

ב"ה | תמוז תשע"ד

# Perspectives

Issue 7 • Price: \$4.00



## HISKASHRUS TODAY

*Questions and Answers  
with Reb Yoel Kahn*

## THE KAITZ

*Rabbi Alter B. Z. Metzger*

## THE REBBE'S COMMUNITY

*Interview with HaRav  
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## WORTHWHILE AND RATIONAL

*In the Rebbe's Words*

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Sometimes, the reason why a file is denied is because the file is missing an important element. An example would be in this mortgage loan that I closed for a client. They had been with a Mortgage Broker for 3 months and the file was denied by 3 of their banks. The client came to me distraught and desperate to get a mortgage and close on this home. I reviewed the entire file. The main reason that I saw that the file was denied, was firstly, it was sloppily put together. The file was missing pages of bank statements, large deposits and inconsistencies were not explained. The main problem was the occupancy. The clients were moving from what

seemed to an underwriter and equal house but in the other side of town and the underwriter just didn't believe that they were moving. I went through the file, addressed every inconsistency. We backed up everything with solid documentation. We asked the client to write a detailed motivation letter explaining the move. The client did all that we asked. My underwriter had NO problem with believing the occupancy, but she was concerned about other issues in the file, which we promptly addressed. We closed the file.

Another reason why a file is denied is because different lenders have different guidelines regarding "layers of risk". An example is a client that we closed 2 weeks ago. A large bank denied the file because of her "student loan payments". These were deferred loans that this woman had co-signed for her son. Now, we do have to count deferred payments in our income/debt ratios. We called the student loan company with the client and got the minimum payments that would be due. This was an investment property purchase. We were able to use the rental income from the property even though my client was a first time investment purchaser. We closed. Her previous bank did not use rental income to qualify the loan, so she got denied.

So are all underwriters the same? The answer is NO. An underwriter doesn't just "validate" the file, making sure all the points required to close the loan is properly documented, an underwriter also has to look at the file from an objective way and weigh the layers of risk on every file. Different underwriters weigh different issues differently.

So if you get denied, what should you do? It depends. If you are with a major bank; apply a second time with a different lending institution. If you are with a correspondent lender or mortgage broker, find out the reason for the denial and see if you can correct the problem. Many times something in your file was not structured properly. Once the item in question is addressed, very possibly, you can reverse that denial into a successful mortgage closing.

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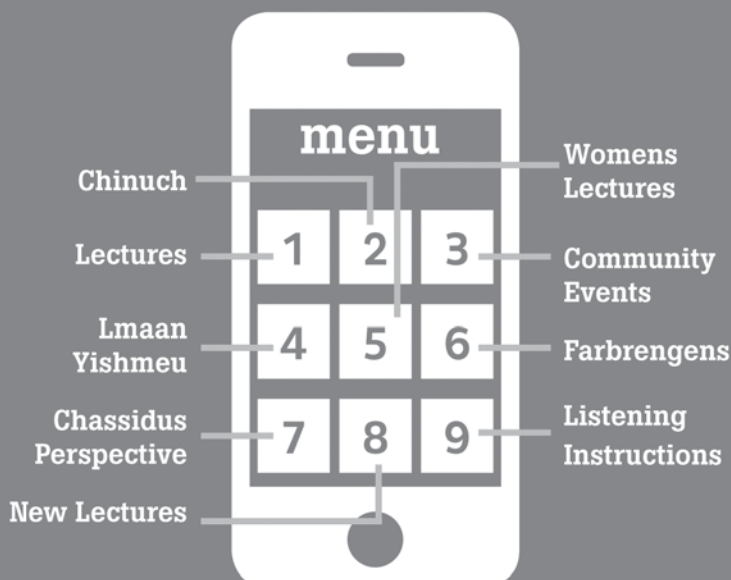
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### Chassidus Perspective

*Reb Yoel Kahn (Yiddish)*

Dial **7**

*Updated Weekly!*



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## WHAT'S YOUR PERSPECTIVE?

Your submission is welcome at: [Perspectives@MerkazAnash.com](mailto:Perspectives@MerkazAnash.com)



# - FOREWORD -

The *mashpia* of Rishon L'Tzion, Reb Shoel Brook, once participated in a *chalitza* ceremony in which the *rabbonim* took a long time to figure out the position of the *chalitza* shoe. Without much prior experience, they kept on looking into the Shulchan Aruch and arguing over it. Reb Shoel later remarked, "Imagine if one of us had never seen someone wearing *tefillin* before, we would have the same challenge trying to work out from the text how to put it on..."<sup>1</sup>

A way of life cannot be guided by textual instructions; it must be experienced. Chazal praise learning from the conduct of Torah sages and deem it superior even to learning itself.<sup>2</sup> One who is knowledgeable in Torah but did not receive guidance from *talmidei chachomim* is reckoned an ignoramus. Since he has not been taught the principles according to which one should approach Torah scholarship, he is likely to apply incorrectly that which he has learnt.<sup>3</sup> These principles can only be conveyed by example and experience.

If this is true of concrete scholarship, this is surely the case with the fine nuances of life. If a *rov* without *shimush* (apprenticeship) will inevitably fumble when applying *halacha* to real life, how much more so, a chossid lacking *shimush* is bound to unknowingly generate a twisted take on *Chassidus*.<sup>4</sup>

Understanding that *seforim* alone cannot make a chossid, young *chassidim* spent long hours listening to their elders during *farbrengens* and otherwise. In encouraging an *eltere* chossid to share his wisdom the Frierdiker Rebbe writes, "Guidance in *Chassidus* can only be transmitted directly from one chossid to another, just as one candle is lit from another."<sup>5</sup>

We hope that Perspective magazine contributes to this important end.

**Rabbi Shimon Hellinger**  
General Editor

1. Heard from Reb Yoel Kahn.

2. Brachos 7b.

3. Sotah 22a.

4. In the winter of 5710 (1950), during the final months before his *histalkus*, the Frierdiker Rebbe wrote: "Nowadays, many chassidim are completely off track. It is often the loud youngsters, lightheaded and spiritually insensitive, who arrogantly jump to the head table, and thus they remain naked – without knowledge of *Chassidus*, and even without *middos tovos* and a *geshmak* in *davening*."

5. Igros Kodesh vol. 1 p. 615.



## THE REBBE'S PERSPECTIVE

Prepared by Rabbi Shimon Hellinger

**DO CHILDREN NEED A BREAK DURING THE SUMMER?**

**HOW DO WE NOT SEE YIDDISHKEIT AS A BURDEN?**

**WHAT IS THE TORAH VIEW ON VACATION AND PLAY?**

In this sicha from Yud-Beis Tammuz 5745<sup>1</sup> (1985) the Rebbe addressed these questions and more:

### TO LIVE IN THE SUMMER TOO

We are witnessing the bizarre phenomenon of *yeshivos* and schools closing during the summer months so that the children can have a 'vacation'. This doesn't just run contrary to *frumkeit*, but is an expression of unbridled *vildkeit* (recklessness)!

Torah is our life, and studying it, is our children's source of life. But the message our actions send is that 'life' is important for ten months of the year, but we're then willing to give our children a 'break' from life!

People argue that it's a *rachmanus* (pity) on the children who wear themselves out over the course of ten months, attending *yeshiva* almost every day where they can't play and have fun, and so they deserve some time off. But it's impossible to take time off from life! And how can months of growth and vitality be described as getting worn out?

We need to raise the alarm about the closure of *yeshivos* and schools during the summer. Our Torah institutions cannot conceivably be closed for even a single day, never mind weeks and months.

Some argue that the *mosdos* don't have the budget for keeping their doors open during the summer. But what role does money play when life is at stake, particularly the lives of our children which will impact their children and descendants for eternity?!

---

1. Unedited – printed in Toras Menachem 5745 IV, pg. 2450 and onwards.



## DO YOU SEE TORAH AS A BURDEN?

Ultimately, this practice is plainly the outcome of the belief that Torah is tiresome, *chas veshalom*! Torah is here in order to improve our lives. While we can't make conditions with Hashem and tie our observance to a favorable outcome, we have in fact been promised by Torah that its study results in tremendous blessing.

If we lack for something physically, it certainly isn't due to learning too much Torah. Whatever the cause actually is, were we to learn Torah properly, our problems would disappear, and it's only because we don't, that our difficulties endure.

Yet, our *galus* is so dark that people are in denial about this reality!

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---

## COMING OUT OF THE DARK

Practically speaking: there are some who believe that summer vacation is a vacation from *yiddishkeit*, from Torah and *mitzvos*, *Rachmana litzlan*. 'Taking off' from Torah doesn't make us freer, but enslaves us to the *yetzer hara* and *goyishkeit*. And it's so bad that the slaves believe they're free!

And so everything within our power must be done to ensure that during the summer our children don't decrease the amount of Torah they study year round; in fact, considering that they are free from secular studies, they should actually learn more Torah.

Certainly children should be allowed to play during their free time as a means of staying healthy, especially since, as a holy nation, our bodies are holy as well. But a significant amount of the summertime should be devoted to increasing Torah study, and it should be the kind of learning which leads to action, setting the children on a lifestyle of Torah.

Clearly, a sincere campaign will win over hearts and minds on this issue, and have an impact; after all, anyone behaving differently is in denial of reality, a product of living in the dark.

## IN SUMMARY

**Torah and yiddishkeit are the spirit of our lives, and they improve our lives both spiritually and physically. Perceiving Torah as a burden comes from an unhealthy outlook on yiddishkeit.**

**It is important to keep healthy through rest and play. These need not detract from continuous enthusiasm and involvement in yiddishkeit.**

**Closing yeshivos during the summer is counter-intuitive to education, from even a secular perspective. A healthy outlook on yiddishkeit allows one to happily engage in Torah and mitzvos year round.**



Reb Yoel Kahn

# HISKASHRUS TODAY

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### WITH REB YOEL KAHN

by Rabbi Shimon Hellinger

Transcribed by Rabbi Shraga Dovid Homnick

***Gimmel Tamuz is approaching, and everyone is in a state of heightened preparation and inspiration, but there are two general questions that are on everyone's mind: (1) How can we connect ourselves to the Rebbe today when we can't see the Rebbe? How especially can the young generation which has never seen the Rebbe have meaningful *hiskashrus*? (2) How does one become *mekushar* to the Rebbe? What exactly does that involve?***

In response to the first question: I recall a *Yud Shvat farbrengen* where the Rebbe compared the *histalkus* of the Frierdiker Rebbe on *Yud Shvat* 5710 to the period when the Frierdiker Rebbe had left Russia, *Isru Chag Simchas Torah* 5688.

During that period, there were times when there was no communication at all. The GPU, the Russian police, would conduct searches in Chassidim's homes and would search for the Rebbe's picture, and if they found one it was considered treasonous and arrests were made, and that was that. Otherwise, however, there was no communication with the Rebbe.

They had these same questions back then. The Frierdiker Rebbe left Russia *Isru Chag Simchas Torah* 5688 and Communism fell in 5751, quite a bit of time, during which they didn't hear or see the Rebbe. Nevertheless, *bochurim* came out of Russia with a strong connection to the Rebbe.

On that *Simchas Torah* before he left, the Frierdiker Rebbe said that space won't separate between him and the chassidim. This message was absorbed by those present, and so no matter where he was later, whether in Riga, Warsaw or later in Brooklyn, they knew that space didn't separate them. That was what they would dwell on during their *farbrengens*.

The *farbrengens* at the time focused on the past, present and future, and that was reflected in everything. They each relived their past; one chossid would remind himself of a *yechidus*, another of a special *davening*, another of a *farbrengen*, etc. As for the present, there was one thing they knew, and that was that notwithstanding the distance in space, space didn't separate them, and that the Rebbe was thinking of them even



then, awakening Heavenly mercy for them, and always keeping them in mind. And their wish for the future was that they'd meet the Rebbe again, and that was all. And that really worked.

Similarly today, the majority of the young generation is excited about learning another *sicha* and another *maamar* and about learning another detail of what things were like; they focus on the past and that's what interests them. It's the adults that come and confuse them with questions, but the young ones don't seem to have a problem.

**But how can we compare to 5668 when there was only a distance in physical space, when it's a lot more than that today?**

Yes, that's unquestionably true. However, the Rebbe addressed this as well.

There is a letter from the Rebbe to a widow whose husband was killed, and, as is apparent from the letter, there were girls at home who needed to get married already, but the home was enveloped in brokenness and sadness, and they just didn't stop mourning. The Rebbe writes that everyone understands that a bullet can only harm the body but not the soul, and the soul is still interested now in what's happening in its home, and experiences pain from the fact that due to its absence there's depression and brokenness in the home. And so when a wedding will be made, when there will be happiness, the soul will share their joy.

To whom did the Rebbe write this and about whom? The Rebbe wrote this to a simple woman, which means that even a simple woman can understand this. And about whom? About a simple Jew as well, which means that even where a simple Jew is concerned, even a simple woman

can understand the soul's continuing presence and involvement.

How much more so in our case, where, first of all, there's the famous idea in *Igeres Hakodesh* that a *tzadik's* life is of a spiritual nature, *emuna*, *yirah* and *abava*. Even when it's invested in a body, this unique soul retains its nature. Based on this, it says in *Iggeres Hakodesh* citing the Zohar, *tzadikim* who have passed away are present in all of the worlds more than during their lifetimes, and 'all of the worlds' includes this world. All of this is true about any *tzadik*. Additionally, we know that the specific *tzaddikim* who are "the shepherds of Israel won't abandon the

sheep of their flock".

So if we can speak of how a simple Jew is watching and is interested in seeing how his home is doing, how much more so that a *tzadik*, and especially for a shepherd of Israel, is completely involved in what's happening with the sheep of his flock.

**If so, how is this different from all the previous Rebbeim, who also possess spiritual life and are also shepherds of Israel?**

Yes, true, they too are certainly shepherds of Israel. Yet, it says in Tanya that the entire *knesses yisroel* is like one person, one body, and just like a body has a head from which energy is distributed to all the limbs, even the nails, similarly the *chayus* of the *nefesh-ruach-neshama* of all ordinary Jews comes from the *nefesh* of the *tzadikim* and *chachamim* who are the *roshei bnei yisroel* of their generation.

In every generation *klal yisroel* is one person, and so there's the body of this generation, and then there's the body of another generation, and then another. The Alter Rebbe was the head of

The majority of the young generation is excited about learning another *sicha* and another *maamar*... It's the adults that come and confuse them with questions.

one generation, and then the Mittler Rebbe was the head of a second generation, and so on. The spiritual energy which is assigned from Hashem to every Jew is drawn down through the *tzadik* who is the head of that particular generation, until the time comes for their passing like the Alter Rebbe on *Chof Daled Teves* etc.

So yes, the shepherds of Israel don't abandon the sheep of their flock, and the Rebbe applied this maxim to the Rebbe Rashab. However, although they don't abandon the sheep of their flock, a new generation came and they were led by a new shepherd. So while it's true that the sheep of the flock weren't abandoned on *Beis Nissan*, which is what the Rebbe says, but the Frieddiker Rebbe took over then. And on *Yud Shvat* 5710, the Rebbe became our leader, which means that this generation is led by the Rebbe.

**These are all spiritual things, but what does this mean practically for us?**

These are spiritual things, you're right, but spirituality is connected with practicality.

**How do we see this?**

Let's return for a moment from the situation after

*Gimmel Tamuz* to before *Gimmel Tamuz*.

We speak of a head and the soul inside, and how the energy for all the limbs of the body comes from the soul and the head, or as it's called in *seforim*, a *nesbama klalis*. While the *nesbama klalis* is a kabbalistic concept and a spiritual thing, at the same time, it's quite a practical matter as well, and this expresses itself both in the shepherd and in the sheep.

Everyone knows the Rebbe's concern for every Jew in every aspect. There certainly were some *gedolei yisroel*, true *gedolei yisroel*, each of whom cared about a specific thing. Some were mainly concerned about physical things like *parnasa*, while others were concerned about spiritual matters. Within spirituality itself, one cared about the study of Torah, another cared about Shabbos, another for kashrus; each was concerned about a specific thing for Klal Yisroel. Additionally, each was preoccupied mainly with his community.

But in the Rebbe we find one Jew who cared about every single Jew in every location. The Rebbe cared about physical matters, like not giving land to the Arabs because it's a matter of danger, which he said was the most crucial factor. [While he



also spoke about the benefit of a complete *Eretz Yisroel*, it was the *din* in *Shulchan Aruch siman Shin Chof Tes*, the fact that it's simply a danger and a matter of life and death, that was the main thing.]

This same person sent *shluchim*, and was concerned that if some young man was involved with a non-Jewish woman, that he drop it. And this same individual who was involved with and cared for that Jew, was no less concerned at the same time that a *bachur* should learn more *chassidus* and *daven* with more *geshmak*.

How does one Jew care about all of these things? The answer is: The head, the soul, gives everything, and the head feels everything that's happening in every limb, and that's what matters to it.

This is all on the shepherd's end, but we witness the same phenomenon with the sheep:

Jews of all backgrounds were drawn and came to the Rebbe, but why would they all come to the Rebbe? There are so many kinds of people, each with their own nature, some are head-people while others are heart-people, yet all were drawn to the same place. I'm not even talking about the Jews of all backgrounds, from *shomer ha'tzair* to *neturei karta* who came here, because that is more of a physical division. Yet there was also a diversity of temperaments, head-people and heart-people, and all were drawn to this place.

