whatever reason the main rooms of the house don't have a mezuzah, would it be better to light the menorah by a bedroom or front door that do have a mezuzah?

A. You should light at the entrance of the main room, even if it has no mezuzah.

[This topic is discussed in several *maamarei Chassidus*. See *Ner Chanukah* 5746 (*Hisvaaduyos* Vol. 1 p. 136):

“If there is no mezuzah on the right side, then the menorah is to be placed on the right.



IS THIS A KOSHER MENORAH?

This is since Chanukah candles is a *mitzva d'Rabbanan*, which has the qualities of both the right and the left ... so if the place lacks a mezuzah, the Chanukah lights themselves draw down the revelation of the “right side.”

The Rebbe then adds: “Since Chazal say that one mitzva leads to another, so ultimately, because there are the Chanukah lights on the right, that itself will cause that the person kindling them to also fulfill the mitzva of mezuzah and then there will be “mezuzah on the right and Chanukah lights on the left.”] #2004*

THE PLACE OF LIGHTING

Q. When making a Chanukah party in the lobby of a senior independent living building, can we say the brachos for the menorah lighting and have the people be *yotzei*?

A. If this is their place of residence, it is okay.

Q. My wife is in a rehab center for Chanukah, and they only let them light candles in the Shul downstairs. Should she light in the Shul, or should I have her in mind and be *motzi* her when I light at home?

A. She should be *yotzei* from you, but she should watch someone in Shul lighting and answer Amen. #2007 ■

THE

SIN

OF

THE

GOLDEN

ROUND

THE REBBE'S
BATTLE TO
RESTORE
HALACHIC
ACCURACY AND
JEWISH PRIDE
TO THE SHAPE
OF THE
MENORAH

IT IS HARD TO FIND CLEARER,

sharper expressions from the Rebbe as we find on the subject of drawings of the menorah in the Beis HaMikdash made with rounded arms. The

source for this depiction is the Arch of Titus in Rome which commemorates the victory of the wicked Titus over the Jews.

At the farbrengen on the afternoon of Shabbos parshas Mattos-Masei 5742, the Rebbe spoke at length about the shape of the branches of the menorah in the Beis HaMikdash and proved that they had to be diagonal as is clear from Rashi and Rambam; fortuitously, Rambam's diagram was discovered at that time. The Rebbe addressed questions and differing opinions on the subject.

Besides the halachic explanation about the menorah's branches, one could see that the Rebbe wanted to erase any connection to the wicked Titus.

“The typical drawing of a menorah with six rounded half-circle arms are most likely based on the copying of a menorah which non-Jews made in Rome and on the victory arch of Titus, may his name be erased. When the wicked Titus destroyed the Beis HaMikdash, he ordered that the vessels of the Mikdash be brought to Rome and in honor of the wicked one, they built a ‘victory arch’ bearing his name, ‘The Arch of Titus.’ On this arch they depicted the captive vessels of the Mikdash including the menorah which is drawn with half-circle branches.

“In addition to the menorah on the Arch of Titus not being at all accurate, it was obviously made to show and express the control and dominion of Rome over the Jews, r'l, so that they etched the words ‘Judea Capta’ (captive Jews) in several places and there were times that they compelled Jews to go to the arch to see what is written and inscribed there in order to humiliate them, etc.”

The Rebbe considers this not only a halachic problem, that the drawing of the menorah's branches as half-circles is incorrect, but also an identification with Titus and the degradation of the Jews in exile.

THE ROUND SHAPED MENORAH IN 770 BEFORE THE REBBE RAISED THE ISSUE



“It comes out that drawing the branches of the menorah as half-circles ought to generate a hue and cry, in addition to it being the opposite of Rashi and Rambam etc. Also because it gives a certain imprimatur, r’l, to the drawing on the Arch of Titus which was made to cause anguish to the Jews and humiliate them.

“Instead of the drawing of the menorah reminding a Jew and inspiring him that his job is to be a ‘light to the nations,’ they make the menorah in such a way that it reminds of the opposite, that Rome vanquished the Jews, r’l!”

These sharp words of the Rebbe were meant to express his strong aversion to those who continue to draw menorahs and make menorahs copying that same humiliating menorah from the Arch of Titus.

Many Chassidim saw in this another step whereby the Rebbe was paving the way for Moshiach, by removing another layer of exile.

The handwritten diagram of Rambam shows the menorah with straight, diagonal arms, as his own son testified that the drawing was done specifically with diagonal arms.

The Rebbe said that it was even worthwhile for Chanuka menorahs to be made with diagonal branches, noting that this would not be copying a vessel of the Mikdash (which is prohibited) since a Chanuka menorah has eight branches and the menorah of the Mikdash had seven.

The Rebbe’s words were conveyed to the world. Thousands of shluchim and Chabad Chassidim began using menorahs with diagonal branches and in thousands of cities, shluchim set up huge menorahs with straight arms so the message spread even further.

THE STORM THAT FOLLOWED

Like many things that the Rebbe innovated, this topic generated a storm. Many did not

QUESTION ABOUT THE REBBE’S CHANUKA GELT



As is known, over many years, Tzeirei Chabad, on behalf of the Rebbe, gave out coins as Chanuka gelt. For many years, coins were distributed that had a drawing of a menorah on it with rounded branches. The Rebbe was asked whether to continue using the coins.

The Rebbe’s answer was that they could try to change this but not to insist on it since there were several views.

understand the Rebbe’s point and some said it was a chiddush of Lubavitch. The Rebbe referred to this when Rabbi Sholom Steinberg, publisher of *HaChumash Ha’mevoar*, passed by the Rebbe for dollars. He showed the Rebbe the drawing of the menorah in his Chumash with diagonal branches. The Rebbe smiling said, “You probably know that they made a tumult around me about this.”

In recent years, we are beginning to see some signs of the thought revolution wrought by the Rebbe even among groups that did not understand the Rebbe’s words at the time. Decades ago, depicting a menorah like that on the Arch of Titus was standard practice, even among the most religious Jews including schol-



THE REBBE WITH THE STRAIGHT-ARMED MENORAH IN THE BACKGROUND

respectful flowery verse which defies translation in English.]

R' Brim wrote that even great Torah scholars did not take note of Rashi's view that the branches were diagonal. He said that in his elementary school class where he taught for 28 years, he hung up a menorah with diagonal arms like Rashi's view, "Although many did not approve and until recently expressed surprise about the diagonal and even when I showed them clearly in Rashi they were still not swayed, because the half-circle shaped menorah is so engraved in the mind so that even Torah scholars did not notice that word 'diagonal' in Rashi (they were not yet aware of the Rambam's drawing)."

ars. Today, most researchers contradict and have debunked the image of the menorah on the Arch of Titus. Some focus on other details of the menorah (like the base) but the common denominator among the researchers is that they have stopped treating it as "the Menorah of the Mikdash."

An example of a response sent to the Rebbe was one sent by Rabbi Reuven Brim, author of *Purim Ha'meshulash* and other works, who wrote a long letter to the Rebbe about the menorah and tried to bring proofs that some of the poskim held that the branches were rounded. [He began his letter with profoundly

This letter shows how widespread the ignorance was and to what extent the "rounded exile" was etched into the minds and hearts even of Torah scholars.

Rabbi Yosef Kapach is the one who deserves a lot of credit for attacking the depiction of the menorah of Titus, as he was the one who discovered the Rambam's drawing of the menorah. In his notes on the Rambam's commentary on Mishnayos, he wrote, "Unlike the widespread drawing that was copied from the Arch of Titus which has already been proven is fraudulent since in the beraisa it says that it has feet while in the widespread drawing it

is on a wide base, and other contradictions.”

If the menorah that came to Rome had diagonal branches why is it drawn with half-circle arms on the Arch of Titus?

The Rebbe concludes it was another menorah that was similar to the menorah of the Mikdash. The Rebbe said there were many who produced menorahs that were similar to the menorah of the Mikdash since that menorah was of great importance and especially idol worshippers did so for their idol worship. In fact, the menorah of Titus is one of those made for idol worship, which is why it has etchings of a dragon on it, a symbol used by idol worshippers.” (For those who are unfamiliar, the dragon was a type of creature whose image was frequently used in idol worship, as the Sages taught, “One who finds vessels on which is the image of the sun, the moon, a dragon – he should take them to [dispose of them in] the Yam HeMelach [Dead Sea].” Meaning that this was a clear symbol of idolatry).

Mr. Yaakov Agam, an artist who designed the huge menorah put up in Manhattan by Tzeirei Agudas Chabad, did research on this and noted that even from an artistic perspective, Jewish art is based on straight or diagonal lines like the Magen Dovid, unlike Christian art which uses circles and half circles.

It should also be noted that many err in thinking that the Arch of Titus, which is the source for the half-circle menorahs, was made in the days of Titus. Actually, research shows that it was built many years after the victory and even after the death of Titus so that whoever tries to base himself on this image is mistaken.

Another proof that this menorah is not the one used in the Beis HaMikdash can be found in the article publicized by Rabbi Greenwald in the periodical *Meor Yisrael*. He refers to one of the Kinos about the destruction of the Mikdash which says that the menorah of the Mikdash fell and was broken when they tried taking it

CHANGING THE TIDE

Unfortunately, even within Chabad the rounded menorah is still used whether in preschool crafts or when shluchim advertise or give rounded menorahs as gifts to distinguished people, having their pictures taken with them.

All these are exceptions yet we need to remember that this is not a trivial issue, but rather the essence of the Rebbe’s view is to uproot idol worship and the exile feeling from the root, to get rid of another layer of galus and bring the Geula.

It is sad to see silver stores with menorahs in the window that look like the one used to aggrandize the name of the wicked one who destroyed our Mikdash.

Those buying new menorahs should ask for ones with diagonal arms. When there is a demand for it, the supply will keep up. This will be a victory for halacha and pure Jewish hashkafa.

into captivity and this was miraculous. This is why the menorah on the Arch of Titus does not have legs as the menorah in the Mikdash had.

HALACHIC RULING

As mentioned, many questions were raised by Torah scholars as well as historians and researchers about the Rebbe’s position. One of the common questions asked was why are menorahs found among antiquities rounded; likewise, there are drawings of rounded menorahs in siddurim of the kabbalists.

The Rebbe responded that in archaeological digs there are many other things found that are against halacha like round tefillin. Do we say that these discoveries change the halacha?

CONT. ON P. 42



R' Hirsch Pekkar was born in Dnepropetrovsk in 5696 (1986), when R' Levik, the Rebbe's father, was the rav of the city. He survived the war and moved in with family in London and made a living as a silversmith making designer jewelry. The fire in his melting pot and in his soul brought him to the Rebbe and he never left...

Like Silver in the Smith's Hand

The image is a composite of two photographs. The top portion shows a close-up of a lathe in a workshop, with a hand visible on the left side. The bottom portion shows a man with a beard working on a large, curved wooden structure, possibly a menorah, with another person standing nearby. The background is a workshop with various tools and equipment.

A Chassid of **STERLING SILVER**

→ How
I Built 770's
Gilded Menorah

THE REGULARS IN 770 KNEW

R' Hirschel Pekkar a'h as a dear elder Chassid. The English readers among them would read the inspirational letters that he gave out a few times a year in which he wrote his original ideas on the parsha or upcoming holiday and mainly, called for unity among Anash and importuned everyone to think, "What does the Rebbe want of us?" He did so to fulfill the Rebbe's instruction to be mechadesh in Torah and write it down.

People loved to read his writings as one of the people said during shiva, "R' Hirschel wrote from the heart with love and people sensed this and accepted what he said."

After his passing this summer, websites showed a video of him telling about one of his private audiences with the Rebbe in which the Rebbe said he should "take ruchniyus and gashmius from here." R' Hirschel said, "I want to take the Rebbe with me."

The Rebbe said, "If you are taking from the spirituality that is here, you are taking me with you, and if you take me with you, you should use me for good things."

That was R' Hirschel, a sincere and upright Jew who tried to bring the Rebbe wherever he could and do good things. On the Yomim Noraim he would travel to distant Jewish communities in Australia, Argentina, and cities in Europe and wherever he went he brought the Rebbe's messages.

CHILDHOOD IN THE REBBE'S CITY

R' Hirschel was born on the second day of Shavuos 5696 in Dnepropetrovsk (Yekaterinoslav) in Ukraine where the Rebbe's father, Rabbi Levi Yitzchok, was the rav. With the outbreak of World War II, his father was

drafted into the Russian army and a short time later, army representatives came to the house to say he had been killed in war. His mother fainted at this news. This traumatic event was engraved in six-year-old Hirschel's memory.

After the war, his mother decided to leave Russia and with the help of professional smugglers she and her son crossed the border. The instruction they were given was to wait for the changing of the guards when the soldiers were chatting with their replacements and then to run across the border. As they did so, the soldiers noticed something suspicious and began shooting at them.

