

# 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** עי"ה  
 ben Horav **Yitzchok Elchonon Halevi** הי"ד  
**Shagalov**  
 Passed away on 21 Tamuz, 5766  
 Reb **Dovid Asniel** ben Reb **Eliyahu** עי"ה  
**Ekman**  
 Passed away on 5 Sivan - Erev Shavuot, 5765  
 Mrs. **Devora Rivka** bas Reb **Yosef Eliezer** עי"ה  
**Marenburg**  
 Passed away on the second day  
 of Rosh Chodesh Adar, 5766  
 Reb **Yitzchok Moshe** (Ian)  
 ben Reb **Dovid Asniel** עי"ה  
**Ekman (Santiago, Chile)**  
 Passed away on the 24th day of Shevat, 5769  
 ת. נ. צ. ג. ה.

**AND IN HONOR OF**  
 Mrs. **Esther Shaindel** bas **Fraidel Chedva** שתח'ל  
**Shagalov**  
**DEDICATED BY**  
 Rabbi & Mrs. **Yosef Y.** and **Gittel Rochel** שיחי  
**Shagalov**

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**Rabbi Yosef Y. Shagalov,**  
**Executive Director**

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16:3

ויקהלו על משה ועל אהרן ויאמרו אלהם  
רב לכם כי כל העדה כלם קדשים  
ובתוכם ה' ומדוע תתנשאו על קהל ה'

*And they [Korach and his following] converged upon Moses and Aaron and said to them: "Enough! Every one of the congregation is holy, and G-d is amongst them. Why do you raise yourselves above the congregation of G-d?"*

## *Jack of all Trades*

There are those who maintain that they have no need of a mentor to guide them through life. They claim, as did Korach, that each individual can forge his relationship with G-d unaided. They argue that since the Jewish faith rejects the concept of an intermediary between man and G-d, they have no use for a rebbe or master.

They fail to understand that the entire Jewish people are a single entity, that every individual soul is, in truth, but a limb or organ of the soul of Israel. Just as each limb and organ of the human body has its function at which it excels, so too every soul has its role and mission, as well as its limitations. The 'loftiest' of souls is dependent upon the 'lowliest' for the attainment of the single, unified goal. And were any limb to strike out on its own, detaching itself from the

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'head' which provides the entire body with vitality and direction - the results are self-understood.

Said Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok of Lubavitch: "When an individual adopts the attitude that he can do it all on his own, he reminds me of the story told about the goy and the *tefillin*. Once, a Jew noticed a pair of *tefillin* in the house of a gentile peasant. Upon seeing the holy object in such a place he began to inquire about the *tefillin*, wishing to purchase them from the goy. The peasant, who had looted the *tefillin* in a recent pogrom, grew agitated and defensive. "What do you mean, where did I get them?" he blurted out. "Why, I made them myself! I myself am a shoemaker!"

### Source:

Told by Rabbi Menachem M. Schneersohn, the Lubavitcher Rebbe shlita, June 30, 1951.

## Korach / The Exchange

18:28

כַּן תְּרִימוּ גַם אַתֶּם

*Thus, you too shall lift up the offering from the grain [‘terumah’] to G-d*

From the words “you too” we derive that a person’s agent can act in his stead; that the agent of a person is as he himself.”

Talmnud, Kedushin 41b

## *The Exchange*

When his eldest son, DovBer, reached cheder age, Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi approached one of his colleagues, a fellow disciple of their late master, the Maggid of Mezeritch. In his characteristic singsong manner, Rabbi Schneur Zalman said:

“I have a *mitzvah* to fulfill - the commandment “*you shall teach them* [the words of Torah] *to your children*”.<sup>1</sup> You, too, have a *mitzvah* incumbent upon you - the duty to support your family. Let us make an exchange: I will provide you with the means to fulfill your *mitzvah*, and you will teach my son.”

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1. Deuteronomy 6:7.

## Once Upon A Chassid

Rabbi Schneur Zalman then gave the young man a crash course in his approach to early childhood education: “One obviously starts with the *aleph-bet*. What is an *aleph*? A dot above, a dot below, and a line in between - this is an *aleph*. And this is the very *aleph* of Torah: that the *Yud* above (G-d) and the *yud*<sup>2</sup> below (the Jew) are bound by a line of faith.”

### Source:

Hayom Yom [calendar with quotations from Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok of Lubavitch, compiled in 1943 by Rabbi Menachem M. Schneersohn, the Lubavitcher Rebbe shlita], quotation for 8 Adar 11.

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2. The Hebrew letter *Yod* is the first letter of the Divine Name. “*Yud*,” in Yiddish, also means ‘Jew.’

# BESURAS HAGEULO

## The Announcement Of The Redemption

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One might still raise a question, as others have done. Even if one were to do one's work to perfection, even reaching the level of "dissemination" (which implies total commitment and self-abnegation), one might question to what avail is it considering the fact that "you are the least among the nations,"<sup>1</sup> and that there are the "seventy nations" who so outnumber the "one lamb"<sup>2</sup> -- Israel.

In other words, what will be the world's and the nation's response to the Jewish efforts at "disseminating the wellsprings to the remotest reaches," in an effort to hasten the true and complete Redemption, since they do not understand what all this means?! Granted, these efforts are noble and sublime, but one might object, we have to consider the world's reaction!

The answer to these questions is:

The world is ready and completely receptive! When a Jew performs his work properly, transcending all limits and constraints, and simultaneously channeling these efforts within the parameters of nature, he will see how the world, nature and the nations of the world will assist him in his work.

...This is particularly true now that so many of the impediments are no longer here. (And as was noted earlier, even the Soviet Union has undergone significant changes for the better.) On the contrary, we are witness to the miracles and wonders that have occurred, specifically in the last two years (of "miracles" and of "wonders I shall show him, 5750 and 5751, respectively"). The

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1. *Vo'eschanan* 7:7.

2. *Tanchuma Toldos* 5. *Esther Rabbah*, 10:11. *Pesikta Rabbasi*, 9:2.

## THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE REDEMPTION

time has thus arrived, that notwithstanding the need for supernatural changes (the miracles and wonders of the true and complete Redemption), these supernatural energies permeate the nature of the world itself, so that the world itself assists in the blossoming of the Redemption.

*(From the talk of Thursday, Parshas Korach, second day of Rosh Chodesh Tammuz and of Shabbos Parshas Korach, 3 Tammuz, 5751)*

**IN LOVING MEMORY OF OUR DEAR FATHER**

**Reb Mordechi ben Reb Yechiel ע"ה Blauner**

On the occasion of his third yahrtzeit, 10 Tamuz, 5786

**ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.**

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