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Reb Meir Bairach ben Reb Leib ע"ה Rothman

Passed away on 24 Sivan, 5753

ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.

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LIKKUTEI SICHOS

AN ANTHOLOGY OF TALKS

by the
Lubavitcher Rebbe
Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson

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 602 North Orange Drive.
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 Tel.: (323) 934-7095 * Fax: (323) 934-7092
<http://www.torah4blind.org>
 e-mail: sys@torah4blind.org
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BESURAS HAGEULO

The Announcement Of The Redemption

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All this receives greater emphasis in recent generations, described as, "in the heels of," and as, "the heels of the heels of Moshiach," particularly in this generation, the last generation of exile... Only the heel of the foot, i.e., the absolute last generation has the ability to "rise on its own"¹ and elevate all previous generations, because the last generation of exile will be the first generation of Redemption - the Redemption for all Jews throughout all generations!

In particular, the shepherd Aharon HaCohen² of our generation - my sainted father-in-law, the Rebbe, the leader of our generation... has emphasized this through his "invocation" of "Immediate Teshuvah, immediate Redemption,"³ and the announcement that we only have to "polish the buttons," and afterwards - the declaration that this too has already ended, and it only requires us to "stand prepared all of you"⁵ to greet our righteous Moshiach in the true and complete Redemption.

(From the talk of Shabbos Beha'aloscha, 19 Sivan 5751)

1. *[The term "ability to rise on its own" is applied to the kindling of the menorah in the Temple, where the law requires that the branches be lit in such a manner that the flames can rise by themselves without any further assistance of the one who kindles them. See Rashi beginning of Parshas Beha'alosecha, cited by the Rebbe in this Sicha. Translator's note.]*

2. Thus Aharon is called in an explicit Scriptural text "the three shepherds" (*Zecharyah* 11:8. And see *Taanis* 9, end of side a).

3. Published in his *Igros Kodesh*, volume 5, page 361 and further. 377 and further. 408 and further. Volume 6, page 430 and further. *[The phrase literally means, "Immediately to Return (or Repentance), immediately to Redemption. Translator's note.]*

4. See the talks of Simchas Torah of 5689.

5. See *Igros Kodesh* of the Rebbe Rayatz, volume 4, page 279. *HaYom Yom* 15 Teves. And in several other places.

LIKKUTEI SICHOS

AN ANTHOLOGY OF TALKS

RELATING TO THE WEEKLY SECTIONS OF THE TORAH AND
SPECIAL OCCASIONS IN THE JEWISH CALENDAR

by the

Lubavitcher Rebbe

Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson

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Volume IX: *Bamidbar*

•

In English rendition

by

Rabbi Eliyahu Touger

BEHAALOS'CHA

EACH ACCORDING TO HIS MEASURE

In tractate *Yoma*,¹ our Sages pose a difficulty: It is written:² “When the dew descended on the camp at night, the manna descended upon it.” This implies that the manna descended within the camp. But it is also written:³ “And the people will go out and gather [the manna],” from which we can infer that they had to leave the camp to gather the manna. And it is further written:⁴ “And the people spread out and collected the manna,” indicating that they had to search far and wide.

Our Sages offer the following explanation. The three verses refer to three types of Jews. For the righteous, the manna descended at the entrance to their dwelling. Those of intermediate spiritual stature had to go out of the camp to collect it, and the wicked had to search.

In the same vein, our Sages¹ note that the Torah refers to the manna as bread³ and cakes,⁴ yet also says it must be ground.⁴ The righteous, they explain, would receive baked bread. Those of intermediate spiritual stature would receive cakes ready to be baked. And the wicked would receive a substance that had to be ground.

1. *Yoma* 75a.
2. *Bamidbar* 11:9.
3. *Shmos* 16:4.
4. *Bamidbar* 11:8.

GLIMMERS OF DAWN

In general, we see that as we draw closer to *Mashiach's* coming, the controversy and accusations against *Chassidus* have abated. For example, in previous generations there were claims that *Chassidus* should not be studied at all. Such arguments are no longer advanced. There is, however, a new argument: *Chassidus* is relevant only to a spiritual elite.

Every degree of concealment is motivated by a Divine intent; indeed, the intent is that the concealment itself lead to a greater revelation. Similarly, in the case at hand, not only shouldn't these statements lead to distress, they should encourage us to intensify our involvement in the study and dissemination of *Chassidus*.³⁸

This reinforced dedication will have a positive effect. When the *yetzer hora* sees that the concealment it brought about only caused the study and dissemination of *Chassidus* to be reinforced, it will see that its efforts were — according to its conception — counterproductive, and will remove that concealment.