Hirschel and his mother froze in terror as bullets flew to their right and left and the searchlights scanned the area where they were hiding. During those moments, he experienced the saying, "Every bullet has its address." The earth near them absorbed numerous bullets while they were miraculously saved. After the soldiers stopped shooting, the two of them waited silently and after a few minutes which seemed an eternity the soldiers moved away and they were able to cross the border.

They arrived in a displaced persons camp near Bergen Belsen. Like many Holocaust survivors, his mother found it hard to live a normal life and care for her child. His aunt Sarah who lived in England and heard about their difficult situation, contacted them and offered to raise Hirschel in her palatial home in London. When he was ten, young Hirschel traveled to England by ship. All he owned was a loaf of black bread.

A CHILD ALONE

His aunt welcomed him emotionally but the two had no common language for he did not know English and she did not know Russian.

Aside from that, the aunt had not experienced the horrors of war and found it hard to understand the survival mentality of her nephew. For example, when she saw the loaf of black bread in his bag, which had turned moldy, she threw it out.

Hirschel, seeing his discarded treasure, immediately retrieved it and holding it close to him he shouted at his aunt. Since she did not understand Russian, it took time for her to understand what had happened. Only after she showed him the plentiful amounts of white bread she had for him and the rest of the food that she had in abundance, did Hirschel agree to relinquish the moldy bread.

While he tried to adjust to life in England, his mother sailed to Eretz Yisrael. A short time later she became sick and died in a hospital and since she had no relatives, the local rabbanut took care of her burial. Some years afterward, when R' Hirschel wanted to see his mother, he found out that she had died. Unfortunately, the chevra kadisha of those days did not have organized lists and he was unable to find out where she was buried. Not only was he a double orphan but he could not even visit his parents' graves.

In London, Hirschel had to contend with open displays of anti-Semitism. When he returned from the Jewish school with friends, they passed through streets that had been bombed in the Blitz and gentile children hid in the ruins and lobbed rocks at the Jewish children. When he saw these ruffians standing among the ruins, Hirschel fearlessly ran toward them and would give them a good beating. The gentiles learned not to start up with the Jewish schoolchildren.

Relatives of his sent him to learn in yeshivos in Gateshead and Manchester and when he graduated he began working in jewelry. He first lived in Birmingham and then settled in London.



R' HIRSCHEL IN HIS CHILDHOOD IN LONDON

CONNECTION TO CHABAD

Although he was a religious Jew, he felt something was missing. At the age of eighteen he began learning Chassidus with R' Yankel Gurkov who spread Chassidus and received detailed guidance from the Rebbe. R' Gurkov opened a window into the world of Chassidus and told him about the Rebbe.

R' Hirschel felt drawn to the Rebbe since the Rebbe's father was the rav of his hometown. He wrote to the Rebbe asking for a bracha for three things: proper intelligence, a good livelihood, and the right woman to marry. Very soon afterwards the Rebbe responded, saying he would mention him in his prayers and wished him that he share good news soon. Two weeks later he met his wife.

GUIDANCE FROM THE REBBE IN YECHIDUS

In 5722, R' Hirschel went to New York with a group of Jews from England, part of the or-

ganized groups arranged by Mr. Zalman Jaffe of Manchester. R' Hirschel had yechidus for the first time and immediately felt this was the connection he was looking for. He brought up the subject of parnassa and the Rebbe asked him, "Are you doing piecework or time-work?" He encouraged Hirschel to devote himself to improving his skills as a jeweler and pointed out that the only way that he could do that would be if he was doing piecework and was not pressured time-wise. Because of this advice, Hirschel set up a little workshop in his home and throughout the years he worked on improving his skills. The Rebbe also urged him to put his signature on each of his creations.

Some time later, during a visit to New York, R' Hirschel got a job in Manhattan for a company that wanted him to design jewelry for them. He worked hard and after a while, feeling that he was starting to work too hard for money, he decided to give it all to the Rebbe. When he did so in a yechidus, the Rebbe smiled and then took a hundred dollar bill out of what R' Hirschel gave him and gave it back and said, "Since the money is mine to do with as I please, I want you to take this and spend it on a gift for your wife and use the remaining money for Jewish books for your children."

One year, he went to New York for a long period of time hoping that he would be successful in selling his creations at good prices. He had made some nice pieces of jewelry but to his surprise he wasn't able to sell any of it. He was used to his work being desirable and he couldn't understand what had happened.

When he had yechidus and told the Rebbe about this strange occurrence and showed one of the pieces to the Rebbe, the Rebbe glanced at it and said, "You used 19 stones in this piece. It would have been better to use an even number, 18 or 20.

R' Hirschel was amazed that the Rebbe knew the number of stones from just a glance and was even more amazed when, from the mo-

ment he changed the number of stones to an even number, he quickly sold all his jewelry.

R' Hirschel fashioned a silver utensil especially for the Rebbe after he heard that the Rebbe drank tea. So that the Rebbe shouldn't find the cup too hot to hold, R' Hirschel made a silver ring in which the cup could be placed and held.

OPEN RUACH HA'KODESH IN THE REBBE'S LETTER

Shortly after he began his connection to the Rebbe, in 5722, his wife began suffering from terrible stomach pain. She went to the hospital where they told her she had gall bladder stones which could clearly be seen on an X-ray. The doctor recommended surgery and said, "If anyone tells you otherwise, he's a charlatan." Mrs. Pekkar made an appointment for the surgery. Being nervous about it, she wrote to the Rebbe to ask for his blessing but there was no reply.

By divine providence, the guest-house where their children were going to stay during the period of the surgery and recovery was full and they had to postpone the surgery. That's when the Rebbe's letter arrived which said, "Since there is a waiting period before the date for the surgery, it would be worthwhile to use the time to try a diet and to see if this would render the operation superfluous. After trying a diet, consult with expert doctors again and perhaps they will change their minds about the need for surgery for I know of many instances where careful diet proved effective."

Mrs. Pekkar tried the diet which included fruits and fruit juices and the problem resolved, which is why she did not make another appointment for surgery. Some time later, she suffered from problems with her feet and when being examined she mentioned to the doctor that she had previously had gall stones. The doctor took an X-ray and saw nothing. "Who told you you had gall stones?" he asked in surprise. The Rebbe's simple advice had cured her.



R' HIRSCHEL RECEIVING A DOLLAR FROM THE REBBE

Three years later, Mrs. Pekkar was sick again. A doctor who made a house call decided to call for an ambulance to take her immediately to the hospital. She stayed there through Shabbos and her condition improved so that she was released motzoei Shabbos. R' Hirschel stayed with friends and when he went home after Shabbos he found a letter from the Rebbe.

Since he had not contacted the Rebbe's office to ask for a bracha for his wife's recovery he was quite surprised by the letter, especially by what it said. "By the time this letter reaches you, I hope that whoever needs G-d's blessing for an improvement in health will have that improvement. In such a case, everything that needs to be done through natural means should be done with the guidance and treatment of a doctor who serves as a channel to receive G-d's blessing as it says (Devarim 15:10), 'And G-d your G-d will bless you in all that you do.'"

As he read this letter, R' Hirschel was told his wife felt much better and that she was on her way home. What amazed him more than anything else was the fact that the Rebbe's let-

ter had been sent from New York before she knew she was sick. The date on the letter was 25 days earlier!

REBBE, HELP ME!

R' Hirschel bonded completely with the Rebbe. He regularly learned the Rebbe's sichos and maamarim and over the years acquired proficiency in the Rebbe's teachings. He did not only learn the Rebbe's teachings but lived them. He used his work as a way to spread the Rebbe's ideas among his customers but did not stop there. Occasionally, he would send letters to the editors of Jewish publications in which he presented the Rebbe's position on timely subjects.

When he needed special heavenly assistance, he would say, "Rebbe, *help mir*" (Rebbe, help me). Occasionally, he would tell his children about a situation in which he needed a particular bracha and how immediately after asking for the Rebbe's help he saw supernatural success.



R' HIRSCHTEL IN HIS WORKSHOP

Before it became customary to write to the Rebbe and put the letter into a volume of *Igros Kodesh*, when there were situations in which he had to make on the spot decisions and he couldn't wait for an answer to the Rebbe, he would open a Chumash and take instruction from the first verse he saw.

He once got an offer to attend a jewelry exhibit with all the pieces he had in stock. The organizers promised to buy everything he brought. This was a very enticing offer and although the exhibit was a six-hour trip from his home, he set out with his son-in-law, R' Menachem Mendel Shagalov.

After traveling most of the way and being close to their destination, he suddenly began to suspect that maybe there was some scam involved here. He reviewed his conversations with the organizers of the exhibit again and again and found nothing wrong but still felt uneasy. He took a Chumash that he always had

in his car and randomly opened it. He saw the verse, "and the serpent was clever." He immediately told his son-in-law: They are a bunch of frauds and we are going home. The next day, the newspapers reported about a group of clever thieves who enticed six businessmen to come to them with all their merchandise. Five businessmen were murdered and robbed while the sixth did not show up and was saved. The sixth man was R' Hirschel.

IN YECHIDUS WITH HIS SON MOSHE

In 5735, R' Hirschel went to the Rebbe for Shavuot to celebrate his birthday with the Rebbe. He went with a group of guests from England who traveled with R' Zalman Jaffe and took his oldest son Moshe along.

Although Moshe was a boy at the time, he remembers the yechidus. After waiting a long time while sitting on the steps near the entrance to the Rebbe's room, they finally had yechidus.

The Rebbe spoke at length with his father and the secretary periodically opened the door to try to hurry things up.

When the Rebbe finished speaking with R' Hirschel, he asked Moshe what he was learning. The Rebbe asked him a few questions about the number of strings and knots in tzitzis as the Rebbe was wont to do with young children. Moshe was pleased that he was able to answer the Rebbe's questions and when he gazed at the Rebbe he was mesmerized by the Rebbe's eyes that shone with an otherworldly light. That image remains with him until today.

Toward the end of the visit, on 16 Sivan, at the goodbye to guests who came from England, the Rebbe delivered a sicha for more than ten minutes. Then the Rebbe gave out a Tanya with English translation. R' Hirschel was a little late for the Tanya and the Rebbe asked R' Groner, "Where is Pekkar?"



R' Hirschel once went on a Shabbaton to some city in England and after Shabbos went to visit the rav of that city. They got to talking and the rav asked a question about the prophet Elisha's prophecy which was double that of his teacher Eliyahu. R' Hirschel did not know the answer and when he asked Chassidim later on, they did not know the answer either.

The next time he had yechidus, he told the Rebbe the rav's question. The Rebbe got up and went over to the sefarim shelves and took out several sefarim that spoke about this subject. From where he was standing, R' Hirschel could see the name of the sefer that the Rebbe extracted and he quickly took out a pen and paper and wrote down the names of the sefarim that the Rebbe took out including the pages the Rebbe looked at. The Rebbe looked into several sefarim and then gave him two sources to tell the rav. The Rebbe also told him to tell Rabbi Vogel of London about this for him to be in touch with the rav.

// HE MOVED TO CROWN HEIGHTS AT JUST THE RIGHT TIME AND SHORTLY AFTER HE ARRIVED, HE WAS ASKED TO FASHION A GOLDEN MENORAH FOR THE REBBE WHICH WAS THE HIGHLIGHT OF HIS LIFE.

MAKING THE MENORAH IN 770 WITH STRAIGHT BRANCHES

R' Hirschel's love for the Rebbe spurred him to move to New York. He moved from apartment to apartment until he ended up in his apartment in the building directly opposite 770. Although at that time hardly any Jews lived on the other side of Eastern Parkway and the Pekkar family were the first Jewish family in the building, there was nobody happier than he.

One thing bothered him: a tree that blocked the view of 770 from his window. A few days later, he was surprised to see city workers cutting down the large tree. The reason, they said, was that the tree was too close to the fire hydrant but for R' Hirschel it was clear that his prayer had been answered quickly.

He moved to Crown Heights at just the right time and shortly after he arrived, he was asked to fashion a golden menorah for the Rebbe which was the highlight of his life.

At a farbrengen on Shabbos parshas Matos-Masei 5742, the Rebbe spoke at length about the shape of the branches of the menorah in the Beis HaMikdash. The Rebbe delved into the length and breadth of the issue in halacha



THE COMPLETED MENORAH IN R' HIRSCHEL'S HOME

and proved that the branches of the menorah in the Mikdash were diagonal as indicated by Rashi as well as the Rambam's diagram that was discovered at that time. The Rebbe did not avoid the questions and other views and explained them one by one including questions that were a product of the concealment of exile.

Beyond the halachic explanation of the branches of the menorah there were also practical ramifications. The Rebbe considered the change in the drawings of the menorah as another stage in the disconnect of the Jewish people due to the darkness of exile. The Rebbe connected the rounded menorahs to exile and darkness and mentioned the degradation of the Jews by the Arch of Titus. Menorahs with

rounded branches, said the Rebbe, are a clear symbol of the exile way of thinking.

