

מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות לכ"ק אדמו"ר  
לרגל יום הבהיר י"א ניסן  
נדפס ע"י ולזכות  
הרה"ת ר' דובער וזוגתו מרת אסתר לאה  
וילדיהם מנחם מענדל וחיה מושקא שיחיו  
גרינבלאטט





# MITZVAS HADOR

***Our responsibility and our distinct privilege.  
The novelty of our generation.***

***Shlichus is the Rebbe's initiative so symbiotic  
with dor hashvi'i; the Rebbe's unrelenting call  
to reach each and every single Jew throughout  
the world, bringing them the truths of  
Yiddishkeit and the maayonos haChassidus.***

***In honor of the yom habohir, Yud Aleph  
Nissan, we revisit this phenomenon based on  
the sichos and letters of the Rebbe; what the  
Rebbe calls "the mitzvah of our generation."***

## A Fundamental Shift

In biographies of Chassidim of previous generations, an interesting observation can be made. Many of these Chassidim worked in a wide range of occupations: some were businessmen, like Reb Meir Refaels, Reb Pinchas Raizes, and Reb Binyomin Kletzker (who was in the wood-logging business, hence the name “kletzker”); others were rabbonim, like Reb Zalman Zezmer; and some were *mashpi'im* and *ovdim* who spent their time learning and davening, like Reb Pesach Malastovker. Many simple Chassidim were often innkeepers or craftsmen.

With all that, there is one profession that was quite rare: spreading Yiddishkeit and Chassidus. Aside for a select few, like Reb Hillel Paritcher, almost none of the Chassidim of old have teaching Chassidus and spreading Yiddishkeit

as their full time occupation. It was something that Chassidim did throughout their lives, regardless of occupation, and there are countless stories recounting their tireless, sometimes life-risking efforts to do so even among their detractors; but few spent their entire lives doing this, and it also wasn't something that the Rabbeim demanded of them. A typical Chosid might spend his entire life in a *shtetl*, learning Chassidus and growing in his own *avodas Hashem*, while doing business on the side.

Flash forward a few generations to *dor hashvi'i*, and everything is different. Suddenly we find the greatest emphasis on people going out on shlichus devoting their lives to the Rebbe's mission; the result being that there are now thousands of Chassidim serving as shluchim throughout the world, involved in every aspect of Jewish life: building *mikvaos*, running

Hebrew schools, manning mitzvot booths, hosting Shabbos meals, teaching Chassidus to *olomishe*, and on and on.

What changed?

In a *sicha* of Shabbos parshas Shekalim 5729, the Rebbe addressed this very issue. *Hafatzas hamaayanos* never existed on this scale before in the history of Chassidus, the Rebbe said. The Baal Shem Tov, for example, who himself traveled around spreading Chassidus, didn't generally expect it of his Chassidim. Even after the Alter Rebbe was released from prison, when the *avoda* of spreading Chassidus really began<sup>1</sup>, it was still nothing like it is today.

Thus, the Rebbe said, Chassidim of previous generations were able to spend their time learning and davening at length, with the luxury of going to a warm *mikveh* everyday, rather than tearing themselves away from their communities and traveling to far-flung locations. *Hafotzas Hamaayanos* on this scale did not exist by any of the Rabbeim: not by the Baal Shem Tov, the Alter Rebbe, the Mitteler Rebbe, the Tzemach Tzedek, the Rebbe Maharash, or the Rebbe Rashab. It began with the Frieddiker Rebbe. Why?<sup>2</sup>

## The Mission Statement

Yud Shevat 5711. It was the farbrengen marking the first yahrtzeit of the Frieddiker Rebbe, and nervous anticipation mingled with muted excitement as everyone waited to see what would happen. Would the Rebbe finally end the long months of uncertainty and accept the *nesius* of Lubavitch? There were indications that this farbrengen would be the one, but still, no-one knew what to expect—a *kabbalos hanesius* is one of those things that had happened only a few times in history and it was impossible to know how this one would play out. The shul



RASKIN FAMILY ARCHIVES

'AN ENCOUNTER WITH CHABAD' SHABBATON IN CROWN HEIGHTS, TEVES 5725.

## כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר מאחל לעצמו

...יש גם שינויים בהנהגתם של

הנשיאים מדור לדור - כי, מדור לדור, "דור הולך ודור בא", משתנה אופן הבריורים (שהרי לולי השינוי בעבודת הבריורים, לא הי' צריך להיות שינוי הדורות), ומצד זה משתנה גם אופן העבודה, ובמילא משתנים גם ההוראות של הנשיא שבכל דור ודור. ולכן מצינו בסיפורים שמספרים

על מה שכל רבי הי' מאחל לעצמו

("וואָס יעדער רבי האָט זיך

געוואונטשען") - שלא היתה אותה

ברכה אצל רבינו הזקן, אצל הנשיא

שלאחריו, ואצל הנשיאים בדורות

הבאים, אלא היו שינויים בזה - לפי

אופן העבודה שהיתה דרושה בשביל

אותו דור.

