

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

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Executive Director

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Tzav / Opening Statement

6:5

וּבַעַר עָלָיו הַכֹּהֵן עֵצִים בְּבֹקֶר

The fire upon the altar shall be kept burning upon it, it shall never go out. Each morning, the kohen shall burn wood upon it.

Although a supernal fire from heaven always burned upon the altar, nevertheless, it was imperative that an additional fire be provided by man.

Talmud, Eruvin 63a

Rabbi Schneur Zalman, founder of Chabad chassidism, once said: "The chassidim of Rabbi Cheikel' are aflame with a love of G-d; but it is not they who are burning - it is Reb Cheikel who is burning within them."

Opening Statement

Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok Schneerson, the sixth rebbe of Chabad-Lubavitch, passed away on the 10th of Shevat 5710 (Jan. 28, 1950). The Chabad-Lubavitch community chose his son-in-law, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson shlita, to succeed him as their rebbe and leader.

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1. Chassidic rebbe Rabbi Cheikel of Hadmur.

Once Upon A Chassid

Traditionally, the first discourse of chassidic teaching (ma'amar) delivered by a Chabad rebbe signifies the formal start of his leadership. Rabbi Menachem Mendel shlita formally accepted the leadership of Chabad-Lubavitch on the first anniversary of Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok's passing, with his delivery of the discourse *Came Into My Garden*.²

As soon as he concluded the discourse, he turned to the assembled chassidim and said:

“Now, listen. Chabad has always demanded that a person toil and accomplish on his own rather than depend on the rebbe. This is the primary difference between the ‘Polish’ school of chassidism and that of Chabad. Among other chassidic groups the approach is that ‘the *tzaddik* vitalizes (his followers) with his faith.’³ Not so in Chabad. We must all do and accomplish on our own, with the 248 limbs and 365 sinews of our own bodies and the 248 limbs and 365 sinews of our own souls. In the words of our sages: ‘All is in the hands of heaven, except for the fear of heaven.’⁴

“I am not declining to help, G-d forbid. I will assist you in every way that I can. But if you do not act on your own,

2. *Bosi L'gani*. Printed in *Sefer Hama'amarim Melukot* (The Collected Discourses of Rabbi Menachem M. Schnerson, the Lubavitcher Rebbe *shlita*), vol I. pg 3.

3. Based on Habbakuk 2:4. The verse actually reads “The *tzaddik* shall live by his faith”; but the Hebrew word *yichyeh*, ‘shall live’, can also be read as *y'chayeh*, ‘shall give life.’

4. Talmud, Brachos 33b.

Tzav / Opening Statement

nothing will be attained by sending me notes, singing songs, or saying *L'chayim*. As the Rebbe used to say: '*Leigt zich nit kein foigelach in buzim*' (a Yiddish expression implying 'don't get any big ideas'). By our own initiative, we must transform the folly and the drives of the 'animal soul'⁵ to holy ends."

Source:

Likkutei Sichos [The Collected Talks of Rabbi Menachem M. Schneersohn, the Lubavitcher Rebbe shlita], vol. 11, p. 500.*

5. In his *Tanya*, Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi explains that a Jew has two 'souls', each possessing the entire range of attributes that make for a functioning persona: desire, will, intellect, feelings, motives, etc. Each expresses itself via its own philosophy, mind-set, language, and behavior. The 'animal soul' (*nefesh habehamis*) is the essence of physical life and focuses on the self, its every act motivated by the quest for self-fulfillment and self-enhancement. The 'G-dly soul' (*nefesh ho'elokis*) gravitates to its divine source, striving to be nullified within the all-pervading reality of G-d. All of its endeavor focuses on the thought, speech, and deed of Torah, the means by which man may cleave to his Creator.

As they both have the same brain, heart, hands, etc., at their disposal, this makes for the perpetual struggle of life: the struggle between substance and spirit, between self-assertion and self-nullification. Any thought, desire, or act of man stems from either of his two souls, depending upon which has gained mastery over the other and is asserting itself through the person's behavior.

*. Correction: Vol. 2.

BESURAS HAGEULO

The Announcement Of The Redemption

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What was said previously concerning the Redemption receives extra emphasis as we find ourselves in the month of Nissan of this year, "It will be a year of miracles [that] I will show you." And as we said (also in the general letters) regarding the wonders and miracles which occurred this year (close to Purim), an opponent of the Jews was nullified. The victory reached the point that the enemy freed some of the prisoners of war in a fitting manner, as we previously discussed in detail.

And certainly the Holy One, Blessed be He, will continue to reveal wonders and miracles until - and most important - "I will show you miracles" in the true and complete Redemption.

For these wars in that part of the world ("the king of Persia" with the "king of Aram") are one of the signs that the Redemption through our righteous Moshiach is imminent, as stated in *Yalkut Shimoni*.¹ And as it says there, "My children, do not be afraid... the time of your Redemption has arrived" and "the King Moshiach stands on the roof of the Beis HaMikdash [Holy Temple] and proclaims to them - to Israel - and says, 'Humble ones, the time for your Redemption has arrived!'"

*(From the talk of Shabbos Parshas Tzav,
Shabbos HaGadol, 8 Nissan 5751)*

1. *Yeshayahu, Remez 499.*

IN LOVING MEMORY OF
OUR DEAR FRIEND AND COPY EDITOR
Rabbi **Benyomin Daniel (Brad)** ben Reb **Ephraim ע"ה Hoffman**
Passed away on 24 Tamuz, 5783

ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.

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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**

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in health, happiness, Torah and *mitzvot*.

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