May G-d help that we not be distressed by the challenges, nor by the concealment of G-dliness which we face. Instead, may these challenges intensify the spreading of *Chassidus*. This increase in turn hastens the coming of the ultimate Redemption to be led by *Mashiach*. May it take place speedily, in our days.

(Adapted from *Sichos Yud Shvat*, 5717 and *Sichos Shabbos Parshas Beshallah*, 5723)



See *Shulchan Aruch HaRav, Hilchos Talmud Torah* 4:3,17. Also, consider the above in light of the well-known analogy concerning the priceless gem in the king's crown that was ground into an elixir to save the life of his son [*Igros Kodesh* of the Rebbe Rayatz, Vol. III, p. 326ff.].

38. In this context, see *Tanya*, ch. 28, *Iggeres HaKodesh*, Epistle 25.

vate him to turn to G-d in *teshuvah*. Preventing him from studying, by contrast, causes him to sink even lower.

Were we to ask the person who was rebuffed, why his spiritual state is so low, he could reply, quoting the verse:³⁴ “I was driven away today from attachment to the heritage of G-d.”

The person who drove his colleague away will himself be subject to examination: How much better and more refined is he than the person he drove away? Moreover, his achievements will be assessed according to the potentials which he himself possesses, and not according to those of the person driven away.

To cite a parallel, *Chassidus*³⁵ explains that Moshe was “more humble than all the men on the face of the earth,”³⁶ because he made the following calculation: Were another person given the soul which he had been given, and were he to have been granted the same level of Divine assistance that he had been granted, surely that other person would have reached even higher levels.

To clarify the matter with an analogy: When a person prevents another Jew from studying “the Torah of life,” and particularly when he does not allow him to approach *P’nimiyus HaTorah*, “the tree of life,”³⁰ he can be considered a spiritual murderer. For he is severing his fellow Jew’s attachment to the living G-d.³⁷

34. *I Shmuel* 26:19.

35. See *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5710, p. 237.

36. *Bamidbar* 12:3.

37. The above does not contradict our Sages’ (*Chulin* 133a; *Rambam*, *Hilchos Talmud Torah* 4:1) charge not to teach a student who is morally unrefined (although that directive applies to the study of *nigleh*, the revealed dimension of Torah law), nor to the parallel admonitions in the *Zohar* and the *AriZal* with regard to the preparations necessary for the study of *P’nimiyus HaTorah*. As explained in other sources, the time has come for “your wellsprings to spread outward,” and even those on the peripheries of Jewish involvement should be exposed to the teachings of the Baal Shem Tov.

“BREAD FROM HEAVEN”

The Torah refers to the manna as “bread from heaven,”³ or “grain from heaven.”⁵ Therefore there are opinions among the *Rishonim* that the blessing recited over manna praised G-d who “brings forth bread from the heavens.”⁶

The difference between “bread from heaven” and “bread from earth” is that “bread from earth” requires several types of labor before it can be eaten. Thus with regard to the labors forbidden on the Sabbath, the *Mishnah* includes the work necessary to prepare bread:⁷ ploughing, sowing, reaping, and the like. Moreover, even after these labors are performed, the baking of bread produces waste.

“Bread from heaven” is different. All the different labors were not necessary to prepare it,⁸ nor did it produce waste.⁹ And this “bread from heaven” was the diet, not only of the righteous, but also of those of intermediate spiritual stature.

(When referring to a person of intermediate spiritual stature, a *benoni*, the intent is not to speak of a *benoni* as defined in *Tanya*,¹⁰ but a *benoni* in the commonly accepted sense of

5. *Tehillim* 78:24.

6. See the *Rame* of Panua, *Maamar Shabbasos HaShem*, Vol. II, with reference to the feast to be eaten in the Era of the Redemption. The *Rame* explains that at that time, we will taste the manna which was preserved, and recite the above blessing over it.

See also *Sefer Chassidim* (*Mikitzei Nerdomim* edition) sec. 1640, which states that the Jews recited the above blessing over the manna.

Although the institution of blessings is generally attributed to King David, who ordained that 100 blessings be recited each day (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 18:21, cited by *Shulchan Aruch HaRav* 46:1), in several sources it is explained that blessings were recited previously. See *Likkutei Torah L’Gimmel Parshiyos*, the *maamar* entitled *Lehavin Inyan HaBerachos*. [*Or HaTorah*, *Bereishis*, Vol. III, p. 551a ff.]

