

IN HONOR OF

Rabbi Yehoshua Levi ben Devorah שיח'י Levin

On the occasion of his birthday,
Shabbat Parshat Chukat-Balak,
the auspicious day of 12 Tamuz, 5783
"Year of Hakhel"

May he go from strength to strength
in health, happiness, Torah and *mitzvot*.

*

DEDICATED BY HIS WIFE

Mrs. **Davina Rochel** שיח'י Levin

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LIKKUTEI SICHOS

AN ANTHOLOGY OF TALKS

by the
Lubavitcher Rebbe
Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson

Reprinted for Parshat Chukat-Balak,
Yud Beis Tamuz, 5783
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"5783 - YEAR OF HAKHEL"

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** שתחיל
Shagalov

DEDICATED BY
 Rabbi & Mrs. **Yosef Y. and Gittel Rochel** שיחיו
Shagalov

IN LOVING MEMORY OF OUR DEAR MOTHER AND GRANDMOTHER

Mrs. **Zlata Zelda (Lucille)** bas Reb **Yaakov** ע"ה **Hazan**

Passed away on 18 Tamuz, 5768

ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.

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DEDICATED BY HER CHILDREN & GRANDCHILDREN שיחיו

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ביום השני לפ' "וקם שבט מישראל"
י"ב תמוז ה'תשע"ה
ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.
(מנוסח המצבה)
*

נדפס ע"י ידידיו

הרה"ת ר' יוסף יצחק הלוי וזוגתו מרת גיטל רחל שיחיו שגלוב

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

•
Volume IX: *Bamidbar*

•
In English rendition
by
Rabbi Eliyahu Touger

YUD-BAIS-YUD-GIMMEL TAMMUZ

THE POWER OF RESOLUTION

Among the stories which my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe, the master of happiness and redemption, related concerning his imprisonment and liberation are several which concern the actual imprisonment.¹

He told how, upon being brought to prison, he resolved not to lose his self-control, not to be unnerved by the GPO. He decided that, not only with regard to those matters which concern the fear of heaven, but with regard to all things, he would not consider them as having no importance whatsoever. In his eyes, they were — to quote — “utter nothingness and void.”

He did not alter this approach even after being placed in solitary confinement for refusing to answer questions. Where was he confined? In a cell full of mud with nothing to lean on, which was infested with rats and other vermin. Even after spending an entire day in such conditions, he maintained his resolve to view both his interrogators and their questions as “utter nothingness and void.”

(In this cell, it was impossible to differentiate between day and night, for there was only a small window near the ceiling, and that was blocked by a wall. It was only by noting the changing of the guards, when hot water was brought and the

1. See *Sichos Gimmel Tammuz*, 5701.

Translating the above into practical terms.

Despite the "uproar" associated with this matter in recent times within this year, the year of "I shall show him wonders," and after witnessing the wonders which testify that this is "The year that the King Moshiach will be revealed," we see how difficult it is to inculcate the awareness and the feeling that we are literally standing on the threshold of the Messianic Era, to the point that one begins to "thrive" on matters of Moshiach and Redemption...

The solution to this dilemma is **Torah study** concerning Moshiach and Redemption. For Torah - which is G-d's wisdom, and thus transcends the natural order of the universe - has the capacity **to alter** the nature of man.¹⁰ Even when one's emotions are still **outside** the parameters of Redemption - G-d forbid - (because he has not yet emerged from his internal exile), he can nevertheless learn the Torah's teachings concerning Redemption, and thereby be one elevated to the state of Redemption. One then begins to thrive on matters of Redemption, borne of the knowledge, awareness and feeling that "Behold he is coming."

*(From the talk of Shabbos Parshas Balak,
17 (numerically equivalent to "tov-good") Tammuz, 5751)*

10. See the comments of our sages on the verse "*Lo'keil gomer oh'lye*" (*Talmud Yerushlami, Kesubos*, 1:2. See there for cross references. Cited in Halacha by the *Shach* (and *Shulchan Aruch* of the *Alter Rebbe*), *Yoreh Deah*, sec. 189:13(23)).

This can be attained when one's intellect is filled with the comprehension of the Torah concepts of Moshiach and Redemption. This intellectual awareness then extends to and permeates one's emotions, and then translates into thought, speech and action consistent with this very auspicious period of time when we stand on the threshold of Redemption and we are able to point with our finger "Behold he (he King Moshiach) has come."

