



דער רבי וועט געפינען אַ וועג... ...געפינען אַ וועג...

Quality and Quantity

AS TOLD BY RABBI CHAIM BORUCH OIRECHMAN (BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA)

Our shlichus in the high-end neighborhood of Puerto Madero in Buenos Aires, Argentina, began in 5765. It is the wealthiest area in the city, with skyscrapers filled with luxury condos and hotels, banquet halls, global corporate offices and international banks. Expansive parks dot the landscape and a beautiful promenade runs between the River De La Plata and the Port of Buenos Aires. La Casa Rosada—The Pink House, the executive mansion and office of Argentina’s president, is located there as well.

Naturally, purchasing a building or property for a proper Chabad House is very difficult and for the first few years we operated out of a small office space. For *yomim tovim* and other events we rented halls and larger spaces, always careful not to disturb the neighbors and tourists.

As the *peulos* grew and the weekly *minyanim* attracted more people, we realized that finding a suitable home for Chabad of Puerto Madero was a top priority, and that it needed to be in a central location with easy access. Our repeated inquiries turned up the same answer: All real estate available for sale in the area were earmarked for constructing multi-storied buildings and skyscrapers. A shul or Chabad House that we envisioned was out of the question.

Among the dozens of skyscrapers, the only two-story house in the entire area caught my attention and whenever I passed it I would think to myself or mention to others that it would be perfect for our needs. But I was aware that it was wishful thinking.

One day, one of our *mekuravim* shared with me that my “dream house” belonged to the city and is designated as a historic landmark. Since it cannot be demolished, it will always stay its current size and it was currently not being used for any purpose. “We must do everything to get this house for Chabad,” he said.

During that time period, the governor of Buenos Aires was forced to resign due to a humiliating ethics scandal and his Jewish deputy, Mr. Jorge Telerman, was installed—several days before Purim—as interim governor for two years until the next election. My father-in-law, Rabbi Tzvi Grunblatt, head shliach to Argentina, and I visited Mr. Telerman on Purim and we had a spirited and warm conversation during which we mentioned our wish to secure a proper location for a Chabad House in the Puerto Madero district.

We shared with him the story of the Megillah and how Mordechai implored upon Esther to do all in her power to save the Jews by pointing out to her that “perhaps this is the reason you have been elevated to royalty...”

He understood the message very well and committed to allocating government property for the purpose of building a shul and a community center under the auspices of Chabad. We would need to gather hundreds of signatures from local residents, investors, hotel owners and others stating that use of the property by Chabad would be a great benefit for the Jewish community.

The manager of the government properties offered us two properties to choose from. The house I had been eyeing for some time was small (less than 500 square feet indoors) but was in a prime location. Another property was much larger (several thousand square feet to build on) but not in such a good location. I was unsure about how to proceed.

I wrote a detailed letter to the Rebbe describing the two locations and requested a *bracha* that I make the correct choice between the quantity of space or the quality of location. To my amazement, after sending the letter to the Ohel, government officials started contacting me about the smaller house as if we had already chosen that one over the other property and even started the necessary paperwork to allow us to begin collecting signatures.

I understood this to be a clear sign that in this case quality outweighs quantity.

After two years of intense work, during Chanukah 5768, the government allotted the property to us. To my surprise, I was notified that in addition to the two-story house, the entire property was being allocated for Chabad use. Upon seeing the official maps of the property, I realized the magnitude of the Rebbe’s *bracha* and the great miracle we merited to experience. The entire property measured over



50,000 square feet and we were allowed to build on it as we wished!

Over the years, we succeeded in constructing a larger building adjacent to the original two-story house. Five years later, in Shevat 5773, the new governor reissued the property to us and during Sivan 5777 the Congress passed legislation allocating the property for Chabad use indefinitely.

This is one of numerous examples where we see clearly how the Rebbe guides us in every area of our shlichus. The Rebbe ensured that we secure a prime location (quality) coupled with previously unimaginable ability for massive expansion (quantity)! **T**

YOUR STORY

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