7. *Shabbos* 74b.

8. Even those who had to grind and cook the manna did not have to perform all the labors necessary to prepare ordinary bread. (See also note 14.)

9. *Yoma* 75b.

10. See ch. 12.

the term — one whose spiritual scales are equally balanced between merit and sin.)

Moreover, the manna also sustained the wicked. And even then, it did not produce any waste. The fact that wicked people — even those who carried the idol fashioned by Michah¹¹ — partook of the manna did not affect the level of the manna itself. Even as it was digested by them, becoming part of their flesh and blood, it retained all its qualities.

And not only did the manna itself remain unchanged, it elevated those who partook of it. Thus our Sages said:¹² “The Torah was given solely to those who partook of the manna,” for the manna refined the Jews and made them worthy of the Torah.

The manna had this effect on all 600,000 Jews, making them worthy of receiving the Torah in its entirety: its simple meaning, its allusions, its homilies, and its mystic concepts.¹³

Partaking of the manna did not change the nature of the wicked immediately; they did not turn to G-d in *teshuvah* at that time. For that reason, even after partaking of the manna several times, there were Jews who still had to grind¹⁴ and

11. For this idol crossed the Red Sea with the Jewish people and traveled with them to Eretz Yisrael (*Sanhedrin* 103b, see *Pesachim* 117a).

12. *Mechilta*, *Shmos* 16:4; *Yalkut Shimoni* to that verse.

See *Likkutei Torah*, *Parshas Eikev* (p. 14b), which states that the manna is identified with Moshe, the recipient of the Torah. For this reason, it is written (*Devarim* 8:3): “He fed you the manna... which your forefathers did not know,” for the forefathers lived before the giving of the Torah. See also the synopsis of that *maamar* (p. 16b), which states that the manna was the diet of the “generation of knowledge” which received the Torah.

13. See *Sefer HaGilgulim*, *Hakdamah* 17; the beginning of *Shaar HaMitzvos*. See also *Shulchan Aruch HaRav*, *Hilchos Talmud Torah* 1:4.

14. See the *Zohar*, Vol. II, p. 62b, and the *Tikkunei Zohar*, at the conclusion of (the 2nd) *Tikkun* 3 p. 140b, which explains that crushing the manna in a mortar (*Bamidbar* 11:9) also relates to the wicked.

It can be explained that in this context (as opposed to the interpretation of “spreading out” to search for manna), there is no difference of opinion between the *Zohar* and the *Talmud* (*Yoma* 75a). Note that in the *maamar* entitled

compared to “bread from heaven,” because within it, “there are neither unresolved questions... nor differences of opinion.”³⁰

One should not, however, surmise that because *P’nimiyus HaTorah* is comparable to “bread from heaven” it is intended for only a spiritual elite. The opposite is true; just as the manna was intended for every Jew, even the wicked, so too *P’nimiyus HaTorah* is intended for everyone.

And their involvement with *P’nimiyus HaTorah* will not cause them any loss. On the contrary, since, as our Sages taught:³¹ “Study is great, because it leads to deed,” the study of *Chassidus* will lead people to turn to G-d in *teshuvah*, and become students of the Torah and observers of the *mitzvos*. As our Sages promised:³² “the light [of the Torah; i.e., *P’nimiyus HaTorah*]³³ will point them to the good.”

For this reason, we should not hold Jews back from the study of *P’nimiyus HaTorah*. On the contrary, we must seek to involve every Jew in this study, for it will lead them to the ultimate truth, to a state in which “he does not lie.” This involves exposing the shades of falsehood which characterize material existence. At that time, there will be no difference of opinion between the G-dly soul and the animal soul, nor will there be any unresolved questions. We will all follow the path of G-d, King of this Earth.

NOT TO STAND IN ANOTHER JEW’S WAY

There are those who claim that people who have not reached the rung of the righteous should not be allowed to study *P’nimiyus HaTorah*. This is a misguided approach, for bringing a Jew to the study of *P’nimiyus HaTorah* will moti-

30. *Zohar*, Vol. III, p. 124b; see *Tanya*, *Iggeres HaKodesh*, Epistle 26.

31. *Kiddushin* 40b.

32. *Pesichtah l’Eichah Rabbah*; the *Jerusalem Talmud*, *Chagigah* 1:7.