What does that show us? That the soul, the head, gives something to everyone, and that being the case, we see this reflected both in the shepherd and in the sheep. And it's this same Jew who was concerned about everyone in every way, and to whom all Jews were drawn, who was not affected

by *Gimmel Tamuz* 5754.

If we can speak of how a simple Jew is watching and is interested in seeing how his home is doing, how much more so that a tzadik, and especially for a shepherd of Israel, is completely involved in what's happening with the sheep of his flock.

It's crucial that we recognize that when a Jew visits the *obel*, that it isn't just a case of visiting *kivrei tzadikim*. Although visiting *kivrei tzadikim* is also significant, that's not what this is about. He's visiting his Rebbe, and when he complains about something, either in person or via a fax or other forms of contact, and he complains about a specific problem, then the Rebbe has literal anguish, and the Rebbe prays for him. And when there's an improvement, and the Jew comes again and relates that things are better now due to the

Rebbe's intercession, the Rebbe has literal *nachas ruach*.

The concept that the shepherd is involved with every aspect of every individual Jew is still in force now in the same way. Although this is something which we can't overtly observe, we still witness various miracles, amazing things, which demonstrate clearly to us that the Rebbe cares and *davens* for everyone.

But this is also true on the sheep's part: if this relationship were just a natural thing, then the logical result after *Gimmel Tamuz* would be, as people, and these were friends of Lubavitch, assumed, that things would hold together maybe two months, three months, but no more, with the Rebbe's seeming absence.

In reality, not one of the *shluchim* has left his place as a result, no *mosad* has closed, and on the contrary, more and more *mosdos* were added, and more *shluchim* embarked on *shlichus*, and the work expanded so much. So now they'll probably



attempt to propose various reasons and rational explanations, but these same individuals who think they're offering answers were the very people who'd said earlier that it wouldn't hold for more than 2-3 months, so what happened?

The same Jewish shepherd is leading now, both on the shepherd's and sheep's part. Jews from all walks keep coming, just as before, and even more; there are Jews from all backgrounds who essentially book a ticket especially to come here, they go to the *mikva*, visit the *obel*, and take a plane back. What is that? We see here that the head, where the soul is, is still present, and is running everything. Everything is the same in this regard.

**What do you mean when you say that the attraction to the Rebbe wasn't a natural thing? Didn't the Rebbe have a lot of traits and attributes which drew people?**

He certainly had those traits and attributes, no question. Interestingly, the Rebbe said a number of times in the name of Baal Shem Tov that we can visualize Hashem's love to every Jew, because it's like parents who didn't have children, and then an only child was born to them in their old age. In truth, that's just a *mashal*, but in the *nimshal* it's far greater than that. This is something we can relate to because every Jew is really an only child.

Ordinarily we recognize that an only child is referred to as such because there isn't another one, and it might sound strange to state that everyone is an only child, but our understanding of an only child is limited. Regular parents can't direct the love of their entire souls to two different children, and so if there's another child in the picture, their

love is limited, but Hashem's love is unlimited.

The same is the case for *tzadikim*, not just ordinary *tzadikim*, but for a Rebbe. It's a G-dly thing, it's a *neshama klalis* which is of a different caliber. But all spiritual things manifest themselves in a physical way, and this is the reason that the Rebbe had all of those traits and attributes.

Why did he have such a drawing power? I've seen people write about the Rebbe's eyes, which is true! But is that the point? Rather, because of who he was, his eyes were that way!

This is all from the shepherd to the sheep, and it's the same thing from the sheep to the shepherd. I mentioned earlier that people from both *ha'shomer*

*ha'tzair* and *neturei karta* went to the Rebbe, which you can find hundreds of reasons for, but it remains a strange phenomenon even with all of the explanations. The real explanation is that the energy of the body comes from the source, all of the particulars of the energy of the body come from the head, which is the Rebbe, and so therefore it manifested itself in natural ways.

**Practically speaking, there are a few days until *Gimmel Tamuz*. What should we do during this time?**

Certainly our *biskashrus* should be increased in every way, both our own and that of others; our own through learning more of the Rebbe's Torah, and making more *chassidishe farbrengens* during these days, and obviously all the things that the Rebbe wrote in his letter for *Yud Shvat* must be applied and observed. But it can't simply be limited to just these few days; we must place ourselves in a completely different mindset, and enter the Rebbe's army.

How does one Jew care about all of these things? The answer is: The head, the soul, gives everything, and the head feels everything that's happening in every limb, and that's what matters to it.

## What does that mean?

The point is this: Learning the Rebbe's Torah, going on *mitvzoim*, learning Chitas and Rambam, and following all the other directives, is something that is surely required of us. But let us think for a moment what was the Rebbe's main idea?

On the one hand, there's a *nekuda*, something all of the *Rebbeim* share; what they have in common is that they're all shepherds of Israel, they're concerned for Jews, are *mashpia* to Jews, giving spiritual and physical energy in all areas. Still, every Rebbe has something unique. There are *sichos* about how the Alter Rebbe was *chochma* and the Mittlerer Rebbe was *bina* etc., and so, when we speak of *hiskashrus*, there must be something special in relation to this specific shepherd.

Everyone knows the Rebbe's *koch*, and this was addressed immediately in the first *maamar* in which he said that our job is to draw the *ikar shechina* down into *tachtonim*, to make the world into a dwelling for Hashem.

It's interesting, amazing really, that even as a child, as the Rebbe's famous letter states, from the day he went to *cheder*, and even before he went

to *cheder*, he always thought about what kind of *geula* there will be, the kind for which the *galus* will have been worth it, and for which we should be able to say later "*odecha Hashem ki anafta bi*" (I will thank you Hashem for having been angry with me), not just good, but the kind of goodness for which we'll be able to understand and thank Hashem for the *golus* with our whole heart.

It's an incredible thing. They recount various things about different *gedolei yisroel*; they say about a certain *tzadik*, I don't remember who, that as a child lying in his crib, he suddenly started crying and he couldn't fall asleep, and what was it? Something about his *tzitzis* was out of order, and when they fixed it and placed it back on him, he stopped crying and fell asleep. They say about another *tzadik* that when he nursed from his mother, he made a *bracha*. So there definitely were wondrous things about their childhood, "*butzin butzin m'katfeihu yedia*" (their nature is identifiable at a young age), and each one probably had his *zahir tfei*, and the *neshama* of this *tzadik* was connected to *tzitzis* which is why it affected him, the *neshama* of that *tzadik* was connected to making *brachos* etc.



But all of these are specific things. We don't hear any other stories, and I think we aren't hearing them because there aren't any, that what should be in a child's head? What should he be thinking? What should be bothering him? That the Jews are in exile, the *shechina* is in *galus*, and therefore we must repair and replace this with such a goodness, with such a *geulah*, that everything will have been worth it. And this was on the Rebbe's mind as a small child, even before he went to *cheder*, and when he accepted his role as leader of Jewry in an official, revealed way, this was the "statement": That the time has now come for making the world into a dwelling for Hashem.

**Is what the Rebbe said then still true today?**

**Maybe times have changed, or maybe we sinned, and "the sin ruined things"?**

Aside from what the Rebbe said then in the *maamar* of *Yud Shvat*, the Rebbe kept saying throughout the years that our generation is the last generation of *golus* and the first generation of *geulah*. That's what the Rebbe always said, and particularly in his first *maamar*.

There's *nevua* and there's Torah. Based on many of the Rebbe's *sichos* it transpires that prophecy on its own is not an eternal thing. Instead, in order to be able to determine whether someone is a true prophet or not, Hashem gave us a test: The positive prophecy of a true prophet never changes, and if it does it is proof that it's not true. Yet prophecy on its own is not essentially eternal.

But Torah is different; Torah is inherently eternal, and the whole world was created from Torah. And just like the process of *Matan Torah* began with Avraham Avinu and went on for seven generations, until Moshe came along and he was

the seventh, "and all the sevenths are beloved", and he brought it down here to earth, the same applies for the revelation of *pnimius batorah* which will occur when Moshiach comes, and the Torah we have now is nothing compared to Moshiach's Torah. So this light began to shine with the Alter Rebbe's *chassidus*, *chassidus Chabad*, and it followed the same pattern until 'Moshe' came and all sevenths are beloved, and the seventh generation brings it down to earth.

So if you'll ask: The Torah speaks about the ten *sefiros*, but maybe they changed? There may have been ten *sefiros* at one point, but maybe that changed now? Why, you ask? I don't know, maybe "the sin ruined things", we'll find reasons. But

no, we're talking about something which the Torah says.

What is the order of the *geula* of *pnimius batorah*? The revelation of *chassidus* through the Baal Shem Tov and the Maggid was something else. As the Rebbe explained, "until Avraham came the world was operating in darkness but from when Avraham came it began to shine", there were *tzadikim* earlier but what

they were doing wasn't connected to the world, Avraham began shining the light in the world and the Rebbe says that it is similarly the case with *chassidus*. However, even within this world it was still spiritual and not physical. It was Moshe who brought it down to earth, and the same is true for the revelation of *pnimius batorah*.

The Baal Shem and the Maggid revealed this part of Torah but not in *sechel*, they spoke on a higher level, and that's not 'world'; *emuna* is something higher than the world, but it's not the world. The 'world' was still operating in darkness, and the Alter Rebbe began drawing it into the realm

**Why did he have such a drawing power? I've seen people write about the Rebbe's eyes, which is true! But is that the point? Rather, because of who he was, his eyes were that way!**

of Chabad (intellect), and then the world began shining. But within that sequence, there was more and more and more until Moshe came along and he was the seventh, "and all sevenths are beloved", and he brought it down to earth, and that's the whole point.

We see how the Rebbe took the deepest concepts and presented them with such *hasbara* and clarity until he enabled many topics in Chassidus to be understood using simple logic, with real comprehension. Why is that? Because the time to bring it down to earth finally came, and therefore, what is our mission? Our mission is to make the world into a dwelling for Hashem, and we do that through spreading *yiddishkeit* and through spreading Chassidus.

**If so, if it's such a sure thing that this is the seventh generation and that Moshiach must come, then shouldn't that mean that we don't need to actually do anything since it will happen anyways?**

(Reb Yoel laughs:) It's exactly as if someone would say, "The Rambam says that Jews will only be redeemed through *teshuva*, and he says further that the Torah promises that at the end of exile Jews will do *teshuva* and they'll be redeemed immediately, so when a person feels inspired sometimes to do *teshuva* he need not bother since it will anyways happen..."

That itself that he is inspired to do teshuvah is a result of the fact that the Torah promised! What did the Torah promise? That Jews will ultimately do *teshuva*! So this experience itself is the manifestation of the Torah's promise!

And that's what it says in the *maamar*, that ultimately, every one of us will do the work that

we need to do, and make the world into Hashem's dwelling. So this itself is certainly the Torah's promise!

**What does all of this mean practically?**

Practically, our work today in *biskashrus* to the Rebbe can't just be generic. Certainly all of the things that were previously in play must be present now, unquestionably. But what's the *zahir tfei*? The *zahir tfei* is making the world a dwelling for Hashem.

How do we do that?

First of all, there are the *shluchim*, and what do they do? They enter into the lowest place, from which there's nothing lower, and they draw the *shechina* down there, every place according to its needs: There are places where intermarriage must be prevented, there are places where *kashrus* and Shabbos must be ensured etc. And what must we focus on mainly? On the *mitzvoim* which the Rebbe made, the foundations of *yiddishkeit*. And similar work must be done for spreading *chassidus*. In that first *farbrengen*, Yud Shvat 5710, when the Rebbe accepted leadership openly and officially, he also said then that the purpose of all these things is spreading *Chassidus*.

**That's all for the *shluchim*, but what's with all of *chassidim*, all of *anash*?**

First of all, we must treasure everyone. But what must be the wish of a yeshiva *bachur*, or even *yungerleit*? What should their wish be? What should they seek? It should be to become a *shliach*.

Let's consider for a moment: the whole creation of the world, with everything that there has been until now, *matan Torah*, the *mishkan*, *bayis rishon*, *bayis sheini*, the revelation of the Baal Shem Tov, the revelation of Chabad, and everything, all of



that was a preparation to making the *tachton*, the world, into a dwelling for Hashem, and that's Hashem's purpose for everything.

When a person realizes that he has the *zechus* and option to take part in such a thing, in making the world a dwelling for Hashem, that involvement must generate tremendous *simcha*, and result in working beyond any limitations. The truth is that the joy should emanate from the very fact of being the Rebbe's *shliach*, that's the truth; the fact that we can take part in the Rebbe's work must be precious to everyone.

Aside from that, there's another thing, which is that even those who can't become *shluchim*, they too must be *shluchim*.

### How?

It's a simple thing, like in *Eretz Yisroel*, where many of *anash* who can't be *shluchim* take upon themselves to visit ten homes and spread *yiddishkeit* there. Even if you can't be a *shliach* for 24 hours a day, be a *shliach* for some amount of time. But you must be a real *shliach* during that time.

The Rebbe used the theme of a military a lot (*Tzivos Hashem*, *Mitzvah Tanks* etc.). What's the difference between a civilian and a soldier? A regular person also does good things, practically speaking, but whenever he feels like it; when he's interested he does good things for 'the fatherland', yet it's on his own terms.

There could be a scenario of a person who does his

work, but not like a soldier. Let's take the students in *yeshiva* for example, they learn, they learn *nigleh* and *chassidus*, they go on *mitzvot*, they do everything, but what if today I have no energy? Today I'm exhausted? And today I'm not in the mood? Imagine if a soldier on the front would say that tomorrow or the next is the wedding of a good friend of his, and he must go, so he wants to be let free? It's clear that that's a joke; there's a battlefield, and so why are you wasting our time with the wedding of your friend?

The same should apply for a *bachur* in *yeshiva*; you're a soldier, "*yotzei l'milchemes beis dovid*", (engaged in the battle of the house of Dovid) and when you're enlisted in *milchemes beis dovid*, when you're operating in the military, there's nothing else. Your job is to go, to "write a divorce to your wife", a 'divorce' from everything else. [Certainly there can be a case where attending a wedding is part of the job, but we're not talking about that; we're talking about where it's not a part of the job.] You're not a civilian, you're a soldier.

Similarly, everyone must take upon himself to do *mitzvot*, to work on various things like spreading *chassidus* or spreading *yiddishkeit*, each of which has various aspects, or involvement in promoting the *sheva mitzvos bnei noach*. There are various options, but what's your job? No matter what your job is, you must know that you're a soldier, there's no 'I have no energy today'.

If you commit to an arrangement like the one they have in *Eretz Yisroel*, to visit neighbors, and



you do it on Friday or Tuesday, then Friday and Tuesday it is, and there's nothing that can get in the way of that. You're in the military, and the Rebbe spoke about this a number of times in *Yud Shvat maamorim*, about "kol ha'yotzei l'milchemes beis dovid".

We discussed earlier about how everyone is discussing the preparation for *Gimmel Tamuz*, and there certainly must be preparations, but we must first and foremost place ourselves in a different mindset; not only do we do what we have to do in these days leading up to *Gimmel Tamuz*, but we also have to think about the day after *Gimmel Tamuz*, and what our job is then.

Forget all of the discussions and theories about why what happened on *Gimmel Tamuz* happened. It's not our business to think about the things that Hashem does, and to offer explanations for them; our job is to know one thing, "yotzei l'milchemes beis dovid", to enter the Rebbe's army, and that's all.

It certainly must be in collaboration with the *shliach* of that city, or else it ruins the work; things must be orderly, but as stated previously, we must know that we too are *shluchim*.

**It's clear that we must be a part of the Rebbe's army, but we must know what to do; how do we know what to do? Sometimes we have questions?**

Questions often come from a lack of knowledge. If we'd learn the *maamorim* with the *sichos* we have from the Rebbe, and especially if we'd learn the *igros kodesh* which the Rebbe wrote, then we can see the Rebbe's approach to various things from those letters.

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Aside from that, if we're already speaking of learning, it's well known that the *hiskashrus* to the Rebbe is through Torah, so it must not just be in order to know everything and have the answers to all the questions, but simply because this is the act of *hiskashrus*. And this is for everyone, even soldiers; the Rebbe is *adoneinu moreinu v'rabeinu*: There's the *adoneinu* (our master), and we're his soldiers, and then there's *moreinu v'rabeinu* (our teacher and Rebbe), so we must

be his students, and that too must be done in a militaristic manner, with no excuses.

As for the amount of time, it's not really a matter of quantity, it could even be ten minutes, but those ten minutes must be done right. Learn something of the Rebbe's Torah every day. And that doesn't mean learning whichever *sefer* you find on the table today, and then learning the next *sefer* you find there tomorrow; it means really learning.

So there's the *inyan* of learning the Rebbe's torah, and there's the benefit of gleaning vital information; the *maamorim* and *sichos* certainly have many more explanations, but in order to know what to do when questions come up, going through the letters a lot will yield answers for many of the questions. It's usually possible to discover the Rebbe's approach to pertinent matters, and if there's a topic which isn't covered, then we should assume that if we'd need to know it the Rebbe would have addressed it, and if the Rebbe didn't address it then it's not relevant for us to know.

