

לע"נ  
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נלב"ע ר"ח כסלו ה'תשנ"ט  
ת'נ'צ'ב'ה'

נדפס ע"י בנו  
הרה"ת השליח ר' יוסף יצחק  
וזוגתו מרת ביילא רחל ומשפחתם שיחי  
ביסטאן



# WHERE YOU MA

*Seizing every opportunity to  
spread Yiddishkeit*

# EVER YBE

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**T**he different roles of ‘Yissachar’ and ‘Zevulun’ (referring to elements within B’nei Yisroel) are well-known. Yissachar represents those whose primary focus involves learning or teaching Torah. ‘Zevulun,’ by contrast, represents those involved in ‘mundane’ activities as their occupation and livelihood, whether in business or similar pursuits.

The role of Zevulun is often perceived as simply supporting ‘Yissachar’ in their holy work; Zevulun provided the material resources that Yissachar needs in order to do their job of spreading Torah, Mitzvos and Chassidus. However, this is not the whole story.

## A FOREIGN LAND

On 12 Menachem Av 5712 (1952), the Rebbe wrote the following letter to Reb Bentzion Bruk (paraphrased), a Yid who, after the upheavals of the Second World War, found himself in a city and country foreign to him. The Rebbe wrote:

“In general, all Yidden believe that ‘Hashem directs the steps of man... (Tehillim 37:23)’ Taking into account that Hashem is the essence of goodness, and that the nature of goodness is to do good, if Hashem brings you to a city and society which is foreign, one with which you are unfamiliar and where you consequently struggle physically and/or spiritually, as a Yid you should have perfect clarity in knowing that the purpose is not to wear you down, but because you have a mission to accomplish specifically there...

“It is clear that your *shlichus* is to instill in your city and surroundings a revival of Yiddishkeit in general, and especially the spirit of Chassidus—namely, love of Hashem, the Torah, and another Yid....”<sup>1</sup>

The Rebbe explained to Reb Bentzion that there is a deeper purpose and mission in place for him, wherever he is. This is because every Yid, the businessman as well as the rabbi, is on a mission to spread Torah and Mitzvos.

This is actually a core concept expounded upon multiple times in Chassidus: The *possuk* in Tehillim (37:23) quoted above is cited time and again in Chassidus, “מה' מצעדי גבר” (Hashem directs the steps of man, for He desires his way),” explaining that wherever a Yid goes, it is for the purpose of doing a mitzvah. In fact, every Yid is considered a *shliach* of Hashem to bring *Elokus* to the world,

and is thus empowered with the energies of the *mishaleach* (the sender), Hashem, Himself.

היום יום ל' תמוז:

רבינו הזקן בתחילת נשיאותו אמר תורה: מה' מצעדי גבר כוננו, אז א איד קומט אין א ארט, איז עס צוליב א כוונה טאן א מצוה, הן א מצוה שבין אדם למקום והן א מצוה שבין אדם לחבירו. א איד איז א שליח של מעלה, א שליח וואו ער איז, איז ער דער כח המשלח, דער יתרון המעלה אין נשמות לגבי מלאכים - וואס בא נשמות איז דאס על פי התורה.

In the early period of his *nesius* the Alter Rebbe taught: “Hashem directs the steps of man.” When a Jew comes to a particular place it is for an (inner, Divine) intent and purpose - to perform a mitzva, whether a mitzva between man and Hashem or a mitzva between man and his fellow-man. A Jew is Hashem's shliach. Wherever a shliach is, he represents the power of the *meshalei'ach*, the one who sent him. The superior quality that *neshamos* possess, higher than the *malachim* (who too are “messengers”), is that *neshamos* are messengers by virtue of Torah.

## A SHLIACH OF DER AIBERSHTER

In various *sichos* the Rebbe expounded on this further. One well-known example is the *sicha* of Simchas Torah 5746.<sup>2</sup>

After first addressing the shluchim and how everything the [Frierdiker] Rebbe transmits to his generation flows through them, the Rebbe went on to explain that every Yid is a shliach of Hashem to create a “*Dirah bitachtonim*,” a home for Hashem in this world—essentially, to bring Moshiach. In fact, this is why the numerical value (*gematria*) of the word shliach, plus ten, is the same as that of the word Moshiach. Every *neshamah* comes into its body to fulfill its shlichus by, first, studying Torah and performing mitzvos themselves, and second, by using their *every interaction* with the world around them to bring it closer to Hashem. To make this shlichus even more relatable, each person is empowered in this mission by the *Nossi Hador* and via his direct shluchim.

