In loving memory of a dear freind
Reb **Pesach Betzalel** ben Reb **Leib** ע"ה **Fleischman**
Passed away on 3 Elul, 5784
ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.

*

Dedicated by his friend
Rabbi & Mrs. **Yosef Y.** and **Gittel Rochel** שיחיו **Shagalov**

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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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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** שתחי׳
Shagalov

Dedicated by
Rabbi & Mrs. **Yosef Y.** and **Gittel Rochel** שיחיו
Shagalov

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602 North Orange Drive.
Los Angeles, CA 90036
Tel.: (323) 934-7095 * Fax: (323) 934-7092

http://www.torah4blind.org
e-mail: yys@torah4blind.org

Rabbi Yosef Y. Shagalov,
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Mrs. **Roneete Mona Mina** bas Reb **Zev** ע״ה **Kurtzman**
Passed away on 9 Cheshvan, 5783
ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.
*

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Chabad-Lubavitch community of California שיחיו

judge" and "your counselor" of our generation creates the sampling and beginning of the fulfillment of the prayer[29] "Return our judges as of old and our counselors as in the beginning." This is in accordance with the principle "The end of creation arose in thought first."[30] How much more [must there be acceptance and adherence] when these matters have already been expressed in speech (i.e., prophecy, which in Hebrew derives from a word that means "movement of the lips"), as it has become customary recently to express the words in speech, particularly the words that the Redemption is imminent.

We can now answer the question that has been raised recently that the Redemption is coming imminently. The question is, how can this statement be accepted? How will the family and the world at large react to this?

In truth, if the subject of Redemption were an innovation, the question would possibly have a place. But the Redemption is not new; rather all of it has already begun ("as in the beginning") and has been brought into and received in this physical world, the lowest of all possible worlds (in the context of "your counselors as in the beginning"). Therefore it won't be a wonder when the Redemption comes imminently!

(From the talk of the Shabbos Parshas Shoftim, 7 Elul, 5751)

29. The eleventh blessing of the Amidah prayer.
30. The hymn *"Lecha Dodi."*

18:13 | תמים תהיה עם ה' אלקיך
Be wholesome ('tamim') with G-d

To be '*tamim*' with G-d means: walk with Him in simplicity and without guile. Do not seek to manipulate the future, rather, accept whatever He brings upon you wholeheartedly. Then, He will be with you and you will reap the rewards of His apportionment.

Rashi's commentary

The Dripping Hat

When Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi was released from his imprisonment in 5559,[1] there was great rejoicing and celebration. At one of the *farbrengens* at the Rebbe's synagogue in Li'ozna, the celebrating chassidim invented a most unique dance: a barrel of vodka was set up in the center of the room, with a dipper at its side; as each chassid passed the barrel, he dipped in for a *l'chayim*. Round and round swirled the dancers, dip, dip, dip, went the dipper.

Soon the predictable happened: the hat of one of the dancing chassidim took a nose-dive into the barrel. Rabbi

1. 1798.

Schneur Zalman himself fished out the hat, replaced it on the young man's head, and quoted: *"A hat of salvation upon his head."*[2] That year, the young chassid became extremely wealthy.

One year later, when the celebration and the dance were repeated, an enterprising young chassid decided to try the hat trick himself. As he passed the barrel, he nonchalantly flipped his hat into its spirited contents. The Rebbe rewarded him with nary a glance...

Source:

Shmu'os V'sipurim ["Sayings and Stories"] by Rabbi Rephael Nachman Kahan, vol. 11*, p. 42.

2. **Isaiah 59:17.**

*. Correction: Vol. 2.

And furthermore: "A prophet about whom another prophet testifies that he is a prophet is presumed to be a prophet and the second one needs no examination."[24] This applies to the leader of our generation, and continues in the next generation through his disciples. One must immediately obey him even "before he gives a sign." Similarly, "it is forbidden to have doubts about him and question his prophecy, that maybe it isn't true, and it is forbidden to test him overmuch" as it says,[25] do not test the L-rd your G-d as you tested Him at Massa... But since it is known that he is a prophet, believe in him and know that G-d is in your midst. Do not doubt or question him..."[24] One believes in the words of the prophet not because it is the prophet's speech, but because it is **G-d's** speech through **this** prophet!