In any case, we must get involved in all of these things; we must enter the army, with *kabalas ol*, but with a *geshmak*. We must know that

ultimately, whether a day earlier or a day later, in our time, *ba'agala didan*, we'll have "*aloh naaleh v'yarashnu osab*". The questions about whether all of this is really still applicable today are the *meraglim's* line of thinking, "*ki chazak hu mimenu*", we just can't. True, if we'd just go along with the world's limitations then it really is a dark world and a bleak situation, but when we go with the attitude that "*chafetz banu hashem*", when we go with the Rebbe's *shlichus*, then we're certain that "*aloh naaleh v'yarashnu osab*", and we'll make the world into a dwelling for Hashem, which is the deepest desire of the Rebbe. after *Gimmel Tamuz*, and what our job is then.

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There's the *adoneinu* (our master), and we're his soldiers, and then there's *moreinu v'rabeinu* (our teacher and Rebbe), so we must be his students, and that too must be done in a militaristic manner, with no excuses.

As for the amount of time, it's not really a matter of quantity, it could even be ten minutes, but those ten minutes must be done right. Learn something of the Rebbe's Torah every day. And that doesn't mean learning whichever *sefer* you find on the table today, and then learning the next *sefer* you find there tomorrow; it means really learning.

So there's the *inyan* of learning the Rebbe's torah, and there's the benefit of gleaning vital information; the *maamorim* and *sichos* certainly have many more explanations, but in order to know what to do when questions come up, going through the letters a lot will yield answers for many of the questions. It's usually possible to discover the Rebbe's approach to pertinent matters, and if there's a topic which isn't covered, then we should assume that if we'd need to know it the Rebbe would have addressed it, and if the Rebbe didn't address it then it's not relevant for us to know.

In any case, we must get involved in all of these things; we must enter the army, with *kabalas ol*, but with a *geshmak*. We must know that ultimately, whether a day earlier or a day later, in our time, *ba'agala didan*, we'll have "*aloh naaleh v'yarashnu osab*". The questions about whether all of this is really still applicable today are the *meraglim's* line of thinking, "*ki chazak hu mimenu*", we just can't. True, if we'd just go along with the world's limitations then it really is a dark world and a bleak situation, but when we go with the attitude that "*chafetz banu hashem*", when we go with the Rebbe's *shlichus*, then we're certain that "*aloh naaleh v'yarashnu osab*", and we'll make the world into a dwelling for Hashem, which is the deepest desire of the Rebbe. ■



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# THE REBBE'S COMMUNITY

## LIVING AS CHASSIDIM IN ANASH COMMUNITIES

*An interview with HaRav Yehudah Leib Schapiro*

*Rov of Anash shul and Rosh Yeshiva – Miami, Florida*

In recent years we have witnessed *anash* communities growing by leaps and bounds. Many of us ask ourselves: As a member of *anash* and as a *Lubavitcher chossid* in the work force, what is my place? What is the broader vision for our community, and how do we achieve it?

HaRav Yehudah Leib Schapiro, *Rosh Yeshiva* and *Rov* of the Beis Menachem *anash* community in Miami Beach, Florida, addresses these questions.

The thunder of youthful learning throws me back to my yeshiva years. Passing through the rows of tables on route to the Rosh Yeshiva, I slow my pace, savoring the sweet nostalgia.

Rabbi Leibel Schapiro, the Rosh Yeshiva of Greater Miami, sits at the front of Zal, engrossed in learning with two *bochurim*. Some beginnings of black hairs wave under the shorter *bochur's* chin, as he argues defiantly with the Rosh Yeshiva, finger pointing in a *sefer*. As I approach, his *chavrusa* notices me and signals not to disturb. It is my pleasure.

A few minutes pass before Rabbi Schapiro notices me.

"I would like to talk about some communal matters."



"B'eseder. Meet me at my house, tomorrow evening, ten thirty."

As I leave, I hear the conversation return to the *sefer*. Rabbi Schapiro recounts to the two youngsters when at a Yud-Tes Kislev *farbrengen*, the Rebbe parenthetically mentioned the Rambam they were grappling with. The Rebbe presented it in a different light, saying, "We picked up on the pearl. We wrote in questions, received answers, and from it a *likut* [a *sicha* in Likutei Sichos] was born."



10:30. Rabbi Schapiro is finishing editing his bi-weekly *chidushei torah* for the Ha'oros U'biurim journal. He puts his papers aside, sheds his Rosh Yeshiva hat, and dons one of *rabbonus*.

Somehow, the Rosh Yeshiva I saw yesterday, engrossed in a critical analysis of a nuance in the Rambam's wording, the *chozer* I heard recounting his memories from a particular *sicha*, transforms. He changes gears with ease to deal with *kehillah* affairs.

Earlier today he was in New York for a complex issue involving *Lubavitch mosdos chinuch* in America. Just as we talk, the telephone rings with a difficult *shlichus* related *shailo*, advice on *shalom bayis* and the *gabai's* report on *shul* happenings.

The *bochurim* praise his clarity, but they have never seen it in pressing life issues; how he dissects the matter, weighs the options and lays anchor to his final *psak*. I could sit here for hours captivated, but it's not what I'm here for.

Between phone calls, we have some conversation.

### **The Rebbe loved and devoted himself to every *yid*. What was the Rebbe's special relationship with his own community of *chassidim* – *anash*?**

The Rebbe's special relationship to *anash* was always apparent. From the beginning of his *nesius*, the Rebbe invested much effort in guiding *anash* and their families. On his own initiative, the Rebbe would inquire about the wellbeing of specific families or individuals. There seemed to be an extra responsibility to those who belonged to the *anash* community.

During the first decade of the *nesius*, this special relationship was evident at the *farbrengens*. The Rebbe would call out to individuals by name, telling them to say '*lchaim*' and commit to additional learning or similar. While the phenomenon dwindled as *anash* grew, and the intimate atmosphere was somewhat lost, the

affection and close relationship remained. The Rebbe continued to inquire and advise *anash* in *yechidus* and letters. What's more, one of reasons the Rebbe started the Sunday Dollars was because he wanted to personally interact with each *chossid* allowing him or her to present their questions.

A quick glance through the Rebbe's letters shows how concerned the Rebbe was with every individual. They offer a broad glance of the Rebbe's communal and personal involvement, even more than in the *sichos* that addressed Torah issues and universal topics. Inquiring and offering detailed advice on the person's health, *shidduchim*, *parnassa*, and other personal matters, every detail in the *chassidim's* live's, no matter how minor, was significant in the Rebbe's eyes. Not to mention, one's level in *ruchniyus* and learning schedule, which the Rebbe would

often inquire about both via correspondence and in *yechidus*.

The Rebbe's involvement in personal life was right up to the last details. When I got married, I asked the Rebbe about renting a certain apartment. He replied that he agreed, "Unless you intend to buy a house." Similarly, when the Rebbe announced the *Shnas Habinyan*, a year of building, his intention was for personal building as well and he gave money for *anash* to expand their homes.

To the Rebbe, *Anash* were close family, the *bochurim* were his children, and the communities were his communities. The Rebbe cared for the *bochurim b'gashmiyus* and *b'ruchniyus*. The Rebbe would step into the *Zal* (study hall) to see how the *bochurim* were learning. When he saw a *bochur* walking outside during the winter without a coat, he would confront him. The Rebbe was intimately involved in the specifics of each community, its *shuls*, schools and *mosdos*. The Rebbe inquired about the *shiurim* and the *farbrengens*, and would ask about the attendance, the speakers and the outcomes.

As a young child my family lived in Cleveland, Ohio. On one of my father's trips to the Rebbe for

Yud Shvat, I was lucky enough to join, and enter into *yechidus* together with my father. I remember how the Rebbe asked my father about every detail of the recent Yud-Tes Kislev *farbrengen*. In fact, my father would often receive letters from the Rebbe inquiring about the general community and specific individuals.

In 5734 (1974) we started the *yeshivah* in Miami and I had many questions running the *yeshivah*. I felt uncomfortable about asking the Rebbe about such small details, so I wrote to HaRav Chadakov. However, every time he would come back to me with responses from the Rebbe on each one of the questions. The same story repeated itself regarding every Lubavitch *mossad*.

The growth and development of Crown Heights and other *anash* communities were also close to the Rebbe's heart. Though the Rebbe, as the previous Rebbeim, would as a rule not get involved in communal matters and he left it to the community activists (to the exception of rare occasions that the Rebbe addressed), the Rebbe often saw to it that activists should be appointed and that *shuls*, and other communal projects were current and active.



The Rebbe oversaw the establishment of Gemachs in *anash* communities. The Crown heights free-loan Gemach would submit a yearly report to the Rebbe. When one year, there were excess funds in the account the Rebbe asked, in astonishment, why they didn't find someone who could use the money...

The Rebbe invested tremendous energy into *anash* and the running of the *mosdos*. When it came to other organizations and communities the Rebbe would offer advice when asked, but he didn't comment or advise on his own. But *anash mosdos*, were the Rebbe's business, and he worked to make sure that everyone and everything was in order.

**With the numbers of *anash* in the workforce growing, what does it mean to be a *chossid* in the workforce?**

Many *chassidim* of previous generations had a trade with which they supported their families. The esteemed *chossid* Reb Binyomin Kletzker, for example, was a lumber dealer. In no way did it interfere with their *chassidishe* lifestyle. Actually, they applied the lessons of *Chassidus* both in *shul* and at work.

The foundation of *Chassidus* is recognizing and revealing Hashem both in our lives and in the world. In *shul* these *Chassidim* *davened* at a decent pace and with deliberate thought. They set times each day to learn *Gemara*, *Halacha* and *Chassidus*. In business, they worked honestly and intended that the revenue should be used to feed their families and raise them to be upstanding *yidden* and *chassidim*. When they had a spare

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moment they would learn a *mishna* or recite a *kapitel* *Tebillim*. When they had a spare dollar, they would use it for *tzedaka*.

Living as a *chossid* in the workforce is a central topic in the *sichos* and memoirs of the Frierdiker Rebbe. Today as well, *chassidim* in the workforce must strive to be "*chassidishe yidden*" as *Chassidus* teaches.

Amongst the *chassidim* of the past, *chassidishe* lifestyle was not synonymous with financial struggling. Some were very well off, and lived comfortably

and distributed *tzedaka* with an open hand. It didn't pull them away from being *chassidishe yidden*. Obviously, Hashem has His plans for each person, and some had financial hardships too. What *chassidim* scorned was "*baal habatishe hanochos*" (a worldly perspective), where money and luxury become a driving element in life. We could live comfortably, but our mind and heart should be involved in more significant matters, utilizing all we have for *avodas Hashem*.

Being in the workplace does not mean one cannot be a proper *chossid*.

**Yet, the Rebbe instructs us to go out to the "world" and to engage in *bafatza* and *sblichus*. How does this fit with living a traditional *chassidishe* lifestyle?**

At a recent Kinus Hashluchim, I spoke about the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the *histalkus* of the Alter Rebbe. On the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the *histalkus* of the Baal Shem Tov the Rebbe placed a strong emphasis on the implementing the Baal Shem Tov's lesson and lifestyle today as well. The Rebbe painfully quoted other's claim that, "*nishtakcha*

*toras haBaal Shem Tov*," that the teachings and lifestyle founded by the Baal Shem Tov is lost and forgotten. Part of their claim was that Lubavitch is no longer occupied with *Chassidus* and is instead busy with *mitzvoim*. The Rebbe emphatically rebutted this claim, and asserted that Lubavitch did not change, saying that the path of the Baal Shem Tov continues and Chassidim study *Chassidus* and follow its directives, and it is no contradiction to doing *hafatza*

Nowadays as well, we have to make sure not to *chas v'shalom* think that "the path of the Alter Rebbe has been forgotten," and that today Lubavitch is nothing more than a 'kiruv organization,' and a very good one as well.

Not true. Lubavitch is a path of serving Hashem through understanding *Chassidus* and applying it in daily life. At the same time as the Rebbe spoke about *hafatza*, the Rebbe also discussed deep and complex concepts from Nigleh and *Chassidus* at the *farbrengens*, and demanded from us to understand *Chassidus*, to *daven* a *chassidishe davening*, and live a *chassidishe* life.

In fact, the Frierdiker Rebbe and the Rebbe both said that ideally *chassidim* should be occupied solely with disseminating *Chassidus*, a lofty revelation of G-dliness in preparation for the light of Moshiach. By contrast, patching the cracks in observance of *mitzvos* is the job of *askonim*, *frum* activists, who teach practical *halacha* and build up Jewish communities. But the Rebbeim both said that because no one else is caring for bolstering Torah observance, it was necessary to sacrifice the sacred light of *Chassidus* for the sake of saving *yiddishe* lives from assimilation.

In other words: Being involved in *hafatza* should

Many chassidim  
of previous  
generations had a  
trade with which  
they supported  
their families.  
In no way did it  
interfere with their  
chassidishe lifestyle.  
Actually, they  
applied the lessons  
of *Chassidus* both  
in shul and at work.

not take away from our being *chassidishe yidden* and living a *chassidishe* lifestyle. The truth is that if the *shliach* is a *chassidishe yid* his *hafatza* is on a higher level and makes a much greater impact.

Reb Yossel Wineberg *a"h*, of Tanya on the Radio and author of *Lessons in Tanya*, told me, "We are B"H witnessing the growth of the Lubavitch 'movement' (that's how he called it); we must see to it that the same should be with Lubavitcher '*Chassidus*.'" We do this by learning *Chassidus* for ourselves, living a more

*ruchniyus'dike* life and sharing this with others.

The essence of *Chassidus Chabad* is the study and application of *Chassidus* – *limud bachassidus and darkei bachassidus*. It is equally relevant to all Chassidim, whether in the walls of the Beis Medrash, on *shlichus* or in the workforce.

**The Rebbe demanded that his *chassidim* spread *yiddishkeit*. Can one who is not a *shliach* be considered a complete *chossid*?**

The Rebbe saw spreading *yiddishkeit* as a priority of our generation. Yet, he made it clear that although full-time *shlichus* was something everyone should strive for, it did not mean that if you are not a *shliach* you cannot be a *chossid*.

There were some members of *anash* who the Rebbe directed to various areas of commerce. The Rebbe would then demand of them that in the course of their business they should influence their acquaintances to put on *tefillin* and increase their *mitzva* observance. In fact, at times, a working *chossid* can influence someone whom a *shliach* cannot. In his unofficial capacity he may be able to reach a reluctant *yid*.



The Rebbe's intention with the *mitvzoim* was, not just the *shluchim*, but for all *anash*. When the Rebbe announced *mitvza tefillin*, every member of *anash* would go to work with a pair of *tefillin*. It became common knowledge amongst businessmen that if you did business with a Lubavitcher he will insist on putting on *tefillin* first...

Doing *mitvzoim* also benefits the *chossid* himself. When influencing others, we are automatically uplifted. At the beginning of *mitvza tefillin* the Rebbe said that we see how *mitvza tefillin* brought an awakening and *chayus* in the *mitzva* of *tefillin* to the *chassidim* themselves.

While a *shliach* who does the Rebbe's *shlichus* becomes an extension ("*kemoso*") of the Rebbe, one who was not privy to that opportunity can also be an accomplished and total *chossid* and be "doing the Rebbe's work." Unfortunately, the mistaken all-or-nothing approach can discourage people from *mitvzoim* and from *Chassidus* in general.

In other words, the Rebbe demanded that every person dedicate himself to draw others closer to *Yiddishkeit*, by using his qualities, talent, and interactions. Every person has the ability to be a *chossid* and *mekushar* to the Rebbe, no matter his

or her situation.

**With so many years gone by and such incredible advancement in technology, society, and international culture, is *Chassidus* today still the same as in previous generations? Is it possible to attain the same levels as the *Chassidim* of the previous generations?**

The essence of *Chassidus* (the '*nekudab*') did not change. Having a connection to Hashem and being more spiritually sensitive did not change. What perhaps changed is the particular form through which it expressed itself (the '*tziyur*'). The world has changed, and thus our *madreiga* is not the same as *chassidim* of yesteryear, but the purpose and point is the same.

The spirit of *Chassidus* is "*hisgabrus batzurah al bachomer*," overpowering spirit over matter. Simply put, this means that *ruchniyus* must be the focus of life, not *gashmiyus*. In earlier times this was implemented to a high degree and ordinary physical needs went unnoticed. Today we are incapable of attaining those lofty levels, but the attitude applies today as well. Place *ruchniyus* before our *gashmiyus* and find joy in serving Hashem. This is attainable for every person. Basically, we embrace exactly the same values as



of old and belong to the same way of life.

As a matter of fact, because of the explanations of the Rebbe in *inyonim* of *Chassidus* and *biurim* on the unity of Hashem in the Rebbe's Torah, nowadays we are able to understand the truth of Hashem just as good as Chassidim in previous generations. So the *nekudah* and foundation of *Chassidus* (the recognition of "ein od milvado") we have 100% now as well. How this applies to our daily lives is different nowadays because of the circumstances. But since we know the truth and strive towards it, we automatically move closer to it, even if, in our day-to-day conduct, we may not be there yet.

