

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

Passed away on 11 Tishrei, 5778
ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.

שחבלחט"א

Mrs. **Elka** bas **Raizel** שתחי' **Caplan**

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

ONCE UPON A CHASSID

FESTIVALS

Stories and Anecdotes
told by the Lubavitcher Rebbe,
his predecessors, and their chassidim.

Arranged in conjunction with the festivals of the year.

By Michoel Green

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

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Executive Director

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IN LOVING MEMORY OF OUR DEAR PARENTS
Mr. Tzvi Hirsh ben Reb Yitzchok ה"ע Greenberg
 Passed away on 19 Elul, 5771
Mrs. Chava bas Reb Chaim ה"ה Greenberg

Passed away on 25 Mar-Cheshvan, 5771
 ה. כ. ב. ה.

*

DEDICATED BY THEIR CHILDREN
 ש"ח
 * * *
IN LOVING MEMORY OF OUR DEAR PARENTS
Mr. Meyer ben Reb Hershel ה"ע Berger
 Passed away on 28 Iyar, 5772
Mrs. Faige bas Reb Reuven ה"ע Berger
 Passed away on 22 Adar, 5766
 ה. כ. ב. ה.

*

DEDICATED BY THEIR CHILDREN
Mr. & Mrs. Yaakov and Chana ה"ש Greenberg

Downstairs Phobia

During World War I, Rabbi Shalom DovBer and his family were forced to vacate the town of Lubavitch and resettle in Rostov. Upon his arrival, he rented a modest apartment at 166 Pushkinsky Street, on the second floor. Now, the ground floor was occupied by an army general, a cruel and vicious-tempered individual whom everybody feared, yet this did not seem to concern the Rebbe at all. The first Purim following his arrival, he conducted a lively *farbrengen*¹ in his apartment and told the chassidim not to worry about annoying the downstairs tenant. At the Rebbe's behest, they sang and danced, and the day passed peacefully. After Purim, however, everyone was still wary of the irascible general.

Pesach was approaching and many of the Rebbe's belongings had not yet arrived from Lubavitch. Left with no other alternative, the Rebbe and his wife, Rebbetzin Shterna Sarah, had to *kasher* their year-round water urn for use during the holiday. The two of them did the koshering procedure themselves, pouring boiling water over the urn to render it fit for Passover use. The Rebbe poured plenty of water, scrupulously insuring that the water touched all the vessel's surfaces.

IN LOVING MEMORY OF A DEAR FRIEND
Reb Yosef Yisroel ben Reb Sholom ז"י Rosner
Passed away on 7 Menachem-Av, 5777
ת. ג. צ. ב. ה.

*

DEDICATED BY HIS FRIENDS
Mr. & Mrs. Gershon and Leah ש"ו Wolf
Rabbi & Mrs. Yosef Y. and Gittel Rochel ש"י Shagalov

1. Chassidic gathering.

Downstairs Phobia

When the Rebbetzin saw how much water her husband was spilling all over the floor, she was alarmed. "Try not to spill so much water," she cautioned him. "I am worried about our downstairs neighbor!"

"You're afraid of downstairs," mused the Rebbe aloud, "yet why are you not afraid of Upstairs?"

* * *

The Lubavitcher Rebbe often visited the grave-site of his revered father-in-law, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok of Lubavitch. There he would stand in prayer for many hours, reading the hundreds of notes he received daily from people all over the world who requested the Rebbe's blessing.

Once, while returning from the cemetery, the driver noticed that the Rebbe was in a hurry. His attempts to drive faster were in vain, however, for they were stopped by a red light at every intersection.

After a while, the Rebbe commented, "My, my! If you would only adhere to the rules of *Shulchan Aruch*² as meticulously as you observe the traffic signals, you would be a fine Jew indeed."

Source:

Shmu'os V'sipurim ("Sayings and Stories") by Rabbi Raphael Kahan, vol. I, p. 155; told by Rabbi Yisroel Gordon of Morristown, New Jersey.

2. Code of Jewish Law.

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE REDEMPTION

are presently standing ready to greet our righteous Redeemer [Moshiach]. This is particularly true now that we have reached the milestone of forty years⁸ concerning which the Torah says, "G-d gave you a heart to know and eyes to see and ears to hear."⁹ Additionally, we are now situated in the fifty first year [5751], which in Hebrew forms the acrostic (It shall be a year of) wonders which I will show him [נפלאות ארנו - Niflaos Arenu].