In a *sicha* on 21 Menachem-Av 5744, the Rebbe spelled out this concept in even more revolutionary terms:



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First the Rebbe expounded on various levels present in shlichus, describing how a shliach at first balances, and then harmonizes, two seemingly opposing forces. His own identity, on the one hand, and a complete submission and *bitul* to the *mishaleach* on the other, can be merged by accessing that which is beyond these distinctions. Then the Rebbe stated:

“Although the title ‘Shliach,’ and the formalities of giving *meshke*, and all of the above was said with regard to only a portion of those present at this farbrengen, the ultimate truth that we must know is that each and every one of us, all of us together, and all of *B’nei Yisroel*, are ‘shluchim’ of *Nessi Doreinu*, the [Friediker] Rebbe. From the moment that the [Friediker] Rebbe was appointed *Nossi Hador*, all Yidden in this generation became his attendants and shluchim, for “הנשיא הוא הכל— the *Nossi* encompasses all!”

“It is clear that once one becomes a shliach of the *Nossi Hador* they remain so always, just as one who is a Yid remains so always. Notwithstanding how one behaves, no matter whether one actually fulfills his *shlichus* or the opposite, *R”L*, one cannot change his very identity—the only difference is that some have realized and accepted (*derhered*) this and act accordingly, while for others it takes time.... May it be Hashem’s will that they are inspired to realize who they truly are and immediately begin to behave as is fitting...”<sup>3</sup>

These words are breathtaking in scope: every single Yid,

whether a *rov*, *melamed*, *shliach*, businessman, computer technician, doctor, lawyer, taxi driver and tractor-operator, can be called “shliach,” has been entrusted with a unique mission by *HaKodosh Boruch Hu* that is indispensable to all of creation, and has been called by *Nessi Doreinu* to fulfill this mission!

Indeed, at the farbrengen of the Rebbe’s *Kabbolas Hanesius*, 10 Shvat 5711 (1951), addressing various chassidim, some who had received directives of the Friediker Rebbe to get involved in communal work and others who were directed into the realm of business, the Rebbe stated that everyone’s underlying purpose is to spread *Toras Hachassidus*.<sup>4</sup>

## A TWO-FOLD MISSION

To break it down, what are the primary responsibilities of which a chossid ‘out in the world’ should be aware?

In Hayom Yom, the mission of laypeople is described as follows:

### היום יום ד' ניסן:

עבודת בעלי עסקים מתחלקת לשני סעיפים עיקרים:  
 (א) **העבודה עם עצמו**. בעת עסקו ממש בשעה הפנוי, בישוב בחנות וכדומה, ילמוד משנה משניות פרק תניא, ויהי לו איזה דברי תורה, כמו חומש משניות תהלים תניא, שיהי בקי בהם בעל פה, למען שיוכל לחזור עליהם בהלכו ברחוב, בשוק וכדומה.  
 (ב) **העבודה עם זולתו**. בעת הדבור בעניני עסק יסבב הדבור לספר איזה ספור תוכני, ולמצוא עילה וסיבה לעורר ע"ד למוד וכיוצא בזה.

“The *avodah* of a layperson has two primary categories: 1) *Avodah* with self: Whenever he has a free moment during his work, sitting in his store or the like, he should study a Mishna or two or a *perek* of Tanya. He should know some Torah by heart - for example, Chumash, Mishnayos, Tehilim, Tanya, so that he can review it while walking on the street, in the market, and so on. 2) *Avodah* with others: while discussing business matters he should use the conversation to share a meaningful story, and find some way to inspire his fellow to study Torah or similar activities.”



## BUT I'M A BUSINESSMAN!

It is not always easy to accept this mission. One might feel that it is better performed by others, while he focuses on his business and his material livelihood. A well-known story told by the Friediker Rebbe on this topic goes as follows:

There was once a chossid of the Rebbe Maharash from the town of Volodimir, Russia, where he served as a goldsmith and clock maker. On a visit to Lubavitch, the Rebbe Maharash asked him to report on any public *shiurim* in Volodimir that he was involved with. The chossid replied that the people of town were simple and ignorant, mostly from the ranks of the Cantonists and “Nikolay soldiers,” conscripted to the Russian army as children.

They spoke Russian instead of Yiddish and in behavior were barely distinguishable from their Russian neighbors. The majority of the townsfolk couldn't read the davening — they just about managed a *bracha* upon receiving an *aliya*. The chossid said that he had his own, private *shiur* for an hour each day, and also prepared the *krias haTorah* for the community (as no one else could *lein*), but how and why would he try to arrange public *shiurim* for the townspeople?!

“If so,” responded the Rebbe Maharash, “why do you live there? You come from Polotsk, a town filled with shuls and yeshivos. Why did you abandon Polotsk in favor of Volodimir, as you describe it, a spiritual wasteland?”