The Rebbe urged that menorahs made for Chanukah also have diagonal branches. The Rebbe noted that there was no concern that this was copying a vessel of the Mikdash since a Chanukah menorah has eight branches unlike the seven branches on the menorah of the Mikdash. The Rebbe noted, "There are Chanukah menorahs that are rounded so that even in 770, the menorah is rounded."

As a result, Rabbi Chaim Nisselevitz, today a mashpia in Toras Emes in Yerushalayim, and then a tamim in 770, wanted to change the big menorah in 770. R' Nisselevitz told Beis Moshiach about the menorah fashioned by R' Pekkar:

"I was a bachur in 770 and after Tishrei 5743 I thought about how Chanukah was coming up and something had to be done about the big menorah. I approached Rabbi Hirschel Chitrik who had donated the previous menorah and asked him whether he planned on making a new menorah that would look as the Rebbe wanted it. When he said no, I felt I had the green light to correct the matter.

"At the same time, I was afraid that if he found out my plans he would send a note to the Rebbe and that would torpedo the whole thing since, to the Rebbe, peace supersedes all. Therefore, I worked on it with the utmost discretion.

“I spoke with my good friend Zalman Scharf and afterward we learned the subject thoroughly and knew exactly what we wanted.”

Around the same time, the bochurim went to join a shiur and farbrengen at the home of R' Chaim Mizrachi, a mekurav living in Flatbush, and they studied the sicha together. R' Chaim wondered whether the Menorah in 770 is indeed the way the Rebbe wanted it to be. When he was told that it wasn't, he with the bochurim contacted R' Pekkar and asked him about it. After thinking it over, he said that it was possible to make a large menorah with all the details described in the Torah, cups and knobs and with straight arms. R' Chaim laid out the first \$1,000 to buy the first brass parts needed to begin the work. Subsequently, the Menorah with the gold coating which cost \$3000, a lot today and worth even more back then, was sponsored by R' Mordechai Nagel of Crown Heights.

In an interview with *Beis Moshiach*, R' Hirschel Pekkar described events from his perspective:

“Two bachurim came to me, Nisselevitz and Scharf, and asked me to make a big menorah. It was four days before Chanukah and I sarcastically said, ‘Too bad you didn't come one day before Chanukah ...’ It was a big, complicated project with minimal time to do it. Nevertheless, I enthusiastically got to work and began constructing the menorah with all the details.

“I worked on it nearly ten days in a row and two long nights. It was unique work that was done with extraordinary excitement...”

R' Nisselevitz:

“The work wasn't simple. It was complicated and even exhausting. The first night of Chanukah, when the menorah wasn't ready yet, we were quite upset. Some of us bachurim began working at night in Pekkar's workshop to help move things along faster.

“I remember our disappointment the first night of Chanukah when they put the large menorah on the Rebbe's platform and I knew that the Rebbe wanted a different menorah with straight arms. I consoled myself with the thought that in a few days the menorah would be different.

“The work was finally completed. The menorah was large and beautiful, impressive and eye-catching, and covered in gold.”

Nisselevitz and Scharf brought the menorah to 770 in the evening before maariv and set it up minutes before the Rebbe's entrance on the sixth night of Chanukah. Hundreds of people stood and watched in amazement.

“The tension was enormous,” recalled Nisselevitz. “We didn't know how the Rebbe would react, positively or negatively. Would he have pleasure from it or tell us to bring back the other menorah out of respect for the donor.

“When the Rebbe entered the large zal he immediately noticed the new menorah and as he went up the steps of his platform he gazed at it. When he reached his place he looked in the siddur, a signal for the start of davening. We didn't know how to interpret the Rebbe's reaction. Then the Rebbe suddenly turned around and scanned the menorah from top to bottom and bottom to top. We saw something remarkable – throughout the davening, whenever there was an opportunity, the Rebbe turned around to look at the menorah.

“After maariv, the menorah was lit and then the Rebbe went up to his office. When we asked one of the secretaries for the Rebbe's reaction, he said he saw that the Rebbe looked very pleased. To us, this was the greatest possible simcha, providing the Rebbe with nachas ruach!”

THE REBBE'S EXACTITUDE

Additional details about that menorah lighting and an astonishing concern for even the



R' MOSHE PEKKAR (RIGHT) ASSEMBLING THE MENORAH

smallest details on the part of the Rebbe were recounted by Rabbi Peretz Blau:

“The tension was great over how the Rebbe would react. R' Asher Sossonkin lit the menorah enthusiastically (as is his way) and at the conclusion of the lighting, the Rebbe motioned something to R' Asher with a hand movement that indicated some sort of instruction and criticism about the lighting. The intended instruction was not understood and after R' Groner asked the Rebbe what he meant, the Rebbe said to put the shamash somewhere else and not on the menorah. There was great tension and the tmimim were so disappointed and did not understand what was wrong. The event was altogether one of majesty, holiness and joy and the Rebbe looked pleased but this part clouded the proceedings somewhat. (So

much money and time had been invested to reach this moment.)

“The bachurim asked R' Groner to ask the Rebbe for an explanation and something fascinating came to light, which showed the Rebbe's great care in even the tiniest possible ‘interpretation’ that could adversely impact the halacha. R' Groner explained on the Rebbe's behalf that since the menorah that the bachurim prepared was amazingly similar to the menorah of the Beis HaMikdash, and the Rebbe greatly enjoyed this, and since it was the sixth night of Chanukah when, together with the shamash, seven lights were lit on the menorah, although there was no halachic concern whatsoever since the menorah had eight branches, still, since from a distance it could look like a seven-branch menorah (the number of lights burning on the sixth night together with the shamash) this should be avoided.

Being that the shamash did not sufficiently stand above the other lights [the bachurim were so focused on having it be as similar as possible to the menorah of the Mikdash and therefore, the shamash, which is in the center, was made on a diagonal branch as we see on many menorahs, such that it was removed from the row of lights, in order to stand out as not being part of the row of lights. They only made it just a bit higher, which met the halachic requirement of Chanukah to distinguish the location of the shamash as apart from the actual lights, while also, at least to their minds, creating the optimal situation in that the menorah was very similar to the menorah of the Mikdash.] Therefore, the Rebbe said to place the shamash below the lights on a lower surface in order to avoid even the

possibility of the appearance of an exact copy of the ‘Menorah of the Mikdash.’

“Of course, they immediately fixed the menorah and R’ Hirschel Pekkar changed the middle branch so that it is much higher than the rest and is also vertical like the other branches, which is what we see on the menorah of 770 now.

“What we learn from this story is how careful the Rebbe was not to even come close to even the remote appearance of transgressing the prohibition against making a menorah in the exact form of the menorah of the Mikdash.”

When R’ Hirschel told about making the menorah he ended with, “The next Friday night, the Rebbe exited after the davening towards the steps and I stood among hundreds of Chassidim. Suddenly, the Rebbe turned around to me and wished me a ‘Gut Shabbos’ with an unusually luminous look, and I felt that the Rebbe was thanking me for the work.”

During the following years, R’ Hirschel made similar menorahs for private individuals and mosdos with the most famous one on display at Mamilla Mall in Yerushalayim.

THE REBBE WAS PLEASED

A few years after Gimmel Tammuz, R’ Hirschel publicized a letter prior to 11 Nissan on the topic of his Kashrus to the Rebbe and the special “koch” required for inyanei Moshiach. At night, R’ Hirschel dreamed that the Rebbe told him that he was very pleased. The Rebbe said in the dream that he himself would make sure to publicize it to all the shluchim.

When R’ Hirschel woke up and remembered his dream, he did not understand how his letter would reach all the shluchim. A few hours later, he got a phone call from the Shluchim Office. One of the people there in charge of sending material to the shluchim said that he



THE REBBE NEAR THE MENORAH (YOU CAN SEE THE ORIGINAL PROTRUDING SHAMASH)

greatly enjoyed reading R’ Hirschel’s rousing letter and he wanted permission to send it to all the shluchim! R’ Hirschel felt that since “a person’s messenger is like himself,” it was like the Rebbe himself publicized the letter.

Similarly, on another occasion, when he made a Torah crown for one of the Sifrei Torah in 770 and at the hachnosas Sefer Torah he was honored to speak and he explained the meaning of the design which consisted of three interlocking circles, afterward R’ Groner told him that the Rebbe heard his speech and it looked like the Rebbe enjoyed his ideas.



R’ Hirschel passed away on the eve of 29 Av 5781. He is survived by his wife Tzivya, his daughter Mrs. Chaya Hurwitz of Crown Heights, his daughter Devorah Shagalov of Florida, his son Moshe of Florida and his son Yossi of Mexico. ■

SOCRATES' SEAT IN OLAM HABA

Daily Lesson for 24 Kislev:

משביעין אותו תהי צדיק ואל תהי רשע

An oath is administered to him [before birth, warning him]: "Be righteous and be not wicked."

CHAIM "DER KENER"

In Liozna there was a man named Chaim who was exceedingly poor. His wife was a bad woman who embittered his life but he was always happy and would say about every situation that he can do anything.

He once heard from the Alter Rebbe an explanation on "An oath is administered to him, 'Be righteous'" - that the word "mashbiin" is from the root of "sova" meaning satiety, therefore he is capable of everything and he has no obstacles. Even when the evil inclination comes and says, "How can you, in your situation, do such and such?" he would respond that he can do anything which is why he was called, "Chaim Der Kener -- He who Can."

(Sefer HaSichos 5701 p. 98)

Daily Lesson for 25 Kislev:

שנאמר "ולבי חלל בקרבי"

שאיין לו יצר הרע כי הרגו בתענית

The Righteous are motivated [solely] by their good nature, as it is written, "And my heart is a

void within me," that is, void of an evil nature, because he [Dovid] had slain it through fasting.

WHEN YOU KILL THE YETZER YOU START TO LIVE

In 5605, many guests went to the Tzemach Tzedek and waited for yechidus. The Rebbe called the elder Chassidim to come in to his room, farbrenged with them and took a lot of mashke to say l'chaim.

Afterward, the Rebbe left his room to the people and called his sons Rabbi Boruch Sholom, Rabbi Yehuda Leib and Rabbi Yisroel Nachum, each by name, pushed himself into the crowd, jumped on a bench, climbed on to a table and announced, "True, 'what difference is there to me if he killed it entirely, what difference is there to me if he killed half of it,' but 'killing half of it' is necessary."

Then he began to dance and he when he finished dancing he went back up on the table and said, "And my heart is a void within me,' and our sages say that Dovid killed the Evil Inclination by fasting. 'Chola' is numerically equivalent to 'chaim.' When one has killed it by fasting, one begins life anew."

(Sefer HaSichos 5696, p. 8,
Toras Menachem vol. 45 p. 70)

כעס וגאווה מיסוד האש שנגבה למעלה

From the element of fire in the animal soul are created the traits of anger and arrogance whose nature is to rise up.

A CLOD OF SOIL TAKES PRIDE

Rabbi Avrohom the Malach, son of the Maggid of Mezritch, once came to his father-in-law who lived in Krimenitz. All the residents and their children, including the learned and distinguished, went out to greet him but the Malach stood near the window and gazed out at a tall mountain, without saying a word.

Among those present was a young man who was opposed to Chassidus and took pride in his good qualities. It seemed to him that the Malach was spurning the honor of those who had gone to greet him. He could not contain himself and he asked the Malach, “Why is your honor gazing at that mountain which is nothing but a clod of soil?”

The Malach replied, “That is precisely what I am wondering about, how is it possible that such a simple clod of dirt can be so prideful that it becomes a tall mountain?”

The young man was taken aback by what the Malach said which pierced his heart.

(Sippurei Chassidim, Moadim
(R’ Zevin) p. 335)

שכל צדקה וחסד שאומות העולם עושין
אינן אלא להתייהר

All the charity and kindness done by the nations of the world is only for their own self-glorification.

THE OLAM HABA OF SOCRATES

Socrates was a sage from Athens who intellectually apprehended the unity of G-d. Since he publicly spoke about believing in one G-d, the Creator of heaven and earth, he was sentenced to death but he drank poison and died.

The Alter Rebbe once said that when he died he went to the heavenly court and wanted to

be given a seat next to Avrohom Avinu. He claimed: Avrohom sacrificed himself for the sake of heaven and he also sacrificed himself for the sake of heaven, so he deserved a seat next to Avrohom.

They told him: You are not like Avrohom! Avrohom gave up his life for no reason and reward but because of his pure faith, while you exchanged one lust for another.

The Alter Rebbe explained that the reason he committed suicide was because he had apprehended intellectually that to believe in G-d is the greatest pleasure in the world.

