



הצליח ונשא חן בעיניהם



Rabbi Mendel Raskin

Cote S. Luc, Canada

”נשיא דורנו האמ
אויפגעטאן און
אנגעזאגט צו כל
אנשי ונשי הדור
אז מצוות הדור
איז אין דעם ענין
השליחות...”

“The Rebbe *nesi doreinu* established and mandated each and every man and woman in this generation that the ‘mitzvah of our generation’ is *shlichus*...”
(ש”פ וישלח תשמ”ז)

I was *zocheh* to grow up on shlichus in Morocco where my father Reb Leibel, and תבלח”ט my mother Mrs. Hoda Reizel Raskin, were sent by the Rebbe in 5720*.

After my wife and I got married in Kislev 5745*, I joined the kollel in Crown Heights. It was clear to us that we would go on shlichus when the time came. A year later, on 12 Cheshvan 5746*, we wrote a letter to the Rebbe with four offers of places for shlichus, asking if we should consider any of the options. In our letter, we wrote that we are soldiers and are ready to go wherever the Rebbe would send us even if it meant learning a language that we were not familiar with.

Weeks went by and we received no response from the Rebbe. We wrote a second time but again we didn’t receive an answer. I was broken. I felt that maybe the Rebbe didn’t want us to move on shlichus.

I asked the Rebbe’s *mazkir* Reb Binyomin Klein if I should write a third time but he said I shouldn’t; my letter is on the Rebbe’s table!

A few more weeks passed and we got another offer for shlichus in Montreal.

I wrote the fifth option in to the Rebbe and within no time, I received the Rebbe’s answer:

כמפורסם בכי”ב כעצת ידידים מבינים. אזכיר עה”צ

As is well-known in such matters, follow the advice of knowledgeable friends. I will mention this at the Tziyun.

After following the Rebbe’s directive, I wrote again to the Rebbe. The Rebbe answered by circling the words I wrote asking for the Rebbe’s וברכה הסכמה.

It seems that the Rebbe wanted me to continue the same *avoda* as my father, working with French speaking, *Sefardische Yidden*.

On 9 Iyar, I wrote to the Rebbe with the date that we were scheduled to move on shlichus. The Rebbe answered צ”ע אזכיר and sent out a Canadian dollar bill for us to give to *tzedakah* in Montreal.

On 12 Iyar, a few hours before we left to Montreal, I stood in the hallway of 770 after Mincha. As the Rebbe was returning to his room, Rabbi Groner mentioned that I was leaving on shlichus that day. The Rebbe looked straight at me and said:

פארט געזונטערהייט און ס’וועט זיין בשורות טובות.

Travel safely and there will be good news.

As a young child, I had always received *chinuch* from my father that the primary focus of shlichus is to bring *Yidden* to the Rebbe. Baruch Hashem we merited to bring many groups to the Rebbe, something that we continue to do to this day. We brought full buses of *Yidden* for Shabbos on many occasions, including the last Shabbos that the world was *zocheh* to a *farbrengen* from the Rebbe, 25 Adar I 5752*. We would be at the Rebbe’s davening and *farbrengen*, and then we would receive dollars on Sunday morning.

The Rebbe had tremendous *nachas ruach* from these groups and it was clearly seen in the way the Rebbe would say *lchaim* to them, encourage the singing and even say special *sichos* in their honor. There are many stories about these trips which are beyond the scope of this article. We were also *zocheh* to receive a number of answers from the Rebbe in regards to the groups that came.

Additionally, over the years, we were *zocheh* to receive the Rebbe’s answers on various issues. Here are a few:

For Shabbos Parshas Shoftim 5748*, I came with my wife and two children to spend Shabbos with the Rebbe. At the end of that Shabbos *farbrengen*, the Rebbe spoke strongly about the coming year as a time for building and

that new Chabad Houses should be built (the Rebbe later gave it a name: (שנת הבנין). I took a *hachlata* that I would build a new Beis Chabad during the year.

In order to build you need money, so I decided I would travel to Australia to visit a certain *gevir* and ask him to donate a large sum. I booked a ticket for Sunday, 22 Elul (the day after Shabbos Selichos), and went to the Australian embassy to get a visa (at that time one needed a visa to travel to Australia). Of course, I wrote my plan to the Rebbe and asked for a *bracha*.