At some time or another, we all struggle with living up to the values of *Chassidus*. That is human. The problem starts when we define ourselves by the struggle, and redefine "Lubavitch" around the shortcomings. We must recognize and strive towards being a Lubavitcher chossid the way the Rebbe wants. Then, even when we fail, *chas v'shalom*, we will quickly get back on track.

The Rebbe told of a unique yechidus moment at a *farbrengen*. In a yechidus, when asked to commit to putting on *tefillin*, the man replied, "It's not for me. I'm a secular Jew." The Rebbe replied, "There is no such thing as a secular Jew, nor is there an Orthodox, Reform or Conservative Jew. There is a Jew and what a Jew must do. Some people do it and some people don't. You must do what a Jew is obligated do."

Similarly, it is inaccurate to claim, that there are various types of Lubavitcher chassidim and "I am

modern." Modern Lubavitch is a misnomer. There is one type of Lubavitch. There is a Lubavitcher and what a Lubavitcher must do. We must do our best to live up to it.

On a similar note, the Rebbe writes in a letter that there is no such thing as "Modern Orthodox." Modern means new and innovative. Orthodox

means traditional and unchanging. "Modern Orthodox" is thus an oxymoron. It means that the person going by this title does certain things correctly according to tradition and in other areas he deviates from it.

Likewise, there cannot be a Modern Lubavitch; it is a contradiction in terms. A person going by this title acts as a Lubavitcher part of the day and as a modern person for another part. Our task, and everyone has this task to varying degrees, is to see to it that the Lubavitch in our lives grow. Start by learning the platform of Lubavitch, and try to apply it to life. The key is to have clarity and direction and to constantly grow.

Reb Yossel  
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'Chassidus.'"

The distinction aspiration and present condition has a far-reaching impact on our children. While we remember many true *chassidishe yidden* from our youth, our children look to us for *chassidishkeit*. We must take the time to explain to our children what it means to be a *chossid* and what the Rebbe expects of us, and, most importantly, to behave that way. Then we can hope that the children will head in that direction, and perhaps outshine us parents.

**Much of our Western society contradicts what *Chassidus* stands for. How do we stay**

## committed to *Chassidus* while living in such a society?

Although we do interact and mingle with others, we must retain our unique identity.

When Yosef had his first son in Mitzrayim, he called him Menashe, meaning 'forgetting.' His second son he named Efraim, 'being fruitful.' The Rebbe explains that Yosef's intention in his choice of names was to protect himself from Egyptian influence. Seeing Menashe would remind him that he lives in a place that could make him forget his father's house, and therefore he has to behave in a way that it shouldn't happen, and should remain faithful to his father's ways. With a strong identity he would not be affected by Mitzrayim and could even elevate it, the fruitfulness in Efraim's name.

There is a similar *vort* in other *seforim*: Chazal say that when Yosef was about to transgress, the image of his father appeared to him ("*nireh lo*"). The term "*nireh lo*" can also mean: he liked it (as

when Tosfos writes "*nireh li*," that he prefers this answer). This means that by always keeping in mind that he has to follow his father's lifestyle, Yosef was saved.

We are Chassidim of the Rebbe. Recognizing this can uplift us and empower us to overcome the daily struggles.

Even though it is more difficult today, it is attainable. We may not have the same revelations of the past and we contend with a flood of technology threatening our values, but we are given the strength to overcome it, as long as we have the strong commitment to be that way.

This is something that we must remind ourselves time and again. Using the words of Reb Moshe Pinchas Katz in his announcement before the Rebbe's *tekios*, "*m'zol gedanken vu m'shteit un far vemen m'shteit!*" we must remember where we stand and before whom we stand. We must remind ourselves that we are Lubavitcher **Chassidim**.

I step out of the office to allow Rabbi Schapiro to take a sensitive phone call. When I return, the conversation moves towards the benefits of *anash* community and its structure.

## What is the purpose of an *anash* community? And why is it important to belong to one?

Community is certainly a significant factor in a person's life, as the Rambam writes "a person is a sociable being." When Choni Hamagel awoke from his 70 year sleep and no one in his hometown recognized him, he asked Hashem to take his life, saying, "*Oi chavrusa oi misusa*," either friends or death. For this reason, the Rambam writes, it is important to choose good friends and neighbors since they will inevitably impact our behavior.

A community is not merely a group of individuals living in one area; a community is an atmosphere. A Lubavitcher *kehillah* exudes a *chassidishe* atmosphere. As the Rebbe writes in many letters, a *chossid*, except when on *shlichus*, is meant to live in a *chassidishe kehillah*.

A *chassidishe* community is defined as being founded on *chassidishe* values. It is not enough to have a *minyan Nusach Ari* and a *Kiddush* like an ordinary *shul*. It must radiate *chassidishe* warmth through *shiurim*, *farbrengens* and other positive activities.

There are some *anash* who would like to be active in *shlichus* but are unable to do so full time, so they move to an area of an established *Shliach* and help with the Chabad House. This is praiseworthy of them, and is a fine solution for *anash* who would like to be involved in *hafatza*.

However, for an *anash* family looking for a nice community, a Chabad House is most likely not the best choice. A Chabad House, by very nature, cannot offer that full atmosphere of a *chassidishe* community. Of course, everything there is done

according to *halacha* and even *b'hiddur*, yet, the environment targets a different crowd. Besides the obvious differences, there are many subtle points that set a Chabad House apart from a *chassidishe* community, though they can be difficult to identify.

Here's an example: Chassidim recognize a Rebbe as a *tzaddik*, a *nesbama klalis* that connects us to Hashem and the channel for all *hashpa'a* in *gashmiyus* and *ruchniyus*. In a Chabad House this cannot always be highlighted, and often the Rebbe is described in more worldly terms as a great scholar and Jewish leader. In general, spending time in a secular community runs a high risk of one becoming secularized, unless one is there to influence others, like the *shliach* or *anash* who are there for *shlichus*.

The influence of a community effects mostly the children. The child's primary concept of *yiddishkeit* will be based on his early experiences. His perspectives and values will be formed by what he saw growing up. The way of dress, the

topics of discussion and the general mentality, will shape the child's manner. Conversely, an environment where the conversations run around *chassidishe* stories and concepts impress an *eidelkeit* upon the child.

Additionally, a child often follows where his parents are headed. If parents move to a community for the sake of better *yiddishkeit* the child will aspire to higher standards; if they move to relax their standards *chas v'shalom* the child will relax them further.

If a family must leave the major *chassidishe kebilos*, they should choose a community with strong *chassidishe* values where they will not have to compromise their standards.

*Shluchim* and *anash* assisting them must make sure to educate their children about the higher standards of *chassidishe* lifestyle. They need to explain to their children that although something may be appropriate, and even admirable, for an outsider, it is unsuitable for a *chossid*.





Wherever a group of *anash* live together, they must see to it that their needs are met through regular *shiurim* and *farbrengens* suited to their level. Actively arranging these functions is a sure way to stay strong.

**How do we see to it that an *anash* community should become a *chassidishe kehillah*?**

Above all, the atmosphere during *davening* has a major impact on the community character. When *davening* is prefaced by a *shiur Chassidus*, begins on time, and there is no talking throughout *davening*, it uplifts the atmosphere. Children pick up on these things. A child who sees his father talking during *davening*, loses his sensitivity towards *davening* and may affect other parts of *yiddishkeit* too. *Davening* must be treated respectfully.

*Farbrengens* are an important element of a *chassidishe* community. In classic *chassidishe* style they should consist of Torah, stories and heartwarming *nigunim*.

External decorum and the conduct of community members contribute to the environment as well. The style of programs and the dress of the men and the women set the tone of the community.

Another crucial ingredient to forming a vibrant *chassidishe kehillah* is having a person who will bring a *chassidishe* atmosphere into the community. He need not be a *rov*, but simply an *eltere chossid* or any '*chassidisher yid*' who can give *shiurim* and *farbreng*.

**Why is it so important to have such a figure? Can't someone be brought in on special occasions to give *shiurim* and *farbreng*?**

**When the Rebbe announced mitvza tefillin, every member of anash would go to work with a pair of tefillin. It became common knowledge amongst businessmen that if you did business with a Lubavitcher he will insist on putting on tefillin first...**

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The benefit of having a model *chossid* in a community is twofold:

Firstly, a local '*chossid*' serves as a beacon of light and sets the tone for the entire community. Through regular *shiurim* and *farbrengens*, and even just by living amongst them, he can infuse the community with life. He serves as a role model of a *chassidishe* lifestyle, and can inspire the community members to follow in his footsteps.

When my father first moved to Cleveland, he

asked the Rebbe in *yechidus* what his task should be there. The Rebbe told him, "The first thing is that the entire town should know that a *chossid* lives there." In the same way, a *chassidishe yid* will uplift the community just by living there. This is true whether he is the official *mashpia* or not.

Secondly, when living locally, the *chossid* can serve as a personal mentor for the community members, offering a listening ear and sound advice in matters of *chinuch*, *shalom bayis* and personal growth.

Every community must have such a member. It is a basic ingredient of a *kehillah*, and whatever expense it entails is no different than all the other expenses involved in the upkeep of a *shul*. In fact, the Rebbe invested immense effort to have official community *mashpi'im* appointed in every *anash* community.

It is preferable that the *mashpia* be officially appointed and salaried so that he is bound by his responsibility and that the community accepts his guidance. The Rebbe instructed the *anash* community in Montreal that they should pay a salary to the *chossid* Reb Peretz Mochkin so that he can dedicate himself to them. In larger cities it

may be possible to find someone already living there, while in outlying communities it may be necessary to bring someone in.

There are *boruch Hashem* many *chassidishe yungeliet* today who are capable of serving as *mashpi'im* for *anash*. It is only a matter of understanding the need and catering to it.

Even after the *mashpia* is in place, the community members must become involved. For the *mashpia* system to succeed, the community members must be active. A *mashpia* can work wonders with a committed community.

**What guidance can you offer those involved in the creating and running *mosdos* for *anash*?**

One important point is that independent *mosdos* must regularly consult with a *chassidishe mashpia* or *vaad* to ensure they are on the right track. Managing the shul or school on a day-to-day basis one can lose sight of the big picture. An outsider 'sees for miles.'

Especially when pressure mounts from finances

or individuals with change in mind, it is possible to make mistakes. A *mosad* that is undergoing financial difficulty will find it hard to resist a donation with questionable provisions, or hold a program or dinner in a compromising manner. Having someone they answer to will give the strength to stand strong.

This *mashpia* or *vaad* should oversee the decisions and policies of the *mosad*. It is not enough to approach a *mashpia* when a question arises. The administration may not even realize there is a question. The Rebbe instructed for a *vaad ruchni* to be setup in Kfar Chabad.

The *vaad* should consist of people with a heightened sensitivity and a strong vision. Small decisions by the *vaad* of a school, for example, can have far reaching effects on the lives of the children. *Vaad* members should be those *anash* members with the finest level of *ruchniyus*, who will ensure that our children's *chinuch* is not compromised.

I thank Rabbi Schapiro for his time and leave his office. I feel like I have become wiser and more educated on the Rebbe's vision for his community.



Rabbi Alter B. Z. Metzger

# KAITZ — THE TIME OF MESSIANIC REDEMPTION

*A Letter attributed to Rebbetzin Fraida, the Alter Rebbe's  
Daughter*

## INTRODUCTION

“Kaitz” — the end of Jewish exile and suffering and the advent of Moshiach has been the ultimate longing of all Israel. From this letter which impressively draws upon sophisticated concepts of Chassidus, we acquire the knowledge that “Kaitz” is not merely a fixed point upon the time span of history occurring inevitably and external to the labor of man. On the contrary, it is specifically related to the religious endeavor of man first on the level of Iskafia,<sup>1</sup> the conquest and control of evil inherent to man and finally Is'hapcha,<sup>2</sup> the transformation of these evil impulses from “darkness to light and from bitterness to sweetness.” Thus man achieves “Kaitz Kol Basar”<sup>3</sup> — “the end of all flesh,” the refinement and edification of the physical so that man ultimately realizes the level of self-nullification to the radiant revelation of the Divine. This degree is even beyond that of “Binah Ilaah” or “Shechinah” wherein man as a separate entity by virtue of intellect or Divine endowment is a bearer for

G-dliness, yet at the same time maintaining his own identity.

The loftier level is described by the terms “Thirty two paths of wisdom,” “The crown of wisdom,” “Yichudah Ilaah” — the upper level of unity, these entailing total self-nullification of G-dliness to such an extent that man no longer possesses self awareness and his “sole thought and longing is but for God himself.”

Chabad's concern with description of spiritual levels is not an end in itself but rather a means for awakening and conveying insight as to the various bonds that exist between G-d and man.

Highly relevant to a normal person and somewhat similar but not quite identical to the three aforementioned levels of Iskafia — the control of evil, “Binah Ilaah” or “Shechinah” — man as a bearer of G-dliness and finally “Yichudah Ilaah” — is the following description of man's spiritual labor during the course of an individual's daily prayers described by the Rebbe as particularly

reflecting the spiritual concepts relayed to the months of Nisan, Iyar, and Sivan.

“The commencement of the spiritual task is Modeh Ani and Hodu LaShem, these being in the category of acclaim and submission. Man devoid of understanding and emotion is only capable of submitting by means of giving himself over totally to the labor at the onset of the departure from Egypt — a total flight from evil, which is characteristic of the month of Nisan.

Subsequently, there occurs the endeavor of Pesukei D’Zimrah, the blessings of Shema and the Shema itself which is the endeavor of reflection and contemplation.

This is to be found even in the first verse of Shema, this word meaning understanding and grasping. The purpose being to transform one’s emotional qualities finally ascending to the highest levels in the realm of love for G-d, “with all your heart,” “with all your soul” till an individual ultimately achieves love for God with his total being BeChol Meodecha.

This labor being comparable to the striving of the month of Iyar and expressed in Sefiras HaOmer, the counting of the omer during the course of the entire month.

All of the aforementioned is descriptive of man as self-aware and conscious of himself as an existent entity. Subsequently ‘there is ascent to Shemoneh Esreh — the silent prayer “as a slave before his master” (Shabbos 10a). Total self-nullification; man is totally devoid of speech capable only of declaring “Oh, Lord open my lips” he is as one who “repeats responsively the words of the speaker.” This being similar to the striving of the month of Sivan. (Likutei Sichos, Vol. I, p. 269).

In Likutei Torah (a massive collection of Chassidic discourses given by Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Lyadi and redacted with elaborate commentary by Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Lubavitch, popularly known as the Tzemach Tzedek, whose mother Devorah Leah, Fraida’s sister, accepted a heavenly decree in her father’s stead and perished

# REBBETZIN FRAIDA

*Some background on Rebbetzin Fraida the daughter of the Alter Rebbe. Prepared by Perspectives editorial staff.*

Rebbetzin Fraida, a daughter of the Alter Rebbe, was an illustrious woman and was very dear to her father. The Alter Rebbe would recite Chassidus privately for her, while the Mitteler Rebbe, out of his eagerness to hear more chassidus, would have to hide in the room to listen. When the Mitteler Rebbe had a question for his father, he would often ask his sister to inquire, knowing that the Alter Rebbe would not turn her down.

Rebbetzin Fraida was married to Reb Eliyahu Schneerson. She passed away on the 17<sup>th</sup> of Sivan, 5573 (1813), and is buried in Haditch near her father.

On one occasion of private chassidus from the Alter Rebbe to Rebbetzin Fraida, when the Mitteler Rebbe was hiding in the room, the Alter Rebbe spoke about the *bigdei kehuna* (the clothing of the *kohanim*). When it seemed to the Mitteler Rebbe that his father was concluding without having explained the *avneit* (the belt), the Mitteler Rebbe quickly took off his *gartel* and threw it towards his sister. Fraida took the cue, and asked the Alter Rebbe “Is there no explanation about the *avneit*?” The Rebbe responded, “It seems that someone else is in the room besides the two of us...”<sup>1</sup>

■ ■ ■

An urgent *pidyon nefesh* was once sent to the *Ohel* in Haditch, where both the Alter Rebbe and Rebbetzin Fraida are buried. The shamash, Chaim Meir, took the letter and in his haste



to bring it to the *Obel*, forgot to knock before entering. Before he realized what was happening, he found himself on the floor outside the *Obel*. That night, Rebbetzin Fraida came to him in a dream and admonished him, "How could you enter without knocking! You think you see birds here?! *Neshamos* come here!" She ended off saying that since chassidim don't usually give validity to dreams, he would receive a sign about the validity of this dream. As the shamash awoke, a bee stung him in his ear, deafening him in that ear.<sup>2</sup>

■ ■ ■

Before she passed away, Rebbetzin Fraida asked to be buried alongside the Alter Rebbe. Though she was a special person, the chassidim were hesitant to bury her near the Rebbe.

At the end of her life she began reciting "*elokai neshama*," and when she recited the words "*veata asid litlab mimeni*," she cried out "wait, father, wait, I'm coming." With that her *neshama* left her body.