One might suggest an additional rationale for the need and the virtue of studying the Torah's teachings concerning Moshiach, Redemption and the building of the third Temple; as an entrance into the Messianic Era:

Although our Sages⁷ have declared that Moshiach will come "when we are distracted from his coming," this does not contradict, G-d forbid, **the need for thought and reflection of the most powerful order**⁸ on matters of Moshiach and Redemption. This means primarily thought and reflection that we are now standing at the very entrance of the Messianic Era, that "Behold he is coming," since all the deadlines have since passed, teshuvah has been done and all of the different aspects of our Divine service have been completed in accordance with the details mentioned above. The resolution of this apparent contradiction is that the term for distraction, "Hesech HaDa'as" (literally "removing one's knowledge") actually means "**transcending** one's knowledge."⁹ This implies that after one has allowed this matter of Moshiach to permeate one's intellect (by applying one's thought and constant reflection, etc.) one then reaches the level where this then transcends one's knowledge.

7. *Sanhedrin* 97a.

8. *Da'as*, the type of knowledge where "one binds his mind with an extremely powerful and strong bond; firmly attaching one's thought." - Tanya, end of ch. 3.

9. *Tanya, Igeres HaKodesh* (105b).

like that the Rebbe was able to determine when it was day and when it was night.²⁾

At 11 o'clock Thursday morning, *Rosh Chodesh Tammuz*, guards entered the Rebbe's cell and ordered him to stand. (When telling this story, the Rebbe emphasized that in prison, he would spend more time in prayer than usual.)

The guards spoke Russian, but the Rebbe — as was his practice throughout his imprisonment — answered in Yiddish, saying that he would not stand.

What was the crux of his refusal? The rules were that whenever information was to be conveyed to a prisoner, he was required to stand. This was to impress upon him that he was under the prison's authority. And the Rebbe recognized no such authority.

It appears that one of the guards was Jewish, for he understood the Rebbe's answer and replied in Russian: "If you do not obey, we will beat you." To which the Rebbe replied, "Nu."

The guards carried out their threat, and then left the cell.

Shortly afterwards, a second group entered. With them was Lulav, a Jew who had been among those who had arrested the Rebbe. Lulav came from Chassidic stock. He addressed the Rebbe with his title. "Rebbe," he told him, "Why are you opposing them? Why make this a struggle? They are coming to inform you that your sentence will be lightened. When they tell you to stand, you must stand."

The Rebbe did not answer.

"Do you *want* them to beat you?" Lulav asked.

When the Rebbe again refused to answer, the guards beat him again. One of them gave him such a blow below the chin

2. See *Likkutei Dibburim*, Vol. IV, p. 1317.

that the Rebbe felt pain for a long time afterwards. Then they also left.

In time, a third group of guards entered the room. Among them was a Jew named Kavalov. They also told the Rebbe to stand, and again the Rebbe answered that he would not. Kavalov attacked the Rebbe with murderous anger, muttering (in Russian): "We'll teach you a lesson." To which the Rebbe responded (in Yiddish): "The question is, who will teach who?"

A short while afterwards, yet another group of guards came and told the Rebbe (who remained seated) to go to the prison office. There he was informed that he was to be released from prison and sent into exile for three years in the city of Kostrama.

When the Rebbe approached the table, he saw all the papers from his file. He noticed that one line was crossed out. (This line stated that the Rebbe had been condemned to death. When the Rebbe told the story himself, he did not include this detail, for he did not even want to mention such a possibility. He said merely that a line had been written and then crossed out.)

Further down on the document a line stated that the Rebbe had been sentenced to ten years of hard labor at Solovki (an island near the North Pole). Next to that was written *Nyet* (no).

At the bottom of the page appeared the terse order: "Three years in Kostrama."

The officials told the Rebbe that he was sentenced to exile, and asked him what class of train ticket he desired. He responded: "First class" (in which only the wealthy or high government officials traveled). When they asked whether he had the money to pay for it, the Rebbe replied that if the money they had confiscated from him upon his arrest was not sufficient, his household would make up the difference.

