



A LIGHT UNTO THE NATIONS

SHEVA MITZVOS B'NEI NOACH

לזכות
החייל בצבאות ה'
מנחם מענדל שיחי
לרגל יום הולדתו ביום י"ג טבת
שיגדל להיות חייל לנח"ר כ"ק אדמו"ר
נדפס ע"י הוריו הרה"ת ר' **יצחק דובער**
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גלאסנער



HISTORIC OPPORTUNITY

On Yud Shevat, 5711, the Rebbe delivered the maamar Bosi L'gani, setting out the charge of this generation, *dor hashvi'i*: to finally and completely bring the *shechinah* down to this world—*ובתחתונים דוקא*—specifically to the lowest of all worlds.

It is this mission that drives Chassidim to this day, to transform the world into a more G-dly place, and to teach the inhabitants of the world about the existence of the Creator and to live by His word, until the whole world will be filled with knowledge of Hashem. Obviously, included in our mission is a broader reach to *all* the inhabitants of the world, a majority of which are non-Jews.

In the words of the *novi*: *כי אז אהפך אל עמים שפה ברורה לקרא כלם בשם ה' לעבדו שכם אחד*—For then I will transform the peoples to a pure language that all of them call in the name of Hashem, to worship Him of one accord.

In connection with Yud Shevat, we take a look at the underlying meaning of this unique effort to spread the universal ethical laws, known as the *sheva mitzvos Bnei Noach*, among all the peoples of the world—a theme passionately discussed by the Rebbe at almost every major *farbrengen*, especially in the 5740's, and particularly the televised *farbrengens*.

We are now at a unique moment in history.

For thousands of years the Jewish people have been persecuted—from when Nimrod threw Avraham into the furnace and Eisav threatened Yaakov's life, to the expulsions and massacres of the Middle Ages, to their oppression under the Soviets and the extermination of six million Jews in the Holocaust just 70 years ago.

In the past few decades, however—a mere blink in the history of a nation—Yidden everywhere live in freedom. No longer are Yidden locked in ghettos and limited to specific trades, no longer are they barred from higher echelons of society, officially or otherwise; a Yid can behave and practice and run his life however he sees fit. For the first time ever, Yidden have the opportunity to deal with and mix with non-Jews on an equal level, including in government and commerce.

Faced with this unprecedented reality, most Yidden have largely continued as before. When it comes to their Yiddishkeit, when they are davening in shul, the non-Jew is not involved. Out in the world of business, on the other hand, Yidden now have the opportunity to play a role in society—not when it goes against Yiddishkeit, *chas veshalom*, but when there is no contradiction.

The Rebbe, however, taught us something almost shockingly simple: now that these new opportunities have been opened before us, we have the duty and responsibility, as is *paskened* by the Rambam, to share a universal message of ethics and morality to all people, based on the teachings of the *sheva mitzvos bnei Noach*.

In addition to the simple halachic obligation, this represents a monumental shift in how a Yid deals with the world. Whereas, in the past few thousand years, many Jews looked at a non-Jew with fear, or at least faint suspicion, now is a time when also a non-Jew can have a prominent role in Yiddishkeit.

The Rebbe explained that when a Yid encounters the world, though he may be tempted to try “playing the game” at the world's rules, he should in fact act himself: a proud Yid, a believer in Torah, who is always ready and eager to share the message of Yiddishkeit with every person. Far from sacrificing prestige and success, he will find that he will only gain respect in the eyes of others, leading to success, financially and otherwise.

These new freedoms, this new era in history is far from a coincidence, the Rebbe explained. The fact that we now have an unprecedented ability to share a universal message of morality with our gentile neighbors is part of a much larger picture. After years of refining the world and preparing it to realize its purpose of being a divine home, a *dira betachtonim*, we are now standing at the threshold of the time of Moshiach, when the entire world will indeed be a *dira betachtonim*. A world that will have no more famine, nor war, no envy nor malice,” because *all* inhabitants of the world—Yidden and *goyim*—will not be “busy with anything but knowing Hashem,” as Yeshaya states “the world will be filled with Divine knowledge as the waters cover the sea.” Hashem has given us the opportunity to get ready, to begin the process of bringing every human being into the service of Hashem by teaching the *sheva mitzvos bnei Noach*.

Furthermore, by teaching this to the nations of the world, their superior numbers have the ability to reach every corner of the world. In order to ready the *entire* planet to be a *dira batachtonim*, it is imperative that the non-Jews also carry the message.



