



THE ULTIMATE TEST

Historically, our nation's most transformative moments came as a result of persecution. In this foundational discourse, the Rebbe explains how today's freedoms set the stage for Judaism's most consequential test.

TEACHER'S MANUAL



JEWISH INSIGHTS

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GIMMEL TAMMUZ

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Shluchim of the Rebbe to Mumbai India

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The verse states “And you should command the children of Israel, and they should take to you pure olive oil, crushed for the lamp” (Source 1). The Rebbe Rayatz asks: (a) usually the verse says “command” or “say” to the children of Israel. Why does our verse says “you should command”? (b) Why does the verse say “crushed for the lamp” instead of “oil to illuminate”?

The Rebbe explains that the words “you should command” define the role of Moses, to connect the Jewish people with G-d. How does Moses do this? In three ways, as will be explained.

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Moses is the shepherd of faith, helping the people internalize their faith. An example of transcendent, non-internalized faith, is a thief praying to G-d for success in a heist. If he believes in G-d, why does he steal? This is an expression of transcendent faith - he believes, but this belief is not part of conscious processes. To some degree, we all suffer from this problem (Sources 2-3). When Moses teaches the Jewish people to internalize their faith, he is connecting them to G-d.

Story: She says. I know!

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During the time of Haman's decree, Mordechai - the Moses of his generation - inspired the Jews to remain firm in their commitment to G-d and not to renounce their faith, even at the risk of their lives.

The Megillah states “the Jews accepted that which they had begun doing.” This means that the giving of the Torah at Mt. Sinai was just the start, and the final acceptance of the Torah occurred during the period of Purim. (Source 4)

This raises the question: At Sinai the Jewish people were on the highest spiritual level, yet this is termed just the “beginning.” During Haman's decree the Jewish people were at a physical and spiritual nadir - how could this be the time for the final acceptance of the Torah?

The answer is that while the state of the people during Haman's decree was indeed at its lowest point, this was when they expressed their readiness to sacrifice their lives for G-d. This is why this constituted the final acceptance of the Torah.

This answers the question of why the verse says “crushed for the lamp.” Self-sacrifice in the hardest times, “crushed,” is what enables us to reach “the lamp,” the deeper level of our souls.

When Mordechai inspired the Jewish people to risk their lives for G-d, he revealed the essence of their soul, thereby connecting them with G-d.

Story: To the last drop of blood

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Even while living in physical and spiritual comfort, we can still feel completely “crushed” - from the fact that G-d’s presence isn’t revealed in this world.

Moses showed an example of this. He had comprehended 49 levels of Divine understanding, but he was “sick” with his yearning to reach the 50th level. The Alter Rebbe would say “I want nothing at all! I don’t want Your Paradise, I don’t want Your World to Come... I want nothing but You alone.”

When the leader of the generation inspires us to feel broken due to the lack of Divine revelation in this world, he is revealing the essence of our soul and connecting it G-d.

(It can be suggested that this point is expressed in the Rebbe’s shlichus outreach effort. The Rebbe inspires us to feel broken when we hear about a community that has no Jewish life, and travel there in order to transform that place.)

Story: Caring for a remote community

Introduction

During the later years of his life the Rebbe would from time to time personally distribute printed copies of a discourse of his. The final discourse the Rebbe distributed opens with the words Veatah Tetzaveh, “and you should command.” The custom has developed to study this discourse on the day of the Rebbe’s yahrtzeit, Gimmel Tammuz.

In this class we will study some of the key points from this discourse.

השיעור לג' תמוז

מאמר דיבור המתחיל “ואתה תצוה” תשמ”א,
יצא לאור בקונטרס פורים-קטן – תשנ”ב

Background:

In 1920, after several years of upheaval, revolutions, and fighting between the two factions jostling for power in Russia, the Red Army was victorious and Russia became a communist state. They forced the communist ideology on the citizens with terror. There was to be absolute economic equality among all citizens. They were all workers, the assets belonged to everyone. There were no rich and no poor, everyone was equal under the law.

Along with the economic ideology came the atheist ideology. Communism scorned religion, ridiculing it as the “opium of the masses,” and began to uproot any trace of it. In short course, all religious institutions in the massive country were shuttered. Millions of Jews were shocked to discover that their synagogues, schools, and mikvahs were now illegal. Everyone was forced to send their children to government schools, where they were indoctrinated with the communist way of life.

The Communist Party set up a special division, the Yevsektzia, which means Jewish division in Russian, which focused on furthering their agenda among the Jews. Sadly, the Yevsektzia’s members were young Jews caught up in communism, and they persecuted their brethren.