And we have, in fact, witnessed "wonders" that testify that this is **"the year that the King Moshiach shall be revealed,"** and the **"time when the King Moshiach will come..."** and announce to Israel, 'Humble ones, the time for your Redemption has arrived.'³ Further, these wonders and the announcement that "Behold, he (the King Moshiach) is coming,"⁴ allowing for the translation that **"he has already come,"** mean that we already stand on the threshold of the beginning of the Messianic Era as well as on the threshold of the beginning of the Redemption, the continuation and culmination of which shall occur imminently.

Since we are standing on the threshold of Redemption which will arrive imminently, it follows that the study of the Laws of building the Temple this year must be **of an entirely different order.** First and foremost, this study must be permeated with the certain awareness and full recognition that this study is not merely an "academic exercise," but it is **relevant for practical use for the very next moment.** For indeed, the "Future Sanctuary that we are anticipating has already been built and is fully developed (above and will thus imminently) be revealed and arrive from Heaven"⁵ **instantaneously!**

The attitude towards the study of these laws should be analogous to what was discussed in the recent past,⁶ that the special increase in the study of the teachings of Torah concerning Redemption and Moshiach should not simply serve as a catalyst to hasten the coming of Moshiach and the Redemption. Rather this study should enable us to live with and thrive on matters of Moshiach and Redemption. We should "live with the time" of the Messianic Era.

3. *Yalkut Shimoni, Yeshayahu* 499.

4. *Shir HaShirim* 2:8 and *Shir HaShirim Rabbah* on this verse.

5. *Rashi* and *Tosphos* commentaries to *Sukkah*, 41, end side a and in other sources.

6. Above, p. 49 and in other places.

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All the signs mentioned by our sages concerning the generation of "the heels of Moshiach" indicate that our generation is the last generation of exile and consequently the first generation of Redemption. This realization has been greatly increased through the enhancement of efforts to disseminate the Torah, Judaism and the wellsprings of Torah to the most remote reaches of the world, extending even to this "lower hemisphere," i.e. the Western Hemisphere, (as a result of the liberation of the 12th and 13th of Tammuz) over the course of the last 50 years

Consider this: If **at the beginning** of this epoch, my sainted father-in-law, the leader of our generation, issued a proclamation that "Teshuvah now, Redemption now!" and testified that we have already completed all of our Divine service, and all that remains for us to do is to "polish the buttons" and "All of you, stand ready to greet our righteous Moshiach." How much more so, **at the end** of this epoch, there is absolutely no shred of doubt that the time of Redemption has arrived. To borrow a Talmudic expression: "All of the deadlines have passed."¹ Even Teshuvah (which the Talmud there states is a prerequisite for Redemption ("Redemption depends solely on Teshuvah")) has already been fully realized.

...Within our generation itself, there is an added innovation this year:

Besides that we find ourselves in literal proximity to the true and complete Redemption, in this year of "It shall be a year of miracles I shall show him," when the prediction of "As in the days you have departed from Egypt, I shall show him wonders,"² will be realized.

The officials agreed to this, and told him they would free him from prison at 2 p.m. that afternoon. He would then have six hours to spend with the members of his household before having to leave the city for Kostrama.

As mentioned above, this all took place on a Thursday. With *Shabbos* in mind, the Rebbe asked when he would arrive in Kostrama. When they answered that he would arrive on *Shabbos*, the Rebbe declared that under no circumstances would he travel on *Shabbos*.

When telling this story, the Rebbe would conclude: "Thank G-d, I did not have to travel on *Shabbos*! I remained in prison until Sunday."

The reason he was not freed immediately was that the Communists would not allow him to remain at home any longer than they had stipulated. Therefore they held him in prison until Sunday afternoon, at which time they let him go home. On Sunday night, he departed for Kostrama.

When telling the story, the Rebbe would always add that he had already dispatched Reb Michael Dvorkin to Kostrama. There this trusted elder chassid gathered Jewish children and began a *cheder*. He also checked the local *mikveh*, and gave instructions for it to be made *halachically* faultless.

In other words, precisely the same activities for which the Rebbe had been sentenced to death — and only through diplomatic intervention was that sentence miraculously commuted to three years of exile — were being carried out under his direction. For even before he himself arrived in Kostrama, he sent an emissary to establish a *cheder*³ and make a *mikveh* fit for communal use.