33. See the gloss of the *Korban Eidah* to the *Jerusalem Talmud*, *op. cit.*. See also *Toras Shalom*, p. 139.

This explains why a person who does not know which Torah portion to read on a given *Shabbos* should read the one concerning manna. For every type of influence which is drawn down into the world is drawn down through the Torah. Thus the creation of the *Shabbos* atmosphere — i.e., that the light of *Shabbos* should permeate the material realm — is also dependent on the Torah. Accordingly, when we do not know the portion connected with any given *Shabbos*, we should read the one concerning manna, for it conveys the spiritual theme which characterizes the *Shabbos*.²⁷

The Ten Commandments, and similarly other portions of the Torah, reflect elevated spiritual levels. They do not, however, reflect how these spiritual lights descend into this world without change.

TWO TYPES OF SPIRITUAL BREAD

Everything which exists has its source in the Torah. The Torah is described with the analogy of bread.²⁸ Accordingly, the two types of bread, “bread from heaven” and “bread from the earth” have their source in two different dimensions of “bread” within the Torah.

Nigleh, the revealed teachings of Torah law, parallels “bread from the earth,” while *P’nimiyus HaTorah*, the Torah’s mystic teachings, parallels “bread from heaven.”²⁹

Nigleh is comparable to “bread from the earth” because it is characterized by questions and differences of opinion, and its study involves effort. *P’nimiyus HaTorah*, by contrast, is

27. To cite a parallel, there are 12 gates of prayer, one relating to each of the 12 tribes. And there is *Shaar HaKollel*, the general gate. When a person does not know the tribe he is descended from, he should use this general gate (*Likkutei Amarim* by the Maggid of Mezeritch (ch. 133); the introduction to *Shaar HaKollel*).

28. See *Shabbos* 120a, *Chagigah* 14a, the introduction to the *Tikkunei Zohar* (1b), the conclusion of *Tikkun* 3 (p. 140b), and *Bereishis Rabbah* 43:6.

29. See the *maamar* entitled, *Ki Savo*, 5666, and the *maamar* entitled *Amar Rabbi Akiva Ashreichem*, 5667.

cook before eating. Moreover, several of the incidents referred to in the verse:¹⁵ “And you tried me these ten times” occurred after the Jews began partaking of the manna.¹⁶ Thus we see that the manna’s effect was not complete. Nevertheless, in all instances it definitely had some influence.

A PARALLEL BETWEEN MANNA AND SHABBOS

Based on the above, we can appreciate a ruling in *Sefer Haltim*¹⁷ quoted in the name of Rav Saadia Gaon: When a person finds himself in a distant community on *Shabbos*, and does not know which Torah portion should be read, he should recite the portion concerning manna. For this portion was related on *Shabbos*.

On the surface, this ruling is difficult to understand; many portions in the Torah were related on *Shabbos*. For example, “everyone agrees that the Torah was given on *Shabbos*,”¹⁸ and so the person could read the Ten Commandments. Why should he read the portion concerning manna?

The above question can be resolved by clarifying the intrinsic connection between the manna and *Shabbos*. Just as the manna did not lose its spiritual quality despite the fact that it descended to very low levels, so too the *Shabbos* retains its essential quality even as it descends to very low levels.¹⁹

Omar Rabbi Akiva in the series of *maamarim* entitled *Yom Tov Shel Rosh HaShanah*, 5666, that only the example of crushing manna in a mortar is cited.

15. *Bamidbar* 14:22.

16. See *Archin* 15a and the commentaries to *Avos* 5:4.

17. *Hilchos Birchas ViOneg Shabbos*, sec. 184.

18. *Shabbos* 86b.

19. Both the manna and *Shabbos* join the higher spiritual plane with the lower in such a manner that the spiritual retains its elevated qualities, while the form of the material entities remains unchanged. There is, however, a difference in approach. *Shabbos* reflects the ascent of the worlds (as they exist) to the spiritual plane, while manna represents the descent of the spiritual (in its transcendence) to the material plane.

It is true that as the manna descended to the earthly plane and became actual food, it became somewhat material in nature. For this reason, when

With regard to the verse,²⁰ “And the heavens, the earth, and all their hosts were completed,” the word *vayichulu* is associated with the word *kilayon*,²¹ meaning “expiration,” i.e., it is as if the soul of the world expired with love for G-d.

This does not mean that the world ceases to exist, but rather that the world *as it exists* became elevated. For that

Moshe spent the 40 days on Mount Sinai, he did not eat manna in its physical form. Instead, he partook of it in its spiritual form, as the angels do,* as implied by the verse (*Tehillim* 78:25): “The bread of the mighty was eaten by a mortal.”