(Reshimos Devarim p. 101)

Daily Lesson for 28 Kislev:

נולדה ונתעוררה מדת
יראת הרוממות במוחו ומחשבתו

There will be born and aroused in his mind and thought the emotion of awe.

AWE AND ALCOHOL DON'T MIX

In the first years of the Tzemach Tzedek's leadership, he sat and farbrenged with Chassidim and they brought mashke to the table that was 90% alcohol. The Rebbe drank one cup, a second cup, and even instructed that a third cup be poured. Then he moved his finger over his brow and there was no indication on his face that he had had anything to drink.

Afterward he explained that he meditated on the greatness of G-d and the meditation cast awe and fear on him. Since “Harsh wine, fear eases it” [a play on words of the Talmudic dictum “harsh fear, wine eases it”], the fear worked on him to remove the impact that the mashke had on him.

When the Rebbe told this story he learned from it that the Tzemach Tzedek's fear of G-d affected his physical body to the extent that it removed the impact of the mashke.

(Toras Menachem vol. 2, p. 89) ■

The inspiring address of Rabbi Yosef Carlebach,
shliach to Central New Jersey, before the banquet
of the recent International Kinus HaShluchim

A photograph of Rabbi Yosef Carlebach, a man with a long white beard and glasses, wearing a black hat and a dark jacket. He is standing at a clear acrylic podium with a microphone, speaking. The background is a large screen displaying a graphic with Hebrew text and a portrait of a man. The lighting is dramatic, with red and blue hues.

STRAWBERRIES
Not Apples & Pears!

**IN 5750,
WHEN THE
REBBE**

declared that year to be “a year of miracles”, speaking about the Medrash on the imminent coming of Moshiach, there was an article written by

one of the leading rabbinical figures in New York City, currently the chief rabbi of Efrat, Rabbi Shlomo Riskin. In this article, Rabbi Riskin wrote to every Lubavitcher Chassid: “Your Rebbe has declared that this is ‘a year of miracles.’ I have one question: How many Lubavitchers have cancelled their reservations this summer in the bungalow colony?”

It is time for us to make a real *cheshbon nefesh* regarding what we have done with our shlichus over the last thirty years. If we need help to make this *cheshbon nefesh*, we have the best resource possible – the sichos of the Rebbe to the Kinus HaShluchim. Therefore, I would like to share with you one of those sichos – from 5747.

The Rebbe speaks there about the beginning of shlichus. He discusses the first shliach – Avraham Avinu – a great Jew who had a specific mission regarding exactly what he had to do, and he did his shlichus. However, the shlichus only pertained to certain people. Then came *Mattan Torah*, and the shlichus was given to every Jew to spread Torah and Yiddishkeit. As the years progressed and Jews went out to different places throughout the world, the Rebbe says that there were appointed shluchim in every generation, connecting this with the shlichus of every Jewish soul that comes into this world to make a dwelling place for G-d in the lower realms. The Rebbe says that we use Torah and mitzvos – these are the shluchim that Hashem sent us to complete our mission.

Then, the Rebbe adds that still you need to have something new: a *Nasi HaDor* who comes

and tells you openly that you are a shliach. The leader of the generation sent shluchim in Russia, and he sent shluchim to America, Africa, and Australia. Even those who didn’t travel became shluchim in their respective neighborhoods, etc., and they still need help to do their shlichus.

So then came the next “*chiddush*,” the new “new thing” – Kinus HaShluchim, where people sit together, speak to each other, and help one another. The Rebbe then touches upon the difference between a *shliach* and an *askan* (a communal activist): an *askan* is dedicated, but he has his limited field and that’s it. A shliach doesn’t rest. Just in case someone thinks that there’s no more room for his shlichus, he should know that it’s not true. In Brooklyn, New York, seventy-five percent of Jewish children don’t know the Alef-Beis! Therefore, the Rebbe says, shlichus can be done everywhere and accomplish things for everyone!

The Rebbe continues to say that in case you still think it’s too hard, the Kinus HaShluchim starts on Shabbos, as the first event of the conference is the Rebbe’s farbrengen on Shabbos – which represents the idea that “all your work is done.”

THE REBBE HAS HIS WAYS

Then, thirty years ago, the Rebbe added a whole new *chiddush*, a newer dimension to shlichus, how the whole shlichus as we know it has ended and the only thing left now is to open our eyes and welcome Moshiach.

My fellow shluchim, we all know to speak about the Rebbe’s Igros Kodesh, but I want to share something else with you in the event that anyone still has any questions:

Ten days ago, the Kinus committee had a serious problem: Where should we make the



banquet? Should we make it in 770? In the Razag Hall? In front of the Rebbe's house? We had a meeting late at night, and one of the suggestions was to make it in this tent here in front of 770. It was not an easy decision, definitely in carrying it out. I want to thank all those who made it happen in the middle of the night.

I have had a problem with paying certain bills, and my FICO credit rating score was not so good. I was standing here with the Kinus committee on the street, and my credit rating appeared on my cellphone late Thursday night telling us to make the Kinus HaShluchim in front of 770. My FICO score rose by fifty-seven points – to 770! The Rebbe has his ways!

"ES KUMT OHN SHVER"

The Alter Rebbe says that we have to "live with the times."

My fellow shluchim, there was a court case this week in New York City, making the front page of the Wall Street Journal: Kraft Foods, the biggest food company in America, perhaps in the world, was taken to court. Why? Because they have a breakfast item sold to millions of people called 'Strawberry Pop Tarts', and it was

discovered that there are no strawberries in 'Strawberry Pop Tarts' – only apples and pears!

When we think of ourselves as Lubavitchers, Chassidim of the Rebbe, and shluchim of the Rebbe, the whole world expects from us to convey the message that Moshiach is alive and well! If not, how do you get the name 'Lubavitch'? You should be taken to court! You don't have any strawberries in you – you have only apples and pears.

Think of what we have to do in our place of shlichus. We have to ask ourselves: How many Jews have we brought closer to Moshiach? How many people do we visit each day in their homes and offices? Have we brought the word 'Moshiach' into the visit? It's very good that you put tefillin on another Jew, but when he makes the *bracha*, if you have more guts, let him add 'Yechi.' If you have less guts, have him say 'We Want Moshiach Now!', at least saying the word 'Now' with some fervor and enthusiasm.

We're about to start Chanukah campaign activities and a lot of other *mitzvaim*. Is there a Moshiach dimension to it? Do we bring this in when we light the Chanukah menorahs? It's

time for us to submit a proper *'din v'cheshbon'* to the Rebbe.

The Rebbe said about Mivtza Moshiach that *"es kumt ohn shver"* [= it comes with difficulty]. Therefore, we must dedicate ourselves, perhaps even setting aside a specific portion of the Chabad House budget for Moshiach activities. We have to begin planning for Moshiach, planning itself is ten percent of the work. Start classes, Zoom events, make a Shabbaton on Moshiach, etc. Make Moshiach part of your daily agenda.

SAYING THE RIGHT WORDS

I once got a phone call from a shliach who asked me, "Tell me the truth, how do you make money? How does it work?" So I asked him, "Do you make Havdalah?"

"Of course, I do?" he said.

"And what do you do with the wine after Havdalah? You dip your fingers into the wine, place it on your eyes and ears, and then put whatever is left in your pockets, right? Why? *Zahl zein gelt!* So, what do I do? I take the whole cup of wine and I pour that into my pocket..."

But seriously speaking, every Motzaei Shabbos after Havdalah, I ask myself: Am I a differ-

ent person from what I was last week when I made Havdalah? Can I stand this week and tell the Rebbe: Thank you for another week and give me a better week? This is the *'din v'cheshbon'* that he has to make for himself and for the Rebbe.

I recently heard a beautiful vort from a shliach, Rabbi Nisselevitch:

We know that all year round we end the third bracha in Shemone Esrei with *"HaKeil HaKadosh."* When *Aseres Yemei Teshuva* come along, we change it to *"HaMelech HaKadosh"* Saying *"HaKeil HaKadosh"* is fine for the rest of the year, but for the High Holidays, it's a whole different world – *"HaMelech HaKadosh."* And if you said *"HaKeil HaKadosh"* between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, you have to repeat Shemone Esrei from the beginning. You didn't say the right words.

Now is the time of *"HaMelech HaMoshiach."* We have to change our language. We cannot stay the same. It doesn't work anymore!

Now is not even *Aseres Yemei Teshuva*; now is *Neilah* of history! We have to be able to stand up and say: **L'SHANA HABA'AH B'YERUSHALAYIM! BARUCH HABA MELECH HA'MOSHIACH!** ■



THE REBBE On Chinuch

RABBI GERSHON AVTZON



CAN TEACHERS GO ON VACATION?

QUESTION > I teach in a Chabad school and consider myself a dedicated teacher. I work hard to prepare my classes so that they should be engaging and stimulating and feel that I connect well with my students. In order for me to stay energized, I need to separate myself emotionally from my students during the Bein Ha'zemanim breaks. Is that okay or does the Rebbe expect more?



ANSWER > Before we get into the specifics of your very valid question, it is important to clarify the Rebbe's approach to Chinuch. To the Rebbe, the teacher-student relationship is all consuming and it needs to permeate every aspect of the life of the student.

The Rebbe often quoted (see Likkutei Sichos Vol. 5 page 376) the following Gemara (Bava Basra 8b): "Rav once found Rav Shmuel bar Sheilat standing in a garden. Rav said to him: Have you abandoned your trust and neglected your students? Rav Shmuel bar Sheilat said to him: *It has been thirteen years now that I have not seen my garden, and even now my thoughts are on the children.*"

The following are a few letters where the Rebbe demands this extra level of involvement:

WHY ARE THE STUDENTS MISBEHAVING?

(1) In a letter written to the hanhala of the Yeshiva in Lod, the Rebbe writes: "I want to

bring something very important to your attention, *and this will also be a test of the dedication of the staff of the Yeshiva*: 'What are the students doing the 24 hours of Shabbos and who is watching over them?'" (Igros, Vol. 13 page 359; #4615)

(2) To a hanhala of a Yeshiva that was complaining about the deteriorating attitude and behavior of their students, the Rebbe responds: "If (the members of the hanhala) would show an interest in the plight of the students and their behavior *not just during the hours that they are sitting in their classes, but during their free time* [with their mind set on] knowing (a) what they are involved in? (b) whom they are meeting with? and (c) what their behavior and conversations are? then many of the issues would not occur in the first place."

The Rebbe adds: "I have the feeling that the issue is that the staff of the Yeshiva do not feel that this is their responsibility. They suffice with the official hours that they put in and expect

others to take the responsibility. This attitude has led to the negative direction in the behavior of the students.” (Igras, vol. 14 page 404; #5179).

VACATION PROGRAMMING

(3) “It is certainly superfluous to motivate you to [arrange] a special program for the vacation days, for it is necessary to prepare such a program with ample time before the vacation. As the adage of our Rebbeim states, ‘According to the stance one adapts, this is the way things proceed.’ The same also applies to conduct during the vacation days.” (Igras, Vol. 4 page 392; #1111). The Rebbe actually instructed educators to stay in touch with their students over the time of vacation.

[I want to mention the example set by Rabbi Chaim Levi Yitzchak Ginsberg a”h (of Kfar Chabad and Rishon L’Tzion) who would spend his whole Chol Hamoed Pesach traveling throughout Eretz Yisrael to visit his talmidim.]

ALUMNI

The Rebbe did not only expect teachers to keep in touch with their current students, but encouraged teachers and institutions to keep in touch with their alumni as well. Here are a few quotes from letters that the Rebbe wrote on this subject:

(1) “I am so pleased to read in your letter that your wife stays in touch with her previous students. It is certain that this will bring tremendous benefit to them and it will also bring benefit to her and your entire home.” (Igras, Vol. 7 page 324; #2180).

(2) “I hope that this holy institution (Tomchei Tmimim) will make an honest *cheshbon tzedek* ... about what happened to the talmidim that had left their institution. How many remained focused and live their lives as Chassidim, how many remained (at least) *shomrei Torah and mitzvos, etc.*” (Igras, Vol 11page 398; #3780).

// THE REBBE DID NOT ONLY EXPECT TEACHERS TO KEEP IN TOUCH WITH THEIR CURRENT STUDENTS, BUT ENCOURAGED TEACHERS AND INSTITUTIONS TO KEEP IN TOUCH WITH THEIR ALUMNI AS WELL.

ADVICE FOR THE WARY TEACHER

It is also interesting to mention an answer the Rebbe wrote to a teacher who complained that he feels totally exhausted after his hours of teaching and wanted advice. The Rebbe responded (Ibid, page 52; #3430): “It should be possible to take a small break between classes or make sure that you are well-rested before you begin teaching. When you make the proper vessel in nature, you will receive success in a manner which is higher than nature.”

THE MOSHIACH CONNECTION

The Rebbe wants us to live with Moshiach. Like in the field of education, this does not just mean when we learn about Moshiach, rather it has to permeate our everyday life as well and every moment of it.