The chossid explained that in Polotsk he had struggled to make a decent livelihood. In fact, he had even asked the Rebbe Maharash for a *bracha* before moving to Volodimir and had received one! The chossid said that, *boruch Hashem*, the *bracha* had been fulfilled —and he was now earning a respectable livelihood.

The Rebbe Maharash replied, “You are making a mistake. It was not for material livelihood that Hashem sent you to Volodimir. One who believes in Hashem, the Torah, and *hashgachah protis*, must understand that Hashem would not uproot a Yid and his family to an empty wasteland, to live among boors and ignoramuses, simply for better material livelihood — Hashem can assist you with material needs wherever you are.

“The reason for this mistake is another mistake: in your mind, your profession, with which you must occupy your time and attention, is that of a goldsmith and clock maker. This is an error; a Yid's true occupation and profession is that of Torah and *avodas Hashem*. The reason Hashem moved



you from Polotsk to Volodimir was to bring the people there closer to Yiddishkeit. The Ba'al Shem Tov taught that Hashem brings a *neshamah* to this world for 70 or 80 years just to do another Yid a favor; this is true even in the physical sense, and especially in the spiritual sense.

“One who imagines that Hashem moves a Yid from town to town simply for their material livelihood is lacking in faith, for Hashem provides food for all flesh, no matter whether they are in Polotsk or Volodimir! When you moved to Volodimir I blessed you with success [in your true mission there]; [yet], a *bracha* is only effective when one takes action! Without action even a *bracha* cannot help ...”

The Friediker Rebbe concluded, “A person must take these words to heart, consider his situation, and ask himself: to what purpose did Hashem bring me to where I am? What positive impact can I have in the realm of Torah, mitzvos and *middos tovos*? Have I discharged the obligations of my *shlichus*?<sup>5</sup>

### היום יום יד חשוון:

מה' מצעדי גבר כוננו, לכל אחד מישראל יש לו תעודה רוחנית בחיים, והוא להתעסק בעבודת הבנין לעשות דירה לו ית'. וכל אחד באשר הוא ובכל מקום שהוא צריך להתענין בכל מאמצי כוחו לחפש בחפש מחופש למצוא איזה פרנסה רוחנית כמו שהוא מחפש אחר פרנסה גשמית. והוא לפי שדרכו - של הקב"ה - יחפץ, כדכתיב באברהם כי ידעתיו גו' ושמר דרך ה', כי יש שני דרכים: דרך הטבע ושלמעלה מן הטבע, העולם בראו הקב"ה להיות נראה כמו שהוא בדרך הטבע - בעיני בשר - והוא דרך אלקים. תורה ומצות הם דרך הוי' והוא המשכה שלמעלה מן הטבע בטבע, אשר בגלל זאת הנה הקב"ה משפיע לישראל למעלה מן הטבע בטבע.

"Hashem directs the steps of man." Every one of the Jewish people has a spiritual mission in life - to occupy himself with construction, to make a "dwelling-place" for Hashem. Everyone, regardless of station or location, must, through an exhaustive search, seek out a spiritual livelihood with all his strength, just as he seeks material livelihood.

This is so because, (as the *possuk* concludes) "He desires His (Hashem's) way." As it is written of Avraham: "For I know and love him because... they will keep the way of *Havaye* (Hashem)." There are two "ways": That of nature and that which transcends nature. Hashem created the universe in such a way that, in man's eyes, it appears to follow a set pattern of nature; this is the "way" of *Elokim*. Torah and Mitzvos are the "way" of *Havaye*, drawing that which transcends nature into nature. By virtue of this (conduct) Hashem endows the Jewish people from that which is beyond nature into the natural.

## I'M NOT SO TALENTED!

Some people who understand that there is an important *avodah* to strengthen Yiddishkeit in their locale, might not feel that they are the right person for the job. Surely the job would be better accomplished by someone influential, or with many talents — not a simple worker!

In the above-mentioned letter to Reb Bentzion Bruk, the Rebbe writes the following:

"One need not wonder that seemingly, such a mission

ought to have been entrusted to an influential magnate or the like, whose every word is listened to, not to one who just about manages to survive. That would only be logical were one to rely on their own abilities; being that this is a mission from Hashem, who is omnipotent, all challenges and obstacles disappear. You can understand this using even simple human logic: when Yidden see that you have no ulterior reasons nor political designs they will pay attention to you, since 'words that come from the heart enter the heart.'"

## THE REWARDS ARE GREAT

The reality is that fulfilling this mission brings tremendous blessing. The Rebbe continues:

"We see in human agency (*lihavdil* infinite degrees) that an agent receives pay or a gift from the sender; how much more so when the sender is Hashem, and He sees that we've accepted his *shlichus* with joy — that we receive great assistance from Above to fulfill the mission."