PART 1: THE HALACHIC OBLIGATION

The halachic basis for *sheva mitzvos*, quoted countless times by the Rebbe, comes from the Rambam in Mishne Torah, Hilchos Melachim. The Rambam writes:

Moshe commanded, by the word of Hashem, to compel all the inhabitants of the world to accept the commandments given to Noach's descendants.¹

Then the Rambam continues:

Anyone who accepts upon himself the fulfillment of these seven mitzvos

and is precise in their observance is considered one of *chassidei umos ha'lom* ['the pious among the gentiles'] and will merit a share in the world to come.

This applies only when he accepts them and fulfills them because the Holy One, blessed be He, commanded them in the Torah and informed us through Moshe Rabbeinu that Noach's descendants had been commanded to fulfill them previously.

However, if he fulfills them out of intellectual conviction, he is not a *ger toshav*, nor of *chasidei umos ha'olam* ['the pious among the gentiles'], nor of their wise men. [In another version this reads "...

rather of their wise men."]²

In the next *perek*, the Rambam lists them:

Six mitzvos were commanded to Adam:

- 1) the prohibition against worship of false gods;
- 2) the prohibition against cursing Hashem;
- 3) the prohibition against murder;
- 4) the prohibition against forbidden relations;
- 5) the prohibition against theft;
- 6) the command to establish laws and courts of justice.
- 7) the prohibition against eating flesh from a living animal was added for Noach.

Thus there are seven mitzvos.

Most of these mitzvos are general and include many details. The list also

...The Yidden alone cannot reach every corner of the world. It is imperative that the non-Jews also carry the message so we can ready the entire planet to be a *dira betachtonim*.

The big question is obvious: What happened in all the years and centuries following the Rambam? Why was this halacha not quoted in Shulchan Aruch and its nosei keilim, nor in most shaalos u'teshuvos throughout the generations?

only includes negative mitzvos³; however, *b'nei Noach* are obligated to fulfill other positive mitzvos as well, including (according to most *meforshim*): *tzedakah*, *kibbud av va'eim*, and others.

In these short *halachos* the Rambam lays out the fundamental definition of *sheva mitzvos b'nei Noach*: these mitzvos are to be fulfilled not merely because one understands it intellectually, but because they are commanded by Hashem.

Being that this is so, the Rebbe said, when a Yid is teaching about the *sheva mitzvos*, he must “put in the effort and explain the mitzvos in a way that the ‘how’ and ‘why’ will be accepted. This takes much

thought and exertion.”⁴

The great reward for fulfilling these mitzvos should also be explained, and that in addition to the reward in this world, those who fulfill them will also merit in the world to come.⁵

And although, on the face of it, these mitzvos are self evident and obvious to any human being, the finer details of these mitzvos aren't so self evident at all. As the Rebbe said: “In order to convince someone to give up on his honor, jealousy and *taava*, that he shouldn't do an act of *hasagas gvul* [unfair competition], that he shouldn't even have a ‘nice talk’ that is negative about someone else... [In order to influence him] in a way which will have lasting

impact throughout the rest of his life; this is only possible if the decision is based on fulfilling the will of the Creator.”⁶ [More on this below.]

This can be done through conversation. “One must work at it over and over again,” the Rebbe said, “and not suffice with speaking about it one time in order to ease off the obligation. If a person spoke about it once, twice, and three times, they may argue: ‘*Vifil iz a shiur!*’ How long must I continue with this? I have other things to do!”

“But as we have seen, sometimes, speaking to a person three times did not accomplish the desired result, but on the fourth or fifth try they became



ARAB ABORTION

During a *yechidus* in 5740, the Rebbe spoke with the Sadigerer Rebbe about the issue of family planning in Eretz Yisrael, and how the government—and the doctors as well—were diligently trying to persuade young families not to have more children, trying to scare them and offering all types of arguments.

The Rebbe asserted that the first and most important way to fight this critical battle would be to persuade the government to increase the stipend given for each child. The Sadigerer Rebbe suggested that the funds be entrusted with the religious Yidden, for if not, he said, the stipend would go to Arabs as well.

After a short back and forth, with the Rebbe bringing up various arguments and the Sadigerer Rebbe protesting that, no matter what, the stipend should be controlled, the Rebbe flipped the argument on its head: Arabs, too, should be encouraged to have children.

”People came to me with complaints: why do I not differentiate [between Arabs and Yidden]?”

