My Hebrew name is Sholom Moshe Ben Avraham and my English name is S. Murray Kupetz. The reason for the ‘S.’ is because my parents meant it to stand for Sholom but they couldn’t come up with an English-sounding equivalent, so they just wrote S. Murray Kupetz on my birth certificate. Whenever people question this, I tell them that Harry S. Truman had the same problem — his S. stood for nothing and he managed to become president of the United States.

In 1962, shortly after Sukkos, I became engaged to the daughter of Rabbi Yehuda Zev Segal, dean of Manchester Yeshiva, and he took us to receive a blessing from the Rebbe.

It was a very special audience. The Rebbe quoted from the Torah portion of Shoftim — which begins, “You shall establish judges and guards at all the gates of your communities…” And then he gave over a teaching from the Maggid of Mezeritch that the word “gates” also refers to all the entrances into the body of the human being — the eyes, the ears, the senses — all of which admit information from the outside. All these have to be guarded, he said.

He then went on to say that a Bais Din, a Jewish court of law, in order to be effective, must have a “makel lirdos v’shofar l’hariya — a staff with which to punish, and a trumpet to blow,” meaning, they must have an method with which to threaten, if necessary, and an instrument with which to announce and publicize.

“What are the parallels for the human being?” the Rebbe asked. If the judges and guards are the gateways to the body, what do the stick and the trumpet represent?

He answered by quoting the Talmud which states “L’olam yargiz adam yitzro hatov al yitzro hara — a person should stir up his good inclination to overpower his evil inclination”. In other words, rouse your good inclination in order to prevent you from sinning.

Having said that, the Rebbe then went on to give us a blessing. He said that the wife as much as the husband is obligated to have an awareness and fear of Heaven, and therefore the relationship between the two of us must be not only a physical...
connection but also a spiritual one — that we must have
togetherness in spiritual terms as well. And he instructed us
to learn either from chasidic literature or from books that
inspire fear of Heaven.

I cannot honestly say that I fulfilled that dictum literally every
day but, because of the Rebbe’s advice, we did create
and sustain a relationship that was not only physical, but was
spiritual, as well. And we just celebrated our 50th anniversary,

Then, of course, he wanted to know why the Rebbe had singled
me out for special regards. I told him the story of the near
mishap on the ice, but then I got a real dressing down. He said,
“So you’re sitting on a story like this for the last year and you’re
not telling us? How could you not tell us such a story?”

The reason was because I had thought nothing of it. The
Rebbe, however, remembered — six months after the event,
he remembered my name and he made a point of letting me
know that he remembered. This was amazing to me.

My third encounter with the Rebbe took place in the middle of
that summer, during the month of Av, 1964. I came to the
United States for the wedding of my brother-in-law, and again
my father-in-law took us to see the Rebbe.

In that audience, the Rebbe asked me what I was learning,
and I said I was learning the laws of mikvaos — the ritual bath.
To which the Rebbe responded with these words: “A mikvaah
can easily be made pasul and rendered unusable, but a spring,
which can also serve as a ritual bath, cannot be made pasul
as easily.”

He continued, “Yafutz maynosecha chutzah — Let your
wellsprings flow outward. If you will teach Torah with others,
if you spread the word of G-d and teach Torah to others, that
will give you a personal protection from the outside world.”

I have tried to follow that dictum ever since. To this day, I
continue to direct in Manchester the Reshet Shiurei Torah
through which I teach Torah to adults in various communities
and places, wherever I am allowed, and whenever I can.

Rabbi Moshe Kupetz is a lecturer, mentor, and coordinator of
outreach programs in the UK and abroad. For close to 30 years,
he gave classes in the Manchester Yeshiva. He was interviewed in
Jerusalem, Israel in the summer of 2013.

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Chayeles Tzivos Hashem
Menucha Rochel bas Chaya Feigl
By her parents

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This week in....

> 5730 — 1970, on the eve of the Rebbe Rayatz’s
twentieth jahrzeit, the Rebbe held a unique farbrengen
on Friday afternoon, just hours before Shabbos. At the
farbrengen, they completed the Sefer Torah to greet
Moshiach, which was initiated twenty-eight years earlier
by the Rebbe Rayatz. This was the first farbrengen to
be broadcast via telephone hookup to multiple Jewish
communities throughout the world.1 9 Shevat

1. Sichos Kodesh 5730 Vol. 1, p. 378

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