In Hayom Yom 16 Iyar, the Rebbe mentions the following anecdote about the Rebbe Maharash:

אאזמו'ר אמר להחסידי ר' אלי' אבעלער - איש פשוט מצד כשרונותיו וידיעותיו - כשנכנס אליו ליחידות: אלי' איך בין דיר מקנא. פאהרסט אויף מערק זעהסט א סך מענשען, איז ווען אינמיטען עסק רעדט מען זיך מיט יענעם פאנאנדער אין א אידישען ווארט א עין יעקב ווארט, און מ'איז מעורר אויף לערנען נגלה און חסידות, פון דעם ווערט שמחה למעלה. און די מעקלעריי צאהלט דער אויבערשטער אפ בבני חיי ומזוני. און וואס גרעסער דער מארק מעהר ארבעט, איז גרעסער פרנסה.

"My grandfather [the Rebbe Maharash] told Reb Elya Abeler, a simple individual in terms of scholarship and aptitude, in *yechidus*: 'Elya, I envy you. You travel to the markets and see many people. When, in middle of a business deal, you have an involved conversation about a *yiddische* idea, something from *Ein Yaakov*, and you inspire them to learn *nigleh* and *chassidus*, the heavens above rejoice. Hashem rewards such a business transaction with children, health, and livelihood. The greater the market, the more work to be done — and the greater the [commensurate *brochos*] and livelihood.'"



## THE BEST WAY OUT

After the tragedies and destruction of the Second World War, chassidim moved to different cities around the globe, with the help of organizations such as the Joint Distribution Committee. The Joint and others wished to help Jewish refugees without overloading existing communities, and often arranged for the refugees to move to new areas where there was little Jewish infrastructure in place. As a consequence, many chassidim ended up feeling highly isolated. Addressing this phenomenon in a farbrengen on Shabbos Parshas Beshalach, 12 Shevat 5714, the Rebbe shared the following:

“When even one chossid arrives in a city, it is for the sole purpose that he bring Chassidus to the city and transform it. That is the real reason he is there, notwithstanding any other factors or organizations at play. One may wish to be elsewhere; in that case, let him accomplish the true purpose of his arrival there and Hashem will move him on to other pastures.”

Further developing this point, the Rebbe shared the following story that had recently occurred:

“A Yid from Eretz Yisroel fell ill and required a complicated surgery. He wrote to me [the Rebbe] and asked for a *bracha*. After responding with a *bracha*, [the Rebbe] advised him to begin putting on tefillin every day. This individual indeed began wearing tefillin and, lo and behold, he immediately recovered without any need for surgery! All the doctors and other patients were shocked. When the other patients asked him what happened he shared with them that he’d begun laying tefillin daily. Upon hearing that they also began laying Tefillin; in any case, he was released from the hospital.

“In other words, the entire purpose of this person’s illness and subsequent hospital stay was so that he lay tefillin and inspire others to do so as well; as soon as he accomplished his mission he was able to go.

“The same applies to homes of the spiritually ill, such as universities — places where ideas contrary to Torah are taught. If one ends up in such a locale, he must realize that his purpose there is to spread Yiddishkeit. True, one may wonder how he can possibly affect a whole city when he is all alone?

“The answer is that the [Friediker] Rebbe expects one to do only that which he is able, just as Hashem asks only according to our abilities — since *tzadikim domim laborum*

(*tzadikim* are similar to their Creator). The very fact that a certain task is expected, indicates that the requisite abilities have been granted as well. Thus, that lone chossid has been given the abilities of the Rebbe — one who is not subject to being cowed by any opposition — to accomplish his task, and Hashem surely rewards any such initiative with abundant blessing physically and spiritually.”<sup>6</sup>

## YOU HAVE CONNECTIONS

In Iyar of 5736, the Rebbe launched “*Shnas Hachinuch*” — a year of education. In an effort to boost educational activities around the world, the Rebbe’s secretariat sent letters to shluchim and heads of Chabad organizations, promoting the new initiative.

Again we see the Rebbe’s insistence that every individual see their *parnassah* as an opportunity to spread Yiddishkeit. Several *anash* businessmen, received letters as well:

“Taking into consideration that by *hashgacha pratis*, you have business contacts in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the like, you obviously understand that it is your responsibility, and also your privilege, to take interest in the current status of Jewish education in these places, and to do all you can do to better the situation...”<sup>7</sup>

## HOW CAN I BROACH THE TOPIC?

Someone involved in business or a profession might feel that bringing Yiddishkeit to the workplace crosses lines, blurs boundaries, and could make others feel uncomfortable.

On Yud-Tes Kislev 5733, the Rebbe addressed this:

“[As a business owner,] Hashem has given you the opportunity to assist another individual with their physical livelihood. It is just as important to assist them with their spiritual livelihood; namely, that they appreciate that even their eating and drinking are ways to serve Hashem.