ומשום זה לא יפלא גם החילוק

שבין הברכה שהי' אדמו"ר האמצעי

מאחל לעצמו, להברכה שהי' כ"ק מו"ח

אדמו"ר מאחל לעצמו:

אדמו"ר האמצעי הי' מאחל לעצמו

- שאברכים ההולכים ברחוב ידברו

אודות יחודא עילאה ויחודא תתאה.

וכ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר הי' מאחל

לעצמו - שכל אברך, ואפילו בחור,

יהפוך ל"עסקן", לפעול בהסביבה שלו

בהתאם למעמדה ומצבה - אם בנוגע

לשמירת שבת או בנוגע ללימוד אל"ף

בי"ת, ואפילו באנגלית...

...ולא להמתין עד שיבואו להזמינו

ולהביאו "בתופים ובמחולות", ולהכריז

לפניו: ראו מי הוא הבא לעשות מצוה...

אלא לרוץ ולחפש בעצמו להציל

יהודי, אפילו לשעה קלה, ואפילו בענין

פשוט.

(י"ט כסלו תשי"ד)

was packed, as over eight hundred Chassidim and admirers of Lubavitch came for the historic event, pushing and sweating in the tiny room.

The Rebbe began the second *sicha* saying that in accordance with the American custom when beginning



A GROUP OF BOCHURIM ON 'MERKOS SHLICHUS' POSING FOR A PICTURE, CIRCA 5711.

a new *inyan*, he would give a "statement"—which seemingly alluded to the *kabbolas hanesius*—but nothing was said clearly. After the *sicha*, Rabbi Avrohom Sender Nemtsov, an elder Chassid in his eighties, jumped on the table and announced: "The crowd asks that the Rebbe say a *maamar*. The *sichos* are good, but the crowd is asking for Chassidus..."

The room fell silent, as everyone held their collective breath to see how the Rebbe would react. And with that, the Rebbe began the *maamar Basi Legani*.

Looking back at the first *maamarim* of the various Rabbeim, it might not be obvious how they connected to their *kabbolas hanesius*, at least in a revealed way. But in this *maamar*, the Rebbe laid out clearly what his *nesius* meant, showing us the broader, cosmic perspective of what was happening here. This wasn't just another generation in the *shalshelos* of Chabad. This new generation, *dor hashvi'i*, had been charged with the ultimate mission, a mission over five thousand years in the making, a mission that Chassidus had been

founded to accomplish and was finally nearing completion—to complete a *dirah b'tachtonim* and prepare the world for Moshiach. As mundane and lowly as we may seem, the Rebbe said, we have the ability to do what no-one before had managed to accomplish. "Now," the Rebbe said, "it is entirely dependent on us."

"...This is demanded of each of us: To know that we find ourselves in the *dor hashvi'i*..."

This kind of *avoda* resembles that of Avraham: arriving in places where nothing was known of G-dliness, nothing was known of Yiddishkeit, nothing was even known of the Aleph-Beis, and while there setting oneself completely aside [and proclaiming Hashem's Name] in the spirit of the teaching of Chazal, "Do not read 'he proclaimed,' but 'he made others proclaim.'"

In the *sicha* following the *maamar*, the Rebbe established the ground rules of this mission.

"Now listen up Yidden! In general, the *nesi'im* would demand that the Chassidim themselves should toil, not depending on the Rebbe. Do not





THE REBBE DISTRIBUTES RECENTLY PRINTED SEFARIM TO THE FAMILIES OF THE SHLUCHIM LEAVING FOR ERETZ YISROEL, 11 SHEVAT 5736.

think that now, because you have chosen someone to lead, you can go back to having a quiet and peaceful life, relying on the Rebbe to take care of everything. *'Laigt zich nisht kain faigelach in Buzem!'* [I.e. don't fool yourselves]."

The Rebbe will help, but the *avoda* of transforming the world into a *dira betachtonim* and fulfilling our mission to bring Moshiach—this is still the responsibility of every Chosid.

Although they were surely inspired by these rousing words, the crowd at the farbrengen could hardly have imagined what the Rebbe really had in mind.

## Final Completion

During the early years of the *nesius*, the Rebbe constantly inspired, exhorted, and demanded from every single Chosid to fulfill their personal responsibility of spreading Chassidus and Yiddishkeit; coupled with the ever present awareness of the overarching goal of bringing Moshiach. But at the time it wasn't necessarily evident to everyone that a fundamental shift was in the making.

As time went on, the Rebbe introduced a revolutionary notion: that every person must become the Rebbe's shliach to spread Chassidus and Yiddishkeit. The Rebbe often explained that the concept of shlichus itself wasn't new, per se; it had begun in the times of the Frierdiker Rebbe<sup>3</sup>, first with the ten Chassidim with whom he made a covenant to save Yiddishkeit with *mesiras nefesh*, and continuing with the shluchim he sent later on, especially after arriving in America.<sup>4</sup> But now the Rebbe was expanding this mandate to every Chosid.

The reason for this, as the Rebbe explained, was already contained in that first *maamar* of *Basi Legani*: we are now on the doorstep of Moshiach,

and it is therefore time to complete the final elevation of the world.<sup>5</sup>

## Saving Lives

In addition to the constant pressing mission of bringing Moshiach as soon as possible—a thread that runs through all of the Rebbe’s *sichos* and *igros* throughout the years—there is a second, equally prominent theme about which the Rebbe constantly spoke: that it is *pikuach nefesh* to save the millions of Yidden who are being lost in the sea of assimilation.

