

להביא לימות המשיח

CONNECT THE DOTS

Moshiach in the News

A CHANGING WORLD

By the end of the 1980s drastic changes were coming about in the world. One after another, events that seemed completely unrealistic in the recent past suddenly became part of the constantly changing present.

In the Soviet Union, the Iron Curtain fell. The walls which had oppressed millions of Yidden for seventy years came crumbling down, giving way to a mass-exodus of Yidden, along with an amazing revival of Yiddishkeit, which had been almost nonexistent beforehand. It also brought an end to the Cold War between Russia and the West.

The Gulf War, bringing with it a scare of ominous clouds of danger and destruction for the Yidden of Eretz Yisrael, had unbelievable results. The war had been won in the Persian Gulf, and the Scud missiles fired towards Eretz Yisrael did not manage to wreak the predicted havoc.

Countless nations turned toward democracy, and for the first time, militaries were being used for humanitarian purposes. Under the auspices of the two superpowers, the United States and Russia, many countries adopted resolutions to lessen the amount of ammunition and weapons they produced.

The Rebbe maintained that these amazing events were not by chance, rather that they are signs of a new era dawning upon the world and that we are seeing a preview of the effect of Moshiach. Hashem had begun affecting the hearts

and minds of world leaders to bring about changes in world order.

Quoting the *possuk* וכתתו חרבותם לאתים ("and they shall turn their swords into plowshares") the Rebbe pointed toward the resolutions to lessen production of weaponry¹. Regarding the Gulf War, the Rebbe quoted the Medrash, which speaks of the Persian king attacking an Arabian king, concluding with the statement of *Melech Hamoshiach* standing on the roof of the *Beis Hamikdosh* declaring² ענוים הגיע זמן גאולתכם.

NEW YORK TIMES AD

In³ an attempt to bring this message of the Rebbe to the world, Rabbi Yosef Gutnick, along with Hatomim Shlomo Uminer joined forces with Rabbi Yehoshua Metzger of The Chai Foundation (Chabad Advertising International), arranging for an ad to be placed in the New York Times, which would portray the Rebbe's view, namely, that the recent world events are leading us to Moshiach.

It was agreed that the ad would begin with a description of the recent world events. The incredible phenomenon of regimes and dictatorships being overthrown peacefully, along with a general gravitation towards world peace and anti-aggression, were items that every person followed in the news and were able to relate to. The ad contained the theme of 'connect the dots,' bringing the readers to understand on their own that these occurrences cannot simply be coincidental; and to conclude that a hidden hand is leading the world in a

very specific direction, towards an era of goodness and kindness.

The ad went on to explain: The Lubavitcher Rebbe emphasizes that all of these events are a prelude to the era of the ultimate redemption of Moshiach, which is a cornerstone of the Jewish faith. We are standing before an era that will drastically change the world order. However, we cannot just sit back and enjoy the spectacle; each and every one of us must take an active part in furthering the changing times through bettering his and her personal surroundings. Every act of goodness, every additional commitment to Torah and mitzvos, can accelerate the dawn of this era.⁴ [Note that in the ad, the end of the word 'Moshiach' is left unwritten, for the reader to 'conclude' with his or her own actions.]

Countless weeks were spent, together with the advertisement agency of Mr. J.J. Gross, writing and perfecting a script which would be based on the Rebbe's own words, in a very simple and comprehensible way.

When the final version was ready in the beginning of Elul, it was brought to Rabbi Leibel Groner for the Rebbe, to obtain his consent and *brocha*. Over the next few days, nothing was heard from *mazkirus*.

THE REBBE RESPONDS

On Monday, 9 Elul, the Rebbe visited the Ohel, and upon his return, gave the response to the proposed ad. The Rebbe wrote a very encouraging reply, in which he emphasized that the benefit of the ad is very evident and concrete:

In preparing this article we were assisted by Rabbi Yehoshua Metzger and Rabbi Shlomo Uminer.

THE NEW YORK TIMES THURSDAY, AUGUST 16, 1990

AB

Draw Your Own Conclusion

These are amazing times.

The Iron Curtain tumbled... Iraq is humbled... The people of Israel emerge whole from under a rainstorm of murderous missiles... An entire beleaguered population is airlifted to safety overnight... A tidal wave of Russian Jews reaches Israel... Truth and justice take center stage, with America emerging as the leading global power... Nations around the world turn to democracy... Plus countless other amazing developments that are taking place in front of our eyes.

Any one of these phenomena by itself is enough to boggle the mind. Connect them all together, and a pattern emerges that cannot be ignored.

Yes, we are living in the most extraordinary times – as our world evolves toward a state of peace, and mankind thrives toward a state of perfection. The times are changing – not just for the better, but truly for the best.

A cornerstone of Jewish faith is the belief that, ultimately, good and peace must triumph. This is the essence of “Moshiach” – who will usher in the final redemption ordained in the Torah.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, emphasizes that these remarkable events are merely a prelude to the final Redemption, culminating in unity among people, domestic harmony, and cessation of hostilities between races, neighbors and nations.

And these developments can be accelerated through the small but important acts of goodness and charity that are within the reach of every man, woman and child. It is our job to lift ourselves, our communities and our societies toward the great dawn we are all witnessing. And it doesn't take much to move forward – a kind word, a gift to the needy, treating others with respect, strengthening one's commitment to the Torah and its directives.

The Era of Moshiach is upon us. Learn about it. Be a part of it. All you have to do is open your eyes. Inevitably, you'll draw your own conclusion.

MOSHIACH

Be a Part of it!

For information call **FRIENDS OF CHABAD LUBAVITCH** (212) CHABAD-1
or contact your local Chabad Lubavitch Center.