“One should not tell himself that he is only the business owner and his relationship precludes talking to his employees about spiritual matters — surely helping someone in one area, such as physical needs, is not a contradiction to assisting them in other areas, especially such a fundamental area as to be fully alive! Talking to them about such matters

is actually an expression of true care and concern.

“This is a unique *shlichus* with which Hashem has empowered an employer, since as the employer, your words regarding tefillin, eating kosher, observing shabbos, keeping *taharas hamishpacha* and so on have a much better chance of being accepted.

“The important thing is to not criticize the errors of others. One’s approach should be energetic, with light and joy. The owner can share the following: ‘Hashem told me to love you like I love myself. Now, it seems to me that if you do the following [i.e. strengthen your commitment to Yiddishkeit] you will be happier and more alive. Hence, I can fulfill my mitzvah of expressing love and care for you, and you in turn will live a better, more complete life, *‘tomim tihyeh im Hashem...*’”<sup>8</sup>

## TO THE WORLD AS WELL

In the 5740s the Rebbe began calling strongly for the teaching of the *Sheva Mitzvos B’nei Noach* to any non-Jew upon whom one has influence.

One example is the *sicha* of Chof Menachem-Av, 5745, where the Rebbe explains that the *shlichus* of each individual to bring *Elokus* into the world and hasten the coming of Moshiach, must also extend to inspiring non-Jews — for Moshiach will come when the entire world is uplifted in serving Hashem, including the non-Jewish population.

Thus, anyone with connections or influence with non-Jews should talk to them about the *Sheva Mitzvos B’nei Noach*, encouraging them to recognize Hashem’s influence in their daily existence, and to lead moral, upstanding lives. The Rebbe underscored that one’s goal should be to simply influence others to behave in a more refined and G-dly manner, in accordance with the directives of Hashem, not for any ulterior motives. When communicated in the right spirit, openly and truthfully, one’s words would surely be effective.<sup>9</sup>

“Don’t think,” says the Rebbe, “that a Yid’s connection with a non-Jew is only for *parnassa*, and the relationship should remain limited to that. In fact, 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!*”<sup>10</sup>



REB MAYER ZEILER HELPS LORD MARCUS SIEFF OF ENGLAND PUT ON TEFILLIN

## FABRIC OF YIDDISHKEIT

Indeed, the Rebbe encouraged various individuals to implement this approach of love and care, with colleagues, employees, clients, and acquaintances. As we will see below, this approach has been wildly successful. Let us start with some fascinating anecdotes shared by the dedicated chossid Reb Mayer Zeiler, proprietor of Flocktex, a textile business in Eretz Yisroel. The business was started after the Yom Kippur War by Reb Mayer’s father-in-law, Reb Dovid Deitsch, at the behest of the Rebbe.

Reb Mayer relates:

“The Rebbe instructed us to locate our factory in Eretz Yisroel as a way to strengthen the country and provide income for many Russian Yiddishe families in the area. However, we always knew that the Rebbe’s intent for us was not only to turn a profit, and not only to help immigrant families with *parnasa*, but also to be an example of Yiddishkeit and a source of inspiration for others.

“Being in business, we had the opportunity to reach places and individuals who others would have difficulty getting to. Many opportunities arose during visits of dignitaries to our factory, when I would offer to put on tefillin with them and encourage them to strengthen their Yiddishkeit. Before and after these visits, I would send reports to the Rebbe and often receive detailed guidance.





## TEFILLIN FOR THE LORD

“One early example was when Moshe Katzav brought us a very prominent visitor: Lord Marcus Sieff of England, chairman of Marks & Spencer, president of the Weizmann Institute, and a strong supporter of the economy in Eretz Yisrael. He had come to see the new industry we were developing in the country. His company sold clothing and furniture, so his visit had great business potential as well. We were warned ahead of time that no publicity was allowed while he was in Israel, to ensure his safety. He was accompanied by Professor Sella of the Weizmann Institute. After a light breakfast, we gave him a tour of our plant.

We had just developed a new type of velvet which had the ability to fully block out sunlight. He was very impressed and told us that we had a nice plant and that he thought we would be successful. His statement was encouraging, since, at the time, we had yet to turn a profit. ‘What can I do for you?’ he asked. No doubt, he expected us to ask him for help in marketing our product. Velvet fabrics were very popular in England, and we had created the perfect new version. To his surprise, I requested something else entirely: ‘Lord Sieff, how about putting on tefillin?’ Moshe Katzav and Professor Sella started to laugh. Lord Sieff was surprised. ‘Tefillin? It’s been 54 years since my bar mitzvah when I last put on Tefillin.’ After some hesitation, he agreed. He put on the tefillin, the photographer snapped a few photos, and we said Shema together. Always the perfect gentleman, he thanked me for the opportunity.