This issue was relatively new. Until recently, the vast majority of Yidden were *shomrei Torah umitzvos*, and it was only in the past approximately one hundred and fifty years or so that this has changed. Initially, the main issue was that religious youth were being enticed by the false promises of the “new world,” causing them to drop their Yiddishkeit. But by the time the Rebbe’s *nesius* began, the problem had grown much more serious—many Yidden were so far gone that they had no idea what Yiddishkeit even was.

The early roots of this crisis had already begun in the times of the Alter Rebbe with the spread of the *haskala* movement, and the Rabbeim were on the forefront of the fight against it, leading the Chassidim in a battle of *mesiras nefesh*. The Tzemach Tzedek was arrested twenty-two times for standing up to the *maskilim* at government meetings in S. Petersburg. Both the Rebbe Maharash and the Frierdiker Rebbe’s lives were threatened by *maskilim*, only to be saved by open miracles. The spiritual status of the Yidden continued worsening with the onset of Communism, and the Frierdiker Rebbe toiled with *mesiras nefesh* to keep Judaism alive in Soviet Russia.

The Frierdiker Rebbe also worked tirelessly to spread Yiddishkeit in the free world. These efforts intensified

with his arrival in spiritually desolate America, where he began sending Chassidim to establish Jewish schools in a number of American cities.

The arrival of the Rebbe and Rebbetzin on the shores of America in 5701, signified the beginning of the biggest transformation, as an entire new phase in *hafotzas hamayonos* and *hafotzas hayahadus* began. The Frierdiker Rebbe established Machne Israel, Merkos L’Inyonei Chinuch and Kehos, and placed them in the Rebbe’s care. The purpose of these new major institutions included spreading yiddishkeit to all yidden and disseminating Chassidus in all languages.

This ‘battle,’ the Rebbe explained, is another reason for the institution of shlichus specifically in this generation. In these times of *ikvisa dimeshicha*, as the darkness of the world increases greatly, the *nossi hador* gives the shlichus to every single person to leave his surroundings, to go out to the *chutza*, and to do whatever he can to save the Yidden there. With three-quarters of Jewish children worldwide roaming around without a *Yiddishe chinuch*, and innumerable amounts of Yidden having no idea about their heritage, every single person has the duty to turn over the world with Yiddishkeit!<sup>6</sup>

This takes precedence over every other personal concern, spiritual or physical, the Rebbe explained, because saving a life takes precedence over all else. *How can you make cheshbonos when people are drowning?* Someone that makes excuses for his inaction, the Rebbe said, no matter how holy or valid these excuses may seem, is a classic example of a *Chosid shoteh*, like a person that would consider letting a woman drown because he thinks it’s not *tzniusdik* to save her. And because it is *pikuach nefesh*, going out on shlichus isn’t a *hiddur mitzva*—it is the absolute duty of every single person.<sup>7</sup>

## A Constant Shturem

When the Rebbe instituted a new *mitvza* or *takana*, it usually followed a familiar pattern. First came the introduction phase, when the new *mitvza* was the focal point of 770 and Lubavitch as a whole; and the Rebbe *shturemed* about it time and again, speaking about it constantly at farbrengens and writing about in letters. It was clear that during this time period, this was the primary mandate and main focus of the *avoda*. A few prime examples: the mid-5730s, the ten *mitvzoim*; 5741, Tzivos Hashem; and 5744/45 when the Rebbe instituted the daily study of Rambam.

After a certain amount of time, the Rebbe would move on to the next focus—a new *mitvza*—though it was clearly expected of the Chassidim to continue working in the previous *mitvzoim*, which by that time had become part of the regular *avoda*. Thus, while putting on tefillin and distributing *neshek* are probably the two most familiar trademarks of a Lubavitcher to this day, you will rarely find fiery *sichos* about these campaigns after the 5730s. Although Tzivos Hashem is one of the Rebbe’s unique *chiddushim*, there aren’t many *sichos* about the idea from 5746 and on. If you see a *sicha* about *mitvza mezuzah*, you know you’re looking at a *sicha* from 5734; if it’s about printing Tanyas, you know it’s probably from 5744.

But not shlichus. Shlichus is one institution that the Rebbe *shturemed* about over and over again throughout the years, as he exhorted and almost begged the Chassidim to utilize their *zechus* and immediately go out on shlichus. Reading a passionate *sicha* about shlichus, one cannot know if it’s from 5718 or 5728 or 5747. During the farbrengen of Purim 5721, the Rebbe remarked, “Speaking about this topic isn’t new; we have been speaking



ALEPH INSTITUTE



A MITZVAH MOBILE IN CALIFORNIA, CIRCA 5732.

about this year after year, without pause!”

This continued throughout the years. On Shabbos parshas Vayishlach 5747—more than twenty five years later—the Rebbe announced:

“It is the *tzav hash’aah*, according to the *hora’os* of *nessi doreinu*—which, [Hashem] revealed to his servants, the prophets—that every single person of this generation, man and woman, should dedicate themselves to be shluchim of the *nossi hador*, to toil in spreading Yiddishkeit, Torah and Chassidus! And, *איני מבקש אלא לפי כוחו* (Hashem only demands what one is able to do)—every single man and woman has all the requisite *kochos* for shlichus...it is only up to their will to give themselves over to this *avoda*.”