...One must make known to all members of the generation that we have merited that G-d has chosen a person endowed with free choice, who is incomparably higher than the members of his generation, to be "your judge," "your counselor," and the prophet of the generation. This chosen leader will provide the instructions and advice relevant to the service of all Jews and all people of the generation, in all matters of Torah and mitzvos, and daily conduct in the manner of "in all your ways, know Him" and "all your deeds (should be for the sake of Heaven)."[26] [His counsel has] extended to the essential prophecy[27] of "immediate Redemption" and instantly "Behold he (Moshiach) comes."[28]

The acceptance of and adherence to the instructions of "your

24. Ibid, halacha 5.

25. *Vaeschanan*, 6:16.

26. *Mishlei* 3:6. Avos, chapter 2, Mishneh 12. See Rambam, *Hilchos De'os*, end of chapter 3. *Tur Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim*, section 231.

27. Not just as a Sage and Judge, but as a Prophet, for this is certain - see Maamarei Ha'ketzorim of the Alter Rebbe, p. 354-5.

28. *Shir HaShirim* 2:8 and *Shir HaShirim Rabbah* on the verse.

In the last moments of exile, the lesson for everyone of Shabbos Parshas Shoftim can be understood. There must be a Divine service appropriate - measure for measure - to the situation of Redemption:

One must publicize to one's self and to all whom he can reach the necessity to internalize the lessons and advice of "your judges" and "your counselors" of our generation. In general these leaders are the rabbis, as in the statement; "Who are the kings? The Rebbis."[20] More specifically, it is the leader of our generation, the judge, counselor and prophet of our generation and the continuation of our Rebbeim who preceded him.

The obligation to receive the words of the leader is rooted in the commandment of the Torah:[21] "I will raise up a prophet for them from amongst their brethren like you and will put My words in his mouth and he will speak to them all that I command him..." "To him you will listen."[22] According to the legal decree of the Rambam mentioned above, if one has the qualifications and perfection required of a prophet, when this same person performs signs and wonders, "we do not believe in him because of the signs alone, but because of the mitzvah Moshe commanded in the Torah when he said, 'if he gives you a sign, listen to him.'" The sign is: "He will tell you thing to come and his words will prove true,"[23] - as we have seen and continue to see the fulfillment of the blessings of my sainted father-in-law, the leader of our generation.

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judges as before times and your counselors as in the beginning... this will be without a doubt when the Creator corrects the hearts of men, their merits increase, their desire is for G-d and their wisdom increases before the coming of Moshiach, etc.

20. See *Gittin* 62a. *[The phrase used in the original is the following quotation: "who are the kings? the rabbis." Translator's note.]*

21. Our parsha, 18:18.

22. Our Parsha, 18:15.

23. Rambam, ibid, beginning of chapter 10.

BESURAS HAGEULO
The Announcement Of The Redemption

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The proclamation of my sainted father-in-law, the leader of our generation[1] : "Immediate repentance (and automatically) immediate redemption," and that everything is already completed, including "polishing the buttons,"[2] has been mentioned often lately. His announcement that it only remains to "stand[3] prepared, all of you"[4] has also been completed. We are now ready to greet our righteous Moshiach immediately. It's obvious that we are now at the time when the promise that "I will return your judges [as they were in the beginning][5]... and your counselors"[6] is ready to be fulfilled. Furthermore, "as they were in the beginning," alludes to the fact that this has already begun,[7] as mentioned earlier.

…In every generation - even before the resurrection of Moshe - it is relevant to know the law that "G-d gives prophecy to mankind."[8] It is within the grasp of the created to experience a true revelation of G-dliness, even to the degree of perfection that was

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1. *"Kol Koreh"* in *"HaKriah VhaKedushah"* (Sivan-Tammuz 5701. Elul 5702) - published in the *Igros Kodesh* of the *Rebbe Rayatz*, vol. 8, p. 361 ff. 377 ff. 408 ff. Vol. 6, p. 430 ff.

2. See *Sichos Simchas Torah* 5689.

3. His *Igros Kodesh*, vol. 4, p. 279. See there for cross references.

4. See *HaYom Yom* 15 Teves and in many other places.

5. *Yeshayhu* 1:26.