”So I told them: ‘First of all, according to *halacha*, a *ben Noach* is obligated to “inhabit the world” [and have children], and he’s prohibited to murder [– abortion]. Furthermore: a Yid is obligated to ensure that a *ben Noach* fulfills his mitzvos. If he’s able to do so, a Yid is not allowed to let a *ben Noach* do anything against the *sheva mitzvos*. Now, when the Yidden are not in power, there’s nothing they can do about it; but when they *are* in power, like in Eretz Yisrael, a Yid may not allow an Arab child to be aborted!’”

why it isn’t mentioned in Shulchan Aruch and its *nosei keilim*. “However, it is understood,” the Rebbe said, “that in a situation where this issue does not exist—as in this part of the world in the present day and age—the mitzvah applies.”⁷

This can be compared to the mitzvos that only apply when the *Beis Hamikdash* stands, or only when all Yidden are in Eretz Yisrael. Just because we haven’t fulfilled a mitzvah for hundreds or even thousands of years, that doesn’t mean that these mitzvos have been canceled, *chas veshalom*! “Every mitzvah that is written in Torah falls under the rule that ‘this Torah will not be switched!’” the Rebbe declared.⁸

In other words, being that the mitzvah of *sheva mitzvos* hasn’t applied for so many years—centuries or longer—many had basically forgotten about it. The Rebbe, as true leader and visionary, had the broad, thousands of years view-point to bring this obligation to the fore in these times when we can actually fulfill it.

WHO HAS TIME FOR THIS?

Many people could not comprehend why we would be so quick to extend outreach

a *shomer mitzvos b’nei Noach*!”

It should be noted that these seven mitzvos are now simply seven isolated laws. They are the foundations of a healthy and civil society -- the basis of civilization. And indeed, they are the guiding principles upon which the Constitution of the United States and many other constitutions of free countries today are founded.

WHAT HAPPENED UNTIL NOW?

Being that there is a clear halachic basis for *sheva mitzvos*, the big question is obvious:

What happened in all the years and centuries following the Rambam? Why was this *halacha* not quoted in Shulchan Aruch and its *nosei keilim*, nor in most *shaalos u’teshuvos* throughout the generations?

The answer, the Rebbe explained, is equally obvious: for the vast majority of our history, in the vast majority of countries, it was impossible. The obligation for a Jew to teach these mitzvos to a non-Jew the Rebbe said, is only when we are able to do so. In previous generations, speaking to a non-Jew and trying to influence him to fulfill *sheva mitzvos*

b’nei Noach was literally life endangering, since it would be interpreted as an attempt to get involved in their religion. [I.e. the halachic obligation of teaching non-Jews about their mitzvos does not override *pikuach nefesh*.]

Even in those specific cases when they were able to do so, it was done carefully and quietly. “Therefore,” the Rebbe said, “it is no surprise that in **published** *shaalos u’teshuvos* one doesn’t find discussions about this. Both the person asking and the one answering were scared of mentioning this issue in writing; at most it was discussed in person.” This is also

beyond our own Jewish community. Isn't it more important to focus on our own first?

First and foremost, the Rebbe addressed the issue from a purely halachic perspective: it is a mitzvah like all other mitzvos. Being that this is so, "How can a person even imagine that he can weigh and measure the value of one mitzvah over the other, and to decide according to his **human mind**—which is **biased** in many ways—how much effort is worth putting into it?!" As Chazal taught: "Be careful with a minor mitzvah as with a major one," and "Do not sit and weigh the mitzvos of the Torah."

"Just like Moshe Rabbeinu gave the 613 Mitzvos to Yidden by *matan Torah*, he commanded, in the name of Hashem, to teach all inhabitants of the world to accept the mitzvos of *b'nei Noach!*"⁹

The Rebbe added that this type of thinking leads one to a very slippery slope.

"With this approach," the Rebbe said, "a person can relieve himself of all 613 mitzvos of the Torah, *rachmana litzlan*, because whenever one mitzvah comes up, he's always busy with something else! Even regarding the [foundational] mitzvah

of *kabbalas ol malchus shamyaim*, he will argue that he's occupied with something else!"¹⁰

But the truth of the matter is, the Rebbe pointed out, that most of these arguments are inherently disingenuous. If you manage to find the time to meet non-Jews for your business and worldly affairs, don't say that you have no time for *sheva mitzvos*. "Here comes the *shturemdike* question: *Hayitochen!* When his *own* benefit is at stake, he works and struggles with all his might to influence the non-Jew. But when dealing with something which could bring good to the entire *world*—as the *possuk* says, בשלומה יהי לכם שלום—when there's peace in your city you too [the Yidden] will have peace' [see below]—he tries wiggling out of it by finding all types of excuses and explanations for why he can't do it; he's busy doing Torah and mitzvos!"¹¹

And unlike what some might think, that a Yid's connection with a non-Jew is only for *parnassa*, and the relationship should remain limited to that—the very opposite is true. The real reason a Yid has something to do with a non-Jew is in order to give him the opportunity to teach him about *sheva mitzvos!*¹²

PART 2: BELIEF AS THE BEDROCK OF CIVILIZATION

In explaining the need for *sheva mitzvos*, and why it is such a priority, the Rebbe added another, broader, perspective (though he always emphasized that this was only in addition to the halachic imperative).