And, on Shabbos Parshas Chayei Sara 5747:

“Therefore, it must be announced to all Yidden, and especially the *talmidim* of Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim—whom the Rabbeim were *moser nefesh* to raise—that they should set out for the ‘battle’ of *Bais Dovid* to bring Moshiach tzidkeinu. **Become shluchim and go conquer the world with Yiddishkeit!**”

Again and again, the Rebbe exhorted the Chassidim to go out and fulfill the shlichus of the generation, notwithstanding any and all personal *cheshbonos* and reasons to the contrary—whether they were personal, familial, physical or even spiritual. None of that makes a difference, the Rebbe said, because this is your shlichus.

But it wasn’t always so simple.

## No Hot Mikveh?

In the early years of the *nesius*, as the Rebbe began introducing the idea of going out on shlichus, it was such a radical concept that it didn’t register for many people. Who would ever consider uprooting their families and move out to some random city with no relatives, no fellow Chassidim, no *heise mikveh*<sup>8</sup> and, possibly, no Jewish community? Many couldn’t even fathom that this was actually the Rebbe’s plan.

It took amazing courage to be the first ones to take on this new daunting initiative, and not everyone was able—or willing—to do it. There was once a young couple whom the Rebbe hand picked to move to a specific location (something that almost never

happened and was a *zechus* people would later wish for). Nevertheless<sup>9</sup>, they still tried to decline with excuses.

Yet, as time went on, with the Rebbe consistently speaking about the importance of shlichus, people began slowly realizing that this was what they had to do, and the number of new shluchim grew exponentially year by year.

But it took quite a while, and the farbrengens of those years are full of *sichos* lamenting the fact that people were slow to wake up to the idea of shlichus and they weren’t seeing the responsibility and importance of it.

In several farbrengens during that period, the Rebbe took a number of excuses that one might have and discarded them one by one. In one farbrengen:

*One person says that he doesn’t have papers for travel; a second person has another excuse; a third wants to be a businessman... Others don’t want to travel [on shlichus], arguing that they want to be near the aron hakodesh [the Rebbe].*<sup>10</sup>

And, in another farbrengen:

*In response to the claim that one can’t go, for how can one leave the Rebbe...*





CHABAD OF CALIFORNIA

...In response to the claim that one wants to remain “stuck” in 770, and discharge their [spiritual] responsibility by learning Chitas....

...But then there is another argument; a person is willing to forego their own will, but how can one give up on the will of his wife and children?

...And then [there are those who argue] there is also what to do in Brooklyn!....<sup>11</sup>

A person who is always making excuses about not going on shlichus, the Rebbe said, will have to be pulled out of *galus* by Moshiach tzidkeinu, since even then he won’t want to leave Brooklyn!<sup>12</sup>

Overall, the Rebbe’s general approach was that all excuses, well founded or not, do not affect the greater picture, that this is the shlichus of the generation from the *nossi hador*. It is the greatest *avoda* one can do, *pikuach nefesh mamash*, and the best reasons in the world will never change that. Furthermore, making excuses is foolhardy, since shlichus is in one’s own personal interests—this is how to be connected to the Rebbe, to fulfill one’s purpose, and to live the best life *b’gashmiyus* and *b’ruchniyus*.

Moreover, the Rebbe said, behind all these excuses, especially the spiritual ones, is often something far more basic — “People are simply interested in *menuchas haguf* [relaxing themselves]!”<sup>13</sup>

“What is demanded from you is to stop being immersed in *shtusim*. First thing in the morning he wants a cup of milk, and *davka* fresh milk, and *davka* every day. Then he has to take a walk on Broadway...Or, show a *kuntz*, that although he lives in New York, and has the ability to do so—he *doesn’t* go for a walk on Broadway...”<sup>14</sup>

The Rebbe also dealt with each excuse one by one, and a number of major sticking points were repeatedly addressed in farbrengens throughout the years. One frequent issue was the notion that a person must be fully accomplished in Torah and Mitzvos before teaching others. The Rebbe addressed this many times, providing many different answers, but one of the main responses was that although this idea may sound noble and valid in theory, it has absolutely no place when dealing with *pikuach nefesh*. How can you start reckoning with yourself, deliberating if you are worthy of helping or not—while someone is dying!?<sup>15</sup>

Another major issue, especially in the early days before shlichus was the norm, was that the shliach’s family wasn’t always excited about the idea of their family members living far away. Often, the Rebbe said, this is merely an excuse. The proof is that others, who truly wished to go on shlichus, were successful in persuading their families.<sup>16</sup>

And the same attitude applies, the Rebbe said, to any other reasons a person might come up with to avoid going on shlichus.

The Arizal once went with his talmidim outside of the city of Tzfas to bring in Shabbos. As they were singing and davening together, he

turned to them and said, “Friends! Would you like to go to Yerushalayim and spend Shabbos there?” Being that Yerushalayim is a considerable distance from Tzfas, twenty five *parsaos*, some of his *talmidim* replied they’d like to go home and ask their wives first. The Arizal was filled with dread, and clapped his hands together in dismay. “Woe is to us! Had you all answered in unison that you’d like to go with great joy, the Jewish nation would have immediately been redeemed.”