For this reason, the manna did not descend on *Shabbos*. For at the time of the ascent of the worlds, it is impossible for the spiritual to descend to the material plane.

Nevertheless, even as the manna existed on the material plane, spiritual lights of the highest levels were en clothed within it.** Indeed, this is the reason why it did not descend on *Shabbos*, for the ascent involves only the inner dimension of the worlds. The external dimension of existence does not ascend on *Shabbos*, and therefore other forms of Divine influence, [e.g., rain,] do descend.*** See *Torah Or, Vayakhel* p. 89a-b.

For this reason, although the manna did not descend into the material plane on *Shabbos*, in the spiritual planes it was drawn down on *Shabbos*. All the six days of the week were blessed with manna, because of the seventh day (*Zohar*, Vol. II, p. 63b).

20. *Bereishis* 2:1.

21. See *Bereishis Rabbah* 10:4; *Or HaTorah*, to *Bereishis*, *loc. cit.*

* *Torah Or*, p. 113c. See *Torah Or, Beshallach* 74a, and *Likkutei Torah, Bamidbar* 7b, which explain that Moshe did not partake of “the bread of the mighty” which is eaten by the angels. This explanation is based on a difference of opinion between Rabbi Yishmael and Rabbi Akiva in *Yoma* 75b. Since Rabbi Yishmael interprets the term “bread of the mighty” differently, and explains that it refers to the manna eaten by the entire Jewish people, it can be explained that those *maamarim* are based on two views mentioned in the *Midrash (Shmos Rabbah* 47:5,7), of which it can be said “These and these are the words of the living G-d.”

Moreover, it is possible to offer a resolution. One might say that when Moshe was studying with G-d, he did not eat at all, but when he was reviewing the teachings himself, he was on the spiritual level of the angels, and therefore ate as they did (a letter of the Rebbe from Tevet 14, 5720).

**Based on the explanation in the *maamar* entitled *Veharichu (Eshalech — Liozna)* regarding the dew, it would appear that manna is the essence of the spiritual influence from above.

*** See *Likkutei Torah, Parshas Tazria*, the *maamar* entitled *Lam'natzeach Al HaShemini*.

reason, it is a *mitzvah* to take pleasure in the *Shabbos* by eating and drinking.²²

Nevertheless, the pleasure which a Jew derives from eating and drinking on *Shabbos* — i.e., not only the deed, but the pleasure itself — is a *mitzvah*. During the week, we should not eat or drink more than is necessary to maintain our bodies. And even then, one should not eat or drink for pleasure, but rather out of necessity, for pleasure makes one more materially oriented. On *Shabbos*, by contrast, not only does the pleasure not make a person materially oriented (as reflected in the *Zohar's* statement:²³ “The verse²⁴ mentions ‘the waste of your festivals,’ and not ‘the waste of your *Shabbos*’”), the pleasure itself becomes a *mitzvah*.²⁵

The light of *Shabbos* permeates creation, to the extent that even an utterly wicked person will not lie on *Shabbos*.²⁶ The intent is not to say that the *Shabbos* prompts him to turn to G-d in *teshuvah*. On the contrary, the person remains the same. Nevertheless, he will not lie on *Shabbos* because the light of *Shabbos* permeates even the lowest levels.

22. *Shulchan Aruch HaRav* 242:1.

23. Vol. II, p. 88b.

24. *Malachi* 2:3.

25. See *Torah Or*; the beginning of *Parshas Chayei Sarah; Likkutei Torah, Bamidbar* 72a; the *maamar* entitled *Vihu Omed Aleihem*, 5663, *et al.*

26. *Jerusalem Talmud, Demai* 4:1. Although this same person will lie during the week, for he is utterly wicked, our assumption is that he will not lie on *Shabbos*.

The fact that such people *do* sometimes lie on *Shabbos* is not a contradiction. The intent of the *Jerusalem Talmud* is that the person's nature, and thus our prevailing assumption when dealing with him, prevents him from lying. But each man possesses free choice, and may act contrary to his nature. This is indicated by the commentators who emphasize that “he speaks the truth,” and “fears lying.” They do not say he *cannot* lie. This describes even the animal soul of all Jews, including common people.

A similar concept applies with regard to the manna. The “bread from heaven” that does not produce waste was the natural food of all Jews. Nevertheless, as our Sages underscore (*Yoma* 75b), the Jews had free choice and were able to buy ordinary food from gentile traders. That food did produce waste (*Sichos Shabbos Parshas Eikev*, 5723).