In the words of the Rebbe (Toldos 5752):

“All the days of your life bring about the days of Moshiach’ means that his life (every instant of it) is about bringing the days of Moshiach. That is, a Jew does not limit himself only to those times when he thinks or speaks or does something to bring Moshiach. Rather the essence of his life (‘your life’) is to bring the days of Moshiach.” ■

MOMENTS With The Rebbe

CHANUKAH WITH THE REBBE

1. To Ignite Every Jew. Rabbi Avrohom Yitzchok Glick of London had ye-chidus with the Rebbe. The Rebbe asked him about his livelihood and R' Glick said he sold lightbulbs. He said that now and then he goes to Malaga in southern Spain on business to buy raw materials to manufacture lightbulbs. The Rebbe said, "When you sell lightbulbs, you need to remind the customer to light it up. Every Jew is a lightbulb, and he needs to be lit up..."



2. Playing Dreidel. In 5716, some children were playing dreidel near the Rebbe's room. Among them were Sholom Yisroel Chodakov and Abba Piekarski. The Rebbe arrived from home and when he saw the children playing he took out a dime, threw it on the floor and told one of the children to spin the dreidel.

The dreidel landed on the letter "hei" and the Rebbe asked the children what to do in this case. The children said to divide the pot in half. In the meantime, the Rebbe entered his office and the children raffled off the Rebbe's dime and Abba Piekarski won it.



3. On Sunday 26 Kislev 5747, the second day of Chanukah, the artist Yaakov Agam went to the Rebbe with a small model of the huge menorah he designed. The huge menorah is set up on Fifth Avenue in Manhattan. His conversation with the Rebbe was in Hebrew. The Rebbe graciously welcomed him and said, “Many thanks for the menorah as the Rambam wanted.”

Mr. Agam said, “They told me that the Rebbe said the branches need to be straight (the Rebbe: “Diagonal”) and I also gave the menorah spiritual treatment ...”

The Rebbe said, “May it be like the lights of Chanukah, adding from day to day. Then you too will add in all of your achievements from day to day, and not just around Chanukah time but all year. ■





PARASHA Of The Future

RABBI NISSIM LAGZIEL

HOW TO PUT YOUR LIFE ON THE LINE TO BRING MOSHIACH

BEGIN WITH A GRIN

Yenta was an old woman who went to shul every Shabbos. Every year, when they reached parshas Vayeishev and the story of the sale of Yosef, she would sob. One year, the alert rebbetzin noticed that Yenta wasn't crying.

"What happened? Every year you cry about this sad story ..."

Yenta said, "Every year he makes the same mistake. Why does he go to his brothers? This time, he deserves it!"

LIFE LESSON

Parshas Vayeishev tells the story of Yosef and his sale by his brothers. At first glance, it looks as though Yosef's irresponsible behavior is not consistent with basic Torah principles. According to Torah, life is the supreme value and a Jew is commanded to guard it. Yosef seems to have acted completely against this halachic principle.

When you look into Rashi on the first verses of the parsha, we find that Yosef was completely aware of the great danger in what he did. Yaakov sent Yosef to see how his brothers were doing. Yosef went to Shechem and did not find them. He suddenly met someone, the angel Gavriel himself, who told him that his brothers

were in Dosan. In other words, the brothers are looking for a way to kill you, watch out!

There are commentaries (like Ramban) who say that the angel never told Yosef explicitly about what his brothers were planning. What he said could be understood as the name of the place and Yosef did not understand the hint that the angel was giving him. Yosef did not ignore the danger; he was unaware of it.

But Rashi in his commentary on the Gemara (Sota 13b) shows that he disagrees, that the angel told Yosef, "My dear fellow" - your life is in danger! Yosef disregarded this warning. Why?

There is a famous dispute between Rambam and Tosafos about whether it is permissible for a Jew to sacrifice his life for something that is not one of the three major sins (idol worship, murder and forbidden relations). According to the Rambam (Yesodei HaTorah 5:1), "Whoever is told transgress and do not be killed and he was killed and did not transgress, is guilty for terminating his life." It is forbidden. The Torah wants us to preserve our lives at all costs and it is forbidden to be stricter and die. The Tosafos (Avoda Zara 27b) say that it's the person's choice. If he decided to give up his life for a mitzva, whether a positive mitzva or prohibition, "it is accounted to him as a righteousness."

According to Tosafos we can explain Rashi's view about Yosef. Yosef had an explicit mission from his father Yaakov, to see how his brothers were doing and to let Yaakov know. This entailed the mitzva of kibbud av and not carrying out this mission meant not doing the mitzva. Yosef was ready to do anything to fulfill this mission, even if this entailed danger to his life which, according to the Tosafos, is allowed.

The question then is, even if it is allowed, what is the rationale for doing so? It's madness. We have found that it is permissible but why would Yosef want to do this crazy thing when he was no fool? Furthermore, his mission was to report back to Yaakov. If he would be killed in carrying out the mission, he would end up with nothing, i.e. the mission wouldn't be carried out and he'd lose his life! What reason can there be for this choice?

The Nimukei Yosef, R' Yosef ibn Chaviva, one of the Rishonim, in his commentary on the tractate Sanhedrin, says a short line that sheds light on Yosef's seemingly bizarre behavior. "If he is a great man, a chassid and yerei shomayim, and sees that the generation is lax in this, he is permitted to sanctify G-d's name and sacrifice himself even for a minor mitzva, in order for people to see and learn to fear Hashem and love Him with all their heart."

Yosef HaTzaddik wasn't being irresponsible; he was being a teacher! He wasn't crazy; he was devoted! He wanted to teach his brothers and all Jews about the importance of the mitzva of honoring parents. He saw a lack of respect. He saw Shimon and Levi killing all the people in Shechem against their father's explicit wishes. He saw how Reuven mixed into Yaakov's domestic arrangements and, mainly, he saw how his brothers hated him just because their father loved him, which was a serious breach in their father's honor! Yosef saw that the "generation was lax," and wanted to teach them a lesson even at the price of his life. Yosef wanted to show that he was ready to sacrifice himself for

the mitzva of kibbud av so they should learn from him.

LIGHT UP YOUR LIFE

We are soon going to light the first light of Chanukah. The Shelah says there is a link between these parshiyos and the story of the Chashmonaim and their war against the Greeks. We can see a direct connection between Yosef's self-sacrifice and the sacrifice of Matisyahu and his sons, a self-sacrifice that went beyond the letter of the law and transcended all considerations.

The conduct of the Maccabim was as wild as Yosef's. After all, since when is there a Torah obligation to go to war? Even if we would say that during a time of a "decree of apostasy" we must sacrifice ourselves for every mitzva, where does it say we need to aim a gun and throw grenades? Where does it say that we need to organize an army of partisans and run to the hills, especially when they had no chance of success? This was "few against the money, weak against the strong," like the United States army against a group of impassioned yeshiva bachurim. Does this sound reasonable?

The answer lies in two words, "*kohanecha ha'kedoshim*" (your holy priests). The Chashmonaim knew that they were "your holy priests," "the high priests," and the law of "if he is a great man, a chassid and yerei shomayim" that he is allowed to give up his life at any time, any place, for any mitzva, in order to sanctify the name of G-d and to rectify breaches in the wall of religion. When one acts with self-sacrifice, going beyond any calculations, one merits to see miracles, in those days and at this time!

This is the lesson for us, to devote ourselves with self-sacrifice, beyond logic, to bring the Geula by investing our entire beings into revealing holiness in daily life and the revelation of the existence of G-d in the world and not to be fazed by calculations of the "prison" of exile.

As we've seen before, when one operates with devotion, one sees miracles!

TO CONCLUDE WITH A STORY

We will conclude with a short review of the life of the Munkatcher Rebbe (1868-1937), the author of *Minchas Elozor*, which teaches us about the self-sacrifice needed to bring the Geula.

Rabbi Moshe Yaakov Weiss, rav of the Nevei Achiezer neighborhood in Bnei Brak and a student of the Munkatcher Rebbe, said, "There wasn't a single day that my teacher and master did not mention and talk about Moshiach. I will never forget the Rosh Hashana when before the tekios he stood and spoke, with tears, saying, 'Jews, leave all the side things. I know

that each of you has problems with health and money, but what we all need to do now is pray this Rosh Hashana for Moshiach.'"

On Hoshana Raba 5695, the Munkatcher Rebbe spoke to his community and demanded self-sacrifice for Moshiach, ending with the words, "If they tell you that today Moshiach will come on condition that you die today, would you die for this?" All said yes. This speech, along with a letter that he wrote afterward by way of a response to a certain Torah scholar who challenged this approach were printed in his sefarim. In a sicha of Mikeitz 5744 the Rebbe referred to this and said, "If only they would publicize this letter."

Good Shabbos!

THE SIN OF THE GOLDEN ROUND, FROM P. 17

Science cannot contradict halacha especially when we occasionally see that science changes when scientists realize that not everything seen at first glance as authoritative, is in fact so.

The Rebbe, as always, takes a very strong position on any matter that is against halacha and against the Jewish religion. It should be noted that except for the author of *Maaseh Chosheiv* and the author of *Chochmas HaMishkan*, no other poskim hold the view that the branches were rounded.

Furthermore, the Rebbe notes that those poskim who write that the menorah was rounded, paskened this way based on their understanding of the Rambam. However, once the Rambam's diagram was discovered, obviously even they would agree that according to all opinions the branches were straight.

DIAGONAL MENORAH READY AND WAITING

Machon HaMikdash in Yerushalayim has constructed vessels of the Mikdash out of

silver and gold by way of preparing for the construction of the Beis HaMikdash. For many years, the institute had a menorah with rounded arms but about twenty years ago, they decided to build a new menorah according to the Rambam's view, with diagonal branches. This menorah is made of pure silver and can be used for the avoda in the Mikdash.

Speedily, in our days, when the third Mikdash is built, the kohen gadol will be able to light this menorah which is similar to the original menorah [until we have the original gold menorah described in the Torah].

Rabbi Menachem Makover, one of the people who runs the institute, who was very involved in the menorah, notes that the difference between rounded and straight also relates to the running of the world. Rounded represents nature while straight represents the supernatural. Beyond the halachic angle, the Rebbe definitely opened the path for miraculous conduct of the world – a world of Geula. ■

The Chassidische Vibe

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



יחי אדוננו מורנו ורבינו מלך המשיח לעולם ועד

Everyday Heroines

SARA GOPIN

JOINING THE JOY MOVEMENT

WHAT first struck me when I entered Gitty Stolik's home in Crown Heights was what she calls her "simcha wall," featuring an assortment of joyful sayings and photos. It's truly an uplifting sight! I also loved the antique wooden "treasure box," where she keeps inspiring articles and clippings on the topic of joy. Her newest career is running popular simcha courses, and women from all over the world participate together through zoom. She has authored two best-selling books, "It's OK to Laugh - Seriously!" and "New Joy - Response to a Changing World."

TABLE-DANCING

"The unbounded simcha of my paternal grandfather, Rabbi Benzion Spritzer obm, had a lifelong impact on me," Gitty opens our interview. "At the weddings of his grandchildren my zeide was literally intoxicated with joy and gratitude, to the point that he began dancing and stomping on the table! He did this until he passed away well into his nineties. Witnessing this table-dancing was how I discovered, in a very palpable way, what it means to be b'simcha. It was a glimpse of the joy of the Geula!" She pauses, and adds, "My zeide had suffered throughout his life, losing stillborn babies and twins, as well as both of his wives. But instead of dragging him down, the tragedies heightened his appreciation for the smallest gifts. I'll always remember the first time that my zeide came to visit us from Eretz Yisrael and cheer-

fully exclaimed, 'Look, the room is warm and there are no leaks! Baruch Hashem!' At that moment I realized that there's always a reason to be grateful and to celebrate.

"My parents, Rabbi Hershel and Rivka Spritzer obm, came to America after World War II as refugees. Their chassidishe roots brought immeasurable richness to their lives. They lived in Williamsburg, but later moved to Crown Heights and became Lubavitchers. My father was an 'oveid Hashem,' his face radiating with love and fear of Hashem. Whenever he smiled, he beamed."

After receiving her Teacher's Degree from Beis Rivka Seminary, Gitty taught in the elementary school and high school, and for the last twenty years is a teacher in special education. "I love it, and have seen one miracle after another. When we believe in a child's potential, it's possible that even those children who don't seem to belong anywhere can be mainstreamed," she says unequivocally.

Gitty married Rabbi Eli Stolik, a maggid shir in Oholei Torah, and they raised a beautiful Lubavitch family, dedicated to chinuch and to spreading the wellsprings of Chassidus. Gitty is a popular writer, and I've read her interesting articles in the Nshei Chabad Newsletter. She was also the editor of "Our Vogue," a publication highlighting the inner dimension of tzniyus.