If you would sum up today's consensus on the role of religion, morality, and science in a modern world, it would go something like this: The reason people fought and killed each other in previous generations was because they were primitive, superstitious, and uneducated. Now that our society is modern and educated, enlightened by the findings of science, we have come beyond the primitive cruelty of our ancestors. Our morals are based on the rock of common sense, decency, and modern philosophy.

Faith, in this point of view, may provide meaning, solace and

purpose, it may even be a noble impulse in society, but it's certainly not *necessary*.

The Rebbe, however, pointed out that this was very far from the truth. If in the past there may have been room for argument, our generation—*lo takum paamayim tzara* (this tragedy shall not repeat itself)—saw the Germans in action.

"The nation that prided itself before the entire world to have wisdom, science, philosophy, and morality; the nation that prided itself on the fact that its citizens spent decades dedicated to these studies, writing works on these subjects and rearing students upon students, and with the greatest *shturem* throughout the world—specifically they committed the most horrible acts against *tzedek veyosher*—justice and integrity!

"And this *wasn't* because one single person went crazy and forced everyone else to help him, as some would like to portray it. Those who were present, including me, witnessed the excitement with which the nation accepted him, as they expressed the hope that he would fulfill their aspiration to see 'Germany above all!'"

The component missing in all German culture

and science was that there is a higher Divine authority Who has given us the unwavering rules of morality that we are all accountable to.

“Thus, in order to ensure that society adheres to the basic laws of *tzedek* and *yosher*, it is absolutely necessary that its foundation be fulfilling the will of Hashem!”

The component missing in all German culture and science was that there is a higher Divine authority Who has given us the unwavering rules of morality that we are all accountable to. No-one should make the mistake, the Rebbe said, that this is limited to Germany.

“The situation in this country, unfortunately, is that there are hundreds of thousands of Jewish children, and millions of non-Jewish children, who learn in public school, and they know absolutely nothing about the Creator of the world and its director! Thus, children grow up in an environment that promotes “my strength and the might of my hand has accumulated this wealth for me”—with the notion that there is no-one above him! And because they’re a smart boy, or a smart girl, they can use their smarts and knowledge to get anything they want!

“With the situation as it is, it is very possible that it will further deteriorate, until it can even reach the levels it was in that country, rachmana litzlan!”
[Emphasis added.]

The only way to ensure the peace in the world is through the fulfillment of *sheva mitzvos* given by Hashem at Har Sinai; they are the foundations upon which civilization endures.

(As in many other times during the *farbrengens* discussing *sheva mitzvos*, the Rebbe also went on to call for a Moment of Silence in public schools, but that is beyond the scope of this article.)

WHY SHOULD I CARE?

There are two reasons, the Rebbe said, for Yidden to concern themselves with the state of civilization and try saving it from plummeting into a free-for-all. For one, being that we are fortunate enough to reside in a *medina shel chessed* (under kind government) like the United States, it is only right that we reciprocate and try helping it in any way we can. The best favor we can do is publicizing the *sheva mitzvos*, which will benefit the inhabitants of our country.¹³ When the natural avenue for your



parnassa comes through a non-Jew, you owe it to him to reciprocate the favor. By teaching him about *sheva mitzvos b'nei Noach*, you help him attain the greatest good—life in the world to come.¹⁴

Second, this is critical for the safety of the Yidden. “In the beginning of *galus* we were commanded, “Seek the peace of the city...for in its peace you shall have peace.” When will we have peace? When we fulfill this mitzvah!”¹⁵

We saw clearly in the most recent horrors of the holocaust: those among the nations who kept the *sheva mitzvos*, at least to a certain extent, people who were horrified of murder and robbery *rachmana litzlan*—they were the ones that saved dozens and dozens of Yidden.”

This isn't only regarding atrocities as extreme as the Holocaust, the Rebbe said. On a mundane level, when a non-Jew is faced with the choice of helping or hurting a Yid, in issues as simple as *parnassa*, if he is suffused with the recognition that there is “an eye that sees and an ear that listens,” that he must fulfill the *sheva mitzvos*, he will make the right choice.¹⁶



YOSSI MELAMED via JEM, 9 TISHREI 5750, 11697

GLOBAL MESSAGE

Writer, activist, and Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel had a long-standing, warm relationship with the Rebbe, who, when he was a despairing young man, lifted him out of the depths of hopelessness and set him on the path of success.

When he won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1986, the Rebbe wrote a long note by hand for the *mazkir* to relay to Wiesel by phone—unique in its informality, warmth, and frankness—congratulating him and also suggesting to him what his message for the world should be. The Rebbe provides a succinct, powerful summary of the message of *sheva mitzvos*:

“Ever since we met many years ago, I have followed the events of your life. I did so for many reasons: on account of our personal relationship, and also, as importantly, as a person who is influential on the Jewish people and the entire world. From my part, I am also interested because it relates to my own efforts, according to my abilities, on behalf of individuals and the public.