To be more confident with their decision of burial plots, the chassidim performed a test. They placed her body in a wagon and led the wagon on the road leading both to Haditch and Kremenchug. When the roads split, the chassidim let the horses guide themselves, and sure enough, they followed the path to Haditch. Rebbetzin Fraida's *kever* is immediately adjacent to the *kever* of the Alter Rebbe.<sup>3</sup>

■ ■ ■

The Alter Rebbe said that Rebbetzin Fraida was actually a *neshama* from the "masculine world," but for a certain reason it came down into a feminine body.<sup>4</sup>

■ ■ ■

Rebbetzin Fraida was named after the Alter Rebbe's aunt, an upstanding woman with exceptionally fine *middos*, though simple and unlearned. The Tzemach Tzedek said that Rebbetzin Fraida was endowed with her great mind as a special revelation and gift from above.<sup>5</sup>

at a young age), the command to destroy Amalek is explained in terms of man's inner spiritual struggle. It presents an elaboration upon a theme already discussed in Tanya of the external and inner realms of the heart. The external aspect of the heart is subject to man's conscious control, but the inner realm is roughly equivalent to the modern concept of the unconscious, not subject to man's normal awareness and at times motivating man to act in a manner that would normally seem irrational (Likutei Amarim, Tanya, 105a).

In explaining the statement of the Zohar, that "He who slays the snake shall be given the daughter of the King," the Likutei Torah states: "For the Shechinah which is the Divine Spark within the soul, is in the category of exile, namely, in a state of anxiety regarding economic sustenance, and this emotion surrounds and garbs the inner realm of the heart and soul, for man acquires his bread by means of his soul's striving. And he is confused by his many thoughts and plans, etc. and regarding this it is written: 'He who slays the snake.' The individual summoning up strength for the soul and aiding it to triumph over and master the outer realm of the heart. Waging this conflict by means of understanding and Intellectual mastery, he 'will be given from above the daughter of the King' this being the spiritual level of the revelation of the point in the inner realm of the soul's heart. And thus, G-d's war against Amalek is to cause the emergence of this Inner spiritual quality from concealment to a manifest state" (Likutei Torah; Devarim 35b, 36a).

Consequently Messianic Redemption, ultimate conquest of Amalek and the achievement of the upper level of unity—a profound awareness of G-d's oneness, are all significantly linked together. Though their occurrence depends upon G-d's will, man's initial labor of spiritual aspiration is a necessary prelude. This letter is an eloquent exposition of the thought that Israel cannot passively await an inevitable Messianic era but must strive and labor toward physical and spiritual redemption.

## The Letter

Regarding your writing to me that I wished to reveal the Kaitz — the end of the Diaspora and the time of the Messianic advent, it is not thus, my beloved brother. For how is it possible to reveal the Kaitz — the end — when the beginning has not taken place.

We must first define and understand the terms beginning and end. The purpose of the soul's descent below, vesting itself within a physical body and animalistic soul, is for this descent to finally cause the soul's greater ascent, "to transform the darkness of evil into light and its bitterness into sweetness." However, "who shall ascend upon the mountain of G-d?" — to the lofty level and wondrous degree that this quality of transformation will illuminate both the conscious external and unconscious internal aspects of the human heart in an equal and identical manner. This is what is specifically meant by the end of all flesh has come before Me" (Bereishis 6:12), the end and the spiritual refinement of the physical. Similarly, we find in Isaiah, "All flesh will come to bow down before Me" (Yeshaya 66:23), that even the physical flesh and human selfhood will achieve true self-nullification and inner submission, causing removal of the obstructing barriers between God and man. This is also referred to in the Biblical verse: "And I shall remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh" (Yechezkel 36:26).

The term stone is mystically explained in Sefer Yetzirah as referring to letters and houses as words, since they involve the combining of two letters. "Two stones build two houses," because by reversing the sequence of two letters we can achieve two different words. The change in the "heart of stone" mentioned in the Biblical verse implies the effect on the emotions of the heart awakened by the conscious intellectual effort and external effect of mind by words, of thought or of speech. Thus reflection upon the greatness of G-d awakens the emotions of love and fear. This effort is actually our task during the entire span of

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One Shabbos, the Alter Rebbe went to the home of Fraida to say *Chassidus*. Chassidim, wanting to listen in, climbed up the trees next to her home. Noticing them, the Alter Rebbe turned to the Mittler Rebbe and said, "They want newspapers?!" He then grabbed the Mittler Rebbe's lapel and said, "Why don't they learn Tanya? Why don't they learn Tanya? I tell you, I tell you, that from Tanya one can become a chossid with the likeness of Avraham Avinu!"<sup>6</sup>

■ ■ ■

Fraida once dreamt that she saw the Alter Rebbe and she stared at him very intently. In the dream, the Alter Rebbe asked her why she is staring at him, and she replied that he has 'holy garments'. The Alter Rebbe replied, "Rashbi is even brighter."

The Mittler Rebbe shared this story with Reb Aizik Homiler and concluded, "Short but deep!"<sup>7</sup>

1. Likutei Sipurim p. 46
2. Lesheima Ozen p. 23
3. Lesheima Ozen p. 29
4. Likutei Sipurim p. 46
5. Sefer Hasichos 5704 p. 65
6. Lesheima Ozen p. 22
7. Lesheima Ozen p. 22

existence till the advent of the Moshiach.

However, it is written of the future: "And the glory of G-d shall be revealed" (Yeshaya 40:5), the glory of G-d being a mystical reference to the "thirty-two paths of wisdom" which will be revealed, this manner of knowledge being far superior to the present influence of mind and speech upon the heart. "And the flesh" will actually perceive and apprehend G-dliness. For even physical flesh will achieve the level of nullification to G-dliness caused by wisdom; the perception

that G-d is a constant Creator causing being and existence from non-being and nothingness. Man shall at that time achieve the mystical degree of the “crown of wisdom” similar to the quality of Torah knowledge described as vision, implying profound and certain awareness of G-dliness. “Who is wise, he who sees that which is born”; the wise man perceives the process of G-d’s constant creation of the world from nothingness and void.

This knowledge is actually the achievement of “Yichudah Ilaah,” awareness of a lofty level of G-d’s Unity. Thus our sages declared: “Jacob our father wished to reveal the Kaitz — the end — to his children” He wished to cause the actualization and manifestation among his children of “the end of all flesh.” “And the Divine Presence, Binah Ilaah — the upper level of Divine understanding — departed from him,” which means that he achieved a wondrous Divine revelation beyond the Sefirah of binah — understanding. For this reason his children declared: “Just as there is only one G-d In your heart, similarly there is only one G-d in our hearts, for we have no other thought or desire; our sole thought and longing is but for G-d Himself” (Pesachim 56a).

It is not so in our case; we cannot achieve this high level of spiritual awareness. We can but strive to conquer and nullify our desires because of G-d’s will, and this is described as the beginning of spiritual labor. And he who delves with thought and understanding into this matter achieves the level of Iskafia — conquest of evil inclinations within the soul. This itself is a significant matter, for our souls are of low degree. As a result of this

endeavor, we shall perhaps achieve by means of the labor of flesh the aforementioned category of Kaitz — the end of all flesh. And as the Zohar declares: “He who slays the snake will be given the daughter of the King.” At the onset it is dependent upon man’s effort; “You shall erase the remembrance of Amalek” (Devarim 25:28), and ultimately “The Lord will wage war upon Amalek” (Shemos 17:1 6). And as we have heard many times from our Master, Father, Teacher, Rebbe in explaining the Biblical verse “And I will nullify all existing creatures” (Bereishis 7:4), and this is an adequate hint for the understanding.

And now, my beloved brother, of what significance are these vain and needless words? The primary principle is the necessity of putting one’s own selfhood aside, so that a person is wholly devoid of personal desire. For our ingenuity is naught but vanity and folly. Our primary concern is to prepare for the initial achievement of Iskafia — self-conquest and subjugation. Even this moral level is not easily achieved. And this is only the beginning and commencement of God’s spiritual labor. How is it then possible to reveal the Kaitz — the wondrous G-dly revelation of Kaitz Kol Basar — the end of all flesh, the departure from pursuit of the sensual and physically pleasurable. It is utterly impossible to accomplish such a revelation, and this can only occur when “there shall rest upon us a spirit from Heaven” (Yeshaya 32:15).

These are the words of Fraida, daughter to my Master, Father, Teacher and Rebbe. May G-d grant him life. ■

## NOTES

This letter is to be found In A. Steinmans Beir Ha-Chassidus: Mishnas Chabad (Tel Aviv) pages 596-999. Kerem Chabad vol. 1 p. 101.

1. Likutei Amarim, Tanya, Chapter 27.

2. Ibid.

3. This phrase appears in the Torah as referring to the destruction of corrupt mankind by means of the deluge.

4. See Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Lyadi, Likutei Amarim, Tanya, Part II; Shaar Hayichud VehoEmunah with a preface and translation by Rabbi Nissen Mangel (New York, 1965) p. XIII ff.

# REACHING THE KAITZ THROUGH SUBSERVIENCE TO THE REBBE

In his *reshimos* (handwritten notes), the Rebbe elaborates on the subject of *kaitz* and the absolute need of total subservience to a Rebbe in order to achieve it. It is astounding how appropriate it is for our times. As the Rebbe said many times about the Frierdiker Rebbe, "The Rebbe addressed everything."

Here is a free translation of the relevant paragraphs. The original is printed in *Reshimos* 176 p. 12

In the letter of Fraidka, the daughter of the Alter Rebbe, to [her brother] the Mittlerer Rebbe, Keitz is interpreted as "the end of flesh" and physicality. It can be said, that precisely this matter cannot be accomplished without the dedication and total *bittul* to a Rebbe.



The dry bones that Yechezkel Hanavi brought back to life were from the descendants of Efraim who calculated the Keitz [= the conclusion of *golus*. They left Mitzrayim on their own and were killed by the Plishtim].

The meaning of this is:

They did not follow the guidance of the Torah. Instead, they were independent beings without a Rebbe, without following Moshe Rabbeinu, and they therefore erred.

Their end was that they fell in the Philistine town of Gas [signifying lightheadedness and frivolity]. For although "dry bones" implies being 'dry' [the opposite of frivolity], this is in *kedusha* matters, where he lacks the 'moisture' which bonds and expands. However, in matters of 'Plishtim', he has an loose tongue and lightheaded joy of *kelipa* (the opposite of being squashed). He stumbles, and "falls in Gas," which also means a pit, meaning that everything is fit for him, he has no shame, and he becomes like a "trampled doorstep," *chas v'shalom*.

[This is all a result of his lack of connection and *bittul* to a Rebbe. Without *bittul*, he lacks joy of *kedusha*, and instead develops self-centered joy of *kelipah*. Ironically, his indulgence causes him to disregard his self worth and to act shamelessly. So, although he wanted to retain his self, he ultimately degrades it in a lowly manner.]

Their *tikun* was through Yechezkel ben Buzi. Although he was a Kohen [a person of status], he was "ben Buzi" [also meaning shame], he was the total opposite of a 'separate entity.' [That is why he was the one who elevated the descendants of Efraim who acted independent and without *bittul*.]





## *In the Rebbe's* **WORDS**

# WORTHWHILE AND RATIONAL

An Anthology

## ***A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE***

In recent times, subtlety has largely fallen out of style. Instead, boisterousness and arrogance have become coveted qualities. In America, he who is loudest wins.

In such an environment, modesty has become a technical consideration; rules regulating every detail of what isn't modest. This is far from the way an intelligent and refined person views the issue.

In this letter the Rebbe reminds the educators not to forget that modesty is a fine quality.

### THE FINEST CHARACTERISTIC

We need to bring to the attention of the administrations of girls' educational institutions, of *all* ages, to ... explain to the students, that modesty is the most elegant character trait, the crown of the Jewish mother and daughter.

(7 Adar I 5730, Igros Kodesh vol. 26 p. 324)

■ ■ ■

Seeing modesty as a general characteristic and a way of life, versus particular rules, allows us to understand why it is a "prominent foundation" of Torah and makes one's life "worthy and truly happy."

### A PROMINENT FOUNDATION

*Toras Chayim*, the Torah of Life, which guides every Jew along the path that makes every aspect of his daily life worthy and truly happy, makes modesty one of its most prominent foundations. As the *possuk* teaches us, "[All Hashem asks of you is...] Walk modestly with your G-d."

(7 Adar I 5730, Igros Kodesh vol. 26 p. 324)

■ ■ ■

Thinking that the guidelines of modesty are restrictive is purely a result of ignorance of Torah and its view on modesty. When we recognize and appreciate 'inwardness,' the external dresscode is an expression of noble style and elegance.

## GRACEFUL MANNERISM

Due to their ignorance in Torah, in general, and in *tznius* in particular, some people erroneously believe that the guidelines of modesty "restrict" a woman by robbing her of her rights in society, and insult her honor. That belief is false from beginning to end...

With regard to this, the well-known *possuk* in *Tebillim* (45:14), *kol kevuda bas melech pnima* is often applied, meaning that the true honor of a Jewish girl, a princess, is inward. Here we see that the Torah refers to a Jewish daughter as a person of esteemed stature, a princess, though these virtues must express themselves in a concealed manner, in a spirit of *pnimiyus*, of modesty.

(7 Adar I 5730, Igros Kodesh vol. 26 p. 324)

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Of course, the Torah does not oppose physical beauty. On the contrary, true beauty is when it is coupled with sensitivity and fine character.

## TRUE BEAUTY

What does Hashem want of every Jewish woman? That she be truly modest, "inward," but in a graceful manner. Not just ordinary beauty, but one that incorporates spiritual and physical beauty – real beauty.

This is why there is a *mitzva* in the Torah that a husband provide nice clothing for his wife, especially for *Yom Tov* when there is a *mitzvah* of *simchas Yom Tov*.

(Rosh Chodesh Shvat 5741, Sichos Kodesh 5741 vol. 2 p. 104)

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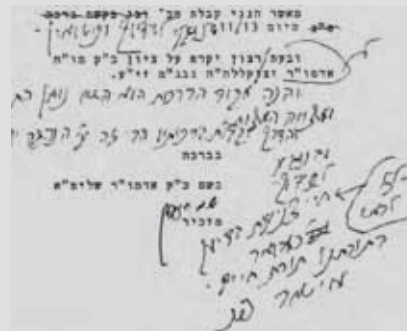
How does one convey an appreciation of fine style to someone lacking it?

In this *sicha*, the Rebbe explains logically and

## A SEGULAH FOR A SHIDDUCH

A young woman requested a *bracha* for a *shidduch*. The Rebbe responded in his handwriting:

"I confirm receipt of your letter of 11/13 concerning a *shidduch* and marriage. The source of *brachos* is *HaShem*, Who gives the Torah and commands us to observe the *mitzvos*. The way to receive His *brachos* is by the daily observance [of the *Shulchan Aruch*]. And concerning a *shidduch*: First and foremost – a life of exact *tznius*, as described in our Torah, the Torah of Life."



in frank terms why modesty is the healthiest and most normal way of life. By highlighting the shallowness and poor taste of the reverse conduct, the value of modesty becomes evident.

## IMMODESTY ANNOUNCEMENT

By dressing immodestly, a girl demonstrates how lowly she values herself. She thinks that she cannot find favor in a young man's eyes with her intellect, her emotions, or other qualities. She believes that her only claim as a human being is her ability to uncover herself! Such a girl is in a pitiable state...

(Simchas Torah 5730, Sichos Kodesh 5730 vol. 1 p. 122 – Condensed)

■ ■ ■

Here too, the Rebbe emphasizes that immorality shouldn't be seen as merely "forbidden," but as repulsive.

## NOT "FORBIDDEN"

A significant number of recent "bestsellers" discuss matters contrary to modesty, which is then not only forbidden, but it is actually revolting...

(Shabbos Parshas Shmini 5739, Sichos Kodesh 5739 vol. 2 p. 597)

■ ■ ■

It seems that recognizing the value of modesty and the shallowness of immorality are intrinsic to "tznius." As the Rambam writes in his introduction to Avos (ch. 6) we are expected to identify with moral *mitzvos*, and not observe them by virtue of obedience alone. To be obediently moral is to value immorality.

In this talk, the Rebbe highlights the senselessness of immodesty and the moral decay that it brings.

## CONTRARY TO COMMON SENSE

Immodesty is not only contrary to Torah, it is also contrary to the straight and reasonable path.

The entire function of immodest dress is to provoke and arouse. The sight of the body won't arouse the man's intellect, so as to make him wiser; it won't arouse his *derech eretz*, so as to make him more respectful towards his own wife; nor will it arouse him to give more *tzedaka*. Goals like those don't need any help from the immodest sight. Quite the contrary: that sight obstructs them. Its only purpose is to arouse lust in the onlooker.

The lust within that person may be hidden, or without passion, but other people volunteer to do him an unasked favor and fan its flames, through their clothing or conduct. Those who fanned the flames will then have a share in that immorality, though they gain nothing from it. After all, the immorality that is aroused is someone *else*, and it is someone *else* who will succumb to his desire, whether by looking or in some other way. Yet this is all deemed to be worthwhile, just for the sake

of arousing someone – not arousing the good within him, but the evil!

So how is it possible that people do such things? It is only because they follow a crooked path. If they would follow the straight path, they would realize that the very purpose of life is to improve oneself. As good as one may be, one can always become better, and see to it that others also improve. By improving oneself, others will naturally hold them in a more positive way.