INVITING OUR FUTURE JOY INTO THE PRESENT

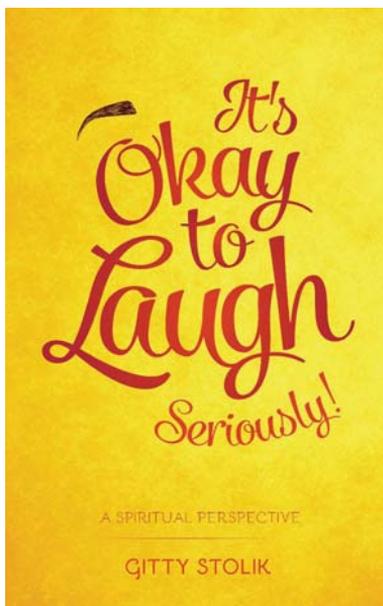
Gitty's involvement in the Joy Movement began after spotting a passage from a Sicha of the Rebbe, from 14 Elul 5748, among the "holy clutter" of pamphlets that builds up in every Yiddishe home. (Afterwards she posted it on her "simcha wall.") She says emphatically, "The Rebbe's words are: 'We've tried everything we can, and we're still in galus. Let's try something new - **simcha**. Simcha focused purely on Geula. Try it and you'll see!' Right then I decided to write a book that would publicize this message that, when we are joyful **now**, acting as if the Geula is just about to unfold, we invite our future joy into the present.

"Thus, about ten years ago, I started researching simcha in Chassidic sources. It became a very intense pursuit, and for fourteen months I spent hours and hours trying to fully understand the concept of simcha. We are all endowed with the gift of joy. It's a primal, insatiable drive, and a universal language. But how can we make it happen?

"I discovered a 'simple formula' that made sticking with simcha so enchanting that, like beautiful music, we're going to want to follow it, through thick and thin. That changed everything for me. As every Chassid knows, simcha is an indispensable avoda. Without joy, we can't succeed in serving Hashem."

PROMOTING SIMCHA IS SERIOUS BUSINESS!

We're always attending shiurim on sholom bayis and chinuch, but a course on simcha? "Now, as we're so close to the Geula, we have to get into the mode," Gitty explains. "We're



also better at everything we do when we have simcha! Therefore two years ago I started my own series. I give five zoom sessions that offer six keys to simcha based on Chassidus, such as relationships, purpose, gratitude, prayer, taanug and the perfect joy of Geula.

"In the Maamar 'Samach T'Samach' the Rebbe Rashab explains that there are two facets, simcha and taanug. Taanug is what moves us higher and higher up in the inner chambers, all the way to Hashem's essence, atzmus.

The interaction between simcha and taanug gives us the key to understanding the whole 'secret' of Geula." Gitty has definitely whetted my appetite to learn more!

"The most amazing women, of all ages and from different parts of the world, have joined the program, which is interactive. After they finished, my graduates convinced me to offer 'maintenance' sessions on a regular basis, ensuring long-term results. Promoting simcha is serious business, and it's become my shlichus.

"I kept asking myself, 'How exactly is simcha going to bring the Geula?' Then I began to wonder how all of us, after years and decades of struggles and pain, will be able to suddenly embrace a culture of joy. When the Geula unfolds, the spiritual ecstasy may be too powerful for us to acclimate to its intensity. Therefore, instead of the galus approach of just putting bandages on our wounds, we must increase our capacity for joy, getting everyone else on the bandwagon as well." Gitty sums it up with a smile, "I'm continually investing in my 'MS,' Masters in Simcha, because the more we stir up simcha, the more Geula is brought into the world!" ■



WHEN HONORING PARENTS IS A CHALLENGE

KIBBUD AV V'EIM, HONORING ONE'S PARENTS, IS A RECURRING THEME IN THE NEXT FEW PARSHIYOS. DO THE WORDS "HONORING ONE'S PARENTS" ENGULF YOU WITH FEELINGS OF JOY, TRANQUILITY, LOVE, AND LONGING — OR PERHAPS WITH PAIN, SADNESS, AND DESPAIR? COACH ESTER SULTAN HAS A ROADMAP WITH SOLUTIONS FOR THOSE BURDENED WITH A STRAINED RELATIONSHIP WITH THEIR PARENTS ON HOW TO GET THINGS BACK ON TRACK.

"MY NAME IS ESTHER SULTAN,

married and thank G-d, the mother of nine children. I am a teacher at a high school for girls, and I have also studied counseling for parents, self and couples' awareness with Ahuva Zuckerman, along with guidance for parents at the Shefer Center in Yerushalayim. When I watched consultations with Ahuva, and in the awareness groups she ran, I saw again and again how every problem was somehow connected to parents, and how repairing the relationship with one's parents can solve the problem for which the person came to seek advice. I then decided to focus on this issue! Today, I lecture and provide guidance to children (to the age of seventy!) on how to improve relations with their parents. It is amazing how so much positive use can come with a little investment!"

WHAT IS HONORING ONE'S PARENTS?

"When we were in kindergarten, the teacher taught us that honoring one's parents means not to disturb Mommy when she's resting and to bring Tatty a cup of water when he returns home. Among many people, it remains at the level of action, and from their point of view, honoring parents is only on this level. Going with them to the doctor, bringing a cake when they stay with them, bringing the grandchildren for a visit.

"Honoring one's parents is above all a matter of approach, the emotional position I have regarding them. Do I give honor or *ch"v* show disgrace? In my heart, am I critical and judgmental towards my parents, looking upon them 'from above'? For if that were the case, even if I would wash dishes from today until next year as my mother asked me to do, perhaps I am doing the mitzva in a technical and practical sense, but I really don't honor her!

WHY IS IT SO HARD FOR US TO GIVE HONOR?

"The million-dollar question...

"We are in a generation that is a little like *tinokos shenishbu* in this matter. The culture in which we live blames parents for everything, and the idea of honoring them is literally the opposite of nature. Psychology explains that everything that is difficult for a person today has its source in his childhood, i.e., the time when his parents were raising him. And if every bad thing I have within me today is a product of the things they did to me in the past – how can we possibly honor them? They are guilty of all the pain within me today! From my vantage point, this way of thinking is so un-Jewish. One of the founding principles of Yiddishkeit is the principle of free choice. A person chooses his life according to circumstances that G-d has placed before him, and he can't blame others for his difficulties.

"In addition, we are used to doing what we want. Compelling our will because our parents want to do things another way - that is most difficult!

SELF-CONFIDENCE AND HONORING ONE'S PARENTS

"First of all, I have to understand why I have to honor my parents. The *Meshech Chochma* explains that the mitzva of honoring one's parents was given specifically in the desert, when parents required no effort in raising children. This teaches us that honoring parents does not depend upon certain conditions. I am obligated to honor my parents for the very fact that I was conceived by them and they gave me life, even if they didn't give me what I felt that they should have.

“When I succeed in honoring my parents unconditionally, I am also capable of honoring myself without conditions. Why don’t we have self-confidence? Because we think that we aren’t good enough in such-and-such an area. ‘I’m not orderly enough, I’m not cheerful enough, I’m not anything enough...’ Self-confidence means being fit in my own eyes, even if I don’t meet all the conditions I set as proof of my worth and value.

“A simpler response: Our parents are our roots, whether we like it or not. We are the fruits they have borne, and something deep inside us is a little bit of them.

“If they aren’t respectable and ‘worthy’ in my eyes, then there’s something ‘not worthy’ within me as well, and it doesn’t matter how much I strive to be different from them and to prove that I really am a good person, unlike my parents. I still don’t have a sense of self-confidence, because deep down inside me, I am the product of a bad home, not a firm individual.

“On the contrary, when I honor my parents and the place from where I came, then I too am ‘worth it.’ I have self-confidence.”

CONFLICTS

What do you suggest someone do in a situation when the parents are not yet Torah observant, but the married children are and the children come to visit with the grandchildren, and it’s important to them that they don’t watch anything on the TV at the grandparents’ house?

“When a person chooses his way of life, he can act in opposition to his parents – they are right-wing – I’ll be a leftist. They eat meat – I’ll go vegan; they’ll be frum, I won’t.

“When a person is being rebellious, he’s not ‘clean.’ He’s not really doing what’s right, rather he’s being influenced by the *yetzer ha’ra* to do the opposite of what his parents want.

“I remember that I once read an interview with Aya Kramerman, a *baalas teshuva*. She wrote about her mother and how her whole teshuva process was in the merit of the education she received from her, devoted to the truth and to follow in its path. I assume that her mother wasn’t very happy that her daughter became a baalas teshuva and didn’t continue in *her* path... However, it didn’t turn into a battle where the mother ‘deliberately’ went against the daughter’s frumkeit – because the daughter did things in a ‘clean’ manner, not to rebel against her mother.

“There’s no way to force someone to accept my choices. It’s his right not to be happy with my choice. The truth is that here too there is no judging of the parents – ‘How can they be so old-fashioned and domineering, wanting that everyone should do exactly as they say.’ It is his right to think that his path is the right one and to regret that his son does not continue in his path.

“When we internalize this, most of the poison and anguish dissipate from the relationship.

“To your question – when I’m untainted, not judgmental or arrogant towards my parents, they can relate to my request in a businesslike manner.

“You have to remember that our parents want what’s best for us. They want that our children should cooperate with us and be raised in a proper way. Therefore, when I’m really not judgmental towards them, there’s a much greater chance that they will agree to my request.”

What do we do with a mother or a mother-in-law who gives lots to candies to our children?

“This is somewhat similar to what you asked previously... First of all, it’s possible to make a respectful request that they don’t give sweets

to the kids. This request says that they can also say 'No', and it will be all right.

"I remember a wonderful woman who once learned with me. She said that in her house, there are no candies whatsoever. Once, they came to visit the grandmother, and she gave toffees to the children... They held the candy, but didn't know what to do with it... When they left their grandmother's house, the children asked her what to do with the candy, and she replied: 'Whatever you want. I don't interfere with what Bubby gives you.'"

"What an amazing education these children received at the price of a toffee... They saw before their own eyes what true honoring of one's parents really is. Isn't it worth it?"

"Don't worry, they know exactly what is permissible and what is forbidden. Our education is not so fragile that candies from Bubby and Zeidy can break it... On the contrary, they see how much Mommy honors her parents and how she's willing to let her children eat sweets that she wouldn't normally allow – simply because her parents gave them and she won't 'break' her word.

"When I'm in a war with my parents over how many sweets the child can eat – he understands that there's an 'issue' at hand, and he'll want sweets all the time. However, when I stop raising a fuss over the matter due to the higher value attached to honoring one's parents – the child understands that there's no issue with me and he'll stop the constant pursuit for candies. Thus, I earn two benefits – no battling with the child and honoring my parents. Two for the price of one."

What about parents who interfere or don't care?

"What does it mean to 'interfere'? What do we call 'interference'? What is a 'lack of caring'? Each of the readers will have a different answer. One might say that if her mother doesn't call to ask how she's doing at least once a day, she feels

that her mother doesn't care about her, while someone else becomes quite upset at the very idea of others interfering in her life that way...

"What I want to say is that this whole question depends upon standards that we have created. Regardless of how we might think is the proper way to act, and we judge our parents based on how they meet the standards we set on conduct, they have no obligation to honor them. Generally speaking, they owe us nothing. They have already given us the gift of life, which is greater than all others, and raised us, and anything they give us above and beyond that is 'extra'!

"A little tip: When we get over these judgmental thoughts towards them – 'They're interfering too much', 'They don't care' – it will be nicer for them to be caring and more pleasant with us. Who enjoys inquiring about someone else when he knows that this person is constantly critical of him?"

And what about parents/in-laws who criticize us?

"From my personal experience – criticism is usually a defense mechanism.

"Once I provided guidance to a kallah who told me quite angrily that her mother-in-law makes comments to her that her skirt is too short. Beyond the fact that it's not nice to make such comments, it's downright stupid! – Your son chose to marry her with her short skirts... What did you hope to achieve with your criticisms? Did you think that she would change her skirts?"

"We spoke a little, and I asked her what she thinks about her in-laws. 'It's weird,' she said. 'My parents are much younger than them, earn less than them, yet they give us more money. His parents simply don't know how to manage their financial affairs!'"

CONT. ON P. 55

The Diaries of

REBBETZIN CHANA'S TRAVELMATE



YOCHAVED ZALMANOW

TRANSLATED FROM YIDDISH BY DOV BARON

CHAPTER XV

SHABBOS ON A FRANKFURT KIBBUTZ

TIME did not stand still. An urgent inner voice automatically asked, “Where am I supposed to go? What should I do right here in this despicable land, unable to speak the language, without money, and without connections to any Jewish community, here on a Friday afternoon right before Shabbos?” Standing in the middle of the tumult of a Frankfurt platform full of German criminals, hundreds of miles from my home – the Poking refugee camp – was not where I wanted to be.