“In addition to the above, I have a deep feeling of appreciation for your hearty involvement in guarding the holy hand-written manuscripts etc. of Chabad and Chassidim—a special merit from heaven, which seems to be even greater than I myself surmised. [Mr. Wiesel was an expert witness at the Hei Teves trial.] This affected the way I thought about you as well, as is obvious.

When I found out that you received the “Nobel Prize”, it brought me pleasure, etcetera etcetera...

...Yet, I was uncertain whether—and how—I should react to the news, for many reasons. However, when Rabbi Yehuda *sheyichye* Krinsky relayed to me your conversation in general—and especially your discussion about the possibility of making a *kiddush Hashem* through this event—I saw therein a distinct *hashgacha pratit* that I should tell you at least a *nekuda* of what seems certain to me:

...The *nekuda* of the *nekuda*: You should utilize this event to publicize—in a way that will have a practical effect throughout the entire world, through the governments

(all of whom are joining this event)—and drive in the awareness that Hashem “created the world to be civilized (and in peace)”—the entire world.

In order to achieve this, education in this direction is required (for adults as well), primarily through the education about, and fulfilment of, the *sheva mitzvos b'nei Noach*.

In order for the fulfillment [of the mitzvos] to be constant, without change, they must be fulfilled because they are the command and request of the Creator of the world, the Director of the world—the Super Power [English in the original] of all super powers.

President Reagan already mentioned this (briefly). Knowing his attitude, I am almost certain that he will join your call and demand on this topic. [And he will do so] publicly and strongly.

It is obvious, that anyone who is educated in, and fulfills, these seven mitzvos, would not be capable of taking part in the events of the Holocaust. You are someone who actually endured the *gehinom* of the Holocaust, and witnessed people actually perpetrating the actions of the Holocaust, and cold-bloodedly.

By the kindness of Hashem you were saved, etc. and you have the holy obligation to announce, and announce again, that every person has the obligation to influence and spread this type of *chinuch*.

There is much more to write about this, but for someone like you it is not necessary. To the contrary: when you speak about it in your own style, it will be better and more effective.

(All of the above is only as a suggestion, and for your consideration, obviously.)

I will conclude with the *bracha* of Yidden, and in *mame lashon*—*farnutzen gezunterheit* [use the prize in good health], physically and spiritually.

I requested that this should be relayed over the telephone (notwithstanding the inconvenience) since it is Erev Yom Tov, followed by nine days [of Sukkos].

Gemar chasima tova, bichavod u'bivrachta”

PART 3: RESPECT THROUGH INFLUENCE

Then the Rebbe took it a step further: not only should Yidden be teaching *sheva mitzvos* because of the thousands of non-Jews who will begin fulfilling them—thousands upon thousands of mitzvos in total.¹⁷ And not only is it in his own interest to do so because of the *effect* it will have—that the world won't descend into chaos. But even more so: the very teaching and influencing and talking on the subject, will bring people to respect us.

By instructing us to spread *sheva mitzvos*, Torah isn't demanding that a Yid do something uncomfortable, that he override his feelings of embarrassment and potential ridicule in order to fulfill the *halacha*. Rather the opposite is true: when a Yid is not embarrassed to show who he really is and the mission he was charged with, and when, furthermore, he spreads belief in Hashem to

everyone he knows, that is when he truly gains the respect of those who know him, and they will follow his lead.¹⁸ And, on a personal level, the Rebbe said, “It causes the non-Jew to become fond of the Yid, since he sees the Yid seeking his benefit.”¹⁹

RIPPLE EFFECT

At the farbrengen of Yud-Aleph Nissan 5743, the Rebbe related a recent incident that illustrated this fact.

There was a Jew, the Rebbe related, a wealthy person [Chassidim would later discover that this was philanthropist David Chase], who among his abundant assets owned a yacht which he would sail from time to time during vacation. When it came time to daven, he needed to know which way was east, and being that, for a while now, he had learned that Yiddishkeit was nothing to be embarrassed of, he didn't hesitate to ask the captain to point him in the right direction.

After this occurred a few times, the captain asked for an explanation, and the Yid told him that he needed to face Yerushalayim in order to properly *daven* to Hashem.

This made a profound impression on the captain. “If a successful person like you,” he said, “who owns a yacht with a captain on

staff, finds it important to connect with G-d three times a day, stopping everything he's doing in order to daven in the proper way, I too will begin thinking about G-d!"