6. See Rambam's *Commentary on the Mishneh* , Sanhedrin, chapter 1, Mishneh 3, which implies there that "I will return your judges, etc." will be "before the coming of Moshiach" and as the passage concludes, "afterwards it will be called for you a righteous city, etc." See *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 9, p. 105, note 74.

7. *[There is a play on words. In the citation from Isaiah (Yeshayu) it says, "All your counselors as in the beginning." The Rebbe interprets this to mean that the beginning of this prophecy has already occurred. Translator's note.]*

8. Rambam, Hilchos Yesodei Torah, beginning of chapter 7.

attained by Moshe.[9] Furthermore - relevant to every generation is "I will establish for them a prophet **like you**,"[10] as the Rambam explains:[11] "We do not believe in any prophet that arises after Moshe our Teacher only because of the sign [he performs], but because of the mitzvah commanded **by Moshe in the Torah**, etc." This means that every prophet is a continuation of the prophecy of Moshe and his Torah. As the Rambam explains, it is only in the **manifestation** of the prophecy that there exists different levels.[12] In our generation it is my sainted father-in-law who has attained the degree of prophecy.

Specifically, after "prophecy has returned to Israel,"[13] as an "introduction to Moshiach"[13] - our righteous Moshiach (who will be "a great prophet[14] approaching our teacher Moshe") will prophesy. Our Sages[15] state that "the first Redeemer (Moshe) is the final Redeemer" and in every generation there is one who is qualified for this. Therefore one has to know as a halacha [law] that even now prior to the Redemption, there exists a revelation of prophecy from Moshiach, even before the Redemption which is a taste and beginning of the complete revelation of prophecy after the Redemption. This means, that this prophecy is not an innovation that will be realized only after the Redemption, but the beginning of it will be achieved even before, in the spirit of "your counselors as in the beginning." The Rambam, who includes in his law code the laws relevant to the days of Moshiach and the introduction to it as well, writes about this [prophecy].

9. Likkutei Sichos, vol. 23, p. 71. And elsewhere.

10. Our parsha, 18:18.

11. Rambam, Hilchos Yesodei Torah, chapter 8, halacha 2.

12. Chapter 7, halacha 5.

13. Rambam, Igros Teiman, chapter 3.

14. Rambam, Hilchos Teshuva, chapter 9, halacha 2.

15. See Shmos Rabbah, chapter 2:4. Zohar Chadash vol. 1, 253a. Shaar HaPesukim, Parsha Veyechi. Torah Or, beginning Parshas Mishpatim. And elsewhere.

One can then understand the accomplishment of the later generations in general and the current generation in particular. It is only in current times that my sainted father-in-law, **the leader of our generation**, has declared that everything has been completed. According to all the signs, it is the last moments before the Redemption.

…The spreading of the wellsprings outside, to all corners of the world, has been completed, and in a way that is intellectually comprehensible even to one who is situated in the furthermost hinterland. The inner teachings of Torah and Chassidus have been translated into many languages (Russian, among many), through my sainted father-in-law, the leader of our generation. In an ever expanding and illuminating fashion, we have come to witness the recent publication of the Tanya, the Written Torah of Chassidus[16] in Braille, the script for the blind, May G-d preserve us (as mentioned above[17]).

According to the announcement of my sainted father-in-law, all aspects of Divine service have been completed, including the Divine service of our Rebbe's, our leaders, who served as "your judges" and "your counselors" until the present day. In addition, the expression "the generation is worthy"[18] can be understood **literally**. It follows then that we have already arrived at the time of "I will return your judges as at first and your counselors as in the beginning" in the most complete sense of the words. (There is therefore no need for officers to enforce the law, because everything is already refined.) Of this, our rabbis and leaders have already provided us with a taste and beginning.[19]

16. A letter of my sainted father-in-law - published in the summary and notes to *Tanya*, page 118 and further. His *Igros Kodesh*, vol. 4, p. 221 and further. See there vol. 5, p. 90.

17. Sichos Shabbos Parshas Eikev (*Sefer HaSichos*, 5751, p. 764 and further).

18. The expression of our Sages - *Yevamos* 39b. *Chullin* 93b.

19. See Rambam's *Commentary on the Mishneh* in note 6: I will return your