The Jewish people should, therefore, be encouraged and their spirits uplifted by declaring that G-d says daily, and literally, anew, that, "**I have indeed remembered you,**" and that your righteous Moshiach "stands behind the wall"¹⁰ and that "this one is coming."¹¹ Accordingly we should prepare ourselves to greet him by increasing our observance of Torah and Mitzvos, **in consonance with the ruling of the Rambam**¹² (whose anniversary of passing is the 20th of Teves, the night after this Sabbath), that through "one Mitzvah, one can favorably alter the balance for oneself and for the entire world, causing oneself and them salvation and deliverance."

(From the talks of Shabbos Parshas Shemos, 19 Teves 5751)

8. [I.e., forty years since the passing of the Previous Rebbe, a milestone which enables us to fully realize the intention and depth of the teachings that were said forty years earlier. - Translator's note.]

9. Tavo 29:3 [Moses said this to the Jewish people who were about to enter into the Promised Land, explaining that they were now capable of realizing that which they were taught by G-d forty years earlier. Translator's note.]

10. *Shir HaShirim* 2:9.

11. Ibid 8. See *Shir HaShirim Rabbah* on this verse (ch. 2:8(b)).

12. *Hilchos Teshuvah* 3:4.

All of the signs mentioned by our sages indicate that we are currently situated **at the very end of the period of exile**. We have "passed all the deadlines."¹ We have also performed Teshuvah [repentance, return, a prerequisite for Redemption]. Indeed, my sainted father-in-law, the leader of our generation, declared (several decades ago) that we have already concluded all the service [necessary for Redemption], including the "polishing of the buttons,"² and we now stand ready ("All of you stand ready") to greet our righteous Moshiach.³

* * *

Despite the difficult and protracted final exile, which has lasted more than 1,900 years (in stark contrast to the duration of the Egyptian bondage which lasted 210 years), the nature of "the Children of **Israel**" has essentially **transcended exile**. Thus, every additional moment we remain in exile is a form "having **now come** into Egypt,"⁴ "as if they had that very day entered into Egypt."⁵

The Jewish people, therefore, stand with firm faith and conviction that G-d will immediately fulfill his promise that "I have indeed remembered you"⁶ by bringing the genuine and complete Redemption, especially when hearing from the Moses of our generation,⁷ my sainted father-in-law, the leader of our generation, that we have already concluded all matters of Divine service and

1. *Sanhedrin* 97b.

2. Talk of Simchas Torah, 5689.

3. Cf. *Hayom Yom*, among others, 15 Teves.

4. *Shemos* 1:1.

5. *Shemos Rabbah*, beginning of our Parsha (8:14), *Tanchuma*, loc. cit. 3.

6. *Shemos* 3:16.

7. See *Bereishis Rabbah* 56:7: "There is no generation in which there is none like Moses." See also *Zohar* 3:273a. *Tikkunei Zohar* 69 (112, beginning of side a. 114, beginning of side a). *Tanya* chapter 44. Ibid. *Iggeres HaKodesh*, elucidation of sec. 27, end.

With respect to Gideon, we find that: "In his days¹ the Jewish people were in distress. The Holy One, Blessed be He, sought a person who would find merit in them. When He found Gideon to be meritorious, because he found merit in them, an angel immediately appeared to him, as it says: 'And the angel of G-d appeared to him and said to him, 'Go with this power, with **the power of the merit you have found in my children.**'" "Said the Holy One, Blessed be He, it is within your capacity to find a defense for Israel. **In your merit they shall be redeemed.**"²

...The merit which will hasten the Redemption is the following:

Even in the Talmudic era it has been said that "all the deadlines have passed."³ Certainly now that we have endured a lengthy and arduous exile, the duration of which has exceeded 1,900 years, **and he has still not arrived...** And in regard to Teshuvah ("It depends only on Teshuvah³) [repentance, return, a prerequisite for Redemption], they have already done Teshuvah. Indeed, there is no Jewish person who has not entertained a thought of Teshuvah, (not just once, but) several times in the course of his lifetime. This [thought of Teshuvah] can transform "instantaneously"⁴ a perfectly wicked person into a perfectly righteous individual, in accordance with the Talmudic ruling⁵ that one who would betroth a woman "stipulating that I am a (perfectly)⁶ righteous individual, even if he

1. *Tanchuma, Shoftim* 4.