The very fact that he thought about Hashem is significant in itself, the Rebbe pointed out. It is a form of prayer, and also falls into the category of "not serving idolatry," one of the *sheva mitzvos*. And surely, the Rebbe said, the story didn't end here. The fact that he began thinking about Hashem certainly affected him in the following days. If he considered doing a negative act, not in line with *tzedek* and *yosher*, he remembered the "eye that sees" and refrained from doing it!

A week and half later, during the Acharon Shel Pesach farbrengen, the Rebbe said that after relating such a story, he had assumed that Chassidim would follow up with it. But since no-one had done so, "I myself began looking into it."

It turned out, the Rebbe said, that from that point on, at every opportunity the captain began speaking with his friends and family about the importance of thinking about the Creator of the world and the importance of davening to him. And, the captain

added, if everyone would think about the Creator and pray to him, the world wouldn't look like such a jungle!²⁰

"If a successful person like you," said the captain, "who owns a yacht with a captain on staff, finds it important to connect with Hashem three times a day, stopping everything he's doing in order to daven in the proper way, I too will begin thinking about Hashem!"

SPREAD THE WORD

Rabbi Dr. Israel Drazin was in the U.S. Army for over thirty years, ultimately attaining the rank of Brigadier General, and served as Assistant Chief of Chaplains of the U.S. Army.

In 5746, he attended a farbrengen. When he approached the Rebbe between the *sichos*, the Rebbe had a relatively long conversation with him.

"You are given special opportunities," the Rebbe said, "to influence your Jewish soldiers in performing their mitzvos, and to influence the gentile soldiers as well in fulfilling the *sheva mitzvos b'nei Noach*. Certainly the other gentile chaplains will not be upset at you, that you are mixing in their affairs, that you are helping them. Probably you can influence him—the gentile chaplain—in performing the *sheva mitzvos bnei Noach*."

"And all this will be a preparation for the coming of Moshiach Tzidkeinu!" the Rebbe concluded.

"I will try and do that," Rabbi Drazin replied.

He later related: "I said, *that's* interesting—that the Rebbe would think that I, as a general, would stand before non-jews and speak to them about the seven Noahide commandments. I thought, 'This is something that's a no-go right from the very beginning. Then I thought about it for a while, and I said to myself that, actually, those things that seem to be the most difficult in life are the things that you should try and do.'"

He developed a speech on the topic, testing it first on Christian clergy. They loved it, and he went on to give it all over the world. As he described in a subsequent letter to the Rebbe: "I spoke in Los Angeles on the subject...to thirty Christian chaplains, including the Chief of Chaplains of the U.S. Army.... several of these told me they intend to speak on the subject....in Europe to 600 Christian clergy...in Atlanta to 300 Christian clergy...in Salt Lake City, to 350 Christian clergy...Although I am not a Chasid...I have read much about Lubavitch, including all of the Rebbe's sichot in the twenty-four volume *Lekutei Sichos* to Bireishis, Shemos and Dvorum.

"I hope the Rebbe is pleased with my initial effort to comply with his shlichus-mission."

The Rebbe wrote back: "I trust that you have your major speeches on this subject on tape, and that you would publicize them in a suitable publication that would serve as a source, as well as an inspiration, for others to disseminate these seven commandments. Wishing you, again, the utmost hatzlacha in all your good efforts, particularly in the above."²¹

PART 4: THE FULFILLMENT OF CHASSIDUS

In addition to the halachic obligation, the societal need, and the personal gain, the Rebbe stated that there's something much larger at play here: the historic opportunity to prepare the world for *geulah*.

Following his release from prison on Yud-Tes Kislev, the Alter Rebbe wrote a letter to his long-standing friends and colleagues, Reb Levi Yitzchok Berdichever and Reb Boruch Mezhibuzher, stating, "Hashem performed wonders... especially in the eyes of the ministers and all the nations of the world. Even in their eyes, it was wonders of wonders, and they all reacted and said, "This must come from Hashem, it is miraculous in our eyes!"

Why was the Alter Rebbe concerned with -and why would he spend his time writing about- things related to these non-Jews?!²²

Because, the Rebbe explained, that is precisely the point.

The objective of spreading Chassidus—the purpose of our life on this planet, in fact—is to make the world a *dira batachtonim*, a place where Hashem can reside. Non-

Jews, are a critical part of this vision. They, too, will be completely submerged in *Elokus* when Moshiach comes.

Thus, as a preparation for Moshiach's times,



THE DEFINING CHIDDUSH OF OUR GENERATION.