If, by contrast, a person chooses the crooked path, how can that benefit *him*? By provoking the evil in another person?!

(12 Tammuz 5730, Sichos Kodesh 5730 vol. 2 p. 394 – Condensed)

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Here again, the Rebbe notes the moral pitfalls that resulted from the modern scorn of modesty. Note that the Rebbe requires a proper education of the depths of "the principles of modesty" in addition to "the teachings of our holy Torah."

## TODAY'S URGENT CHALLENGE

Reb Uriel Zimmer had a *yechidus* with the Rebbe in Tammuz 5721, and he inquired about the Rebbe's much sought after opinion on the upcoming elections in *Eretz Yisroel*. The Rebbe replied that he didn't wish to reveal his opinion about it yet, and went on at some length. The Rebbe mentioned a number of times during this conversation that action must be taken in the area of *tznius*, and he said: "This isn't just election season but *tznius* season!"

(Heichal Menachem vol. 1 p. 202)

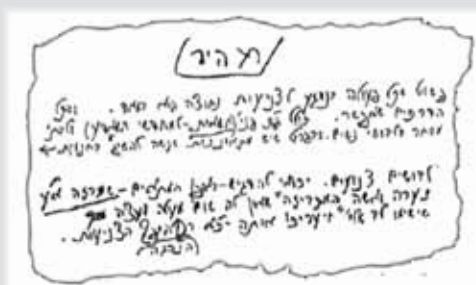
## "EXTREMELY IMPORTANT"

In a handwritten response to N'shei U'bnos Chabad's question about which theme to choose for their convention, the Rebbe wrote:

"Urgent

"... It's important to stress, in an appropriate way, that a woman or girl who "declares" that she has no quality or means that makes her attractive and admired other than being immodest is embarrassing herself."

(Kfar Chabad magazine issue 673 p. 11)



## SAVING THE YOUTH

Even from a purely mortal perspective, one can observe the detrimental collapse that results from a breakdown in modesty. The proliferation of shameless fashions in women's clothing today, which are intended to arouse man's basest animalistic instincts, gives expression to the lowly state of the modern world with regard to fundamental moral values. The unrestrained behavior and immodest dress of many of today's youth, *Rachmana litzlan*, has led to frightful tragedies in many homes. It is certain that had these young people been educated in the principles of modesty, in harmony with the teachings of our holy Torah, many of these calamities would have been averted and many young lives would not have been ruined.

(7 Adar I 5730, Igros Kodesh vol. 26 p. 324)

## MODESTY AND INWARDNESS

The Rebbe encouraged women to go out and draw other women closer to *yiddishkeit*. How can they do that without compromising their modesty?

### MODEST DEMEANOR

"The entire grace of a princess is inward," and women are titled, "the foundation of the home" since their primary occupation is to build a Jewish home for which they must remain "within." Yet, those women who were granted special talent to influence outside the home, should use this talent in a modest manner for the sake of Heaven, to inspire hearts to Divine service and to bring Jewish daughters who are "outside" to good.

It is self-understood and obvious, that this effort

must be done in a manner appropriate for a Jewish girl – in a modest manner, to the extent that even when she is "outside" it is noticeable upon her that "the entire glory of a princess is inward."

(Shabbos Parshas Vayishlach 5746, Likutei Sichos vol. 35 p. 154)

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In practical terms: A princess does not assert herself publicly. Participating in demonstrations or other worthy public forums, is no place for a princess.

### A PRINCESS DEMONSTRATING?!

The general idea of having Jewish women and



girls participate in a demonstration is startling. Where do we find a "*beter*" for women and girls to participate in public demonstrations? This is not the correct behavior from the standpoint of modesty and of *kol kvudah bas melech pnimah*, "the entire grace of a princess is inward."

(Yud Beis Tammuz 5731, Sichos Kodesh 5731 vol. 2 p. 362)

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Is it fair to expect that such a degree of sensitivity should be attained in modern-day America where it is not valued or encouraged?

In this next letter to the Beis Rivkah dinner, the Rebbe explains "*America iz nisht andersh*" as saying that the old-time sensitivity could be acquired in America as well, accepting that indeed it is "no different."

## ALL THE SAME

Immediately upon his arrival in America in the year ת"ש (1940), the Friediker Rebbe declared that his G-d-given *shlichus* in this land was to make America a place of Torah and *yiras Shamayim*. He was challenged, "But this is America! It's not like the Old Country, *der alter heim*!" The Rebbe answered: "***America is no different***. As far as Torah and *mitzvos* are concerned, America is no exception!"

This statement is especially meaningful for Jewish women, and in certain ways more so than for men. Women in general have a tendency to follow recent fashions, and quite often these fashions encroach on the principle of modesty.

*Yiddishe* women must know that the same Torah and *mitzvos*, and the same principle of *kol kvudah bas melech pnimah* ("the entire

glory of a princess is inward") which applied *in der heim* apply equally in America.

(Igros Kodesh vol. 26 p. 79)

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One of the challenges of *tznius* is that it isn't clearly defined. Even if we are meticulous about keeping to the details of other *mitzvos*, *tznius* still seems more difficult. We convince ourselves that small details won't change anything.

## JUST A LITTLE BIT...

As summer arrives, winds blow in the outside world that lure women to compromise their *tznius*, and to dress differently than they have throughout all generations.

All kinds of justifications are offered. For example, someone reasons with a *Yiddishe* woman or girl, "Since today we live in *golus* and we are fewer and weaker than the nations around us, what difference does it make if you won't be different, and you won't close yourself off in your own little world with a distinct way of life?

"Besides, you're not performing any definite prohibition. It's not *chillul Shabbos*, *Rachmana litzlan*, or eating non-kosher! All you need to do is to modify your dress code and your conduct

## ELEGANT HAIRSTYLES

Rabbi Shalom Ber Hecht relates:

My father, Rabbi Yaakov Yehudah, "JJ", Hecht, was shown closeness by the Rebbe and our family would often merit a special *yechidus*. On one occasion, my sister came with loose hair. The Rebbe commented on this, "A *Yiddishe* girl does not have loose hair. The hair should be gathered in a refined manner."

(Haztneia Leches p. 147)

– just a little. And you have a good excuse: you can't be different from the whole world! Where is it written that you must battle ahead and defy the current, spurning the way the whole world lives its life?"

(28 Iyar 5728, Sichos Kodesh 5728 vol. 2 p. 159)

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The Rebbe notes, there has been a rise in modesty, among both Jews and non-Jews. Even Jews, who are already modest, have honed their sensitivity and conduct. This is a sign of Moshiach's coming.

## THE MOST OUTSTANDING VIRTUE

Out of all the virtues that distinguish Jewish women and girls, the most outstanding virtue is modesty... Interestingly, it is in the present time that this virtue has been upgraded – and not only among Jews...

In the current era – even among Jews, where modesty has always been a distinguishing feature – the observance of this virtue has recently been upgraded. For just as in all other areas of *kedusha* one can always continue to grow, there is always room for fine-tuning modesty, too – that is, modesty *within* modesty.

Thus, in the present generation, and in this last year, Jewish women and girls have been dressing more modestly. Every married man here notices this in the way "his other half" dresses; every father notices it in the way his daughter dresses; every child observes it. This modesty finds expression in styles which are not showy and eye-catching, and which are not intended to arouse immodest thoughts in a father or a brother. On

the contrary, dressing in such a way demonstrates that "the entire glory of a princess is inward."

Why did this upgrade happen in the present era?

There is a *possuk* which promises that "as in the days of your Exodus from Mitzrayim, I shall show [the people] wonders," and *Chazal* teach us that it was "in the merit of the *nashim tzidkaniyos* of that generation that our forefathers were brought out of Mitzrayim." The *AriZal* highlights the link between these two statements: just as that redemption took place in the merit of the *nashim tzidkaniyos* of that generation, so, too, the true and complete *Geula* will take place in the *zechus* of the *nashim tzidkaniyos of the present generation*.

(18 Tishrei 5751 – from a recording)

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The real and enjoyable *nachas* that results from modest conduct is guaranteed.

## TRY IT AND YOU WILL SEE!

The Torah promises that if "the entire grace of a princess is inward," one will have children that will give them true *nachas*, not only "*Olam Haba nachas*," but also *nachas* in this world.

Not a *nachas* as some imagine that after 120 years their child will recite *kaddish* for them, rather a living *nachas*, that until 120 years they will relish in *nachas* from their son or daughter...

When we spoke about this matter years ago one could have thought that this was merely a fantasy.

***Taamu ure'u! Try it, and you will see it for yourself!***

(Yud Tes Kislev 5728, Sichos Kodesh 5728 vol. 1 p. 229)



Seenitte All,  
as confided to Yaffa Leba Gottlieb

# THE THINGS I ASK THE RAV

This article first appeared in *Di Yiddishe Heim*, Spring 5743 (1982).

Well, we all have our “*shailos*” — those questions for which we need to consult a Rav — but I’m sure that nobody has them like I do. I can assure you that when it comes to embarrassing *shailos*, I’ve had some that even our pet parakeet would be ashamed to ask. True, if you just call up on the phone, that is pretty anonymous — but all of our Rabbonim must know *my* voice by now.

For a while I did alternate, asking each of three neighborhood Rabbonim every third question — I thought that if they didn’t hear from me so often, they wouldn’t recognize my voice. But by now, even if they don’t recognize my voice, certainly they would recognize my questions — the stupid ones!

I mean, anyone who would hear my *shailos* would have his own about what kind of household I have. Well, I **don’t** have a gymnasium in my kitchen, if that’s what you’re thinking. Look, any little seven-year-old boy who wants a glass of juice can climb onto the kitchen counter and knock a dish-tray full of silverware into the *traife* sink while the hot, (*very* hot) water is running. Is my son any different?

And let me tell you, it’s not easy to get up the nerve

to make that phone call. Usually I wait until I have at least a list of *shailos*, with some being so urgent that I *can’t* wait any more. Also on my list I try to have a few “respectable” *shailos* for warm-ups. For example, I just painted an old eighth-hand counter top, which of course, was formerly *traife*, and I used the best enamel paint, so now I can ask if maybe my counter is not *traife* any more.

Maybe painting it doesn’t change anything, but at least I sound like a respectable (thrifty, industrious) homemaker.

I guess I can console myself by saying I learn from my mistakes. I no longer allow *anything* without a reliable Rabbinic “*hechsher*” in the house, even if it does limit the diet of my eight-year old’s pet goldfish. (My pots once had *shailos* from goldfish food, don’t ask). I’m *careful*. But I still often wake up in the morning with a *shailab* on my head...

I wish all my *shailos* were a dream. The fact is that I *do* dream about *shailos*. I’ve dreamed about leaky milk cartons diving merrily into my steaming chicken soup, while soaking hot bread infiltrates my Passover cupboard. I dream of well-meaning guests fastidiously using my pots and dishes — for exactly the wrong things. I dream of radio

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alerts announcing that my favorite dish-soap has a phony Rabbinic sanction and is unmistakably, contaminatingly, *traife*.

But alas, it's not always a dream. Last Shabbos, in real-life, my eighteen-month old found some eggshells and happily threw them into my tossed salad — while my four-year-old was tossing it. And I forgot what you do to take out eggshells without being held liable for *borair* (separating the unfit from the edible food). Well, do *you* know?

I'm telling you, I'm going to come clean, confess everything. Dear Rabbonim: you want to know who asked what to do with a pink plastic cup that was used to brew "tea" with boiling water and cough syrup that didn't have a *hechsher*? Me. And who asked what to do with a *milchig* tea-kettle (which was never actually *used* for milk) when it was accidentally placed on a dry but not clean meat counter? Me! And a lot of other *shailos* that even *I* wouldn't confide to the world? Me! Me! Me!

Oh, I know. You are going to try to comfort me with that story about the cat and the lady and the Rav. I already know it. The lady comes in to a Rav and says, "I made a terrible mistake. I left some *traife* fat out on my counter, and my cat ate it. Is my cat *traife*?"

And the Ray didn't even blink an eye. He looked in a very thick book, and even turned some pages. Then he said to her, "Yes. He is. You must try not to let that happen again." The lady promised she would be careful, and she walked home enlightened — while the Rav's students laughed and laughed. But the Rav said, "You mustn't laugh! If you make fun of a foolish *shailah*, they will hesitate to come to you with necessary ones!"

So. Now every time I have to ask a *shailah*, I

ask myself first: Is this a necessary *shailah*, or a *traife* cat *shailah*? Well, I don't *know*! If I knew, I wouldn't ask!

So I take a deep breath and I start to dial the Rav. Before I finish, a little voice speaks up: "Are you calling *now*? It's 9:00 in the morning! You'll disturb the Rav's breakfast!" An hour later: "10:00?

But he's probably learning!" "11:00? He's likely not home." "12:00? Lunch hour!" And so on through the day until "10:00 at night? Let the poor Rav get some sleep!" Finally I discuss the whole thing with my husband, Shmuel.

"Well," he begins, "I *can't* ask for you because I don't think I could ever get all of those details straight. Now, of course, you shouldn't ask unnecessary *shailos*, but *these* are necessary, since we don't have the answer to them."

(Rule of thumb #1: If you don't have the answer to a *shailah*, it's good enough to ask). "And as for disturbing the Rav, just find out when is the best time to call. And remember: you are, after all, sort of like a customer. For if it weren't for people with *shailos*, Ravs wouldn't be in business, right?"

Encouraged by this, I pray to the One Above for strength. Amazingly I am able to compact my tangled *shailah* into two clear sentences, and the Ray answers me in three encouraging syllables, ("It's okay").

And then — euphoria! It happens every time after I ask. That burden on my shoulders is lifted — I'm floating on air!

And I know why. Because, as our sages tell us, it is better to be a fool for a lifetime in the eyes of people, than for even one second in the eyes of the *Aibishter*.

So The *Aibishter* saw the whole thing. And He knows. I did a good job. ■

As our sages tell us,  
it is better to be a  
fool for a lifetime in  
the eyes of people,  
than for even one  
second in the eyes  
of the *Aibishter*.





# A VISIT TO THE NEW HEICHAL

What began as small *shiurim* in Crown Heights homes, blossomed into a network of programs. They lead to the developing of an all-day Beis Medrash on Empire Boulevard, and now have snowballed even further, into a second beautiful new Beis Medrash on Eastern Parkway. Withstanding the many raised eyebrows, Rabbi Levi Browd of Yagdil Torah has again brought us to new horizons.

“The success of our Empire location was overwhelming,” says Rabbi Browd. “Besides for servicing over a thousand visitors a week, it has generated a contagious atmosphere; a trend. Others have opened similar spots, some *shuls* have extended their hours and many new *shiurim* have developed.

“Still, the need for another location was clear. Go see for yourself the difference.”

## A PRINCIPLE OF *CHASSIDUS*

And different it is. As I enter through the large oak doors, I am immediately struck

by the contemporary design, high ceiling and comfortable furniture. The powerful air conditioning system and good lighting add to the mood. The donors as well as the management have truly invested; more than just funds.

I approach a middle-aged man, stooped over his Gemora, his fingers drumming on the table to the tune of his learning singsong.

“May I disturb?” I ask.

“Sure,” he responds, as he moves over his lukewarm tea.

“What brings you here?”

He looks confused.

“I mean, obviously the learning,” I explain. “But can’t you learn at home?”

“Ah!” he nods, as he moves the tea again. “It’s the atmosphere. It’s just something else, learning in a place where everyone came to do just that.

“Our *mashpia* in *Yeshivah* once told us a story. The Alter Rebbe was in the middle of *davening* when

suddenly he burst out laughing. The Alter Rebbe laughed a second time, and then a third.

“When he was asked why, he explained that there was a certain *yid* who had decided that he could learn at home, and didn’t need to learn with others in *shul*. This *yid* had just died, and was allotted a secluded place in Gan Eden, away from all others... and so the Rebbe laughed in amusement. Then the Rebbe had *rachmonus* on this lonely soul and prevailed on him to allow him out, laughing with joy about having saved him. However, the lifelong loner wanted to go back to his privacy, and at this the Alter Rebbe laughed again...

“In truth, it’s a basic principle of Chassidus that all *avoda* is easier done in collaboration. And with learning I really feel the difference.”

“And what are your hours?”

Again, he looks confused.

“I mean, when do you come?”

He looks at me pitifully. “That’s the whole point of this place. There are no hours. I come whenever I have a spare minute.”

“Oh,” I apologize, as I get up. “I’m sorry I took up

two.”

## BEING AROUND LEARNING

My eyes catch three men sitting around a table; two small *seforim* and one elder *chossid*. He reads two lines, strokes his white beard, and expounds. And they drink in the words of *Chassidus*. This time, I don’t dare disturb.

Behind them, a *yungerman* is organizing new *seforim* on a bookcase. From him I learn that the *Heichal* possesses thousands of new *seforim*, all in the latest edition, and the numbers are growing. In his opinion, the library is a great factor in attracting the steady flock of visitors.

The *seforim* manager continues, “I know someone who began coming last year to the Empire Beis Medrash. He learned well as a *bochur*, but since getting married he has been consumed with severe *parnassa* challenges, and he lost his *geshmak* in learning. I must tell you, since I pulled him in here, he is a different person. Sometimes he drops by even if he doesn’t have the head to learn just to help out, with the *seforim*. He says that even being around people learning does him good.



