

# A חסידישער פארהאנדל CHASSIDISHER DERHER

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## Miracles at Entebbe The True Secret to Salvation – Tammuz 5736



*This summer marks 36 years since the miraculous rescue of the Jewish hostages held by Palestinian terrorists in Entebbe, Uganda. Much is known of the story of this superb rescue mission widely recognized by the world at large as an open miracle from Hashem for His chosen people. Perhaps less is known of the Rebbe's own rescue efforts before, during, and following the episode. It is a glimpse into this side of the story that we attempt to bring in the following article.*

### TWELVE PESSUKIM WILL OVERCOME THE ENEMY

Throughout the entire hostage crisis, *Yidden* all over the world gathered together to beseech Heavenly mercy for the plight of those captured.

One of the largest gatherings to be held was on Thursday, Gimmel Tammuz called by the "Badatz - Eida Chareidis" of Yerushalayim, where tens of thousands of Jewish school children gathered together to *Daven* for the safe return of the hostages. What was most surprising was that at this gathering (which was not connected with Lubavitch in any which way), all the children recited the twelve *Pessukim* that had recently been selected by the Rebbe!

How so? Rabbi Avrohom Pevsner (one of the "Shluchoi Kodesh" sent by the Rebbe to

Eretz Yisroel, today the *Rav* of Anash in Paris) relates:

"The Shluchim to Eretz Yisroel at the time had a very warm relationship with many of the *Rabbonim* there, and especially with HoRav Y. Weiss, the *Av Beis Din* of *Eida Chareidis*.

"On the morning of the grand gathering, we went over to his home and met with him in his study, requesting that he allow the twelve *Pessukim* to be recited at the gathering. We explained that being that the gathering was in order to bring about salvation against our enemies, and Jewish children have the special power to do so, it would only be appropriate to recite these specific *Pessukim* selected by the Rebbe which surely carry extraordinary power in that regard.

"The *Rav* read through the list of *Pessukim* that we had handed him, and after some contemplation he asked us – was it that these *Pessukim* have special powers to bring salvation, or did the Rebbe choose them because they are just very educational, but any *Pessukim* recited by the children would do the job for salvation and not necessarily these twelve.

"We answered him that although we didn't hear specifically from the Rebbe that these twelve *Pessukim* are especially good to bring salvation, we could be certain that they

are, once the Rebbe had chosen specifically these twelve.

"To our delight, a short while later, the *Rav* notified us that the twelve *Pessukim* would be recited with the entire crowd!"

### MYSTERIOUS TEHILLIM RECITAL...

On Shabbos afternoon, the Israeli airplanes took off on the rescue mission to Entebbe, landing there late Motzoei Shabbos and bringing the hostages home safely in a spectacular operation.

News of the miraculous story spread quickly around the world. When the Chassidim in 770 heard the about what had happened, some suddenly recalled a strange thing they had witnessed that Shabbos afternoon: in the middle of davening *Mincha*, the Rebbe suddenly grabbed a *Tehillim* and began reciting a few *Kapittelach*...

### MIRACLES IN OUR TIME

On the following Shabbos, *Yud Beis Tammuz*, the Rebbe spoke for a long time about the miracles that the Jewish nation had just experienced.

In the end, the Rebbe said that indeed this was a great miracle, as he would speak

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## פתגם | דעם "ונפלינו" אין אהבת ישראל

אז עס טרעפט חלילה ביי א אידן א שלעכטע זאך דארף זיין גלייך ווי דאס וואלט ביי אים אליין געטראפן, ניט נאר דער משתתף זיין זיך בצער חבירו, נאר גלייך ווי ביי אים האט דאס פאסירט.

און מכל שכן בקו השמחה, אז מען זעט א געזונטן אידן, האט פרנסה, נחת פון קינדער, דארף זיין די שמחה ווי בא אים אליין איז דאס. די רמ"ם און משפיעים פון תו"ת דארפן איינפלאנצן אין די תלמידים, פון דעם קלענסטן וואס לערנט אלף בית ביז דעם גרעסטן, דעם "ונפלינו" אין אהבת ישראל. עס דארף זיין אין דעם הדרכה, לימוד און רגילות, און הרגל נעשה טבע.

