

IN LOVING MEMORY OF
Reb **Reuvein** ben Reb **Mordechai Yaakov HaKohen** ע"ה
Caplan

Passed away on 11 Tishrei, 5778

ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.

AND IN HONOR OF HIS WIFE - א - שתבלחט"א

Mrs. **Elka** bas **Raizel** שתחיל **Caplan**

May she go from strength to strength
in health, happiness, Torah and *mitzvot*.

ONCE UPON A CHASSID

The Wisdom and the Whimsy
The Fire and the Joy

Stories, Anecdotes & Sayings
translated and adopted from the writings of the
Rebbes and Chassidim of Chabad Lubavitch
Arranged in conjunction with the 54 sections of the Torah

By Yanki Tauber

Reprinted for Parshat Vayakhel-Pekudei, 5778
(Vol. 22-23)



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Vaad L'hafotzas Sichos

788 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, NY 11213
Tel. (718) 774-7200 - Fax. (718) 774-7494

5759 ♦ 1999

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THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE REDEMPTION

...And still more: those who "know what is done behind the scenes" - and are acquainted with a great many unpublicized details - realize much more the amazing wonders and miracles which occurred at this time in these days.

* * *

During the course of this year - to which the Jewish people gave the name and sign: "It will be a year of miracles [that] I will show him,"¹ and even before this, at the conclusion of the past year, designated by the Jewish people with the sign, "It will be a year of miracles"¹ - it has been emphasized many times what our Sages of blessed memory have foretold (in *Yalkut Shimoni*, *Yeshayahu*, *Remez* 499) regarding the war which would come in that part of the world, namely that thy are among the signs that the complete and true redemption through our righteous Moshiach is imminent.

And in light of the above mentioned events and miracles, one needs to strengthen awareness that this is the time to prepare immediately for the fulfillment of the promise "For sovereignty is the L-rd's"² when all people will be convinced that "there is a master to this world."³ This acknowledgment will bring them "to call all of them on the Name of G-d to serve Him together."⁴

(General letter, 25 Adar 5751)

IN LOVING MEMORY OF
Horav **Schneur Zalman Halevi** ע"ה
ben Horav **Yitzchok Elchonon Halevi** הי"ד
Shagalov
Passed away on 21 Tamuz, 5766
Reb **Dovid Asniel** ben Reb **Eliyahu** ע"ה
Ekman
Passed away on 5 Sivan - Erev Shavuot, 5765
Mrs. **Devora Rivka** bas Reb **Yosef Eliezer** ע"ה
Marenburg
Passed away on the second day
of Rosh Chodesh Adar, 5766
Reb **Yitzchok Moshe** (Ian)
ben Reb **Dovid Asniel** ע"ה
Ekman (Santiago, Chile)
Passed away on the 24th day of Shevat, 5769
ה. נ. צ. ב. ה.
AND IN HONOR OF
Mrs. **Esther Shaindel** bas **Fraidel Chedva** שתחיל
Shagalov
DEDICATED BY
Rabbi & Mrs. **Yosef Y. and Gittel Rochel** שיחי
Shagalov

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"Vaad L'Hafotzas Sichos"

by:

Moshiach Awareness Center,

a Project of:

Enlightenment For The Blind, Inc.

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Rabbi Yosef Y. Shagalov,
Executive Director

Printed in the U.S.A.

1. [An acronym formed from the Hebrew letters used to designate the year. Translator's note.]

2. *Ovadia* 1:21.

3. See *Bereishis Rabba*, beginning of chapter 39.

4. *Zephaniah* 3:9. And see Rambam *Hilchos Melachim* end of chapter 11.

As we come from the days of Purim - days of miracles which G-d performed "in those days at this time," and as we approach the holiday of Passover - when we celebrate the holiday of "the time of our freedom" and we thank G-d for the wonders and miracles which He performed for us at the Exodus from Egypt - now is an appropriate time to turn our complete attention to the wonders and miracles which occurred close to this year's Purim.

These were **open miracles**, not just for the Jewish people, but also for all peoples, until "all the ends of the earth saw"; everyone saw the great miracles that occurred at that time.

...According to the natural conditions of the world, in such a situation there should have been not only a declaration of war, etc., but the conflict should have involved many countries and ignited into a world war, G-d forbid; what actually happened was beyond the familiar natural order, for not only was a world war avoided, but the war that did break out ended quietly.

At the time, all the signs indicated it would be a difficult war, and therefore a huge army was mobilized, well equipped with huge caches of the most sophisticated weapons. After all the arrangements, which is the procedure when preparing oneself for a long war which must last weeks, months - the victory came in a very short time!

The victory was so remarkable that it not only avoided a blood bath between the nations of the world (as was feared at first), but it also reached the point that the enemy freed, in a fitting manner, some of the prisoners of war and even some of those captured earlier.

39:33-43

ויביאו את המשכן אל משה

ויברך אתם משה

And they brought the Sanctuary to Moses, the tent and all its furnishings, its clasps, its boards, its bars, its pillars, its foundations... And Moses saw all the work, and, behold, they have done it as G-d had commanded... and Moses blessed them...

"And Moses blessed them" - He said: "May it be the will of G-d that His presence shall dwell within the work of your hands."

Rashi's commentary

Often, a person may feel inadequate in the face of a spiritual challenge and may contend that he is simply not equipped to reach for 'lofty' attainments. For example, he may argue that while the perfection of his behavior is a matter of choice and violation, he lacks the mental and emotional fortitude to transform his character. This, he maintains, is best left to individuals of a greater spiritual stature than himself.

Says the Torah: You do yours. Apply yourself to constructing the external edifice, and the Almighty will provide the 'soul' to dwell therein. Do your utmost to make yourself a fitting vessel, and G-d

will fill it with the sublime resources which seem so elusive to you now.¹

Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi

Hypocrisy

Once, a certain individual was condemned to Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi as a hypocrite. “He considers himself a chassid,” the Rebbe was told, “and has assumed all sorts of pious customs and practices. He acts like a real holy fellow. But it’s all superficial - internally, his mind and heart are as coarse and unrefined as ever.”

“Well,” said the Rebbe, “in that case, may he meet the end that the Talmud predicts for such people.”

1. In his *Tanya*, Rabbi Schneur Zalman applies this to the *Benoni* (the ordinary man), who feels that he lacks the spiritual credentials to aspire to the level of *Tzaddik*, the perfectly righteous individual who has utterly transformed himself both ‘inside’ and ‘out’ (see footnote or page 43).

In the words of Rabbi Schneur Zalman: “Habit reigns supreme in any sphere and becomes second nature. So if one accustoms himself to despise evil, it will, to some extent, become despicable in truth; likewise, if one accustoms himself to gladden his heart in G-d through reflection upon His greatness, his self impulsion will bring on inspiration from On High. If he pursues this path, perhaps a spirit from above will descend upon him and imbue him with the soul of a Tzaddik.”

The ‘informers’ were taken aback. They had merely desired to ‘warn’ the Rebbe about this individual. But now, what sort of calamity had the Rebbe called down upon him?

Rabbi Schneur Zalman explained: In the final *Mishnah* of the tractate *Pe’ah*, the Talmud discusses the criteria for a pauper to be eligible to receive charity. The section concludes with the warning: “*One who is not in need, but takes... one who is not lame or blind but makes himself as such, will not die of old age until he is indeed as such.*”

“In the same vein,” concluded the Rebbe, “one who makes of himself more than he is in matters of righteousness and piety, will eventually find that these traits have become ingrained in his character and very being.”

Source:

Told by Rabbi Menachem M. Schneersohn, the Lubavitcher Rebbe shlita, May 12, 1977.