“But that’s not my point. Two weeks ago, someone stopped him on the street, and began sharing a *vort* on the *parshah* with him. It took him a second to recognize him as a regular from the *Heichal*. Anyways, the conversation rolled, they moved onto discussing their work, and it looks like it will be helping him in his *parnossa*...

“You see,” declares the *yungerman* as he shifts a set of Frankel Rambam, “Torah never fails.”

## THE COFFEE CORNER

I make my way over to the coffee corner, where two people are thoroughly enjoying a discussion, as they choose from the variety of hot and cold beverages. I overhear that their conversation is a continuation of last Shabbos’s *farbrengen* in *shul*.

“Is this the purpose of the *Heichal*?” I tease.

“Yes,” the taller one replies smilingly, “this is the purpose.”

And he launches into a speech: “The *Heichal* is indeed a place where I come in to learn, to charge my day. But when I get up to make a coffee, and *chap a schmooze*, a *chassidishe devorim belteilim*, it’s rejuvenating too. In fact, if only for the coffee corner, *dayeinu*. Just standing here with a friend strengthens my sense of identity at my Manhattan office.”

Another pair stands nearby making coffee. Still engrossed in a difficult passage of *Gemara*, their tones raise. As one of them stirs with his right hand, his free hand makes vigorous motions in the air, and his tone reaches a pitch.

I turn to a nearby *bochur*, “Doesn’t the noise bother you?”

“That’s what I’m here for. And you?”

I get the point. I’ve disturbed enough. As I leave, I pass a father learning with his son.

“Homework?” I remark.

“Yes, were working on our home,” he quips. ■



PHOTO CREDIT: YAAKOV HELLINGER

# CELEBRATING THE MEANING OF FEMININITY

On Wednesday evening, the 7<sup>th</sup> of Iyar, over 500 young women gathered in the Razag Ballroom to celebrate the meaning of Jewish femininity.

The event was the third in a series of high-class events for young women in Crown Heights. The first event was called "A Celebration of Motherhood" and focused on the joys and *mitzvah* of raising a family, while the second event called "A Celebration of Womanhood" focused on fostering happy relationships. This new project is a collaborative effort of several up-and-coming Crown Heights organizations, seeking to bring fresh inspiration to classic themes.

Learning from past events, the organizers came prepared for the large crowd. Elegant gift bags with refreshments welcomed the women at their seats.

The main speaker of the evening was Mrs. Shaindel Schapiro of Hoboken, New Jersey who discussed Jewish femininity as it applies to

all of a woman's relationships, both with Hashem and those around her. Using classic Torah sources and a slideshow presentation, she discussed how *halachic* standards of modesty were established

to create healthy guidelines to live by.

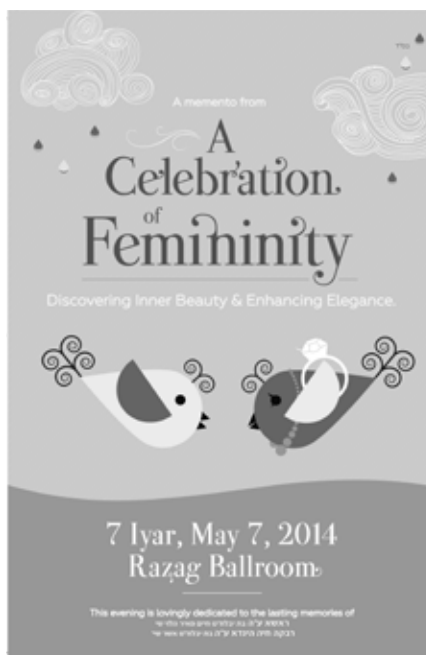
She related what happened in her kindergarten when a playground fence was missing. The children, afraid of approaching the busy street, kept a far distance and could not play at all. Similarly, the lack of a clear wall or boundary actually inhibits us, making us unsure of the limits. When there is a defined boundary, we feel comfortable using the entire space within.

A special booklet of fascinating and little-known stories of the Rebbe on the topic of modesty was printed and distributed in

connection with the event.

Video is viewable online at: [www.torahcafe.com/jewishvideo.php?vid=b98b1820d](http://www.torahcafe.com/jewishvideo.php?vid=b98b1820d)

Booklet can be found online at: [www.MerkazAnash.com/publications](http://www.MerkazAnash.com/publications).



CONNECTION 347-498-0008 - 5-1-3

# CHASSIDUS IN ENGLISH FOR ANASH

Did you ever want to learn a maamar in depth but found the language challenging? Wouldn't it be nice if you could "translate" the *maamar* you learned into practical terms and share it with your family?

Simcha Kantor, a business consultant in Chicago, decided to do something. "There are plenty of English translations out there," said Reb Simcha, "but I haven't found any that are written for *Anash*. Common translations are made for beginners and they assume that the reader is unfamiliar with basic concepts of Chassidus. They also avoid deep concepts, and haven't touched many fundamental *maamorim* of the Rebbe."

In a project called Simply Chassidus, classic *maamorim* of the Rebbe are transformed into English. Not a word-for-word translation, but rather a running explanation of the key points and any critical background information needed along the way. All commentary and explanation is written in simple English, and can either be used as a companion to the original Hebrew text or as a stand-alone read to gain a solid understanding of the *maamar*. His English renditions are strikingly clear and well-organized making the *maamar* readily comprehensible and practical application to daily life.

A longtime dream was materialized when Rabbi Boruch Hertz, *Rov* of Anash in Chicago, encouraged community members on Simchas Torah to take a *bachlota* to learn one *maamar* every month. To enable everyone to participate in this program, he asked Reb Simcha to select and prepare English commentary for the *maamorim*.

Since Shabbos morning is when Anash learn in-depth Chassidus, each maamar is divided into three palatable sections, for three Shabbosim

of a month. To make it work, Reb Simcha made the sections Shabbos size, about an hour long, leaving Shabbos *Mevarchim* for review. "People are busy with Tehillim," Kantor says, "and I don't want them to fall behind."

Right from the get-go the program had great success, and brought a renewed *chayus* for Shabbos morning *Chassidus*. Rabbi Daniel Moscovitz *a"b*, Head Shliach of Illinois, would post them online for Shluchim, who used them for their public *shiurim*.

"Besides being very enjoyable translations," Rabbi Boruch Hertz comments, "they have enabled people to really learn and get excited about the *maamorim* of the Rebbe. They have created a sense of energy and learning in the community, and have raised the level of learning *Chassidus* Shabbos morning a substantial amount for both men and women. I look forward to seeing this project grow."

The program has since been named "Simply *Chassidus*," a name doing due diligence to the flowing English work. New *maamorim* are published, month by month, to his Chicago and online communities. Most recently, Reb Simcha teamed up with Merkaz Anash to release two of the Rebbe's *ma'amarim* – V'Atah Tetzaveh and HaSam Nafsheinu B'Chaim – as a *kuntres* for Gimmel Tammuz.

But for Reb Simcha, the best part is when he is approached or emailed a comment on his understanding of the *maamar*. "It means that people living with the Rebbe's Torah," Reb Boruch proudly reflects, "and that's a tremendous way to strengthen our *hiskashrus*."

To sign up to receive the monthly ma'amer, or to browse the archives, visit: [www.simplychassidus.com](http://www.simplychassidus.com)



# COUNTER PERSPECTIVE

## RESPONSES TO PREVIOUS ARTICLES

### Kosher Education (6)

Dear Editor,

I would like to thank you for printing a section on Kosher education in your previous issue, as this is a very important topic. I have also heard that Rabbi Nochum Kaplan, director of the Chinuch Office, is creating an Inyonei Kedusha curriculum, which I very much look forward to as it is sure to be a valuable contribution to this area.

One of the letters printed in your above mentioned feature, with its accompanying introduction and subtitle, compels me to respond. The phrase “Yiras Shamayim Above Professionalism” that you use to summarize that letter gives the impression that a choice exists as to whether an educator should excel in Yirash Shamayim or professional skills. As Yidden, and Chassidim above all else, if that were the case we would choose Yiras Shamayim without any hesitation.

However, the content of the letter – the Rebbe’s own words – does not seem to reflect this subtitle. In that letter, the Rebbe emphasizes the importance of Yiras Shamayim, stressing that it can coexist with professionalism, and only in extreme cases, when it is impossible to find Kosher education, does it come to a matter of

choosing between the two. I am afraid that the subtitle and introduction to the letter may have been misleading. While the Rebbe emphasizes that professionalism must be grounded in Yiras Shamayim, on numerous occasions the Rebbe beseeched educators to participate in training and become more professional and effective.

I would like to bring your attention to a letter (Igros Kodesh Chelek 19 #7193 dated 16 Shvat, 5720) in which the Rebbe stresses both of these ideals, emphasizing that Yiras Shamayim and professionalism are two very important things that a teacher should strive for, and that one does not in any way preclude the other.

After writing at length about the importance of professional development for educators, including for every educator in Chabad in Eretz Yisroel (where the recipient of this letter lived), the Rebbe then reiterates his position on the importance of teachers having firm *hashkafos* that align with our tradition, enabling students to withstand the extreme trials and extraneous influences that they are facing. Then, the Rebbe points out (emphasis mine):

**I would like to repeat that my intention is**

**not to absolve anyone from the effort of professionalism and becoming more qualified,** but to clarify the situation.... that, as the Mishna says, in order for one's wisdom to be enduring, his fear [i.e. *fear of Heaven*] must precede his wisdom...

Thus, as Chabad educators, we do not have the choice between Yiras Shamayim and professionalism. While we strive to increase our Yiras Shamayim, and that is the foundation for all that follows, it is clearly the Rebbe's *horaah* that, in addition to that, every Chabad educator participate in training to increase their professionalism and effectiveness in the classroom.

The following is excerpted from a letter that the Freirdike Rebbe wrote in 1947:

To the Roshei Yeshivos, *melamdim* and teachers in the central Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim Lubavitch [and other Lubavitch schools]...

Anyone who knows the field of Chinuch and is seriously involved in guiding children, recognizes and feels that even the most qualified and experienced educators need to speak with one another from time to time about the methods of education and guidance that are most suited to the type of students they are educating. And how much more so is it true that *melamdim* and teachers who are young and lacking experience are obligated to strive to expand their knowledge of education and guidance, and much of their success in this most responsible task, with Hashem's help, depends on this.

For this purpose, I suggested to Merkos L'inyonei Chinuch to organize classes of professional development for teachers, and in this regard I now turn to all of the *melamdim* and teachers... to attend these professional development classes in an appropriate measure, and to receive a certificate for their knowledge, and Hashem should grant them success in material and spiritual matters.

Igros Kodesh # 3000, dated 29 Adar, 5707

Our Rebbe continues in this vein in numerous letters, in some expressing distress at the level of professionalism that exists in Chinuch, and on many occasions encouraging various people to organize training courses for all teachers, the sooner the better. (If anyone would like to view these sources, they can be found on [www.MyMef.org/Kuntres](http://www.MyMef.org/Kuntres).)

To summarize, the Rebbe has clearly communicated to us the importance of Kosher Chinuch and educators who are Yarei Shamayim. However, we may not be aware of the fact that the Rebbe urged those same educators to *also* invest in professionalizing and improving their methods of education, for the benefit of the children in their care.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Zalman Shneur

Menachem Education Foundation

Executive Director

P.S. There are two instances that I know of, in my limited knowledge, when teacher training was organized and a professional was specifically brought in to teach the course. When the Frierdike Rebbe arranged teacher training in 1947, as mentioned in the body of this letter, Dr. William Brickman was brought to teach the course.

I also heard from Rabbi Yitzchak Newman that when he was in Kollel, he was involved in arranging teacher training for the Kollel *yungerleit*, and nominated several local teachers to teach the course. When this plan was presented to Rabbi Hodakov, he told the young men that this is not the way we do things, and himself arranged for Dr. Brickman, who was then a professor at the University of Pennsylvania, to come teach the course. It is my hope that this important magazine will further look into this, and put together an article on this valuable topic.

## RABBI HELLINGER RESPONDS:

I have since looked back at the quote in discussion and could not find anything misleading. Here is the full text (the original letter is printed in Igros Kodesh, Vol. 17, p. 233, #6383):

"Everything in the field of education is of paramount importance; a change made in a student has a lifelong effect. And so anything that causes religious doubts must be avoided, just like anything of remote risk to human life, as any intelligent person can understand. With that in mind, the status of any book of religious dubiousness, or any teacher with a similar problem, is obvious.

"This would be the case even if there was no alternative, because the goal of the school and the parents is to raise religious children, which is the only way they'll have a contented life; but now it is certainly possible to find appropriate teachers and textbooks from a religious perspective on a high scholastic level. A number of schools have gone through a phase of doubt and confusion, but experience taught them how to solve these problems, and your school can certainly utilize the results of their experience, and considering your conclusion that "*yiras Shamayim* comes before wisdom", the teacher and textbook that excels in that area must be chosen."

I believe it is clear, as you admit in your letter, that the Rebbe contends that *yiras Shamayim* is more important than "professionalism", and when faced with a choice between the two, *yiras Shamayim* takes priority. Of course, ideally we ought to strive for excellence in both *yiras Shamayim* and in teaching skills.

The same is true of the letter which you reference (#7193). The letter was written to the education minister of *Eretz Yisroel* who complained that

the Lubavitcher teachers were under-qualified. The Rebbe responded that although training is indeed important, what is more important is the teacher's firm *yiddishe* outlook.<sup>1</sup>

In the Rebbe's words: "Amongst those who have minimum qualifications, it is more important that the teacher should have a firm outlook and total commitment to all that is holy to our people, which must also find expression in his personal conduct. Then he will be able to imbue a strong stance to his students as well, [that they] not be confused by the changing [ideologies] in the street and sometimes at home as well."

[It should be noted that in these letters the Rebbe is discussing **excellence** in teaching versus **excellence** in *yiras Shamayim*. A person, who lacks the minimum level of *yiras Shamayim* or of teaching qualities, is categorically out of the question.]<sup>2</sup>

■ ■ ■

### WHAT IS "PROFESSIONALISM"?

Having clarified that, there is something to be said about the place of "professionalism" in education:

Professionalism is commonly understood today to mean:

1. Productive and efficient.
2. Polite and respectable.

Let us discuss the meaning of these qualities and the role that they play in education.

### PRODUCTIVE AND EFFICIENT

In today's fast pace industrialist society, efficiency is the high ideal. The more products that come off the machine, the more papers filed and the more

---

1. In a letter from 14 Av 5715 the Rebbe emphasizes the need for teachers to accept guidance *in the spirit of the school* (not in teaching skills as was implied in Kuntres Hishtalmus).

2. In a letter to the Reshet in Eretz Yisroel (8 Cheshvan

5716) the Rebbe notes the need for the courses to be suitable for *anash*, and in another letter (17 Teves 5717) the Rebbe elaborates that the courses should be by "Agudah or even more right wing."

customers served – is the measure of success.

While productivity is a valuable quality in the abovementioned tasks, they are detrimental in others. Efficiency is not a quality you look for in a musician, and the music of an ‘efficient musician’ won’t be exceptional. Music is an expression of the soul and does not lend itself to efficiency. This is true of all fields of art, insight and nuance.

Pedagogy is an art. It is a vibrant relationship of a living teacher and living students. A classroom should be an organic environment which shapes real people with real talent in thinking, feeling and motivation. It requires the educator to invest deep thought and real emotion into his students.

Our society’s obsession with efficiency is squashing real education. Pedagogy is being replaced with “efficient classroom management” aiming to *produce* learning, skills and good grades. These dry and hard methods produce dry and hard students who, at best, can follow the systems through which they have been led.

This should not be misunderstood to be a call for laxity in learning. On the contrary, real learning, hard thinking and personal growth takes place when the focus is on the learning itself, not on the results.

[Besides, the purpose of Torah study, as explained in Torah and *Chassidus*, differs essentially from the secular concept of academic excellence, and has practical implications on the actual learning. This abstract concept must be thoroughly explored and applied practically under the guidance of qualified *mashpiim*. (This distinction in the purpose of learning is yet another example of how carefully we must analyze educational theories, regardless of how similar they seem to Torah values. What may appear similar may actually differ immensely in nature and direction.)]

## POLITE AND RESPECTABLE

Another connotation of “professionalism” is a polite, respectable and a professional demeanor.

In society today, decorum and etiquette are considered exemplary modes of conduct in the “professional” arena. Genuine care and concern are out of place; a “professional” relationship is supposed to be courteous, but impersonal.

(While there has recently been a call for informality in the business environment, it too is artificial and part of the script and lacks the feel of genuine care and concern. And so, while it may make business more *pleasant*, it won’t form a *meaningful connection* between teacher and student.)

For an educator to have a real, long-lasting impact on the psyche, emotion and motivation of the student, he must genuinely care for the child’s wellbeing. He must share his emotion with his students, showing them when he is pleased with their conduct or the opposite. (In a letter from 19 Av 5714 the Rebbe suggests keeping caring and dedicated teachers who are deficient in teaching skills.)