During the farbrengen of Simchas Torah eve 5747, the Rebbe spoke about the fact that a major aspect of *pnimiyus haTorah* in general, and Chassidus Chabad in particular, is that it reaches the spiritually lowest places. This was developed and expanded from generation to generation through the seven generations of Rabbeim:

The Alter Rebbe brought down Chassidus in a way that could be understood by human intellect;

The Mitteler Rebbe expanded Chassidus further, developing its ideas "like a broad stream;"

Then the Tzemach Tzedek integrated *nigleh* and Chassidus, uniting them as one;

The Rebbe Maharash revealed Chassidus even further, in a way of *lechatchila ariber*;

The Rebbe Rashab continued the way of his father, and went beyond, as expressed in his establishing Tomchei Temimim [the yeshiva and "training ground" for the spiritual soldiers who would spread Chassidus worldwide];

The *chiddush* of the Frierdiker Rebbe, the Rebbe said, was that he spread Chassidus even to the farthest *chutza*, including through translating Chassidus in multiple languages, enabling any person to understand it, including a non-Jew. [The Rebbe once noted that this was also one of the reasons that he arranged for the Tanya to be translated into English.²⁴] This fulfills the ultimate goal of *matan Torah*, to permeate every part of the world with *Elokus*.

"For example," the Rebbe said, "now, even a non-Jew can understand the difference between the concept of *ein od milvado* and *ein od*, as Chassidus explains at length. Now, through *nessi doreinu*, these concepts were revealed and brought down to the lowest levels, even to a non-Jew (who, at the very least, can comprehend the lessons which come from these ideas).

"This continues to go on and expand through his *talmidim* who fulfill his will, and his shluachim, *shlucho shel adam kimoso*, and it extends by *shliach oseh shliach* (one shliach appoints another).

we have the duty and the mitzvah to begin the process of spreading *Elokus* to the whole world, and to every person in the world, through teaching them about *sheva mitzvos b'nei Noach*. This is why in the letter after Yud-Tes Kislev, which represents the victory of spreading Chassidus with the goal of bringing Moshiach, the Alter Rebbe wrote about the nations of the world, and how they saw with their own eyes the revelation from Hashem; a prelude to the time when “the glory of Hashem shall be revealed.”²³

WHO IS SUPPOSED TO DO THIS?

As seen above, the halachic obligation to spread *sheva mitzvos* is incumbent upon every single Yid. However, when the Rebbe first began speaking about it, his call was directed primarily to people with public influence—government officials and aides, public figures—who have unique opportunities to impact the public sphere.²⁵

Quickly, however, the Rebbe encouraged anyone and everyone to get involved. The very fact that someone has a connection with people in the outside world is for a reason; to influence them. These are opportunities given by

Hashem and must not be wasted.”

And at the farbrengen of Yud Tes Kislev 5744, the Rebbe explained that *no one* is exempt from this duty:

The Rebbe related the story of how the Alter Rebbe paused his davening in the middle of Yom Kippur, left shul, and chopped wood to provide heat for a woman who had just given birth. The lesson, the Rebbe said, is that no-one should think they are too great to do a simple *avoda*: “We tell a Yid: Listen up! You are indeed a great *lamdan*, a great achiever, *se’iz nit shaychus tzu zugen*; you have an effect on the doings on-high. Nevertheless, you should know, that there are non-Jews out there who are not yet aware about the importance of *sheva mitzvos b'nei Noach*; therefore, you must do everything in your ability that this non-Jew—as a non-Jew—should fulfill the *sheva mitzvos b'nei Noach!*”

“When he hears this he says, *gevald!* Why must he get involved in these things, don’t you know what he’s involved in?! He recites Ashrei, says Tehillim, learns Chassidus and *nigleh*, spreads Yiddishkiet and Chassidus to the *chutza!* How can you come to him all of a

sudden and disturb him with discussions about non-Jew?

“...The answer to them is: being that you live on the same street as a non-Jew, and it is possible that he does not fulfill the seven mitzvos, or one of them, and being that he respects you, and knows that when you say something, you really mean it, you must find a few minutes to speak with him (if need be, through an interpreter) and tell him the following: Since humans were created in the Divine image, and he commanded you these seven mitzvos, you must fulfill them with all their details!”²⁶

NON-JEWS AS SHLUCHIM

As the years passed, the Rebbe defined the *avoda* of the shluchim as twofold: spreading Yiddishkeit and Chassidus to Yidden and *tzedek* and *yosher* to non-Jews.

During the Kinus Hashluchim 5750, the Rebbe asked a fascinating question: How can we attempt to make the entire world a dwelling place for Hashem—“the Kinus Hashluchim *Ha’olami’*—a world-wide conference—without the necessary manpower?

“Even if we were to reach all Yidden wherever they are, we are only

reaching a fraction of all nations of the world. It falls quite short of the vision of reaching the entire world and the tremendous amount of people who dwell in it. How can Yidden effect that Hashem should have a dwelling place in *tachtonim*—all the *tachtonim*, Kinus Hashluchim *Ha’olami’*—on a worldwide scale?”