“The visit went off without a hitch, but the next morning I was shocked to discover a picture of me putting on tefillin with the lord on the front page of the newspaper. I was mortified. We had specifically been asked not to publish any pictures until Lord Sieff left the country. The photographer wouldn’t answer my calls, so I called Professor Sella and began to apologize profusely. To my surprise, he said there was no need to apologize. The day before, the photographer had called him for permission to use the picture, and Lord Sieff, who happened to overhear the question, said that he wasn’t embarrassed about it and they were welcome to use it.

## SHINUI IN SHINUI

“Another time, a member of the Knesset named Ehud Rassabi visited our factory. He belonged to a political party



REB REUVEN  
DUNIN IN 5726

called Shinui that was antagonistic toward the religious community. He brought a group to our factory as an example of religious people doing honest work. After the tour we had lunch and the conversation turned to how I came to be in Eretz Yisroel. I shared with them that I was sent by the Rebbe himself to help develop the country’s industry—this was a story I shared quite often with visitors. I explained that I had passed by with my father-in-law at *lekach*, and the Rebbe told us to make the move. Suddenly, a woman in the group corrected me: ‘*Leikech*, not *lekach*!’ She was a professed antireligious advocate, so I asked her where she got her clearly religious Poilishe accent. ‘Do you know Moshe Klein, a sofer in New York?’ ‘Of course I do.’ ‘He’s my cousin. I’m the black sheep of my family. I was born in Meah Shearim...’

“Before leaving, the woman came over to me: ‘I live in Ashkelon and I’m on the city council. If the Chabad schools ever need any help, let me know.’ Towards the end of the visit there was a great atmosphere in the room and I saw that we had made a real connection. I turned to Ehud who was of traditional Yemenite origin and said, ‘Let’s show them how to put on tefillin.’ He rolled up his sleeve, put on tefillin, took a picture with us, and several others followed. I gave each of them a beautiful leather Tehillim. They were a very anti-religious party but we had managed to make a real connection with them. Afterward, I sent Ehud Rassabi the photo of him putting on tefillin and he placed it proudly on his Knesset desk. ‘My associates all wanted me to take it down,’ he told me later, ‘but I insisted that it remain.’”

## THE TRACTORIST

As the above stories demonstrate (and as the Rebbe’s *sicha* quoted above points out), when businessmen reach out to

others about *Yiddishkeit*, they can connect with people who otherwise would not be open to any conversation.

Similar stories occurred with the famous chossid, Reb Reuven Dunin, who connected with Lubavitch and the Rebbe in the mid 5710s. Before his time in yeshiva he had worked as an engineer on heavy machinery.

After Chanukah 5719, the Rebbe told Reb Reuven that it was time for him to return to Eretz Yisroel, and that his mission was to work on heavy machinery in a place where many people would see him. Finding such a job was not easy, but eventually he found work at a quarry in Chaifa, near a very busy intersection — exactly what the Rebbe instructed him.

Understandably, the sight of a bearded chassidishe Yid on a tractor made an impression on all who saw him and he became a familiar figure in the area. People would often stop him in the street to tell him “good job” or “keep up the good work.” In this way he was able to reach many people who would otherwise never talk to a *frummer* Yid. After his long workday, he would invite groups of people over for discussions, that brought many Yidden back to their roots:

“One night I schlepped home a group of people from the anti-religious league. I became very close to many of them. One of them, Reb Efraim Lev, and his wife, became chassidim and eventually moved to Kfar Chabad. Years later, they confided in me that the reason they became frum was not due to anything I had said, but because I once visited their home driving my tractor!”

## “SOLAR RAYS” OF YIDDISHKEIT

From heavy industry to the peaks of science; here are two occasions when the Rebbe instructed chassidim to use their advanced secular education and professions to fulfill their mission:

Prominent scientist Dr. Yaakov Hanoka pioneered cutting-edge solar technology and held 57 patents in the field. He was also one of the early *baalei teshuvah* of Lubavitch on campus. He co-founded and chaired the iconic “Encounter with Chabad” Shabbatons called *pegishos*. Dr. Hanoka merited a rare personal connection with the Rebbe, who personally guided him through life's challenges.

Dr. Hanoka had grown up in a traditional but non-religious Sefardic home. In college he became involved with the Hillel rabbi and eventually connected with the Rebbe. Later, he left college and joined the yeshiva in 770.

After a year in yeshiva, the Rebbe told Dr. Hanoka in yechidus to return to graduate school and complete his PhD. Dr. Hanoka replied that he had been thinking of staying in yeshiva and becoming a rabbi, but the Rebbe shook his head and explained, “You’ll do more for Yiddishkeit with three initials after your name.” In a long, handwritten *tzettel*, the Rebbe elaborated on his reasoning: “Each and every one of us is tasked with spreading Yiddishkeit to the best of our ability. Understandably, priority must be where one will have the greatest influence, especially if this place has greater need for this inspiration — understandably in a manner most appropriate for this particular place.

