

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

Reprinted for Parshat Pinchas, 5781
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5759 ♦ 1999

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,
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Once Upon A Chassid

27:15-17

אלהי הרוחת לכל בשר

And Moses spoke to G-d, saying: Let the Lord, G-d of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the people.... so that the congregation of G-d shall not be as sheep who have no shepherd”

Why does Moses address the Almighty as the “G-d of the spirits of all flesh?” So said Moses to G-d: “Master of the universe! You know the soul of each and every individual, You know that no two are alike. Appoint for them a leader who can relate to each and every one of them in accordance with his individual spirit.”

Rashi's commentary

A Change of Clothes

Evening had fallen, and Rabbi Shmuel of Lubavitch was receiving those who came to seek his counsel in *yechidus*, the private meeting of souls between rebbe and chassid. Scarcely an hour had passed, and already the Rebbe was exhausted; he called a break and asked for a fresh change of clothes.

Pinchas / A Change of Clothes

The Rebbe's secretary emerged from the room carrying the clothes which the Rebbe had removed. They were drenched in sweat. "Master of the universe," muttered the secretary, "why does he exert himself so?! Every hour he needs a new change of clothes. Why does the Rebbe sweat so much?"

The Rebbe's door opened, and Rabbi Shmuel stood in the doorway. "Go home," he said to his secretary. "You have not the slightest understanding of my work. I will continue to pay your salary, but I no longer desire your services.

"Don't you understand? In the past hour twenty people came to see me. Each of them poured out his soul to me and asked for my assistance in curing it of its spiritual ills. To relate to each one's dilemma, I have to see it through their eyes. So I must divest myself of my own personality and my own circumstances and clothe myself in theirs. Then, in order to answer them, I must re-assume my own persona - otherwise, why would they come to consult with *me*?"

"Did you ever attempt to change your clothes forty times an hour? If such physical dressing and undressing would exhaust you, can you imagine what it involves to do so in the mental, emotional, and spiritual sense?"

Source:

Told by the mashpiah Rabbi Shlomo Chaim Kesselman.

BESURAS HAGEULO

The Announcement Of The Redemption

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All the signs for Redemption indicate that we are literally at the Redemption. As my sainted father-in-law publicized and declared, we have completed everything necessary for Redemption. Even the "polishing of the buttons"¹ and "stand, all of you ready,"² have also been achieved. This means that "all is prepared and ready for the banquet"³ and we are ready to approach the table and partake of the feast of Livyoson and the Shor HaBor, because "Behold he (the King Moshiach) is coming"⁴ - imminently!

* * *

As we stand in such close proximity to the Redemption, every Jew must accustom himself to this reality. Everyone must internalize a state and feeling of Redemption, by making his personal day a "personal day of Redemption," and transforming one's private space into "the land of Israel." One achieves this by doing, at each moment and in every place, one's service in thought, speech and action to utter perfection.

Also, the result of perfecting one's service (in thought, speech and action) must be expressed in one's speech. That is, just as the "the lots themselves spoke,"⁵ so too when one has internalized one's

1. See talk of Simchas Torah, 5689.

2. See *Igros Kodesh, Admor MaHaRayatz*, vol. 4, p. 279. See *Hayom Yom 15 Teves*.

3. Mishnaic expression, *Avos* 3:16.

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

5. [When the land of Israel was divided among the 12 tribes, the lots that were used to determine the division miraculously spoke, declaring out loud which territory belonged to which tribe. Translator's note.]

BESURAS HAGEULO

Divine service to "make Israel here,"⁶ to the point of penetration of one's very core, one speaks to others about it with enthusiasm. At that point one will eagerly publicize the directive of "make Israel here" to one's family and acquaintances, and certainly to one's students, and ultimately to all those he can reach. Because this message comes from within, one's words are words which come from the heart, which are guaranteed to enter the heart⁷ and will have their intended effect. When one actually becomes a living example of this ideal in his own efforts, he can certainly have the effect on others. This is true to such an extent that the listeners themselves become speakers - "the lots themselves begin to speak."

*(From the talk of Shabbos Parshas Pinchos,
Mevorchim HaChodesh Menachem Av, 24 Tammuz, 5751).*

6. See *Igros Kodesh, Admor MaHaRayatz*, vol. 1, p. 485 ff.

7. *Sefer HaYashar* by Rabeinu Tam 13, cited in *Shaloh*, 69a.

IN LOVING MEMORY OF OUR DEAR MOTHER

Mrs. Frima bas Reb Pinchas ע"ה

Lispektor

On the occasion of her 5th yahrtzeit, 29 Tamuz, 5781

ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.

*

DEDICATED BY HER SON

Mr. & Mrs. Refael and Nechama שיחיו

Medvedev

* * *

IN LOVING MEMORY OF A DEAR FREIND

Reb Yosef Yisroel ben Reb Sholom ע"ה Rosner

Passed away on 7 Menachem-Av, 5777

ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.

*

DEDICATED BY HIS FRIENDS

Mr. & Mrs. Gershon and Leah שיחיו Wolf

Rabbi & Mrs. Yosef Y. and Gittel Rochel שיחיו 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 שתחי Caplan

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

* * *

IN LOVING MEMORY OF
Mrs. Chana (Carrie) bas Reb Meir ע"ה Greenberg

Passed away on 9 Sivan, 5781

ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.

*

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