The Rebbe asks that, seemingly, *halacha* mandates that one must consult with his wife regarding such matters. What did the *talmid* do wrong?!

After explaining the simple answer to this question, the Rebbe taught a deeper lesson. When you hear a *hora’ah* from the *nossi hador*, there is no asking questions! There’s no place for second-guessing when you’re fighting the *milchemes Bais Dovid*! “The calculation may be valid, but for war one is not ready! Moshiach will not be brought this way!”<sup>17</sup>

Then there were those with a much more creative excuse. Instead of finding personal reasons themselves for not going out on shlichus, they took a much simpler path. They claimed that shlichus isn’t the *true* will of the Rebbe, that this is not the only *derech* of Chassidus.

The Rebbe responded to this excuse very passionately and explained why this perception is fundamentally flawed:

A person that claims that the Rebbe doesn’t really want them to go out on shlichus—thereby dragging the Rebbe down into his lowly excuses—is comparable to someone who “holds the head of the king and pulls it down...”<sup>18</sup> Regarding the claim that there are other *derachim* in Chassidus Chabad aside for going on shlichus, the Rebbe compared this to





public, or even to the *nossi hador*, for which one must sacrifice his personal priorities. Countless times the Rebbe emphasized that this is the one true way to find personal fulfillment and success, both spiritually and physically.

This is also the surest way to be close to the Rebbe. In a passage in Yirmiyahu bemoaning the fact that the Yidden had rejected Hashem, that they turned their backs on Him, the *possuk* uses a word—*panu*—that also connotes closeness. Chassidus explains that this is because a person can be very close physically, but in reality he is very far; conversely, a person can be far away physically, but in reality he is close.

This is also true, the Rebbe says, regarding one's relationship with the *nossi hador*. Sometimes, "a person can be close by to the *tziyon*, yet far away." But when he fulfills the Rebbe's shlichus, "the Rebbe is with him wherever he is... Even there, in the place of shlichus, he is together with the Rebbe."<sup>20</sup>

In a fascinating *maane*, the Rebbe addresses a shlucha from London who was fretting that she cannot find peace with herself because she feels that her true place is "here", in Crown Heights, and wishes that she could raise her child near the Rebbe. Circling the words "near the Rebbe," the Rebbe wrote, "Surely she is referring to the spirituality of this [i.e. of being near the Rebbe], (and not to the wood and stones of [this] neighborhood), and this [the spiritual closeness] she will find in my *mosad* in London."

## Challenges

Starting out life on shlichus often comes with many difficulties; financial, social, spiritual, and everything in between. Throughout the years, the Rebbe urged prospective and current shluchim time and again not to be intimidated by the sizable challenges,

saying that if a person fully dedicates himself to the task without being daunted by obstacles, or discouraged by initial failure, he will be successful beyond all his estimations, as he has the *kochos* of the Rebbe.

In a letter, the Rebbe concisely sums up this idea:

*...It is not part of his job to make many calculations. Rather, he must begin working in actuality, without being ashamed of scoffers on the inside or out, nor becoming discouraged if, initially, he is met with obstacles and the concealment [of positive results]. He must know that his duty is to work... He was given kochos for this, and he has the koach of he who sent him, my*

In a *sicha*, the Rebbe spoke about the idea of searching for *simanim*—signs—before making a decision, by opening a *sefer* and the like. This custom is valid, the Rebbe said, but only regarding issues in one's personal life, where there is room for doubt. But, "my father-in-law, the Rebbe, would dismiss those that looked for *simanim* regarding their shlichus," for when it comes to fulfilling the shlichus of the *nossi hador*, "one should not look for signs, not be daunted by signs or by obstacles and difficulties, and especially not from "the sound of floating leaves." Rather one must go and fulfill the shlichus with firmness, knowing that he has the strength of he who sent him, and knowing with certainty that success is assured." Doing so, the obstacles will become smaller and smaller "until they disappear."<sup>21</sup>

*father-in-law the Rebbe. Therefore, he should try again and again, and if chas ve'shalom, he is not successful on the first try [or even on] the third try—he should nevertheless try a fourth time, and surely the success will eventually come. Only in this way can one accomplish and have success.*

## We are Together!

But when things on shlichus did get tough, whether it was issues about children or financial woes or anything else, shluchim and shluchos would inevitably turn to the Rebbe. The Rebbe sent countless letters and there were untold amounts of *yechidusin* encouraging the shluchim and shluchos, guiding them through troubling times.

Rabbi Nosson Gurary, shliach of the Rebbe to Buffalo, New York, and one of the earliest shluchim on campus, was once going through a very difficult time. The university had moved its facilities to a new location, a sprawling campus surrounded by a lake, from where it was difficult for students to access the Chabad House. Suddenly, ten years into his shlichus, he was struggling to get a *minyan* on Shabbos and Yom Tov.