1. *Sanhedrin* 97b.

2. *Michah* 7:15.

3. This can be compared to Yaakov sending Yehudah before him to Goshen (*Bereishis* 46:28) to establish a house of study (*Rashi*).

FOLLOWING THE REBBE'S PATH

The events which happen to a *Nassi*, and in particular those which he publicly relates, serve as lessons for us in our Divine service. One of the lessons to be learned from this story is that we can all tread the path which the Rebbe opened.⁴ For when a Jew makes a firm decision to disregard any concealment his G-dly soul confronts and to overcome all the hurdles and obstacles that lie in the way of spreading *Yiddishkeit*, G-d will sustain his resolution. Although he may be beaten three times — and according to Jewish law, the recurrence of an event three times is sufficient for us to view it as factor to be considered⁵ — these blows will not affect his decision. On the contrary, his resolution will stir another Jew who is under the influence of the forces of evil to recognize the existence of *Yiddishkeit*, *Chassidus*, and a Rebbe. And indeed, this other Jew will call out with the latter title.

Ultimately, such resolution will lead to success — indeed, miraculous success — not only in matters of essential importance, but also in those matters which in comparison can be considered secondary. To refer to an expression of the Rebbe Rashab:⁶ “One remains sound, not only in essence, but in the entire scope of one’s affairs.” And with all one’s concerns, one proceeds to freedom “with an upraised arm,”⁷ and with “heads held high.”⁸

Certainly, when a Jew enjoys circumstances which allow him to spread *Yiddishkeit* freely, — indeed, he is assisted, receiving reward not only in the World to Come, but in this world — he should make a firm resolution to carry out G-d’s

of Redemption. And then “the children of Israel will depart with an upraised arm,” and with “heads held high.” May this take place in the immediate future.

(Adapted from *Sichos Yud-Gimmel Tammuz*, 5722)



4. Once the path is opened by a man of great spiritual stature, it becomes possible for even a person of ordinary attainments (see the *Maamar* entitled *Ki Ka'asher HaShomayim*, 5678).

5. [See *Bava Metzia* 106b.]

6. *Toras Shalom*, p. 246, 248.

7. *Shmos* 14:8.

8. The translation of the *Targum* of the previous phrase. See the *sichah* to *Yud Shvat* in this series, where the significance of this phrase is discussed.

manuscripts. From Moscow, they were instructed to defer to all the Rebbe's wishes.

And so the Russian authorities were forced to stamp every carton of the Rebbe's books so that they could be taken across the border. The north, identified with evil, became an agent of freedom and liberation.

This was a foretaste of the prophecy: "I will tell the north: 'Give up.'" It reflects not only a miracle that transcends the bounds of nature, but a miracle of transformation.

WHEN THE DAWN BREAKS

The miracles performed on behalf of the righteous, particularly in this, the final generation before the Redemption, anticipate and precipitate the miracles of the Redemption itself, showing us what those miracles will be like.

In the Era of the Redemption, nothing will stand in the way of the Jewish people — we will not have to ask permission from anyone, as alluded to in this week's *Haftorah*:¹⁷ "The remnant of Yaakov will be in the midst of many peoples.... They will not place their hope in men, nor wait upon mortals."

Moreover, G-d will command the compass directions themselves to help the Jews. G-d will address the world, and transform it into a vehicle of redemption.

Yet the world will continue to exist, as indicated by the verse which speaks about "many peoples," and the following verse,¹⁸ which speaks about "the beasts of the forest." Nevertheless, although the natural tendency of these nations is to resist the redemption of the Jews, "The remnant of Yaakov... will not place their hope in men, nor wait upon mortals." For G-d will tell the north; "Give," transforming it into an agent

17. *Michah* 5:6.

18. *Ibid.*:7.

mission and extend the scope of the Torah. When he makes such a decision, and remains unphased by all the challenges he faces, he will *surely* be successful.

These efforts to spread the teachings of the Torah — *Nigleh* (the revealed dimensions of Torah law), *Chassidus*, and the observance of *mitzvos behiddur*, in a beautiful and conscientious manner — will lead to the era when "the world will be filled with the knowledge of G-d as the waters cover the ocean bed."⁹ May it take place in the immediate future.

