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

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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
ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.

And in honor of
Mrs. **Esther Shaindel** bas **Fraidel Chedva** שתחי׳
Shagalov

Dedicated by
Rabbi & Mrs. **Yosef Y.** and **Gittel Rochel** שיחיו
Shagalov

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602 North Orange Drive.
Los Angeles, CA 90036
Tel.: (323) 934-7095 * Fax: (323) 934-7092

http://www.torah4blind.org
e-mail: yys@torah4blind.org

Rabbi Yosef Y. Shagalov,
Executive Director

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7:1 | בא אל התיבה

G-d said to Noah: Come, you and your household, into the ark

The Hebrew word for ark, *teivah*, also means 'word'. "Come into the word," says the Almighty, enter within the words of prayer and Torah study. Here you will find a sanctuary of wisdom, meaning and sanctity amidst the raging floodwaters of life.

Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov

Where's the Beef?

One day a visitor arrived at the home of Rabbi DovBer, the 'Maggid' of Mezeritch. The visitor was an old friend of Rabbi DovBer's, who had studied with him back in his pre-chassidic days. With great interest he observed the behavior of his former study-partner, who had since become a follower of the Baal Shem Tov and had assumed the leadership of the chassidic community upon the latter's passing.

The visitor was particularly struck by the amount of time that the Maggid devoted to prayer. He himself was no stranger to reflective prayer: when he and Rabbi DovBer had studied together, they had mastered the mystical teach-

ings of the kabalistic and they would pray with the prescribed meditations, or *kavonos*, outlined in the writings of the kabbala. But never in his experience had prayer warranted such long hours.

"I don't understand," he said to Rabbi DovBer, "1, too, pray with all the kavonos of the Holy Ari[1]. But still, my prayers do not take nearly as much time as yours do."

Rabbi DovBer's visitor was a dedicated scholar. His wife ran the family business so that he could devote all his time to Torah study. Only once a year was he forced to break from his studies for a few weeks: his wife would give him a list of the merchandise she needed and he would travel to the fair in Leipzig to wheel and deal.

"Listen," said Rabbi DovBer to his visitor, "I have an idea for you. Why must you waste precious weeks of study every year? This year, sit at home. Envision the journey to Leipzig in your mind's eye: picture every station along the way, every crossroads, every wayside inn. Then, imagine that you are at the fair, making your rounds at the booths. Call to mind the merchants that you deal with, re-invent the usual haggling and bargaining that follows. Now, load your new purchases onto your imaginary cart and make the return journey. The entire operation should not take you more than a couple of hours and then you can return to your be- loved books!"

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1. Famed kabbalist Rabbi isaac Luria, 5294-5332 (1534-1572).

"That is all fine and well," replied Rabbi DovBer's friend, "however, there remains one slight problem: I need the merchandise."

"The same is true with prayer and its *kavonos*," said Rabbi DovBer. "To envision this or that sublime attribute of G-d in its prescribed section of the prayers, or to refer to a certain nuance of emotion in your heart at a particular passage, is all fine and well. But you see, I need the merchandise...."

Source:

Told by Rabbi Menachem M. Schneersohn, the Lubavitcher Rebbe shlita, July 28, 1951.

BESURAS HAGEULO
The Announcement Of The Redemption

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Special emphasis should be placed this year in all that was said previously in relation to the "just accounting"[1] of Parshas Noach:

The reason for a special emphasis this year can be understood from the following. My sainted father-in-law, the leader of our generation, has testified that all aspects of our Divine Service have already been completed, including the polishing of the buttons, and we stand ready ("stand all of you ready") to receive our righteous Moshiach. Therefore, the goal of the "just accounting" (emphasizing that a just accounting must be a true one) performed in these days is the immediate need for the true and final Redemption to come in actual reality!

