the Holy Temple. All of this should be permeated with the eager anticipation and the certain conviction that imminently we will see with eyes of flesh that "Behold he (the King Moshiach) is coming."[4]

In simple terms:

It should be announced and publicized in all places - with heartfelt words - that G-d says through His servants, the prophets, to each and every Jew: "Behold I am placing before you today a blessing," so much so, that literally today we will see with eyes of flesh the blessing of the true and complete Redemption.

[This announcement must be made even by those who argue that they have not completely absorbed its full meaning. Since their faith is intact, they are able to (and consequently, required to) publicize these matters to others, first and foremost their own family members. (Certainly they don't need to "suffer" from his lack of comprehension of this matter.) They should also spread the word to all those within their environment and ultimately to each and every Jew. Undoubtedly, the appropriate effort will be well received and it will have its intended effect on others, as well as inspiring the one making the announcement and doing the publicity, that he too should internalize the message.]

(From the talk of Shabbos Parshas R'eh, first day of Rosh Chodesh Elul, 5751)

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

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Reflections of Redemption

Essays on the Weekly Torah Reading and Moshiach,
Based on the talks of the
Lubavitcher Rebbe,
Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson

Reprinted for Parshat Re'eh, 5785

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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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Rabbi Yosef Y. Shagalov,
Executive Director

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few days the convention of Chabad emissaries from many countries convened in that country, and its effects are continuing through these days. The convention took place in the country where the city of Lubavitch is situated, as well as other cities where the Chabad Rebbes were active for many generations, such as Liadi, Liozna, Rostov and Petersburg. The emissaries of the leader of Chabad of our generation, my sainted father-in-law, gathered in the capital, Moscow, with the intention of increasing - with more vigor - the dissemination of Torah and the wellsprings of Torah (Chabad Chassidic teaching) to the farthest reaches. It is this process that will bring the King Moshiach.[3]

It is already Rosh Chodesh Elul, the month of reckoning for the entire year. The sum total of this accounting is: **"How much longer!?**...

How can it be that at the conclusion of eleven months of the year "I will show him wonders," our righteous Moshiach has still not come?!...

* * *

Translating the above in practical terms:

In every place, one should publicize and draw people's attention to the specific efforts which are associated with the month of Elul and are alluded to in the initials of five verses which form the word Elul. These verses are references to: Torah, prayer, acts of loving kindness, Teshuvah (repentance or return) and Redemption. Special emphasis should be placed on the fifth acronym, the theme of Redemption, as it permeates all other areas of Divine service, so that everything is done in the spirit of Redemption. This includes particularly Torah studies in matters concerning Redemption and

3. The well know epistle of the Ba'al Shem Tov - Published in *Keser Shem Tov* (Kehot edition), in the beginning, and in several other sources.

since we already have the promise, "Do not fear, the time of your Redemption has arrived." [The words "Do not fear" are an assurance that there is no reason to fear.]

And so it will be for us, that our righteous Moshiach should have actually already come and already stand on the roof of the Beis HaMikdash, announcing and proclaiming that Moshiach has already arrived!

Amen, may this be His will.

(From the talk of Shabbos Parshas Re'eh, Mevorchim HaChodesh Elul, 5750)

36

The relationship of our time to Redemption is based not only on the fact that " I await his coming every day"[1] and especially after "all the deadlines have passed"[2] and all the efforts have been completed (as was discussed several times), but also on the fact that we are now in a special year whose initials represent: "It will be a year of wonders I shall show him," for "as in the days of your departure from Egypt, I will show him wonders."

Indeed, we have actually **seen** many "wonders." The most notable among them has been the liberation of our brethren from that regime [the former Soviet Union], where many of them have emerged from distress to freedom, in both the literal sense of the word as well as (and primarily) with respect to the freedom granted them to live a Jewish life based on Torah and Mitzvos. In the last

1. Text of "Ani Ma'amin" (published in several prayer books) - Based on the expression used in *Chabakuk* 2:3. *Commentary on the Mishneh of the Rambam*, Introduction to Chapter Chelek, 12th principle.

2. *Talmudic* expression - *Sanhedrin* 97b.