THE MERIT OF THE PATRIARCHS

On the verse in this week's Torah¹⁰ reading:¹¹ "From the top of boulders, I see him. I gaze upon him from the hills," the *Midrash* comments:¹²

"From the top of boulders, I see him," these are the Patriarchs.... To explain with an analogy: A king endeavored to construct a city.... He sought to lay the foundation... but waters rose from the depths and prevented him from doing so... until he came to one place and saw a great boulder. "On this boulder, I will build my city," he declared.

So too, the world was originally filled with water, and G-d wanted to establish the world.... When the Patriarchs came and [showed that] they were worthy, G-d said: "I will establish the world on them."

The ultimate intent of creation will be manifest at the time of the coming of *Mashiach*.¹³ Just as creation began in the merit of the Patriarchs (as the *Midrash* indicates), so too the

9. *Yeshayahu* 11:9.

10. See the *Sheloh*, *Cheilek Torah Shebichsav*, *Parshas Vayeishev*, which states: "The festivals throughout the year... all share a connection to the Torah readings [of the weeks] in which they are celebrated."

11. *Bamidbar* 23:9.

12. *Shmos Rabbah* 15:7.

13. See *Tanya*, ch. 36.

consummation of creation, the era of *Mashiach*, will come in the merit of the Patriarchs.

Thus the verse:¹⁴ “All that is called by My Name and by My honor....” is rendered by the *Targum* as: “All this is for the sake of your righteous forefathers who are called by My name, and whom I created for My honor. I prepared an exile for them, but I also performed miracles on their behalf.”

This verse follows the conceptual flow of the previous verses, which speak of the Future Redemption, as it is written:¹⁵ “From the east I will bring your descendants, and from the west I will gather you together. I will tell the north: ‘Give up [the Jews in your lands],’ and the south: ‘Do not prevent them [from leaving].’”

These verses proclaim that in the Future Redemption, the Jewish people will be taken out of every land in which they are to be found. There is, however, a difference in the manner in which the verse refers to the four compass directions. With regard to the east and west it uses the expressions: “I will bring...” and “I will gather...,” i.e., G-d is addressing the Jewish people and telling them what He will do. With regard to the north and south, however, G-d addresses the compass directions themselves, telling them “Give up,” and “Do not prevent them.”

Particular emphasis is placed on the north — the source of evil, as it is written:¹⁶ “From the north, evil will venture forth.” That direction is told to “Give.” Unlike the south (*Teiman*) which is merely instructed, “Do not prevent,” the north is commanded to become a giver, i.e., a force contributing to the Redemption.

This reflects the uniqueness of the Future Redemption: even the north will be transformed into a positive influence.

14. *Yeshayahu* 43:7.

15. *Ibid.*:5-6.

16. *Yirmeyahu* 1:14.

And this, the *Targum* emphasizes, will come in the merit of the Patriarchs for whom miracles — similar to the miracles of the Redemption — were performed.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE NORTH

Among the miracles performed on behalf of “our righteous forefathers,” and in particular the miracles performed for the *tzaddikim* of the last generation before the coming of *Mashiach*, are those that anticipate and precipitate the miracles of the Redemption. In this vein, it can be explained that the miracles of *Yud-Beis* and *Yud-Gimmel* Tammuz were a foretaste of the fulfillment of the prophecy: “I will tell the north: ‘Give up.’”

As mentioned previously, after the Russians decided to send the Rebbe to Kostrama, he refused to go if his journey involved any compromise of the *Shabbos* laws. And the Russians agreed and kept him in prison until Sunday. This was a radical departure from the usual practice. For just as a prisoner cannot be released if the authorities want to hold him, so too, when the authorities desire to release him, he ordinarily has no option to remain in prison. The Rebbe, however, achieved exactly what he desired.

Similar concepts apply with regard to the Rebbe’s departure from Russia. Not only did the Russians “not prevent” him from leaving, they actually *assisted* him, foreshadowing the fulfillment of the prophecy: “I will tell the north: ‘Give up.’”

For example, the Rebbe said that he would not leave Russia unless he was able to take all his manuscripts and books. When the inspectors wished to prevent him from taking certain rare and valuable texts, the Rebbe said that if so, he would not leave the land. The inspectors telegraphed the higher authorities in Moscow, reporting that Rabbi Schneersohn refused to leave without all his books and