(פורים תש"ה)

# CHASSIDUS WITH THE REBBE

*The following are beautiful excerpts from the memoirs of HoRav Yisroel Jacobson who learned in Tomchei Tmimim Lubavitch as Bochur. In those years, the Rebbe Rashab would say Chassidus each Friday night and all the Bochorim would stand and listen – even the very young ones. (Reb Yisroel was before Bar Mitzvah when he first came!) In his vivid descriptions, one will read of how the Bochorim treasured their moments in the Rebbe's presence and the sorrow they felt when they failed to show it the proper appreciation it deserved.*

## AVODAH

My first Shabbos in Lubavitch was Shabbos Parshas Noach, 5668 (1907). Friday night if I remember correctly it was after we had davened Kabbolas Shabbos in the Shul, the Rebbe (Rashab) entered what we called the "Small Zal". (During that period, the Rebbe Rashab still said Ma'amorim there).

The Ma'amor was recited in the south-eastern corner. A "Mem Stumah" was formed near the Rebbe's place with the benches we that used for davening, and a table on the northern side.

This area was not big at all, and it stretched out until the Chazzan's Amud near the Aron Kodesh.

First, the Rebbe Rayatz walked in dressed in his Shabbos clothes and wearing a Streimel on his head. The Bochorim sang some *Niggunim* for a while. One of those singing, as I recall, was Reb Shaul Dov Zislin (then still a Bochor; today he is a Rav in Tel-Aviv). Of those *Niggunim* that I remember, they sang the famous "Yedid Nefesh" often sung in Lubavitch.

Suddenly, an utter silence struck the room. A wide pathway was opened and the Rebbe Rashab walked in and recited the Ma'amor.

I still have no recollection whatsoever; neither from the beginning of the Ma'amor, nor its content. This was the first time I saw anything like this in my entire life; it was truly an awesome scene to behold! The profound impact of the scene would remain with me always...



## NEVER LEAVE THE REBBE

In the year 5673 (1913), the fast of Asara B'Teves fell out on a Friday. The Rebbe davened Kabbolas Shabbos in his home and afterwards it was announced that we were to go and break our fasts, and

afterwards the Rebbe would say a Ma'amor (as he would each Friday night).

I went along with some of my friends to the home of our host, Reb Shmuel the shoemaker, who lived behind the Rebbe's courtyard (in the narrow alleyway near the marketplace). Instead of making an entire circle around the street and going into the house from the front, we just climbed over the fence in the back and spent a short ten minutes making a Kiddush and having a small bite to eat, and then hurried back to the Rebbe's house for the Ma'amor.

When we arrived, we were disappointed to find that all the doors were locked and the Rebbe was already in middle of reciting

was inside).

Hatomim Reb Shimshon Vitebsker also arrived after the door had already been closed, but he tried his luck and hoped he would be permitted to enter anyway due to his deteriorating health situation, and because he was from the most excellent students.

[At this point he was already very sick and had undergone a few operations. He was truly from the most outstanding students in Lubavitch. He was very wise and knew much Chassidus and worked on himself – a real Chossid. He was a friend of Reb Shilem Kuryatin. Later that year, on Tuesday of Parshas Bechukosai, he passed away in his parents' home after spending a lengthy time bound to his bed. On that very day, the Rebbe Rashab received a telegram notifying of the tragic passing, and the Rebbe said that this was done according to Shimshon's instruction.]

He began pleading with one of the Rebbe Rayatz's daughters to open the door for him, and although we never would have believed it was possible, she agreed and opened up for him.

