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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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
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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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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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30:30 | ועתה מתי אעשה גם אנכי לביתי
But when will I do something for my own self?

Selfless to a Fault

Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok of Lubavitch once said:

There was a time when they used to say the truth. And it worked.

Once a chassidic businessman came to my grandfather, Rabbi Shmuel of Lubavitch. This was a man who always kept the *Gates* of *Light* and *The Gate of Faith*[1] in his breast pocket and was fluent in both.

During his private audience with Rabbi Shmuel, the latter inquired as to his daily schedule. "What do you do before the morning prayers?" asked the Rebbe.

The chassid replied that he studies the G-dly concepts which are expounded upon in the teachings of chassidism, and then meditates upon them both during and following his prayers. The Rebbe continued to go through the chassid's

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1. Two books of chassidic philosophy by Rabbi DovBer of Lubavitch, known for their depth and profoudity.

entire day: every available minute was likewise occupied in the pursuit of the Divine.

"And what of the reading of the sh'mah before sleep[2]?" the Rebbe finished. Then too the chassid thought *chassidus*.

"So you are forever thinking of G-d," said the Rebbe, "but when do you think of yourself?"

The chassid fell in a dead faint.

The Rebbe summoned the servant, Reb Pinyeh Leib, to carry the chassid out of the room and revive him. "One needn't faint," the Rebbe remarked, "one must ***do***..."

Source:

Sefer Hasichos 5705 [Talks of Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok of Lubavitch 1944-45], P. 89

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2. Traditionally a time for soul-searching and stock-taking of the bygone day.

31:42 | ואת יגיע כפי
...and the toil of my hands

If of the toil of your hands you eat, fortunate are you...

Psalms 128:2

"The toil of your hands" should be invested in earning a living - leave your head free for more worthy pursuits.

Hassidic saying

Curious Headgear

A chassid of Rabbi Sholom DovBer of Lubavitch opened a plant for the manufacture of galoshes. Soon his every waking hour and thought was occupied in his new and flourishing business.

Said the Rebbe to him: "To insert one's feet into galoshes is a fairly common practice; but a head in galoshes ...?"

Source:

Likkutei Sichos (Collected Talks of Rabbi Menachem M. Schneersohn, the Lubavitcher Rebbe shlita), vol. 1, p. 224.

BESURAS HAGEULO
The Announcement Of The Redemption

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Maimonides writes:

"In that era[1] there will be neither famine nor war..."

A foretaste of this peaceful state can be realized even in the last moments of exile. For even as "the nations are provoking one another," and "The king of Persia provokes the Arabian king... and all the nations are in turmoil and terror," the Jewish people are experiencing a state of tranquillity and peace, since "G-d says to them 'My children, do not fear. Whatever I have done, I have done only for your sake... the time for your Redemption has arrived." Furthermore, "The 'King Moshiach' - the Redeemer of Israel - "stands on the roof of the Beis HaMikdash... and says, 'Humble ones, the time for your Redemption has arrived.'"[2]

(From the talk of Shabbos Parshas Vayeitzei, 7 Kislev, 5751)

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1. Rambam, conclusion of his work *Mishneh Torah*.
2. *Yalkut Shimoni, Yeshayahu, remez* 499.

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The subject that is most urgent in our generation and our time is - the true and complete Redemption through our righteous Moshiach. As has been mentioned many times of late, now all the requirements have already been concluded, we need only receive our righteous Moshiach in actual reality.

All the more so in our generation and our time, when according to the signs of our Sages of blessed memory (in the tractate *Sanhedrin*, in Midrashim and in many places) we are actually on the verge of the Redemption.

As mentioned many times recently, that after our many great achievements and Divine service throughout the generations, and specifically after the Divine service of our Rebbeim and leaders through the Divine service of my sainted father-in-law, the leader of our generation, all necessary spiritual purifications have been accomplished.

This also includes the spiritual purification of "Aisev [Esau] is Edom."[1] Aisev is already completely spiritually purified, as we see how the nations at this time (in the exile of Edom[2]), which stem from "Aisev is Edom," conduct themselves as benevolent governments. Such conduct has spread to other nations, as we have seen, especially of late.

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1. *Vayishlach* 36:1.

2. *[The Jewish people have endured four exiles, each named after the dominant country or culture of the time. These were the Egyptian exile, the Babylonian, the Greek and the Roman. Edom is the Biblical ancestor of the Roman people, whose empire still persists both in a spiritual sense and in a physical sense in the domination of European civilization and its derivatives. Translator's note.]*

It's therefore understood that now the situation is already one in which the physical body, and even the physicality of the world, is completely purified and refined. It is a "vessel" receptive to all the spiritual lights and concepts, primarily the light[3] of our righteous Moshiach, the light of the true and complete Redemption.

And the only thing missing is that a Jew should open his eyes as he should, when he will see that all is ready for the Redemption! There is already the Shulchan Aruch (the Set Table); there is already the Livyosan, the Shor HaBor and the Yayin Meshumar.[4] The Jewish people already sit by the table, "the table of their Father"[5] (the Holy One Blessed be He), together with our righteous Moshiach. (As is stated in holy books[6] that in every generation there is "one descended from Yehuda who is qualified to be Moshiach"). In our generation this is the leader of our generation, my sainted father-in-law. And now forty years after the passing of my sainted father-in-law we also have already "a heart to know and eyes to see and ears to hear."[7]

We must now only open the "heart to know" and open "the eyes to see" and open the "ears to hear." Likewise we must utilize all 248 physical limbs and 365 physical sinews in the learning of the inner aspects of the Torah, as revealed in the teachings of Chassidus and observing the directives of our Rabbeim and leaders.[8] These

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3. *Zohar* section 3 34:b. Cited and explained in *Likkutei Levi Yitzchak* on the *Zohar*, section 3, p. 219 ff.

4. See *Brochos* 34:b. *Bava Basra* 75:a. *Vayikra Rabba* Chapter 13:3. And in other sources.

5. *Brochos* 3, end of side a.

6. Commentary of the Bartenura on *Megillas Rus*. And see also *Sha'alos U'teshuvos Chasam Sofer Choshen Mishpat* (vol. 6) at the end (section 98). And see *S'dei Chemed, Peas HaSadeh*, entry Aleph , Klal 70. And elsewhere.

7. *Tavo* 29:3.

8. In addition to learning Torah and observing mitzvos in general (the 248 positive commandments corresponding to the 248 limbs (*macos* 23, end of side

directives include learning about the concepts of Redemption, in a way that will open the heart, eyes and ears. That is, one must understand, see and hear in the physicality of the world the true and complete Redemption in actual reality. One should learn the Torah of Moshiach (the inner aspects of Torah) in a way of seeing. All of the above is already prepared; one need only open the eyes to see it!

Also the custom of the Jewish people which is continually spreading in our time, to learn the subject of Redemption and Moshiach, in order to prepare himself and others even more for the revelation of the true and complete Redemption, as mentioned above.

(From the talk of Shabbos Parshas Vayeitze, 9 Kislev 5752)

b) and the 365 negative commandments corresponding to the 365 sinews (*Zohar*, volume I, 170b.)

לזכות

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Passed away on 9 Cheshvan, 5783
ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.
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In loving memory of
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* * *
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**

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