“From this it is clear — that your shlichus is primarily in the circles of students, professors, and the like. An effective way of carrying out this shlichus is by the mere fact that they will see that since you were brought closer to Torah and mitzvos you have seen increased success in the field you pursued earlier — which is highly regarded by them. It is clear from this how much effort you must put into this.

“The above is in addition to another main reason: since you have already expended many years on these studies, you must complete them so that you can utilize them as much as possible...”

Indeed, Dr. Hanoka fulfilled the Rebbe’s instructions, attained his PhD, and became one of the most prominent innovators in the field of solar energy — all while wearing a *yarmulke* and a full beard.

## 3M TO IBM

Reb Moshe Rappoport, of Zurich, Switzerland, had a similar story. Reb Moshe’s family stemmed from other communities but always had a connection with Lubavitch. In his teens, Reb Moshe drew closer to Lubavitch and the



REB MOSHE RAPPOPORT AT A TECHNOLOGY PRESENTATION



Rebbe, until eventually it became clear to all that he was a Lubavitcher through-and-through. Throughout this period the Rebbe guided him on his growth and his relationship with his family.

Eventually Reb Moshe got married and needed to make a living. He relates:

“Due to the Arab oil embargo in the early 1970s, the American economy came to a grinding halt and the job market was scarce. I had just obtained a college degree in computer science and my father-in-law urged my wife and I to come to Switzerland where the recession hadn’t hit yet and where he had lined up job interviews for me. I wrote to the Rebbe asking his opinion, and he answered, “Since you have many prospects, it will certainly work out.” I took his word as a promise and went to Switzerland for the interviews.

“In those days in Switzerland it was not considered acceptable to wear a religious symbol like a *yarmulke* at the office. But how can a chossid not wear a *yarmulke*? So I didn’t take it off, and I actually got the job – at the 3M Company – because of it, as the person who interviewed me owed a debt of gratitude to a *frummer* Yid.

“I had already been working for some time at 3M and then IBM, when on Hei Teves 5747, I heard the sicha in which the Rebbe asked that everyone add in their activities as shlichim of the [Frierdiker] Rebbe, especially through opening more Chabad Houses.<sup>11</sup> I found myself unsure on how to interpret this: does the Rebbe want me to quit my job and go on shlichus? I wrote to the Rebbe asking if I should leave my job and become a full-time shliach. The Rebbe’s response was just one word: “Why?” I understood – there was no need for me to give up my job to be a shliach; the Rebbe wanted me to stay and fulfill my shlichus in my workplace, which is exactly what I did.

“I started out doing normal computer stuff, but as time went on, I went into research and ended up building an IBM center in Switzerland where important people like CEOs, politicians and famous journalists from all over the world would come to see what IBM was doing. I did that for twenty years, and everyone I met who saw my *yarmulke* and full beard, saw the face of a Torah Yid. In my position, I also traveled all over the world, where other Yidden approached me and I was able to influence them positively. This would not have happened had I not followed the Rebbe’s advice to stay in hi-tech.”

## EVERY MOMENT IS PRECIOUS

Many other businessmen and professionals had times when the Rebbe was intimately involved in various activities they performed in *hafatzas hayahadus vihamalayanos*. Reb Bentzion Rader, a prominent chossid, businessman, and *askan* from London, related the following:

“In the summer of 5735 I went to Detroit for some business meetings. I arrived on a Tuesday morning, had meetings all day, and in the evening went to stay with someone involved in the business meetings and whose family was associated with the local Lubavitch community.

“My hosts had invited a few couples to their home. Without my directing it there, the conversation turned to religion, and one of the men there kept asking seemingly facetious questions about tefillin: ‘Why can’t they be round? Who said they have to be black?’ and so on. The conversation went on till about 2:00 AM. As we were saying goodbye, I said to the man who had been asking the questions: ‘I suppose that you have a special interest in tefillin; is that why you were asking those questions about them?’ ‘I haven’t put on tefillin for over 20 years!’ was his reply. ‘But you should!’ I responded. He said, ‘Everyone else is going home to sleep, but I’m going to work. I own a bakery, and we work through the night. If you want me to put on tefillin, you can come to my bakery at about 6:30 AM, when we’re between batches, and I’ll put on tefillin.’

“I must admit that this was not my style, but I couldn’t refuse, so at 6:30 AM Wednesday morning I arrived at his bakery with tefillin, siddur and *yarmulke*, and there among the sacks of flour he put on tefillin. What surprised me was that he needed no help—he knew exactly what to do and what to say.