From the Frierdiker Rebbe's room he needed to pass through the Rebbetzin's

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*"When we arrived, we were disappointed to find that all the doors were locked and the Rebbe was already in middle of reciting the Ma'amor!"*

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the Ma'amor! We were told that the Rebbetzin had brought out some wine and Mezonos for those few who had remained in the room after davening, and immediately afterwards the Rebbe began with the Ma'amor.

Inevitably, we were forced to remain outside near a window. Luckily the shutter of the window was open and we were able to hear the Ma'amor well, for the Rebbe spoke in a loud tone. Ignoring the bitter cold we felt and the layer of snow accumulating at our feet, we stood throughout the entire Ma'amor and listened to the Rebbe's holy words, and then reviewed it afterwards.

One of those standing outside with us near the window was Reb Elchonon Dov ("Chonye") Marasov. (Reb Shilem Kuryatin

rooms (the kitchen and another small room), then the "Stalova" (dining room) and the Rebbe (Rashab)'s resting room near the Sukka, the Rebbe's Yechidus room, the bedroom, until he finally reached the front room where the Rebbe was reciting the Ma'amor.

Passing through all these rooms was no simple task; he needed the Rebbetzin to open each door for him and allow him to pass through, but for Shimshon she was willing to do this.

After reviewing the Ma'amor it was already eleven o'clock in the evening, and we all sat together in the front room near the oven and spoke with one-another. True, we heard and reviewed the Ma'amor and we now knew it well, but our hearts were

*(Continued on page 3)*

more at length on Sunday (at the big Farbrengen in honor of Yud Gimmel Tammuz), but we still must try to learn a lesson from what happened and think: why would Hashem do such a thing? Why put the entire Jewish world into a state of fear for so long a time? The Rebbe concluded: We must therefore heighten awareness of the *Mitzva* of Tefillin and *Mezuzah*, which are especially said to be protective of their bearers.

### CHECK THEIR MEZUZOS

The next day, at the Farbrengen of Yud Gimmel Tammuz, the Rebbe dedicated almost all the *Sichos* to this subject, particularly mentioning the power of the Jewish children's prayers and again encouraging them to learn the recently selected twelve *Pessukim* by heart.

Additionally, the Rebbe asked that the *Mezuzos* on the homes of all the hostages be checked to ensure their *Kashrus*, and to see if they need any fixing.

[It should be noted that over the next few days, Shluchim in Eretz Yisroel went about checking the *Mezuzos* of the hostages' homes and indeed found that each of them had some deficiency. After receiving this report,

the Rebbe would mention it at future Farbrengens.]

### THESE PESSUKIM ONLY!

Rabbi Pevsner concludes his story:

"One will notice that during that Farbrengen on Yud Gimmel Tammuz, the Rebbe elaborated on each of the twelve *Pessukim*, explaining how they each possess special powers for us to overcome our enemies.

"What may be a bit less known is that on the morning after the incredible rescue, we went again to visit HaRav Weiss to thank him for allowing the twelve *Pessukim* to be recited at the grand gathering. The *Rav* was in very good spirit and he told us that he is very happy for having had them recited; only he asked that we convey the question he had asked us earlier (whether these *Pessukim* are special for salvation, or just educational) to the Rebbe – which we obviously did.

"You can imagine how thrilled we were to hear on the hook-up of the Rebbe's next weekday Farbrengen that he was addressing exactly that! Later, we passed on the Rebbe's words to the *Rav*, and he was very pleased."

### דאָוונען איז אַ עבודה, ניט דאָוונען ווי אַ פֿידעלע

ח. מען דאַרף דאָוונען, מען דאַרף טאַן אין עבודת התפלה, האָרעווען אויף דאָוונען.

עבודה איז אַרבעט, אַזוי ווי אַ אַרבעטער, עס קומט פֿאַרטאָג גיט ער אַ קרעכץ, ער וויל נאָך שלאָפֿען, האָטש נאָך אַ 15 מינוט, עס ברעכט אים די ביינער, ער וויל זיך נאָך אויסרוהען, אָבער ער דערמאָנט זיך אַז ער מוז גיין צו דער אַרבעט; אַזוי איז אויך עבודת התפלה, דאָוונען איז אַ עבודה, ניט דאָוונען ווי אַ פֿידעלע.