This is, of course, not a contradiction to the dignity and respect that a teacher must have for his students and for himself. Besides for all the *halachos* of *bein adam lachaveiro* that apply towards children as well (i.e. *ona’a* – not causing embarrassment, not calling nicknames, not causing unnecessary physical discomfort etc.), there are special *halachos* for a teacher so that he is respected by the students and his influence is well received.

Naturally, the abovementioned care and concern cannot be created on demand and a teacher must truly have them on his own. Nevertheless, in a school environment where genuine care is valued, not perceived as queer or eyed with suspicion, inborn concern will flourish.

## WHAT TYPE OF TRAINING DID THE REBBEIM CALL FOR?

In the light of the above it is understood why our Rebbeim did not promote “professionalism” in *chinuch*. Instead they called for perfection (“*bishtalmus*”) and training (“*bachashara*”) which

are understandably necessary for an educator. Just as a natural artist must undergo training to develop his talent, the same is for a natural pedagogue.

The training should consist of courses of in-depth in education, psychology and sociology. Educators should be trained to recognize and understand the needs of their students and how to address them.

In conclusion:

Instead of “professional” teachers we need profound educators who understand children, genuinely care about them and treat them with sensitivity and dignity. This will in turn yield children who are passionate about learning and care for one another.

This is not an easy task, but we must, at very least, head in that direction.

■ ■ ■

#### DR. BRICKMAN AND QUALIFIED TRAINERS

P.S. Dr. Zev (“William W.”) Brickman raised in a *frum* home and learned in *yeshiva* RJJ on the Lower East Side. He davened with a *minyán* every day and led a completely *frum* life. He had a regular *kviás* in Gemara throughout his life, completing three *masechtos* a year for the *yahrtzeit* of his parents and brother, with a *hadran* for each! (See A Glimpse into the Life of William W. Brickman by Dr. Chaim Mann-Brickman, European Education, vol. 42, no. 2.)

[Other biographical points: Prior to embarking on his academic career he served as a principal the Lubavitcher Yeshivah High School, among several other *yeshivos*. He traveled several times to Russia, bringing with him seforim and *tashmishei kedusha*, and came to the Rebbe for *yechidus* before each trip.]

In 5707 (1947), following the Frieddiker Rebbe's call for training, Dr. Brickman was invited to lecture to the teachers at the Lubavitcher Yeshivah in Bedford and Dean. The course took place every

year until the late 1950's. (William Brickman's Legacy in Jewish Education Worldwide by Aryeh Solomon, European Education, vol. 42, no. 2).

Dr. Brickman's was a first class pedagogue specializing in comparative education. He disliked the “scientific” methods and “data analysis” that began to overtake much of the education community in the 1960's, and expressed criticism of “quantitative methods completely in lieu of in-depth cultural and historical studies in the field”.

To gain an understanding of his approach, I quote from his writing on the meaning of education: “Education should strive for the lifelong development of each person, regardless of type, to his fullest capacity along desirable and satisfying intellectual, socioeconomic, moral-ethical, and aesthetic paths, as an individual and as a member of society, and in accordance with his ambition, effort, and achievement.”

The following statement from Dr. Brickman summarizes his position on pedagogical training: “the teacher of quality must master several foundational fields in education, including the psychological, the sociological, the historical, the philosophical, and the comparative.” Is it fair to assume that the courses delivered by Dr. Brickman in Lubavitcher Yeshivah were of this nature.

Besides for his pedagogic and religious qualifications, HaRav Chadokov, a master pedagogue and former minister for Jewish education in the Latvian Parliament, was closely involved in coordinating the courses and ensured that they were all suitable.

The question we must ask ourselves is: **Who is scrutinizing the speakers that we are bringing into our community?**



## Life Perspectives (4)

The article in the Tishrei issue describing what a true *chassidishe simcha* should look like was truly amazing. Although it is something that everyone knows deep in their hearts it was important that someone should come out and say it loud and clear.

Printing it under a new column called "Life Perspectives" made it seem as if it was going to be a regular column. It reminded me of a column in "Hakria Vehakedusha" that would present a popular perspective on a topic and then write

"*v'any bakoton omer lav davka*," "and I humbly say 'not necessarily so'" (and sometimes "*davka lav*"), and then present the *chassidishe* perspective on the matter. It seemed like this column would be an updated version of that.

I was truly looking forward to seeing more such topics being addressed in later issues, and was disappointed when that did not happen. I think that such a column is very much needed and would be greatly appreciated.

Levi P.

## The Yiddishe Home (4)

Dear editor,

I think the letter about the importance of putting more emphasis on authentic *chinuch* was right on target. I too would like to see this topic be addressed in detail by experienced *mechanchim*.

A local elementary school recently had a campaign to encourage their 7th and 8th graders to fulfill the Rebbe's *horaah* of "*asei lecha rav*." Almost all the boys chose older *bochurim* from *yeshiva* or staff members from the camps they attended.

One of the teachers correctly pointed out that this is a sign that something is wrong. If the teachers and parents would be proper *mechanchim*, they would be the "*rav*" of these boys. These boys would have had a *rav* even before the campaign and wouldn't need to find some *bochur* to talk to. I would really like to see this topic being addressed in detail in your future issues.

Thanks in advance.

Y.S.

## Is Real Davening Within Our Grasp? (3)

Dear editor,

I would like to personally thank you for your insightful review on the new *kehos siddur*, with insights culled from *Chassidus*.

Although I saw it advertised, I didn't consider purchasing it. However, as a result of your article, I bought the *siddur* and have since found new meaning in my *tefillah*. I am forever grateful to you. Keep up the good work.

To the dear readership, I strongly recommend the *siddur*, for your *davening's* sake; for *your* sake.

To the dear authors of the *siddur*, a great thank you to all those involved in its publication, and

I really cannot wait for the Shabbos and *Yom Tov* edition.

Menachem Segal

Far Rockaway, NY

## Lma'an Yishme'u

### 238 - THE FINAL STRETCH (II)

In the article titled "The Final Stretch" part 2 it's written that the darkness of *galus* makes the light of our *avoda* brighter.

Does that mean that the light is brighter than it would have ordinarily been because of the darkness, or does it mean that the light is brighter than the light created in previous generations with the same *avoda*?

Thank you very much,

RW

### RESPONSE:

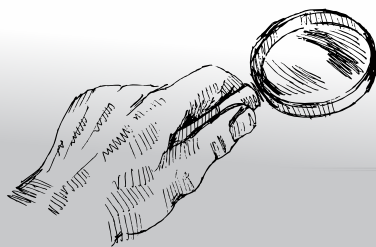
In answer to your question:

The *avoda* in the darkness is indeed greater than the very same *avoda* performed in previous generations. This is referred to in *Chassidus* as "*yisron ba'or min bachosbech*" (the advantage of light **from** the darkness).

The basic reason for this is because the darkness forces a person to awaken deeper resources within himself to overcome the darkness.

On a deeper level *Chassidus* explains that the darkness alone contains lofty sparks of holiness that have fallen very low. By overcoming the darkness we access those sparks and connect them to their source, thereby benefiting from their energy.

I hope this answers your question. ■



## *my* **PERSPECTIVE**

### The Rebbe I Knew

*Yanky Kramer*

A Lubavitcher, by definition, loves the Rebbe. We learn from him, follow his instructions and strive to live up to his expectations.

Our relationship with the Rebbe naturally spills over to others. We feel that it's only fair that we share our Rebbe with the world, for in truth, the Rebbe is, by all classifications, everyone's Rebbe.

Great steps in sharing the Rebbe have been undertaken lately, including the publishing of several biographies of the Rebbe, each attempting to transmit the Rebbe to broader audiences. To share the wealth. And undoubtedly, many a reader will be inspired.

However, here's the issue.

My son brought home a copy. Now, while he purchased it as a gift for someone on his *mitvzoyim* route, I found him reading it on the couch, cover to cover.

The results were immediately apparent. He began talking of the Rebbe's charisma, of his character and sterling personality. How could I put it into words? It just felt wrong.

In frustration, I sat down to pen this letter.

■■■

My dear son,

I spent three years learning at 770, and many more months visiting. I have spent thousands of hours at the *farbrengens*, learning the Rebbe's *sichos* and reading his letters. The Rebbe is my source of life.

Nothing could be more important to me than you having that same relationship. It is for this reason that since you were born I hung a picture of our Rebbe in your crib, and as soon as you could comprehend, I told you stories of the Rebbe.

Therefore, it pains me to watch your understanding of the Rebbe get tainted.

Sure, it's important to share the Rebbe with the world. But in such a book - if the author does his work well - there is a depth, a clarity, which must be compromised. The Rebbe himself is veiled in modern language and stylish trimmings.

Let me say it bluntly: This is not the Rebbe I knew.

The books cannot give you the fire; the *kedushah*. The battle for only the most pure *yiddishkeit*, *chinuch al taharas hakodesh*, growing a beard, *America iz nit andersh*, *shleimus ho'oretz*, the

*emunah* in Moshiach.

It cannot convey the Simchas Torah, pure, “*becher-fun-velt*” dancing; the *tzomah lecho nafshi*; the choked plea for Geulah, the austere tone of the *maamer - divrei elokim chayim*.

It's just not it.

So why should you make that compromise for yourself?!

You might say that you will distill this from the *sichos*, and no harm is done by reading a book. you might also add that since you are reading it with knowledge that it's not for you, your perspective will not change. But my son, that's simply not true. While outwardly you may feel you are getting closer to the Rebbe, in truth you are slowly distancing yourself.

Please understand. When you read the Rebbe's name without the appropriate titles, over and over, you undoubtedly become desensitized. When you read descriptions of the Rebbe in

worldly language, you are getting a worldly version.

When you read impressions from distant people, there is no way their words will not carry some of that distance in them.

Your mind is not made of rubber. Once it has been impressed, it's impossible for it not to be affected. You are forever denying yourself of having a healthy, pure, chossid Rebbe relationship.

I know I haven't really conveyed my feelings. There is much more. Oh, how I wish to transmit this to you.

Because our Rebbe, to me, is not a genius, mystic or social revolutionary. That's not who I handed my pan to. That's not who I said *l'chaim* to. That's not my life inspiration.

To me, our Rebbe is a *Tzadik*, a Torah Yid, a servant of Hashem.

Better said, to me our Rebbe is a Rebbe. The Rebbe.

## Some Pnimiyyus

### *A bochur*

The Shabbos preceding Shavuot, some thirty days before Gimmel Tammuz, I spent at the Morristown *yeshivah* together with some four hundred *bochurim* from many *yeshivos*.

To me, it was a very transforming experience. I indeed attended the *shiurim* with Rabbi Leibel Shapiro, and Rabbi Elimelech Tzviebel. While both were highly stimulating, there was something else that struck me that I will never forget. I don't know if anyone else realized it, but to me it was a special lesson.

Truthfully, it was not what did happen, rather what did not. It is something so small and silly that I am embarrassed to even write about it

while my peers probably never noticed it.

Let me preface. I am a son of a *Shliach*, who grew up as a proud *chossid*, always ready to show his *yiddishkeit*. Whenever requested, I would pose for a picture with elderly people, with a *lulav* or just with a big smile. "It's part of the *mesiras nefesh* for *Shlichus*," my father would say with a wink, "a *bissel chitzoniyus* will do no harm."

However, what is to him *mesiras nefesh*, is what I became; always on show, always presenting. To me, an event without a photograph wasn't an event. Basically, I am a *chitzon par excellence*.

By now you've probably guessed the striking Shabbos realizing. During this weekend there

was no picture taken. At all. Not before Shabbos, and not after. Just a Shabbos of *chassidim* together, looking to be more *mekushar*. Not for the news, not for fundraising, not for the records. And best of all, there was no mention of it, as if no one missed it...

Many readers may not understand my excitement. Good for you, but to me it meant so much. It meant normalcy. I know my father is right, one has to put nuances aside for the

*Shlichus* and the Rebbe always spoke of *mitzvah lefarsem osei mitzvah*. Still, the Rebbe also ridiculed excessive picture taking, of himself and of events.

In summation, a pure, picture-free weekend was really refreshing. A *bissel pnimiyus* also does no harm...

Thank you to the *hanbolah* of Morristown for giving me this gift by arranging the Shabbos *achdus* and reminding me of what we stand for.

## A Thought before Gimmel Tammuz

*S. Gopin*

So many people are searching: Searching for meaning, for advice, for comfort. The limbs of *Klal Yisroel* are aching, hurting.

An awakening is urgently needed. Urgent. Something that will connect the hands and feet to the heartbeat, the pulse, the *neshomah* of *Klal Yisroel*.

During the first two decades of the *nesius*, the Rebbe corresponded with hundreds of thousands of responsa covering every topic. In a

surprising directive, in the late 5740's the Rebbe said to publish some of these letters, thereby opening a new avenue of communication with between the limbs and the heart.

My friends, the answer is in the Rebbe's letters. A thirty volume masterpiece, of meaning, advice and comfort. It's worth reading.

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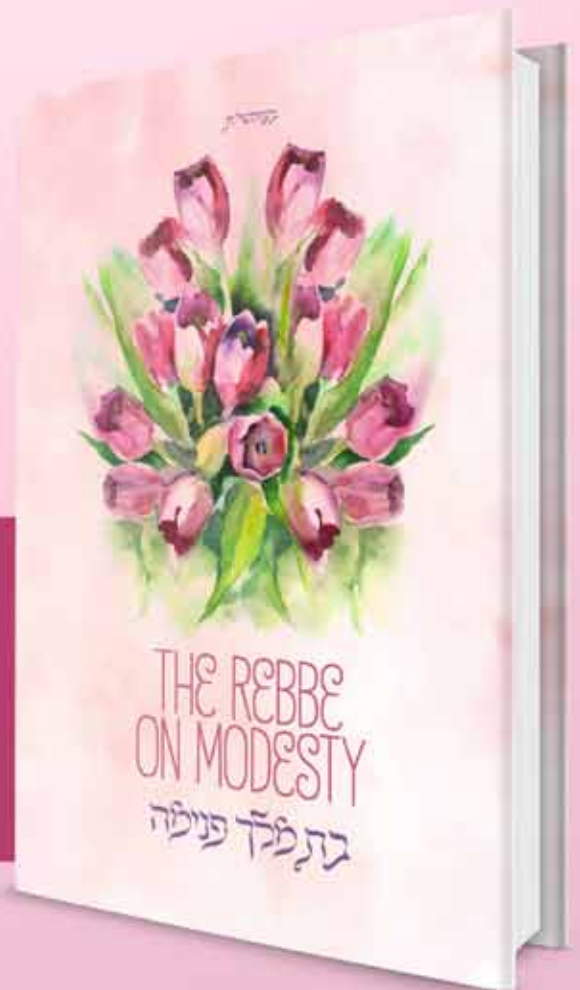
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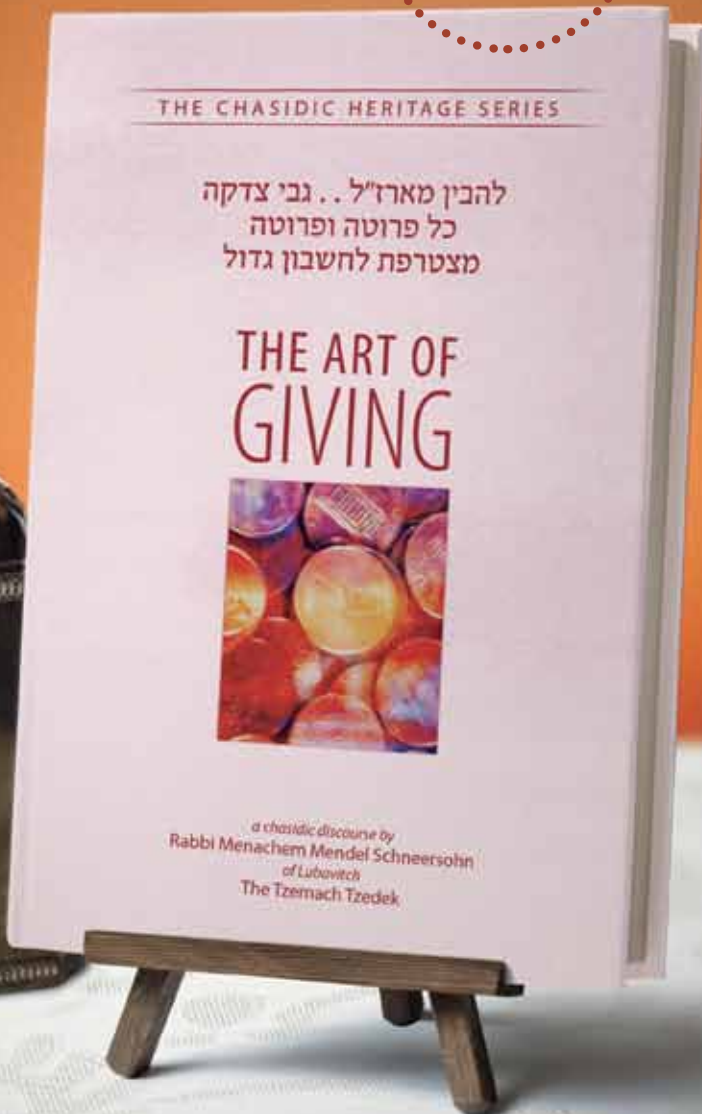




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