"I once went into the Rebbe, and I wrote how lonely it is on a Yom Tov or on a Shabbos. The Rebbe said to me, 'Vibald az du tust di arbet fun dem Rebbe'n dem shver, iz er mit dir—Since you are doing the work of my father-in-law, the Rebbe, he is with you.' Then the Rebbe said, 'Un mir zeinen oichet tzuzamen—And we are also together.' The Rebbe told me clearly that he is with me, and he knows what I'm going through. This is what *pikuach nefesh* is, and this is what you have to do." Rabbi Gurary adds, "He always let me know how much *nachas* he had from the work on campus."<sup>22</sup>

Difficulties and failures, especially financial ones, can overwhelm a

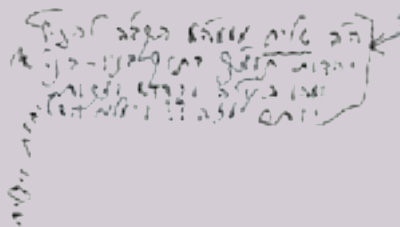
person, blinding him of past successes and overall achievements. In many letters to dispirited shluchim and shluchos, the Rebbe uplifted them simply by putting things into context and showing them the bigger picture of their overall successful shlichus. Being that it is so difficult to judge success in *ruchiniyusdike* work like shlichus, and being that spiritual success can sometimes feel short-lived [doing merely one mitzvah with another can feel like a very small act], shluchim sometimes hadn't even realized the impact they were having until the Rebbe pointed it out to them.

## The Greatest Zechus

The Rebbe also noted that one must be cognizant of the most important point, that as difficult as the hardships may be, they don't come close to the great *zechus* of being a shliach of the Rebbe. In a letter to someone who wanted to resign from his post in one of the *mosdos* in Eretz Yisroel, the Rebbe writes that having a job in the *mosdos* of the Frieddiker Rebbe is "contentment and wealth [אור וקושר] both spiritually and physically, and not everyone merits having this."

In a famous *sicha* on Simchas Torah 5746, the Rebbe added:

*In previous years, in the beginning of the shlichus of opening batei Chabad, there may have been room for doubting its success...But today, after over thirty years of activities of spreading Yiddishkeit, Torah and Chassidus—and seeing how much these activities have accomplished—any place that opens a Bais Chabad is guaranteed phenomenal success!...It is now up to the will of every single person, to join the shluchim who are toiling to fulfill the shlichus of my father-in-law, the Rebbe, nesi doreinu (in a way of שליח עושה שליח—one shliach appointing another shliach, until a hundred shluchim), since, today,*



ה"ה [=הרי הוא] שליח ממממה"מ הקב"ה [=ממלך מלכי המלכים הקדוש ברוך הוא] להפיץ יהדות תומ"צ [=תורה ומצוותיה] בתוך בניו - בני"י [=בני ישראל] ש"י ומהו נעלה וקדוש וזכות יותר מזה! וימלא השליחות ויצליח

*shlichus is a paved path, feasible for literally [mamesh] every single person!*

The Rebbe continued:

*Bichanuni na bizos! [Please test me on this!] Anyone who will give themselves over, with devotion and dedication, to the avodas hashlichus and hafatzas hatorah vehamaayanos through establishing batei Chabad—will see [the success] for himself!*

The Rebbe's affection for the shluchim was also most evident during the "homecoming" Shabbos of the Kinus Hashluchim. Regulars at 770 noticed that the Rebbe was in noticeably higher spirit during the days that the shluchim were there. One year, while addressing the shluchim, the Rebbe began by explaining that "It is a great *zechus* for me to be able to participate with the shluchim in this Kinus..."<sup>23</sup>

## Gezaltzene Shlichus

Many shluchim are in small cities where Jews are few and far between, with little access to kosher food or *chinuch* for their children, and no community to speak of. Even today, with so many other organizations following in Lubavitch's path of doing outreach, this approach is unique to Lubavitch alone. All other *kiruv* organizations establish themselves in places where they will have the most impact, namely cities with major Jewish populations.

Why are so many resources being poured into places with so few Jews, when there are other places with much denser Jewish populations? If the same effort invested in a single, far-out Jew was invested in Yidden living in "closer" areas, it would have so much more of an impact.

One answer the Rebbe gave is that this is "a mitzva that cannot be done by others."

"A Jew who lives in a far place," the Rebbe said, "who no-one else even knows about, who will save him if not you?!" Dealing with Yidden in far off places has the status of a *meis mitzvah*, a mitzvah that is neglected and no-one else is interested in doing, and thus it must be given priority.<sup>24</sup>

Then the Rebbe gave another, more general answer. "The Midrash says that 'Hashem did a favor for Yidden by spreading them throughout the nations,' one of you is exiled to Bavaria, and one of you is exiled to Smartasia...' because each Jew 'builds' the country of his exile. So too, by traveling to every corner of the world, the shluchim turn each of their vicinities from darkness into light."<sup>25</sup>

But some people, the Rebbe said, feel that going to areas with few Jews simply isn't a good use of their talents. When he is offered a shlichus, he is only ready to go somewhere where there are thousands and tens of thousands of Yidden. He thinks



to himself, 'It's a shame to take a talented person like me [and ask me] to dedicate my time, energy, and knowledge to work with a small community which only has a few Yidden, and doesn't even have ten people for a *minyan*! It's not worth it!'