מען דאַרף האָרעווען פֿאַר'ן דאָוונען, מ'דאַרף האָרעווען אין דאָוונען און מען דאַרף האָרעווען נאָכן דאָוונען צו בע'טראַכטען זיך וואָס האָב אין אָפּגע'האַרעוועט, בכדי אַז במשך כל היום זאל זיך אנהערען דער דאָוונען ביי יעדערער כפי ענינו.

ט. חסידים בכלל און תמימים בפרט דאַרפֿען אָנהויבען דאָוונען באַריכות. ווען חסידים וואָלטען וויסען ווי זייערע עלטערען און די צדיקים אין גן עדן וואָרטען אויף זייער דאָוונען וואָלטען אַלע געדאָווענט באַריכות.

(משיחת י"ג תמוז תש"ז)

## AN UNEXPECTED EXPLANATION

Following a Farbrengen around the year 5720, the Rasha"g, Reb Zev Greenglass and Reb Yoel Kahn were standing together and discussing one of concepts the Rebbe had spoken about at the Farbrengen.

It was quite a difficult *Sicha* and they all had some questions on it, making it very difficult for them to comprehend the subject discussed.

In the middle of the heated discussion, the Rebbe walked by and, hearing what it was that they were discussing, stopped in front of the threesome. For fifteen minutes the Rebbe stood there and explained everything, answering all their questions. By the time the Rebbe turned to leave, there were no questions left; everyone had a clear understanding of the *Sicha*.

(Continued from page 2)

full of remorse; how could we have gone to eat before hearing Chassidus?

Hatomim Shimshon also sat with us, and amongst other things, he said "Only because of my poor health condition I was forced to eat early, but if I was healthy I never would have left my place for petty things like this! Only one time, when my head began

spinning like a ball and my eyesight darkened on me, did I leave. Know this; never leave your place [when the Rebbe says Chassidus]. You'll be alright!"

(Zikaron L'Bnei Yisroel, pg. 11; 38)

One of the hallmarks of Chassidim is the Farbrengen. What is a Farbrengen? A Farbrengen is usually translated as “a Chassidic Gathering”, but in truth to *farbreng* means to spend time together, as in “מיר האָבן פאַרבראַכט דאָרט אַ פאַר שעה”. Friends gather together and say L’chayim, give each other *brachos*, pour out their hearts to one another and strengthen each other in their service of Hashem.

However to Farbreng is one of the foundations of a Chassid’s way of life, providing him with a breath of fresh air to recalibrate his life-compass reminding him of who he is.

When discussing the Halochos of the Nine Days, the *Shulchan Aruch* states “When the month of Av begins, ‘*Memaatin B’simchah*’ — we have to reduce in joyfulness.” (In contrast to what is says by Adar, “When the month of Adar begins, ‘*Marbim B’simchah*’ - we have to increase in joyfulness”.) Chassidus offers an additional interpretation, over and above its simple meaning: “When the month of Av begins, ‘*Memaatin*’ - we have to reduce the concealment of the Shechinah which finds expression in the mournfulness of Av.

How is this done? Through ‘*B’simchah*’, by means of joyfulness. Simply put, this means that a Yid needs to be B’simchah even during the sad times of the year. In fact it’s specifically during these times of year that one must be extra joyous, for that is how we counter the sadness that marks these specific dates.

This attitude and outlook is no surprise for Chassidim in general. One of the things most emphasized in the teachings of *Chassidus* is the quality of joy. As the Rebbe writes to someone in a letter<sup>1</sup>:

“The Psak Din of the Baal Shem Tov, that serving Hashem must be done with joy, is well known...”

The idea of serving Hashem with Simcha was stressed countless of times to us by the Rebbe, more so than in previous generations.

