

IN LOVING MEMORY OF
Reb **Ihya Amram** ben Reb **Nissim** ע"ה **Elharrar**
Passed away on 15 Iyar, 5759
Mrs. **Chana** bas Reb **Moshe** ע"ה **Elharrar**
Passed away on 16 Iyar, 5773

ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.

*

DEDICATED BY
Mr. & Mrs. **Yosef Yehuda** and **Guila** שיחי **Elharrar**
Ms. **Shana Chana** שתחי **Cohen**

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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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5759 ♦ 1999

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** שתח'י
Shagalov
DEDICATED BY
 Rabbi & Mrs. **Yosef Y. and Gittel Rochel** שיחי
Shagalov

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 - שתבלחט"א -
 Mrs. **Elka** bas **Raizel** שתח'י **Caplan**
 May she go from strength to strength
 in health, happiness, Torah and *mitzvot*.

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25:42

כי עבדי הם אשר הוצאתי אתם מארץ מצרים לא ימכרו ממכרת עבד
For they [the Jewish people] are my servants, whom I have taken out from the land of Egypt - they cannot be sold into slavery

My deed of ownership precedes and voids any other.

Rashi's commentary

In redeeming us from Egypt the Almighty made us subject to Him alone, and thus inherently and eternally free: no force or law on earth has any jurisdiction over the Jew.

Rabbi Yehudah Lowe of Prague (the 'Maharal')

Highly Connected

The *mikveh* (ritual bathhouse) in Primishlan, home to Rabbi Meir'l Primishlaner, was located at the foot of a steep hill. Even under the best of conditions it was a precarious climb down to the bathhouse and back up to town. But during the winter months, when the hill was covered with ice, the slope was altogether impassable, and even the most agile and daring of the young men were forced to give up

לעילוי נשמת
הרה"ח הרה"ת אי"א
ר' מנחם מענדל ע"ה
בן הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' אלחנן דובער הי"ד
מאראזאוו
מקושר לכ"ק אדמו"ר מהוריי"צ
וכ"ק אדמו"ר נשיא דורנו מה"מ
נולד בעיר ליובאוויטש
זכה לגור ולקבל קירובים
בבית כ"ק אדמו"ר מהוריי"צ בעיר רוסטוב
למד מתוך מסירת נפש בישיבת תו"ת במחתרת
שימש כשו"ב
הי' ממייסדי ושימש בתור מנהל ומשפיע
במתיבתא ובית מדרש במוסד חינוך אהלי תורה
וזכה להשפיע לאלפי תלמידים
בהתוועדויות הרבות
הכניס רוח חסידית ושמחה לרבים משומעיו
גידל משפחתו לחסידות ולהתקשרות
והרבה מהם שלוחים בכל קצוי תבל
נפטר בשיבה טובה ר"ח שבט ה'תשע"ח
ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.
(מנוסח המצבה)
*
נדפס ע"י משפחתו שיחיו

B'har / Highly Connected

after the first few steps. From the first freeze to the spring thaw, the townspeople were forced to take a long, round-about route to the *mikveh*.

All but one. The elderly rebbe of Primishlan would walk down the icy slope every morning to immerse himself before praying. Straight as a rod, he would make his unfaltering way to the bathhouse and back.

One day, two young skeptics set out to prove that there was nothing extraordinary about Rabbi Meir's daily trip. But their attempt met with dismal failure: bruised, bloodied, and with half a dozen broken bones between them, they walked *nowhere* for a good few weeks. Later, one of them asked Rabbi Meir, "How do you do it?"

Said the Primishlaner: "When one is connected above, one does not fall below. Meir'l is connected above, so he does not fall below."

Source:

Likkutei Dibburim [Collected Talks of Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok of Lubavitch], vol. 11*, p. 542.

*. Correction: Vol. 2.

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 אראנני - Niflaos Avenu].

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 (perfectly⁶) 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 נופלים - "supports the falling" - is similar to the expression mentioned before - סמך מלך בבל - 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.