More specifically:

Even though a person recognizes his own personal deficiencies that need correction, this doesn't contradict, G-d Forbid, the testimony of the leader of our generation that we have already completed the Divine Service and stand ready to greet our

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1. *[The term "Cheshbon Tzedek," here translated at "just accounting," refers to the process of self-analysis and self-judgment incumbent upon every Jew (indeed, every human being). It is the "taking stock" of where one stands spiritually and honestly assessing one's faults and deficiencies, with the intent of improving and correcting them. This analysis takes place, on different levels, at regular intervals, i.e., once a day (before retiring), once a week (Shabbos), once a month (Rosh Chodesh), once a year (Yom Kippur). In the full text of the sicha, the Rebbe discusses the significance of Parshas Noach as the first full week of the post-Holiday season. Accordingly, this is the time for an honest self-appraisal and correction of all that needs correction in a manner that is consistent with the rest and joy that is characterized by Noach. In this excerpt, the Rebbe speaks of the special self-appraisal that has to be made because of the uniqueness of this year. Translator's note.]*

righteous Moshiach This is because **the Jewish people's collective** Divine Service over the course of the generations, required during the time of exile to bring the complete Redemption (which depends on our deeds and service during the entire period of exile"[2]) **has been concluded and perfected**. There is absolutely no explanation or reason for the delay of the Redemption. Therefore, even if an individual's Divine service is lacking over the course of time that the Redemption has been delayed, this is a **personal matter** that certainly needs to be corrected and completed. But this does not diminish, G-d Forbid, the completion and perfection of "our actions and service" of the Jewish people as a whole, which stands ready for the Redemption. The very fact that the collective has been perfected allows the individual to correct himself easier and with joy, knowing that the true and complete Redemption is coming imminently.

And if the words said during the lifetime of my sainted father-in-law , the leader of our generation, all the more so after many decades have passed, more than forty years when "G-d gives you a heart to understand and eyes to see and ears to hear."[3]

This is even more true in this year - Hey, Tuf, Shin, Nun, Beis[4] - which is an acronym for (and follows and adds to that of the previous year, Hey, Tuf, Shin, Nun, Aleph, a year in which I will show them wonders) "it will be a year of wonders within it," and "miracles in everything," "inclusive of everything".[5] This [acronym] includes all aspects [of the year will be wondrous].

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2. *Tanya*, beginning of chapter 37.

3. *Tavo*, 29:3.

4. *[Each Hebrew letter has a numeric equivalent, which can be used to designate the years. The year 5752, in which this talk was delivered, can be rendered alphabetically with the letters enumerated above. Translator's note.]*

5. "In all, for all, all" - see See *Bava Basra* 15b at the end and ff. *[The three phrases have the numerical value of the word kabetz - gather. See Chiddushe Chasam Sofer there. Translator's note.]*

Additionally, the letter Beis [meaning "in"] is a preposition that can be used in conjunction with everything. This applies primarily to the "wonders" of the true and final Redemption, "As in the days of your going forth from Egypt I will show them wonders."[6] Since with absolute certainty all of the appointed times have passed, and we've already done teshuvah, now **it all depends on our righteous Moshiach himself**!

* * *

When we make a just accounting at the conclusion of the first week of Divine service in the world for the year Hey, Tuf, Shin, Nun, Beis, "a year of wonders in all," we come to the conclusion that **it all depends on our righteous Moshiach himself**. This awareness expresses iteself in more conscientious and enhanced way of reciting the prayer for the santification of the moon, "for they are destined to be renewed like her,"[7] in the true and complete Redemption through Dovid, the King Moshiach, Dovid, the king of Israel, lives forever."[8]

More specifically:

One should be careful and make an effort to recite the Sanctification of the Moon while dressed in dignified and attractive garments, in the street and "in a multitude of people [wherein] is the glory of the King."[9] This applies also in those places where people have not been conscientious about this until now (because they lived among non-Jews).[10] One should also be careful in regard to

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6. *Michah* 7:15.

7. The text of the blessing of the Sanctification of the Moon (*Sanhedrin* 42a).

8. *Rosh Hashanah* 25a.