## WHY WAS THIS ATTITUDE NOT EMPHASIZED TO SUCH AN EXTENT IN PREVIOUS GENERATIONS?

As each day goes by we get closer to *Moshiach*, we’re getting closer to the *Geulah*. So *Chassidus* says, why should we only sit and cry about the destruction of the *Beis HaMikdash*? Let us rather emphasize the idea of joy and the positive, for this is a way of getting ready for the *Geulah*.

When<sup>2</sup> the Tzemach Tzedek was in Petersburg to attend the Rabbinical Convention of 5603, he received a special permit from the Russian Minister of War to address the Jewish soldiers serving at the military installation in nearby Kronstadt<sup>3</sup>.

When the Rebbe arrived, he was greeted by the waiting soldiers, who said to him: “Rebbe! We’ve been toiling all morning to prepare for your coming, polishing our buttons in your honor. Now it’s your turn to work hard: polish our souls, which have been dulled and coarsened by our many years of disconnection from Jewish life.”

Following his address, in which he encouraged their heroic efforts to cling to their faith, the Rebbe said: “You polished your buttons with sand and water. The soul, too, is polished with sand and water: with the holy letters of *Tehillim* recited with a generous infusion of tears.”

One of the soldiers spoke up: “But Rebbe, battles are won with joy, not tears.”

“So speaks a soldier!” said the Rebbe, with obvious satisfaction. “Yes, you’re right. A soldier enters the fray of battle to the tune of a

joyous march, not with tears. It is by the power of his joy that he is victorious even in the most dangerous and challenging endeavors.”

When the Rebbe recounted this story by a Farbrengen he concluded:

“From then on, the Rabbeim adopted this way of Avodah – everything should be done with Simchah. We are also busy with conquering, and this also should be done with Simchah. [When this is the case] it then lasts longer, and victory comes easier and more swiftly.”

In no generation has this been emphasized so much as in ours, by the Rebbe, who keeps us focused on the future, on *Moshiach* and the *Geulah*, rather than on the past and the destruction. As another day of Gollus goes by, and the darkness becomes thicker, the *Klippos* put up an even bigger resistance as they know their end is near in coming.

Our attitude must be like a soldier on the battlefield ready to face even the most powerful of enemies. Instead of having frightful thoughts he charges forward with a joyous march confident that he will be victorious, and it his joy that makes the victory happen. We will be victorious; we are the first generation of *Moshiach* and in these trying times right before his arrival, the Rebbe stressed to us the importance of doing our Avodah with Simchah.

*Continued next week...*

1. Igros Kodesh vol. 7 page 115.
2. From the Farbrengen of Simchas Torah night 5726
3. This was in the days of the infamous “Cantonists” decree. The fact that the Tzemach Tzedek was granted permission to address the Jewish soldiers was nothing less than a miracle, since the primary purpose of their conscription was to tear them away from Yiddishkeit, R”L.

*Obviously the Halachos of the Nine Days fully apply as described in Shulchan Aruch. The above speaks only of the ruach of a Chassid during these days.*

## רמב"ם | מורה שיעור

ו' כ"ג בתמוז	ה' מעשר פרק ז-ט	ה' שבת פרק כה
ש"ק כ"ד בתמוז	פרק י"ב	פרק כו
א' כ"ה בתמוז	פרק יג-יד, הלכות מעשר שני ונטע רבעי פרק א	פרק כז
ב' כ"ו בתמוז	פרק ב-ד	פרק כח
ג' כ"ז בתמוז	פרק ה-ז	פרק כט
ד' כ"ח בתמוז	פרק ח-י	פרק ל
ה' כ"ט בתמוז	פרק יא, ה' בכורים פרק א-ב	ה' עירובין פרק א

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ומרת דייכא בת החבר ר' ברוך ע"ה  
נפטרה כ' תמוז ה'תשע"א  
נד' ע"י  
משפחת ווינגארטען שיחיו