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by
Rabbi Dovid Yisroel Ber Kaufmann, Ph.D

Re'eh

Seeing Allusions

The month of Elul emphasizes the spiritual concept "from below to Above" – man's efforts eliciting a Divine response. The Torah portion of Re'eh – both its name and opening verse – emphasizes the spiritual concept "from Above to below." Indeed, each word of the opening verse alludes to this approach. The name Elul, on the other hand, is an acronym for "I am for my Beloved and My beloved is for me," indicating that that which is below (creation) initiates the interaction. These two approaches appear to be contradictory. In truth, both appear in the acronym for Elul. In fact, the name Elul alludes to five areas of human interaction with the Divine, each with its own acronym. The most important of these is Redemption. The practical lesson is to see today, which means to see clearly, not through acronyms or allusions, the reality of Moshiach.

The Torah portion of *Re'eh* is always read close to the beginning of the month of Elul. Most years it is the Shabbos before Rosh *Chodesh* Elul – the Shabbos before the new month begins. In that case, the Shabbos of *Re'eh* is also Shabbos Mevarchim – the Shabbos on which is recited the blessing for the new month. In many years, however, the first day of Rosh *Chodesh* Elul – the first day of the new month of Elul – falls on Shabbos. Thus, the Shabbos of *Re'eh* is either right before the month of Elul or actually Rosh *Chodesh* Elul itself. Either way, the beginning of the month of Elul is closely connected with the Torah reading of *Re'eh*. What is the nature of that connection? Why are the month of Elul and the Torah reading of *Re'eh* so inter-related?

Indeed, at first glance the spiritual concepts underlying the month of Elul and those found within the portion of *Re'eh* seem

BESURAS HAGEULO
The Announcement Of The Redemption

1

Already the signs by which our Sages identified the end of exile and the time of Redemption have been fulfilled, including the (recently publicized) sign in *Yalkut Shimoni*:[1]

"Rabbi Yitzchak said:

In the year the King Moshiach will be revealed, the kings of all the nations of the world will struggle with each other: the king of Persia will provoke the Arabian king; the Arabian king will go to Aram for advice. All the nations of the world will be in turmoil and terror; they will fall on their faces, seized by pains like the pangs of childbirth. Israel will also be in turmoil and terror, saying, "Where shall we come and where shall we go, where shall we come and where shall we go?" [G-d] will say to them, "My children, do not be afraid, all that I have done, I have done only for you sake. Why are you afraid? Do not fear, the time for your Redemption has arrived. It will not be like the earlier Redemptions, this final Redemption, because suffering and subjection to other nations followed the earlier Redemptions. But the final Redemption will not be followed by any suffering and subjection to other nations."

The *Yalkut* continues:

Our Sages taught that when the King Moshiach comes he will stand on the roof of the Beis HaMikdash [Holy Temple] and will proclaim to Israel, "Humble ones, the time for your Redemption has arrived!"

So will it be for us. From the outset there is nothing to fear,

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1. *Yeshayahu*, *remez* 499

of Redemption within Elul, for that penetrates all other aspects of one's Divine service.

And even if one claims to not yet understand this concept, how Redemption will occur, nevertheless, since every Jew has complete faith that G-d will bring Moshiach, and that Redemption can – and will – come any day – the blessing is given today – therefore one's obligation to publicize and study about the coming Redemption does not depend on one's comprehension of how it will happen.

In simple terms, we have to announce and publicize everywhere, in an appropriate manner, with words that "go from the heart," that G-d tells each and every Jew, through His servants the prophets, that "*Re'eh Anochi Nosain Lifnaychem Hayom Berochah*" – "See, I give to you today blessing," and that this blessing means that we will actually see – today – with our own eyes – the blessing of the true and complete Redemption.

(Based on Sefer HaSichos 5751 Vol. II, pp. 767-779)

contradictory. The spiritual concept emphasized in Elul is man's Divine service, a movement from below to Above. In Elul – the month in which one prepares for Rosh Hashanah – first man bestirs himself to approach G-d, which in turn elicits a revelation from G-d to man. There is a well-known acronym of Elul that alludes to this approach. (See the previous essay, on *Ekev*.)

But the Torah reading of *Re'eh* indicates just the opposite type of spiritual movement. It emphasizes the revelation of G-dliness that comes first, after which follows the Divine service of man. This is a movement from Above to below, from G-d's inspiration to man's activity. In fact, each word of the opening phrase of the Torah reading implies that spirituality is drawn from Above to below.