The Rebbe answered that *dayo la'aved lihiyos k'rabo*, what's good enough for the master is good enough for the servant. "If it is fitting for Hashem to take the hand of every single Yid and take them to Eretz Yisroel, it is fitting for you to go out and work with even one single Jew!"<sup>26</sup>

In another farbrengen, the Rebbe spoke about another type of person: someone who is looking specifically for a "*gezaltznene* [salted, sophisticated] shlichus." He is willing to work with men or women, but not with children. It's not fitting for him! "No! he is told. You must be invested in the fact that another child and another child should be signed up for Tzivos Hashem!"

## One Little Person

But oftentimes, after shifting from the world of Torah, where one contemplates the grand plan of *dira betachtonim*—how every Chosid can and should take over the world, how we are polishing the final buttons of our *birurim*—after shifting from that world to the world reality, the contrast can be jarring. In this big, intimidating world, with all its billions of people, and with all the terrible things going on, how much of an effect can one shliach have in his little *makom hashlichus*? How much of a difference can he make? How can he, one little person, take on this vast world?

The Rebbe teaches a fascinating *hora'a* from a familiar story of Yaakov Avinu. Chassidus explains that when Yaakov sent messengers to Esav informing him that he was coming from Lavan's house, his message was



MORDECHAI BARON via JEM 147132

THE REBBE DISTRIBUTES THE KUNTRES V'SHAVTI B'SHALOM EXCLUSIVELY TO SHLUCHIM, ROSH CHODESH KISLEV 5748.

that having completed the *birur* of all the *nitzutzos* [sparks] in Charan, he was now ready for the *geulah*. This is an explanation brought down in hundreds of *maamarim* and *sichos*.

Seemingly, this is very difficult to accept. As the Rambam writes, most of the world was still worshipping idols at the time, and Yaakov saw this with his very own eyes as he traveled from Charan to Eretz Yisroel. Furthermore, he knew that the Yidden were destined to be enslaved in Egypt for four hundred years before their redemption. How could he have

thought for even a moment that Moshiach was ready to come?

But Yaakov knew that he didn't have to worry about the whole world. All he had to worry about was his own shlichus. Nothing else in the world—not even the majority of the world serving *avoda zara*—mattered to him, since they weren't included in his shlichus. As soon as Yaakov completed his *avoda* with Lavan, as soon as he completed his, personal shlichus, he sent the message to Esav that Moshiach was ready to come (and he was indeed correct, since

Moshiach could have truly come at that moment).

This is an awesome lesson about *avodas hashlichus*: When a person goes on shlichus, he must throw himself in to his personal shlichus, without worrying about anything else—not about other places or other people, or about anything else around him. “All he has in his world is his shlichus!” As soon as he will complete his personal shlichus, Moshiach will come.<sup>27</sup>

As the Rebbe quoted from the Rambam so many times, a person must look at the entire world as a balanced scale, and all that’s needed is one more action to tip the scale and bring Moshiach. One tiny action—as small as an atom—can blow up the entire world and transform it for the good.

## Dealing with Pearls

This shlichus to spread Yiddishkeit and Chassidus with the goal of bringing Moshiach is not limited to shluchim. In fact, more than any prior era, this shlichus is central to the *avodas Hashem* of every Yid in our generation.

Although the practice of Yiddishkeit has never changed since Moshe Rabbeinu, and is identical (in all key components) by all Yidden worldwide, the approach and philosophy towards it varies, shifting from generation to generation and from community to community. There is the *derech of mussar* and the *derech* of Chassidus; there is Chassidus Chabad and Chassidus *Chagas*; and on and on. Often, what it really boils down to is that each approach zeroes in on a certain mitzva or theme through which they view the rest of Torah and mitzvos. *Musar* emphasizes *yiras Hashem* and the lowliness of man, while Chassidus focuses on *ahavas Hashem* and understanding His greatness.

When the Baal Shem Tov revealed Chassidus, one of the cornerstones of his approach was that the world is utterly united with Hashem, since it is constantly being recreated by Him and has no existence on its own. He wasn’t the originator of this idea; the Midrash stated this thousands of years earlier. But he was the one who emphasized it and focused on it and made it a foundation in *avodas Hashem*.<sup>28</sup>

The same is true about shlichus, the Rebbe explained. The idea of shlichus is as old as the world itself. Adam and Chava, and all their descendants, were given the shlichus to make the world Hashem’s dwelling place. And later, at *matan Torah*, the Yidden became the shluchim of Hashem to fulfill Torah and mitzvos. On a more personal level, every Yid is Hashem’s shliach, and the *nossi hador* of each generation gives the *kochos* to their generation to fulfill their shlichus in the world.

But it was only in our generation, the Rebbe said, that the [Frierdiker] Rebbe took shlichus and made it into a fundamental theme in *avodas Hashem*; just like the Baal Shem Tov—in his generation—did with the concept of constant re-creation. The Frierdiker Rebbe gave the shlichus to every single person to spread Yiddishkeit and Chassidus, by leaving his own place and spiritual level and going out to the *chutzah*.