Motzei Shabbos Selichos came but I had still not received any answer from the Rebbe. Ten minutes before the Rebbe came down for *selichos*, at 12:50 a.m, the Rebbe gave an answer:

הרי הוא במונטריאל והמדובר באוסטרלי?!
אין ענין לסדר הרגיל לבזבז כמה אלפים ממון
ישראל לנסיעות מעבר לים לבקש נדבות כהנ"ל
ולפלא גדול על הקס"ד אף שכוונתו רצוי, אזכיר
עה"צ.

You are in Montreal, and this individual is in Australia?! It does not make sense, under normal

circumstances, to squander a few thousand [dollars] of Jewish money to travel overseas and request a donation in this manner. It is shocking that this was even considered, although your intention was well-meaning. I will mention this at the Tziyun.

After the *histalkus* of the Rebbetzin, the Rebbe spoke about opening new *mosdos* in the Rebbetzin's memory. On the day of the *shloshim*, 21 Adar 5748*, we signed a lease to rent a new Beis Chabad. A year later, on 21 Adar 5749*, we made a special celebration marking one year in the new Chabad House. In response to my letter about this, the Rebbe answered:

נת' ות"ח אזכיר עה"צ, לבשו"ט והזמן גרמא
והענין.

It was received, thanks. I will mention this at the Tziyun for good news. The timing and the concept are [both] appropriate.

Two years later in 5751*, the time had come to expand and I wanted very much to build a Beis Chabad House in honor of Yud-Aleph Nissan. I brought Reb Yoel Kahn to farbreng

לזכות
הרה"ת ר' יוסף יצחק אהרן שיחי'
לרגל יום הולדתו י"ז סיון
ולזכות בנו מנחם מענדל שיחי'
לרגל יום הולדתו כ' סיון
לשנת הצלחה בגור'
ולזכות כל משפחת
בראקמאן שיחי'

with the Yidden in Cote S. Luc and I wrote a letter to the Rebbe about the farbrengen. In my letter I wrote that this farbrengen would also be a special *seudas hodaah* for the great *nissim* that took place in Eretz Yisroel during the Golf War. I ended by asking for a *bracha* that a large crowd should attend and that "we should be able to inform the Rebbe about a new *matana* for Yud-Aleph Nissan from all the participants." I didn't write what the *matana* was going to be. The Rebbe's answer was:

אזכיר עה"צ לתוכן הבקשה.

I will mention at the Tziyun on the content of the request.

I understood this as clear *ruach hakodesh* from the Rebbe. The Rebbe was giving his *bracha* for the *tochen* of what I was actually asking for. Indeed, we put up a new Beis Chabad as a result of that farbrengen.

Another interesting answer I received from the Rebbe was in Shevat 5752*. I wrote that members of the *kehillah* were worried about a sickness that was affecting children and youngsters and that the doctors and parents were unsure if their children should receive a certain injection that could have other negative effects. I added that the only one that could give an answer that would satisfy the parents is the Rebbe. The Rebbe answered:

האומנם אינו יודע שיש רבנים גדולים בעיר
יפנה כל הנ"ל אליהם.

Is it possible that you do not know that there are great rabbonim in your city[?]. You should forward all this [information and the question] to them. 1

He Grew up on Shlichus; she grew up around 770

When the time came for Rabbi Raskin to get married, his parents wrote to the Rebbe asking about three people who had been suggested as possible *shidduchim* for their son to consider. With each name, Rabbi Raskin's father included some information. The Rebbe circled the name of Mrs. Sarah Raskin (then Sternberg) along with the words his father had written "בהצעת שטרנברג תי' שנתגדלה ונתחנכה בד' אמות של 770"—[Go with] the proposal of Sternberg who grew up and was educated in the *daled amos* of 770."

Interestingly, during the period that they were meeting for *shidduchim*, Mrs. Raskin wrote to the Rebbe and received special answers. One of the answers was about Rabbi Raskin growing up on shlichus:

ע"פ הידוע המדובר שיחי' "עסק" גם בבעלי הבתים, אנשים מחוגים שונים והצליח ונשא
חן בעיניהם וכו'... וכן ראה בביתו תמיד כל הימים בפעולות הוריו שיחי'.

As is known, the suggested [*bochur*] *sheyichye* was also "active" with *baalei-battim*, people of various communities, and he was successful and had positive appeal with them etc. He also saw this constantly [growing up] with the activities of his parents' *sheyichyu*.