The phrase is: "*Re'eh Anochi Nosain Lifnaychem Hayom Berochah* – See, I place before you today blessing." Let's look at each of these words:

Re'eh – See: One of the differences between seeing and hearing is that hearing goes from particular to general, building an understanding of the whole by adding detail to detail. A story unfolds in the telling, bit by bit, and not until it's all told is there a general understanding. This is bottom-up understanding, from below to above. Seeing, on the other hand, goes from the general to the particular. First one sees the whole scene, without distinguishing details or individual elements. Only after there is a general understanding and overall sense of the picture does one focus on the details. This is top-down understanding, from above to below.

Anochi – I: There are actually two words in Hebrew for the first person singular pronoun. Both *"Ani"* and *"Anochi"* mean "I" and both identify the speaker. The difference is that *"Anochi"* also identifies the exalted, elevated status of the speaker. For example, the prophet Samuel uses the term *"Anochi"* in identifying himself

as a seer. Here again, there is the implication of spirituality flowing from above to below – from the prophet down to the people.

Nosain – Give: Giving obviously is a process of 'from above to below' – from giver to receiver.

Lifnaychem – Before you: This further emphasizes a drawing down from Above to below, for the word "*Lifnaychem*" literally means "within you." The blessing is placed within the Jewish people, within the essence of each individual, and from there extends outward – and downward.

Hayom – Today: This word indicates the eternal present. This is the day, the moment in which one lives. In this sense, every day is always "today." The cliché, 'today is the first day of the rest of your life' derives from the concept that one's life is drawn from today – from the present which is 'above,' down below into the days that follow. And in this sense, each tomorrow becomes a "today."

Berochah – Blessing: To bless something means to draw down spirituality from above to below. The word "*berochah*" is related to the word for bending, a movement from above to below.

Yet, as we mentioned, the acronym of Elul seems to indicate the exact opposite type of spiritual movement – from below to Above. The best-known acronym for Elul is: *Ani L'Dodi V'Dodi Li* – "I am for my Beloved, and My beloved is for me." (The phrase, from Song of Songs, is a metaphor of the mutual love between G-d and the Jewish people.) Each of the four Hebrew words of this phrase begins with one of the four letters of the word "Elul." This phrase, "I am for my Beloved, and my Beloved is for me," begins with man's Divine service ("I am for my Beloved") and concludes with G-d's response ("My beloved is for me.") First we pray to G-d, after which He responds.

Actually, the month of Elul combines both concepts – a Divine service from below to Above, and one from Above to below. The

advantage of *Ani L'dodi* – I am for my Beloved, the Divine service from below to Above, is that the spiritual insight and effect on one's life is achieved primarily through individual effort. On the other hand, the level of spirituality that can be reached by individual effort – and thus the degree of holiness that can be incorporated into one's conduct – is limited by the finite nature of human beings. But when there is a flow of spirituality from Above to below – *V'dodi li* – My Beloved is for me – the potential revelation of G-dliness is unlimited.

Thus, both possibilities are united and combined in the acronym of Elul.

In fact, this concept of unifying *Ani L'dodi* – self-motivated effort – and *V'dodi li* – effort Divinely motivated – applies to no less than five areas of human endeavor, each indicated by an acronym of Elul. (Briefly, the five areas alluded to in the five acronyms are study of Torah, prayer, Acts of Lovingkindness, *teshuvah* or repentance, and preparing for Redemption.) The most famous acronym, the one we've been discussing, *Ani L'dodi V'dodi Li*, alludes to prayer. Three of the acronyms – those for prayer, Torah and *tzedekah* allude to the concept of individual effort – from below to Above; the other two – those for *teshuvah* (which is self-transcendence) and Redemption (the ultimate in transcendence) – allude to a giving of blessing – from Above to below.

What is the practical implication of all this? How do we translate this spiritual insight into action, since "action is the main thing?" First, we have to awaken within ourselves the Divine service connected with the five acronyms of Elul. We have to publicize the inner meaning of Elul – we have to increase our efforts in the "five acronyms," so to speak. We must add – and help others to add – in Torah, prayer, Acts of Lovingkindness, *teshuvah* and redemption. Particular emphasis must be placed on the last one – the aspect