After some time, I began to leave the station, but I had no destination. I came to a tall door that seemed to be an exit onto a side street. When I opened the door, I could not believe my eyes. Torrents of rain flooded the streets. I cried uncontrollably. The tears fell like the heavy raindrops.

All at once, I felt the picture of the Rebbetzin in my fingers in my pocket. I heard her voice in my mind, “You are not alone, the Creator is with you.” I saw the Rebbetzin’s deep, intelligent eyes smile at me with friendship, love, and courage!



I looked around carefully and saw a car on the other side of the street standing in deep water. A window was open, and someone was shouting something to me and motioning with his hands. Finally, the words reached me, “Are you Amcha? Are you Amcha? Do not cry. My friend is coming out of the store soon, and we will bring the car around to get you and bring

you to the Kibbutz! Don't cry!" His voice carried itself over the street, over the rain and wind.

When the waters receded a bit, the car with two yeshiva bachurim drove to where I stood. With open Jewish friendliness and full of good cheer, they said, "Rain is a blessing from G-d! You are Amcha! Amcha is alive and thriving! Now we can come to the Kibbutz with a great, important guest for Shabbos!" I understood some of their Hebrew words. They said, "We must hurry so that we will not be late for candle lighting!"

During the drive, I overheard the two boys talking about the reason they had ventured out in the flood to get to the store. Apparently, the girls had been short a few candles for candle lighting, and they absolutely refused to make the blessing on electric lights. Therefore, the two bachurim went with self-sacrifice to bring them Shabbos candles! Then they bought extra so that there should be enough for me as well. My thoughts returned to the Rebbetzin. Her wishes were already being fulfilled, right here in this city of Frankfurt.

As they drove into the courtyard of a big building, the Kibbutz, the boys proudly announced, "Girls! Come welcome a distinguished guest for Shabbos, a guest from Russia! She is an illustrious guest that came together with your Shabbos candles!"

One after another, girls ran out from all sides and greeted me like friendly sisters. Each one wanted to have me in her room. Since it was close to Shabbos, they quickly grabbed a hat and wrote the room numbers on little pieces of paper. A raffle was drawn for the winning room number!

We then quickly made our way into the large dining room to light the candles that were set up on a special table. Each girl made the blessing in honor of Shabbos. As the guest from Russia, I lit first!

// I FELT THE PICTURE OF THE REBBETZIN IN MY FINGERS IN MY POCKET. I HEARD HER VOICE IN MY MIND

After davening and eating, they all sat down to hear my story about how I had ended up in Frankfurt. They were extremely interested to hear about Jewish life in Russia, about the Lubavitcher Rebbe and about his Chassidim. We farbrenge together until dawn. As the Lubavitcher guest who escaped Communist Russia, I had to spend time in the room of every girl. I was moved by their sincerity and warmth. These were Jewish girls who had been rescued from concentration camps, orphaned, innocent young souls persecuted by the animalistic Nazis, may their name and memory be erased forever, yet they had retained their dignity and their love for Judaism.



There was a train heading back to Munich at twelve midnight after Shabbos. After Melaveh Malka, the entire Kibbutz, girls and boys, came to escort me to the train station with great joy. Understanding that I did not even possess a groschen because of the crisis I described earlier, they bought me a ticket that was good until Poking.

When the train arrived, they all came onto the train with me to wish me a hearty farewell and to give me presents of money and food. I did not want to accept anything under any circumstance, but they would not accept my insistent refusal. One cannot fight Jewish devotion, generosity and unity, and so everything remained on the seat next to me on the train. Rebbetzin Chana's holy blessing had filled my life in every way. ■

— *To be continued* —

RECAP: *Noa, shlucha in a Yerushalayim neighborhood, visits her mother's gravesite. A large chareidi family arrives at the cemetery and helps to make a minyan for Kaddish. Noa feels that there's some inner connection between this family and her late mother. She sets out on a search to find out more. She reveals that the relationships among the family were a bit problematic. Noa tries to unify its divergent factions.*

The “*latkes ovent*” was a complete failure.

Dozens of telephone conversations preceded the event filling all of Noa's afternoons and evenings for the last week. They accompanied her as she went home, when she put her children to bed, when she took them out to the playground, and when she folded laundry. Between phone calls, she also made progress in organizing the neighborhood Yud-Tes Kislev event and preparing a Chanukah party for her class...

It took them at least two days until they decided upon a location. Gita generously offered the use of her house, however, Faigy and Yehudis didn't think that it would be a wise idea if everyone traveled to the other side of the

A GRAVE SITUATION

A SERIALIZED EMOTIONAL JOURNEY

ALUMA S.

city. Virtually all of them thought that Hindy's house was the most suitable, especially since it has a large courtyard. Yet, it was specifically Hindy who felt that it would be inappropriate for them to come to her, as with the cold winter weather, a large courtyard was of no help.

Chani, the most recent of the sisters-in-law that Noa met, invited everyone to her home, but Devora and Gita rejected the idea, each one in turn. "It wouldn't be smart to invite everyone to a tiny house and no one has any room to move," they explained, each in her own way. Noa naturally served as the ambassador to convey the message gently to Chani.

At nearly the last moment, the father, Rabbi Erlstein, contacted Devora and inquired about how the preparations were progressing. When he heard about the problem of securing a proper location, he solved it immediately. He announced that he would rent the small events hall of the synagogue across the street from his house for the evening. All his daughters' and daughters-in-laws' efforts to convince him that "there's no need", "we can manage", "it's a waste of money" were to no avail.

The issue of the food was no less complicated. This time, however, at least all the parties were united behind a decision to deal with this matter on their own before they discover that their father had hired catering services at top dollar...

At first, everyone put the job on Hindy's shoulders. After all, she works in the field anyway, right? However, Hindy didn't like the idea. "While I have no problem with doing something for thirty or forty people, all this costs money. Do you honestly think that anyone will pay?"

Noa gently conveyed this message as well – Hindy would be happy to do it. However, for her part, Noa thought that everyone should participate in the monetary expenses. They may not be giving proper consideration to all

the time and effort, but Hindy does use expensive culinary products.

Gita was silent for a moment, surprised that she didn't think of this herself. Afterwards, she said that if they're already spending money – it would be preferable to make certain that the food was satisfying. You simply can't sit for a whole night with just a cake bar.

At this point, a discussion ensued regarding the kind of "spread" they would have. An actual meal? Milchig? Fleishig? (Noa cringed at the idea.) Just a bar with sweets and nosh? Latkes of all types? After all, isn't it a "*latkes ovent*"?

The argument was liable to prove most exhausting, even if they would sit together around one table to discuss the matter. It would be virtually impossible when you're talking about telephone calls between one person speaking with a fourth, who then spoke with a third, and again to a fifth. Noa had already reached the breaking point when the fourth person's idea on a compromise fell by the wayside, as did all previous ones. Chani was then on the line when Noa almost burst into tears. Chani had been the one who called for a ceasefire on this front. She would make challah rolls and salad, and each person invited would bring whatever he/she wants. Milchig (!) or pareve, store bought or homemade, sweet or savory...

They now mercilessly began to open fire as they came to the third stage – the evening's program.

A *dvar Torah* by Gita? "We've already been in seminary... We don't have the patience to sit with Torah sheets and look through the *mefarshim* – and with children yet!" (Yehudis)

A photo display of the family? "What? Without applying modern technology everywhere, it's no longer possible to enjoy such productions!" (Devora)

Humorous performances of family events? "There's nothing humorous about this family..." (Faigy)

Party games? “Be serious. I’m not on a Shabbos outing with my students.” (Gita)

Hire someone from the outside? “If no one wants to pay for the cake bar, do you expect that they’ll be willing to throw money at someone who will treat them like a bunch of old women at an old age home?” (Hindy)

Thus, they reached no decision. The battle just continued, over the phone naturally, up until two hours before the evening’s event was scheduled to begin, on the first night of Chanukah. Noa can now do nothing except hope that the very fact they are all meeting together after such a long interval will be a most interesting affair.

Half past five.

The “*latkes ovent*” begins, somewhere in far off Shaarei Chesed.

The telephone finally falls silent.

Noa suddenly feels empty.

It was as if a film running at fast forward had stopped at once.

She looked at the disorderly house, the ram-bunctious children eating doughnuts and trying to stick the candles on Mendele’s menorah, and she was amazed how everything seemed so tranquil to her...

They lit candles together and gave out Chanukah gelt. Daniel went out to participate in a Car Menorah Parade throughout the neighborhood, while she put the children to bed. Everything was so calm and quiet. Yet, her heart was with the Erlsteins in the small simcha hall in Shaarei Chesed, and she was genuinely hopeful that some great change would come about.

After two days of silence on the phone lines, she broke down and called Devora, filled with hope, only to reveal the fulfillment of the saying

of our Sages, of blessed memory: “To be thrown from a high rooftop to a deep pit.”

AT *seven o’clock in the morning, I opened my eyes. Yosef Eliyahu’s brothers roamed around the house and chatted, coming in and going out of the room, washing Neggel Vasser and looking for their shirts. Yosef Eliyahu hears nothing. Sleeping like a log. I also haven’t heard the noise of my brothers for some time now, and they make noise – plenty of it.*

I decide to get up. I wash my face, put on a shirt and a pair of shoes, and then go to say “Thank you” and “Good morning” to Yosef Eliyahu’s mother.

His father’s angry voice is heard in the kitchen. “Again with the cigarettes! I have no money to buy fish for Shabbos. Why are you giving him money for cigarettes?”

While I don’t hear what his mother says in reply, his father answers her – “No one asked him to start smoking. He should go out to work and pay for his own cigarettes!”

At that very moment, I make what I consider to be three important decisions:

To go back to Yosef Eliyahu’s room and remain there until his father leaves;

To find work and pay for my cigarettes myself;

To arrange for an envelope similar to those Rachel gives out and place it under their door, as soon as I have the money.

Some time later, when I had returned home, I suddenly notice the paint peeling off the walls and the old broken kitchen cabinet. I then add a fourth decision – to prepare an envelope for our family as well.

It’s interesting how I suddenly noticed this! Apparently, I really am working for Rachel. ■

To be continued...

“And then I understood everything. She’s being judgmental towards her mother-in-law, who feels that she’s looking at her arrogantly, as if she’s trying to give it back to her: ‘You say we’re not good enough? *You* aren’t good enough!’

“When we honor our parents and in-laws, without being judgmental and haughty towards them – they have no need to attack us in response, and the relationship becomes an immeasurably better one.”

PARENTS SUCH AS THESE...

What can be done with parents who abused their children in the past, acting towards them with manipulation and toxicity?

“It pains the heart. While such instances are rare, they do exist, and it really isn’t easy. It’s hard for me to give an answer that is correct in all cases, because this is really a complex matter, and we must relate to each set of circumstances on its own merit through personal advice. In general, I *can* say that as a faithful Jew – there is *Hashgacha Pratis* in the world. Hashem doesn’t just give certain parents to certain individuals. It is for his good – ‘no evil descends from Above’! Perhaps there is a process that this person needs to go through, and as a result, he needs such parents? In any event, I checked dozens of times and I found no asterisk alongside the *passuk* of ‘Honor your father and your mother.’ Thus, the obligation to honor one’s parents applies to such people as well.

“Above all, we must understand that honoring parents is for the good of the person himself. It builds self-confidence within him, emotional health, helping in his relationship with his spouse and his parents, as is written, ‘So It may be good for *you*.’ Furthermore, a

person who does not honor his parents above all else does damage to himself!

“From a practical standpoint, it’s conceivable that he has to distance himself from them or not be in contact with them on certain matters to prevent any harm. However, the main thing is the emotional position, not mere actions, a respectable one which must be taken in any case.

“Usually in such situations, there are incorrect dynamics between the parent and the child, and there is something that must be done. Therefore, I strongly recommend going for professional advice to check what can be done to have a good life together with one’s parents – as they are.”

CHOSEN STORIES

“It’s hard for me to choose... Every story moves me anew. Someone sent me a picture with her mother and a huge bouquet of flowers her mother gave her. She wrote to me that before this course, this never would have happened, and now that things have calmed down, she can finally be a girl.

“In another case, there was someone who vehemently opposed any form of rapprochement, stubbornly declaring that her feelings towards her parents are extraordinarily negative... However, after a few months, she met with me and said that her whole attitude towards her family was different because she had changed how she related to them.

“There were girls who finally got married when they put a halt to this internal war. Women who restored contact with their parents, who then unexpectedly passed away a few years later, were so happy that they had been privileged to have a good relationship – at least during the final years – and didn’t miss out on having their parents.” ■

חסידינשע קאפ

THE WORLD IS READY, ARE YOU?

Where do we see that the world is ready for the Geula? Everywhere!