This is a constant theme throughout the Rebbe’s Torah, and especially in his letters. The Rebbe constantly encourages and enjoins every person, no matter his occupation or station in life, to spread Yiddishkeit and Chassidus by whatever means possible. Even if he was only a beginner in Yiddishkeit, even if he had his own problems to deal with, and even if he had doubts, this was his shlichus.

The Rebbe added, that although every Yid is indeed a shliach of the Rebbe, this was truly revealed and

emphasized when the Frierdiker Rebbe started appointing official shluchim, people who were completely dedicated to spreading Yiddishkeit. The Rebbe explained the difference by comparing it to another concept. Chassidus explains that all mitzvos are included within each other, so when a person fulfills any single mitzvah, in a sense he is really fulfilling them all. But, clearly, when you put on tefillin, the theme of *mitzvas* tefillin is much more revealed than when you blow a shofar, even though Tefillin is included in shofar as well. The same is true regarding shlichus; although all Yidden are shluchim, it is much more revealed by the shluchim themselves.<sup>29</sup>

A person can fulfill the shlichus of Hashem in the world no matter what his official occupation is. But, the Rebbe said, why would you choose to serve Hashem through your physical work, when you can serve him directly by going out on shlichus?!

There are two types of “pearls,” pearls of barley, in soup, and pearls on a necklace. You should invest yourself in the real type of pearls and become shluchim!<sup>30</sup> In today’s day and age, the Rebbe said, we are not demanding *mesiras nefesh* like in Russia. Quite the contrary; when a shliach arrives in a city, they sit him down at the *mizrach* wall, put his picture in the newspaper—which, in America, is the greatest honor of all—and they even give him the airplane ticket to get there. All a person has to do is to dedicate his will to the Rebbe.<sup>31</sup>



In the times of the Rebbe Rashab, the Rebbe said, a person first had to learn many years in Tomchei Temimim, after which he had to become a *maskil* and an *oved*. Only then would the Rebbe Rashab call him in and send him out on shlichus to be a rov, teacher, or *rosh yeshiva*. But in our times, the shlichus is immediately given to every single person. We

are saying clearly, the Rebbe added, that there is no reason to make preparations and to try to achieve very high levels before going. Rather, as soon as you are capable, you are given the shlichus of *lech lecha*, to give yourself over to the shlichus of our generation; to *shturem* the world with Yiddishkeit!<sup>32</sup>

Every person today has the opportunity, and also the serious responsibility. The Rebbe demanded that we “turn over the world,” in a positive manner, by going out into the world—and going out of ourselves—and doing everything we can to bring Yidden closer to Yiddishkeit.<sup>33</sup>

And most importantly, as the Rebbe explained at the Kinus Hashluchim of 5752, to fulfill the ultimate and final shlichus:

אז די איינציקע זאך וואס איז איצטער  
געבליבן אין דער עבודת השליחות איז: צו  
מקבל זיין פני משיח צדקנו...<sup>T</sup>

1. Sefer Hasichos Toras Shalom p. 112
2. Sichos Kodesh 5729 vol. 1 p. 368-369
3. And the Rebbe Rashab; see Shabbos parshas Lech Lecha 5749
4. Sefer Hasichos 5747 p. 89
5. Sichos Kodesh 5729 vol. 1 p. 368-369
6. Sichos Kodesh 5729 vol. 1 p. 368-369; Sefer Hasichos 5747 p. 93
7. Shabbos Parshas Kedoshim, 5746
8. See Sichos Kodesh 5729 vol.1 p. 368-369
9. See Shabbos Parshas Shemini 5718; Igros Kodesh vol. 17 p. 52
10. Shabbos Parshas Vayeshev 5717
11. Shabbos Chol Hamoed Sukkos, 5728
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. Simchas Bais Hashoieva 5721
15. Simchas Torah 5728
16. Shabbos Chol Hamoed Sukkos, 5728
17. Shabbos Parshas Shemini 5718
18. Simchas Torah 5721
19. Shabbos Parshas Shemini 5722
20. Simchas Bais Hashoieva, 5721
21. Shabbos Parshas Noach 5749, Toras Menachem 5749 vol. 1 p. 309-311
22. Rabbi Gurary's "My encounter" interview, Living Torah disc 137 program 545
23. Hisvaaduyos 5750 vol. 1 p. 395. See also *Children Come Home* Derher # 26 (103) Kislev-5775
24. Purim 5728; Yud Beis Tammuz 5730; Shabbos Balak 5734
25. Purim 5728
26. Yud Beis Tammuz 5730; Shabbos Balak 5734
27. Sefer Hasichos 5747 vol.1 p. 132; 143
28. Likutei Sichos vol. 25 p. 331 fn. 29
29. See Sefer Hasichos 5747 vol. 1 p. 86; 129; Sefer Hasichos 5748 vol 1 p. 440.
30. Sefer Hasichos 5747 vol. 1 p. 93.
31. Shabbos Chol Hamoed Sukkos 5728
32. Shabbos Parshas Lech Lecha 5749
33. Sefer Hasichos 5747 vol. 1 p. 93



THE REBBE ENCOURAGES THE TROOP OF MITZVAH TANKS, ON THEIR WAY TO THE STREETS OF NEW YORK CITY. SUMMER 5734.