A public service message from The Foundation, approved by Joseph Grunich, Lubavitch, Australia.

נתקבל ות"ח ודבר בעתו מה טוב - ובג"ד
[ובגדון דידן] הנראה דוקא בעיני בשר ובאופן
דממש, ומתחיל ב"אני" ואח"כ ו"דודי" - ויה"ר
שיהי' (דודי) כפליים (ובמילא לתושי') דכפל ה"ז
ישועה. אזכיר על הציון

The Rebbe instructed that the ad be translated into Hebrew and Yiddish, and be printed in the *Algemeiner Journal*, as well as in the Hebrew press, directing them to hurry in order that it be printed in the next possible issue. Although initially Rabbi Yosef Gutnick had undertaken to cover the expenses of the ad, the Rebbe informed them that he would cover the costs of the Hebrew and Yiddish ads himself; adding a message for Rabbi Gutnick: "מ'זאל ניט מאכן קיין קונצ'ן" ["He shouldn't play around with this"].

Upon receiving the answer, the organizers were filled with excitement; it was not uncommon for the Rebbe to reject proposed ads regarding Moshiach topics, especially in such public and widely read media outlets. However, their ad was not only accepted, it was actually embraced by the Rebbe, not only instructing that it be disseminated much further than originally planned, but even insisting on personally covering the additional expenses. They immediately fulfilled the Rebbe's instructions and had the ad translated. They also forwarded the original version to shlichim around the USA to have it placed in their local newspapers.

QUESTIONS

That night, riots broke out in Crown Heights. An African-American child

They received the Rebbe's unequivocal disapproval. The ad was to be printed exactly the way it had initially been drafted.

had been struck by a car driven by a Lubavitcher, later dying from his wounds. The tension in the area exploded into mass rioting and looting, and later that night Yankel Rosenbaum ז"ל was murdered in cold blood as he was innocently walking down President Street. The chaos continued for three days with wild pillaging and destruction throughout the neighborhood.

But that was not all. That morning troubling news had arrived from the Soviet Union. The vice-president of the new government was trying to usurp the presidency from Mikhail Gorbachev, placing him under house arrest in his summer home in Crimea. Less than a year after the Iron Curtain had fallen, it seemed that the wheel was turning backward, and that the new age of Russia would return to an abyss of Communist dictatorship, from whose shackles the country had only recently been released.

As a result of these perturbing incidents, the validity of the ad was now being thrown into doubt. A large emphasis had been placed on events in the Soviet Union as one of the major signs of the upcoming redemption. But in light of the current situation, it would seem ludicrous for readers to believe that it was the prelude for an era of peace, all the while the news reported ominous winds blowing the USSR in the opposite direction.

NO NEED TO WORRY!

The events in Russia concerned Chassidim in particular. A significant group of shluchim had moved to Russia in recent years, and scores of bochorim were presently in the country, running

the many camps opened to serve the Jewish children swarming in droves to learn about Yiddishkeit. Relatives and friends around the world worried deeply for their safety, suggesting that they evacuate the country until the politics calmed down. The shluchim wrote to the Rebbe, and everyone waited anxiously to hear what the Rebbe would say.

The Rebbe's answer was not long in coming; *mazkirus* very quickly issued the following response:

בתמהון הכי גדול קיבלתי השאלה - כפשוט
ימשיכו בכל התכניות שלהם, כולל הקייטנות עד
גמירא כמתוכנן. זה יצליחם ויבשרו טוב. אזכיר
על הציון.

“With **very great** surprise I received the **question**. Obviously they should continue with all of their plans, including the summer camps, all the way through as planned. Hashem will grant them success and may they herald good news. I will mention [this] at the Ohel.”

The Rebbe's words were immediately publicized in all cities of the USSR, spreading encouragement and calm to all of the Chassidim, who in turn brought the Rebbe's words to their thousands of *mekuravim* throughout Russia⁵.

Hearing of the Rebbe's encouraging response, the organizers of the New York Times ad felt that perhaps a line should be added, addressing the apparent inconsistency between a time of goodness and kindness, and the current world events; conveying the Rebbe's assurance, that the situation in Russia will turn out well.

They conveyed the question to the Rebbe, outlining their new plan and asking for the Rebbe's consent. A short while later

they received the Rebbe's unequivocal disapproval. The ad was to be printed exactly the way it had initially been drafted.

Upon receiving the reply, the organizers immediately completed the final touches to the design, and forwarded it to the New York Times, as per the Rebbe's instruction.

On Thursday, 12 Elul, the full page ad was finally featured, in its full appeal and splendor. To the surprise and delight of the organizers, the same newspaper also published wonderful news from Russia; the coup had been defeated peacefully, and the previous government regained control over the country, just as the Rebbe had predicted.

The news caused people all over to heave a sigh of relief, while simultaneously reading--in the ad--that the era of the *geulah* is upon the world; and that the recent events (of that very day!) are all a prelude to the coming of Moshiach, encouraging them to join in the preparations as well. **D**

1. Hisva'aduyos 5752 vol. 2 pg. 267
2. Hisva'aduyos 5751 vol. 1 pg. 203
3. The following is based on an interview by A Chassidisher Derher with two activists involved in this project; Rabbi Shlomo Uminer as well as Rabbi Yehoshua Metzger, director of the Chai Foundation.
4. Rabbi Uminer notes that when crew members of CNN asked the Rebbe what is his message to the world (12 Cheshvan, 5752), the Rebbe stated this exact idea, saying: “It was printed in all the press of all the countries; Moshiach is ready to come now, it is only from our part to do something additional in the realm of goodness and kindness”.
5. See *Dyedushka; harabi milubavitch viyahadut Russia* p. 618 and further, for more details.