9. The details of the laws of the Sanctification of the Moon - see *Tur Shulchan Aruch*, *Orach Chayim*, section 427, and in the commentaries there.

10. See *Magen Avraham* there, 14.

the time of the Sanctification of the Moon, since we find different customs about this: three days after the Molad[11] [New Moon], seven days after the Molad,[12] and the evening after Shabbos [Saturday night],[13] "If the night after Shabbos is before the tenth of the month... but if it is afterwards one should not wait until after Shabbos, because there might be two, three or four cloudy nights and the moon won't be seen and the time will pass."[14] This applies specifically in those countries where the sky is covered with clouds, particularly in winter time.[15] Each place should follow its custom and according to its situation. In places where there is a question or doubt, one should act according to the instructions of the rabbinic authority of that place.

Further, and this is the main point, the Sanctification of the Moon should be performed with the specific intention to speed and hasten and actualize the immediate arrival of Dovid King Moshiach, through an increased appeal and entreaty for the Redemption, as expressed in the conclusion of the Sanctification of the Moon: "**And they will seek** the L-rd their G-d and Dovid their King, Amen."

(From the talk of Shabbos Parshas Noach, 4 Mar-Cheshvan 5752)

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11. See *Turei Zahav* there, section 3.

12. *Shulchan Aruch* there, par. 4. And in the Prayer Book of the Alter Rebbe, "according to the Kabbalah the Sanctification of the Moon is not recited until seven days after the Molad" (and see at length the glosses of the Rebbe Rashab (in the Prayer Book Torah Or 242:1-2. And in the *Siddur im Dach* (Siddur with Chassidic discourses) 321:1-2). *Shaar HaKolel* chapter 33, section 2. And see there for further cross references.)

13. *Shulchan Aruch* there, par. 2.

14. *Remo* there.

15. See the glosses of the Rebbe Rashab and *Shaar HaKolel* there, that for this reason the Tzemach Tzedek was not particular (in winter time) to wait until after seven days. But obviously it's different for those dwelling in countries where (many of the) winter months are not cloudy.

In loving memory of our dear mother in law & mother
Mrs. **Rivkah (Rozanne)** bas Reb **Chaim** ע״ה **Stekler**
Passed away on 13 Kislev, 5786
ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.
*
Dedicated by her son-in-law and daughter
Mr. & Mrs. **Yehuda (Jerry)** and **Avigail (Allison)** שיחיו **Elfassy**

In loving memory of a dear freind
Reb **Yosef Yisroel** ben Reb **Sholom** ע״ה **Rosner**
Passed away on 7 Menachem-Av, 5777
ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.

*

Dedicated by his friends
Mr. & Mrs. **Gershon** and **Leah** שיחיו **Wolf**
Rabbi & Mrs. **Yosef Y.** and **Gittel Rochel** שיחיו **Shagalov**

* * *

In loving memory of a dear freind
Reb **Pesach Betzalel** ben Reb **Leib** ע״ה **Fleischman**
Passed away on 3 Elul, 5784
ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.

*

Dedicated by his friend
Rabbi & Mrs. **Yosef Y.** and **Gittel Rochel** שיחיו **Shagalov**

In loving memory of
Reb **Yissochar** ben Reb **Peisach** ע"ה **Dekhtyarevsky (Dexter)**
Passed away on 9 Mar-Cheshvan, 5774
ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.
*
Dedicated by his children and grandchildren שיחיו
* * *
In loving memory of our dear friend
Mrs. **Esther (Monique)** bas Reb **Shmuel** ע"ה **Mariani**
Passed away on 8 Cheshvan, 5786
ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.
*
Dedicated by her friends תחיינה
* * *
In loving memory of
Mrs. **Roneete Mona Mina** bas Reb **Zev** ע"ה **Kurtzman**
Passed away on 9 Cheshvan, 5783
ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.
*
Dedicated by
Chabad-Lubavitch community of California שיחיו

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