“When he finished, I said to him, ‘You obviously know how to put on tefillin, and you know the blessings and the prayers. Why don’t you do it regularly?’ He told me that he didn’t own a pair of tefillin, and buying a pair was not a priority, but if someone gave one to him, he would put them on regularly. I answered that I was returning to England via New York, but I expected to be back in Detroit in about six weeks, and that I would bring him a pair of tefillin.

“Late that evening I flew to New York and stayed in Crown Heights overnight. Thursday morning I davened with the Rebbe and sent in a *tzetel*, detailing the business discussions I had and also the episode with the man in

## REMEMBER TO DO BUSINESS AS WELL!

Reb Yitzchok Nemes was a devoted chosid, who looked at every business trip as an opportunity to reach another yid and bring them closer to Yiddishkeit. The Rebbe would often tell him, “Yarbeh Biniseios—He should make many trips,” as he used his trips to spread Yiddishkeit and bring tashmishei kedushah to far-flung locales.

One time, when Reb Yitzchak returned from a trip and entered yechidus, the Rebbe told him: “Yitzchok, you are a businessman. You must remember to [also] do business...”

Detroit and the tefillin. I concluded the note saying that I was returning to London that evening (Thursday night), and that I was especially looking forward to Shabbos, since, for the first time, all our children and grandchildren would be staying with us.

“Shortly before Mincha the Rebbe’s secretary told me that he had been trying to reach me, as he had a response to my note. In his reply the Rebbe wrote, ‘Do you think it is right that a Yid who put on tefillin yesterday for the first time in over twenty years should wait another six weeks for you to buy him a pair of tefillin so that he can perform the mitzvah again? You should buy the tefillin today. If you can arrange to get them to him in Detroit in time for him to put them on today, fine; if not, you should personally return to Detroit today with the tefillin, so that he can put them on in good time. You should do this even if it means not being with your family for Shabbos. When this Yid sees how important it is for you that he does not miss even one day putting on tefillin, this mitzvah will have special importance to him.’

“There were a number of problems. First, I only had a small amount of money with me—not enough to buy a new airline ticket. Second, how would I obtain a pair of tefillin in Crown Heights? I tried the Tzach office, but they had none; the Judaica store Drimmers was also out of stock. Finally, I was able to buy a pair at a store on Kingston Avenue—the last pair they had—against my check. Then I phoned American Airlines, who would transport them. Next

I called the person with whom I had stayed in Detroit, who said he would collect them at the airport and deliver them to the man in time. One of the yeshivah students gave me a lift to La Guardia Airport, and the tefillin were put on a plane to Detroit.

“I left for London only after notifying the Rebbe what had been arranged, and waiting to hear that the tefillin had been collected and delivered.

“A few months later, I met this person again in Detroit, and asked him how he was doing with the tefillin. He told me that he had not missed a day—even walking home in the snow one day when his car broke down so that he could put on the tefillin before sundown. He said: ‘Because of the trouble you went to in order that I receive the tefillin the very next day, they are especially important to me.’

“Almost the exact words that the Rebbe had written to me.”<sup>12</sup>

## MAMASH A SHLIACH

On 21 Menachem-Av 5744 (quoted above), the Rebbe said:

“I ask the ‘shpitz-Chabadnikes’ to not be foolish and add explanations or hidden intents to my words — ‘*Ich mein vos ich zog* (I mean what I say)’, there is no need for their help (and *halevai* it shouldn’t be counterproductive). I stress again: each and every person is a shliach of *Nessi Doreinu*, the [Friediker] Rebbe, who is a shliach of *Nessi Ha’Olam* by way of Moshe Rabbeinu...”

With these unforgettable words echoing in our hearts, we will surely each fulfill our shlichus and bring the *Geula Shleima* now.

1. Igros Kodesh vol. 6, p. 263.
2. Likkutei Sichos vol. 29, p. 348.
3. Toras Menachem Hisvaaduyos 5744 vol. 4 pg. 2452 and forward.
4. Likkutei Sichos vol. 2, p. 497.
5. Igros Kodesh RaYatz vol. 7, pg. 20-21.
6. Toras Menachem vol. 11, p. 60 and forward.
7. Igros Kodesh vol. 31, p. 194, et. al.
8. Toras Menachem vol. 70, p. 239.
9. Hisvaaduyos 5745, vol. 5, pp. 2722-2724.
10. Yud Alef Nissan 5743; Hisvaaduyos 5743 vol. 2 p. 1207. For a comprehensive overview on this subject, see “*A Light Unto the Nations*,” Derher Shevat 5777.
11. See “*The Beis Chabad*,” Derher Kislev 5778.
12. Credit to chabad.org/511189.