2. *Yalkut Shimoni, Shoftim* 62.

3. *Sanhedrin* 97b.

4. *Zohar* I, 129, end side a.

5. *Kiddushin* 49b. *Rambam, Hilchos Ishus*, 8:5. *Tur, Shulchan Aruch, Even HoEzer*, 38:31.

6. Based on the version cited on *Or Zarua* 112.

BESURAS HAGEULO

were previously a perfectly wicked person, she is betrothed, for perhaps he had a thought of teshuvah."

Considering the above, it is with utmost certainty that our righteous Moshiach must arrive **here and now, immediately, [mamosh] in the most literal sense.**

Now, this exercise of finding merit⁷ in and of itself should suffice to bring about the Redemption. Moreover, in addition to the finding of merit, the imminence of Moshiach's arrival constitutes a **definitive ruling issued by many rabbis and halachic authorities.** Further, since Torah "is not in heaven,"⁸ this ruling issued by the earthly courts "obligates," so to speak, and affords a unique privilege to, the heavenly courts. **And so it will be confirmed!**

* * *

In our day and age, after G-d has vented His rage with the destruction of the Holy Temple, and after all of "our deeds and actions throughout the duration of exile,"⁹ and after all the decrees of oppression and persecution - may Hashem, indeed, shield us and protect us from them - the Jewish people have endured throughout the protracted and arduous final exile, particularly the Holocaust of the very last generation, the process of refinement and purification has, without any doubt, been achieved in full, "enough and even too much." Consequently, the [current¹⁰] "siege of the Babylonian

7. *i.e., that we have already passed all the deadlines as well as satisfying the condition of Teshuvah. Translator's note.]*

8. *Netzavim*, 30:12. See *Bava Metzia* 59b.

9. *Tanya*, beginning of chapter 37.

10. *[The Hebrew term Samach, which means "besieged," can also be rendered "supported." This talk was delivered on the fast day Asara b'Teves (the Tenth of the month of Teves), the anniversary of the siege of Jerusalem by the Babylonian king. The Rebbe here is alluding to the threats of the modern day Babylonian dictator, which are actually the events which serve as preludes to the Redemption. Translator's note.]*

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE REDEMPTION

king"¹¹ has acquired an exclusively **positive** connotation, one that is **visibly and manifestly good, even to eyes of flesh.** In the words of our sages:¹² The Holy One Blessed be He says to Israel, "My children have no fear. All that I have done¹³ I have done exclusively for you... the time of your Redemption has arrived."

The emphasis of this generation - particularly this year, the year designated as "It shall be a year of wonders I will show him" - should be placed on the concept of G-d's support of those who have fallen,¹⁴ to strengthen and encourage the Jewish people, emphasizing particularly the support and encouragement acquired through faith in the coming of Moshiach and the implicit trust that "behold he (our righteous Moshiach) is coming."¹⁵ This should be accompanied with enhanced preparation for his arrival by way of teshuvah [repentance, return] and observance of Torah and mitzvos. In the words of the pronouncement of my sainted father-in-law - the leader of our generation: "immediate Teshuvah, immediate Redemption."¹⁶ "Return, O, Israel, unto G-d your G-d; prepare yourselves and your family to greet our righteous Moshiach, who shall arrive soon, in the most literal sense."¹⁷

(From the talks of Shabbos Parshas Vayechi (and Asara b'Teves, may it be transformed into joy) 5751)

11. *Yechezkal* 24:2.

12. *Yalkut Shimoni, Yeshayahu* 499.

13. This includes the efforts of the Babylonian King, who is merely an ax in the hands of the one who chops with it. [i.e. He is G-d's instrument.]

14. *[The phrase סומך נזלים - "supports the falling" - is similar to the expression mentioned before - סמך מלך כל - the Babylonian King besieged," which the Rebbe interpreted in a positive vein to mean that "he supported." Translator's note.]*

15. *Shir HaShirim* 2:8. See *Shir HaShirim Rabbah* on this verse (2:8(b)).

16. In his *Igros Kodesh*, vol. 5, end of p. 361 ff., 377 ff., 408 ff. and in other places.

17. *Hayom Yom* - 15 Teves.