This is one of reasons, the Rebbe said, that Yidden were commanded to teach *sheva mitzvos*. Part of making the world a dwelling place for Hashem is to make it into a civilized place for people. And for this, “we need the nations of the world, who are much larger in number, and occupy much more space in the world. Yidden can assist in this endeavor, but the primary work of making the world a civilized place must be done by the seventy nations. This is also the mission of the shluchim: to reveal within all human beings that they are the shluchim of Hashem; Yidden through fulfilling the 613 mitzvos, and non-Jews through fulfilling their seven mitzvos.”²⁷ **T**

1. Sefer Shoftim, Hilchos Melachim U’milchamos, perek 8 halacha 10.

2. Ibid, halacha 11.

3. With the possible exception of *dinim*, see *meforshim* for explanation.

4. Toras Menachem 5743 vol 2 p. 636
5. Yud Alef Nissan 5743; Toras Menachem 5743 vol. 4 p. 1207-1208
6. Toras Menachem 5747 vol 2 p. 615
7. Acharon Shel Pesach 5743, Hisvaaduyos 5743 vol. 3 p. 1333; Lekutei Sichos vol. 26 p. 141-142
8. Yud Tes Kislev 5743; Sichos Kodesh 5743 vol. 2 p. 30
9. Yud Tes Kislev 5744; Sichos Kodesh 5744 p. 26
10. Purim 5747; Toras Menachem 5747 vol 2 p. 616
11. Yud Tes Kislev 5743; Toras Menachem vol. 2 p. 637
12. Yud Alef Nissan 5743; Toras Menachem 5743 vol. 2 p. 1207
13. Toras Menachem 5743 vol 2 p. 640
14. Yud Alef Nissan 5743; Toras Menachem 5743 vol. 3 p. 1208
15. Yud Tes Kislev 5743; Toras Menachem 5743 vol 2 p. 636, based on the recording.
16. Lekutei Sichos vol. 26 p. 143
17. Lekutei Sichos vol. 26 p. 144
18. Lekutei Sichos vol. 26 p. 144
19. Purim 5747; Toras Menachem 5747 vol. 2 p. 615
20. Achron Shel Pesach 5743; Toras Menachem 5743 vol. 3 p. 1336
21. Living Torah disc 83, program 331 “Family of Nations”; Living Torah disc 106, program 423 “Extended Family”.
22. Yud Tes Kislev 5743, Hisvaaduyos 5743 vol. 2 p. 640. Yud Tes Kislev 5744; Sichos Kodesh 5744 p. 19
23. Yud Tes Kislev 5744; Sichos Kodesh 5744 p. 35
24. Shabbos Bereishis 5729
25. See e.g. Yud Alef Nissan 5734; Sichos Kodesh 5734 vol. 2 p. 10
26. Yud Tes Kislev 5744; Sichos Kodesh 5744 p. 49
27. Sefer Hasichos 5750 p. 144



PRAYER

During the Rebbe’s effort to include a “Moment of Silence” each morning in public schools, he urged that public officials, from all levels of government, should recognize the importance of this endeavor through official proclamations and the like. Rabbi Zalman Aaron Grossbaum, shliach to Ontario, Canada, arranged a meeting with the Prime Minister. His plan was to gift him a large silver *kiddush* cup, a *kos shel Eliyahu*, and to explain to him that every person, especially someone in a position of leadership, has the responsibility to bring holiness into his environment—to transform the world to *kedusha*.

The day before their meeting he wrote a letter to the Rebbe detailing his plans. That night, he received a call from the Rebbe’s *mazkirus*. On his letter, the Rebbe had circled the words “*kiddush* cup,” and wrote a question mark and exclamation mark—“?!”

“What’s he going to do with it?” the Rebbe wrote. “On the other hand, [if you give him] a *siddur*, in an English version (wrapped up in a box within a box), [then he will have use for it] because many prayers, starting from the beginning, *Modeh Ani*, are relevant to a *ben Noach* as well.”

Rabbi Grossbaum relates: “So here we are, sitting there. It’s ten o’clock at night, and our *kiddush* cup on the table, all wrapped and engraved, is history now. We have to get a leather-bound English *siddur* in a beautiful jacket, and then have it in another box to present it to him.

“We presented him with this *siddur* and told him exactly what the Rebbe said. Ever since then, with every single Prime Minister in office, when we meet with them we bring an English *siddur*, and they acknowledge how meaningful it is to recognize every day that there is a Creator who has restored our soul, giving us a new force of energy to go forward another day.”

(My Encounter interview, Living Torah disc 114 program 455)