MASHAL

A babble of voices, sounds of music, smells and people flooded the enormous hall and George closed his eyes in an attempt to overcome the din. The voice on the PA (public announcement) system, the background music from a high-end shop, the loud hum of idle chatter, the scents of perfume, coffee and the floor rugs all together overwhelmed him and he looked for a place to sit down and relax.

This wasn't the first time that George was in the airport. As a sharp and experienced

businessman, he spent a great deal of time in the halls of airports all over the world, but this time, the trip was a bit different and George sought some peace.

He finally found an empty seat and turned his attention to taking a bite of the warm, tasty croissant he had brought with him. He said the "mezonos" bracha and heard an "amen." Next to him sat a large smiley man wearing a little kippa. He was wrapped in a heavy coat and was busy fishing out dough pockets from a plate with clear sauce.

"Where are you going?" he asked in a heavy accent. They both happily discovered that they were on the same flight. The man

introduced himself as Sergei on his way from distant Moscow.

On a nearby bench leaned a fellow in a fine-weave coat with a rolling “r” by the name of Ricardo. “We are three already,” he said with a bashful smile. “If we washed, we would have a zimun,” and he continued eating his pasta in tomato sauce and drinking espresso from a little cup.

Opposite Ricardo, a sturdy man with equally sturdy boots, who was chewing on pieces of spicy beef jerky, stood up. He shook the hands of the members of the little group with rough hands, “Ruby. I’m from a small farm in Australia and I’m also on the flight.”

For mincha, a few minutes later, they had a minyan. Ten Jews from ten parts of the world. Ricardo was the chazan and the saying of “amen” was in ten different accents.

The voice on the PA system could be heard right after they said “Yechi.”

“Boarding for the flight to New York begins now,” said the monotonous voice.

“We can learn a bit on the plane,” suggested George from France. Sergei from Russia, Ricardo from Italy, Ruby from Australia and the rest of the little group, each of whom was coming from another part of the globe, nodded their agreement.

NIMSHAL

Throughout the generations, Jews studied Torah, kept mitzvos, and prayed for the Geula. Where do we see that our generation

is the generation most ready for the Geula? In general, in order for the Geula to come, the world needs to be ready for it. Where do we see this?

The answer is in our Mashal, in a quick glance at Terminal 5 at Charles de Gaulle airport in France, and actually in numerous other places.

When the Jewish people went into exile, it was a terrible decree and the more they dispersed, the more it looked like a tremendous spiritual descent for them. But our sages say that, “G-d did a tzedaka with Yisrael,” since the Jewish people operate in every place that they land and fulfill Torah and mitzvos in all these places.

The Jews who came from Eretz Yisrael became citizens in all the places they went to: Italy, France, Russia, Yemen, Australia, Morocco. Wherever they went, they became somewhat like the locals in the clothing they wore, the language they spoke, the foods they ate. Note the foods that each of the passengers in the Mashal brought with them, and what they wore.

The real reason for this is that this way, the customs of every country are used and become part of our service of Hashem. Sparks of holiness that were scattered in the creation of the world are refined by Jews who go to every location.

When a Jew settles somewhere and behaves in a way that fits that place, in a way that is permissible according to Torah, he accomplishes the spiritual refinement of that place and turns it into a dwelling place for Hashem.

TERMINAL 3	
Paris - New York	
Paris - Tel Aviv	
Paris - London	
Paris - New York	
Paris - Madrid	

TERMINAL 4	
Paris - Tel Aviv	1:20
Paris - New York	2:05
Paris - Milan	2:15
Paris - Tokyo	3:30
Paris - New York	3:50

TERMINAL 5	
Paris - Athens	2:15
Paris - Munich	4:20
Paris - London	5:15
Paris - New York	5:40



Furthermore, the best, most successful way to fix a place is in accordance with the way that people are used to behaving in that place, which is why a Jew needs to act according to the customs of a place in order to use it for the service of Hashem. In this way, in every place, the city and country becomes a place of Torah and mitzvos onto itself.

This is the special innovation of our generation. In previous generations, the Jews were not dispersed to every corner of the world. Even when they went into exile, they were only in a few countries. But today, it is hard to find a single country, area or city that does not have a religious Jew who

uses the customs of the place to fulfill Torah and mitzvos.

This point is that much more prominent in the country where our Mashal takes place, in France, a country which stood as a symbol of wanton behavior and which was turned into a place of holiness and fear of heaven. The Hebrew name for France, Tzorfas, even has the letters of “poratzta,” and both are numerically equivalent to 770. This hints to the idea that with the spiritual refinement of France and turning it into a place of holiness and fear of heaven, the process of refining the world has been completed. The number 770, the place of the Nasi HaDor, alludes to the revelation that gives us the power to refine every place in the world.

CHALLENGE

1 When will the flight that George, Sergei and the other Jews mentioned in the Mashal, leave?

2 What direction will they daven mincha?

3 Who else in the picture joined the minyan? Where did

4 What is Sergei's last name?

5 Who flew with his son?

6 Who had another stopover in Eretz Yisrael?

1) On the sign it lists the only flight to New York from Terminal 5 (mentioned in the Nimschal) as being at 5:40.
 2) Towards the right side. The sun is in the west at mincha time, so in order to face east they will have to turn to the right.
 3) You can see a tallis and tefillin bag next to the person eating sushi, a food that is Japanese and so is the flag on his cap.
 4) You can see the bag with the Russian flag on it with the name S. Chasidov.
 5) You can see an extra small suitcase next to Ricardo with a small identical coat to his on top, so he is the one.
 6) Ruby has a bottle of soda with Hebrew letters on it. Since he is from Australia that means he is the one who had a stopover in Eretz Yisrael.

ANSWERS



The Fifth Night of Chanukah

In 1979, tragedy struck. A Yiddishe girl became friendly with a non-Jewish boy and ran away from home! Do you think she returned home safely? Well, years before, the Rebbe foresaw what would happen...

Rabbi Moshe Chaim Greenwald tells this incredible story:

My father, Rabbi Avraham Tzvi, was born in Lodz, Poland in 1912. When he was just seven years old, his father passed away. Hoping to give him a proper chinuch, his mother sent him to his uncle Rabbi Menachem Zemba, a great talmid chacham and huge Torah leader in Europe. Together, they learned a lot of Torah.

In 1929, when my father was seventeen, Rabbi Zemba brought him to Warsaw to attend the “Great Wedding” of the young Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson and Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka, the daughter of the Frierdiker Rebbe. The next day, they went to visit the chosson.

At the end of the visit, Rabbi Menachem Mendel turned to my father: “Chanukah is in a few days. Do you know why Chassidim celebrate the fifth night as a special occasion?”

Both my father and Rabbi Zemba didn’t know, so the future Rebbe explained: “The fifth night of Chanukah never falls on Shabbos. This symbolizes great spiritual darkness! However, the light of the fifth Chanukah candle can remove all darkness. **The duty of every Jew—whether in Warsaw or London—is to light up even the deepest darkness.**”

Ten years passed, and the Holocaust began.

My father’s wife and five little children were killed by the Nazis. After the war, he immigrated to America broken and alone. Rabbi Moshe Chaim, his uncle who had moved to Philadelphia before my father was born, welcomed him with open arms.

Time passed and my father found a new wife. Before marrying my mother, he went to New York to get a bracha from the Frierdiker Rebbe.

When the Frierdiker Rebbe heard that my father’s entire family had been killed, he wept bitterly and bentsched my father for a long, happy life. Before he left, my

father mentioned that he had been at the “Great Wedding” of the Frierdiker Rebbe’s daughter twenty years earlier.

The Frierdiker Rebbe’s eyes brightened. “In that case,” he said, “you should visit my son-in-law! His study is one floor down!”

When my father went downstairs, Rabbi Menachem Mendel recognized him right away and asked about the fate of Rabbi Zemba. Afterwards, he said, “Since my father-in-law sent you to me, I’ll share words of Torah with you.”

“Chanukah is almost here,” he continued, “and Chassidim celebrate the fifth night as a special occasion. That night never falls on Shabbos, which symbolizes great spiritual darkness. However, the light of the fifth Chanukah candle can remove any darkness! **The mission of every Jew—whether in New York or London—is to light up even the deepest darkness in the world!**”

My father was shocked. The Rebbe had just repeated what he had told him twenty years earlier!



After my sister and I were born, my family moved to Toronto. We lived there for many years, and in 1969, I got engaged. Just as he had done before his own wedding, my father took me to get a bracha from the Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson.

When I entered the Rebbe’s room, I saw the Rebbe for the first time in my life. His piercing blue eyes affected me deeply.

My father held out a note with my name, the kallah’s name, and a request for a bracha. Before unfolding the note, the Rebbe smiled at him. “You were here less than twenty years ago before your own wedding! I’m sure you remember that my father-in-law sent you to me.”

My father was amazed by the Rebbe’s memory. After reading the note, the Rebbe bentched me and my father, wishing us



long and happy lives. “Just as you rejoiced at my wedding,” the Rebbe told my father, “You should rejoice at the weddings of your grandchildren.”

What a powerful bracha! Overcome with emotion, my father started crying. Before we left, my father asked the Rebbe a question.

“Some people in Toronto say that Lubavitchers shouldn’t help non-religious Jews do mitzvos. Doesn’t Dovid HaMelech say that those who hate Hashem are hated? So why do Lubavitchers go out of their way to help those who go against Torah and mitzvos?”

The Rebbe became serious. “How would your ‘super-religious’ neighbor react if his own daughter, chas v’shalom, made bad friends and moved away from Yiddishkeit?” he replied. “Would he try to convince her to return to Torah and mitzvos, or would he say that ‘those who hate Hashem are

hated’? Do you really think that he would break off all contact with her?”

Without waiting for an answer, the Rebbe continued. “Of course, he could answer that his situation is different, since she is his daughter. However,” the Rebbe continued, becoming very serious and pounding on the table, “To Hashem, every Yid is as important as the daughter is to her father! Every Yid is a part of Hashem Himself!”

Then the Rebbe said, “I should conclude with a bracha. Chassidim celebrate the fifth night of Chanukah as a special holiday. You see, the fact that the fifth night of Chanukah never falls on Shabbos means it’s a great spiritual darkness. **But the light of the fifth Chanukah candle can remove any darkness. This is the job of every Jew—whether in Toronto or London!** Every Yid is a piece of Hashem above. With the light of his neshama, he can light up the darkest places and reawaken the ne-

shama of another Yid—even someone who is far removed from Torah and mitzvos.”

My father was stunned. The entire way home, all he could do was repeat three words: “This is incredible! This is incredible!”

Ten years passed.

In 1979, a few days before Chanukah, we flew to England for my younger brother’s wedding in London. On the way, my father looked troubled. After asking him a few times, my father told me what was wrong.

Shortly before our flight, my father was visited by his friend, a respected member of the local non-Chassidic community. “I didn’t want to tell anyone, but maybe you can help me,” his friend cried. “My daughter ran away to London together with her non-Jewish boyfriend.”

“Since that day,” the worried father continued, “it feels like Tish’a B’Av in our house! Could you look for her while you’re in London? Maybe Hashem will help you find my daughter and save her from disaster!”

After my brother’s wedding, my father asked the kallah’s father if he knew of anyone who could help find the missing girl from his hometown. “Go to Rabbi Avraham Yitzchok Glick, a shliach of the Rebbe,” the kallah’s father advised him. “Maybe he can help you.”

Right away, my father called Rabbi Glick, explaining that there was no time to lose. “As soon as I find her, I’ll call you!” Rabbi Glick promised.

Ten days later, Rabbi Glick called. “Come to my house! I have a surprise!”

When my father arrived, he saw a girl crying in the living room. Somehow, Rabbi Glick had found her and convinced her to go back to her parents! At the entrance to the living room, my father noticed a Chanukah menorah. He took a closer look, and almost fainted! Five Chanukah candles were burning with a steady flame.

Father stared at the candles, remembering the words spoken by the Rebbe fifty, thirty and ten years earlier: **“The light of the fifth Chanukah candle can remove any darkness ... The duty of every Jew, whether in Warsaw or London ... New York or London ... Toronto or London ... is to light up even the deepest darkness ...** How would your ‘super-religious’ neighbor react if his own daughter, chas v’shalom, made bad friends and moved away from Yiddishkeit? To Hashem, every Yid is as important as the only daughter is to her father!”

Shaken, my father felt that he had to meet with the Rebbe. When he arrived, he burst into tears. The Rebbe looked at him and said, “My father-in-law, the Frierdiker Rebbe, is able to see far into the future...”

The story does not end here. In 1989, my eldest son got married. My father passed away just after the wedding sheva brachos ended. He passed away on the 14th of Kislev, the date of the Rebbe’s anniversary. The Rebbe’s bracha that my father would rejoice at his grandchildren’s wedding came true exactly sixty years after the “Great Wedding” in Warsaw, exactly sixty years after their first meeting!