Millions of Jews, many of them traditionally observant, experienced a radical change in just months. The fear the government instilled in the populace, and their unhesitating willingness to use violence against anyone deemed a threat to their ideology, caused many to buckle under the communist boot. Jews stayed away from the few synagogues that remained open and didn’t give their children a Jewish education. The Jewish future in the huge Soviet bloc, home to three million Jews, seemed bleak.

Amidst that upheaval, in 1920 the Previous Rebbe, the Rebbe’s father-in-law, became the Rebbe after the passing of his father, the Rebbe Rashab. The young new Rebbe resolved to devote his life to preserving the embers of Judaism in the USSR. Under the noses of the Soviets, he established an underground network to fill the place of the now banned and shuttered Jewish life.

The Rebbe sent emissaries to different cities to establish schools in private homes, hidden mikvahs in the cellars, secret prayer groups, and more. In just a few months, the Rebbe had begun a massive revolt against Russia. An underground network of hundreds of institutions was established, fueled by the self-sacrifice of the Rebbe and his emissaries.

The Yevsektzia didn’t take kindly to this. The KGB was drafted into the war against the Chassidic underground and didn’t hesitate to threaten and punish anyone associated with the “Schneerson clan.” An operative caught teaching children Torah would be sent to a labor camp in Siberia or shot dead. The same fate faced ritual circumcisors, kosher slaughterers, rabbis, and cantors. Many Chassidim were caught, imprisoned, tortured and even killed, but the Rebbe didn’t budge and sent other Chassidim in their stead. It was an existential battle, a battle to preserve Jewish life in a land that had until recently been home to the largest concentration of Jews in the world.

Our story takes place seven years later, in 1927, when the battle for Judaism was at its height. The Yevsektzia and the KGB knew of the efforts of the chassidic underground to thwart their destruction of Judaism and decided to go after the man who headed it all – the Lubavitcher Rebbe – and bring the entire network to its knees.

Ahead of Purim Katan, the Rebbe traveled to Moscow, where he met with several of his operatives. The Rebbe publicized that he would be speaking at one of the only synagogues still open.

Such a public move poked the Soviet bear. Long before this, the Yevsektzia had circled the Rebbe as a target, and now the Rebbe wanted to host a public Chassidic gathering in Moscow?! His acquaintances passed on information suggesting that the authorities were closing in on him, and advising that he flee immediately to Leningrad (today known as S. Petersburg), but the Rebbe stayed put.

The Choral Synagogue on Archipova St. was packed wall-to-wall when the Rebbe began his remarks.

At that gathering, the Rebbe delivered a Chassidic discourse opening with the words from the megillah “The Jews accepted.” In this discourse, the Rebbe focused on Haman’s persecution of the Jews, as described in the Megillah, and the Jews’ self-sacrifice to remain faithful to their Judaism under the threat of death, withstanding the temptation to convert. The Rebbe took a lesson from those days to 1927, when Jews were once again forced to endanger themselves to live as Jews. He encouraged the audience not to comply, and to keep studying Torah and, most importantly, to give their children a Jewish education.

There were many people listening intently to the Rebbe’s every word, including KGB spies. The Rebbe ignored their presence and delivered his sharp and clear message without mincing words.

Four months went by, and on the 15th of Sivan the Rebbe was arrested and sentenced to death. After intense diplomatic pressure, including from the U.S., the sentence was commuted to a lengthy prison sentence, until further international outcry led the government to expel the Rebbe from Russia.

The Rebbe, who would eventually marry the Previous Rebbe’s daughter, was then in Leningrad with his future father-in-law, and experienced these events first-hand.

On many occasions, the Rebbe recalled this fateful Moscow gathering and the historic discourse his father-in-law delivered. The Rebbe demonstrated the vital importance of Jewish education from that discourse, and the sacrifice warranted to keep Judaism alive.

On a winter Shabbat in 1981, during a Chassidic gathering, the Rebbe delivered a discourse based on his predecessor’s Moscow discourse, further explaining, developing and clarifying it, and adding his own thoughts.

Eleven years later, on Purim Katan, 1992, the Rebbe handed a copy of the discourse to each of the men, women and children present. It was printed in a special booklet and edited by the Rebbe. For hours, thousands streamed past the Rebbe, and he handed each of them a copy.

Because this was the last discourse the Rebbe distributed, the Chassidim saw it as the last message the Rebbe wished to impart to them. Since then, every year on the third of Tammuz, the Rebbe's Yahrtzeit, Chassidim study this discourse, delving into its teachings, deriving lessons for life, and strengthening their soul's bond with the Rebbe.

Video:

Click here for a brief video from the distribution of the Veatah Tetzaveh discourse.

<https://videos.jem.tv/video-player?clip=3060>

A. The Leader's Role

In the middle of the Torah portions describing the Mishkan and its vessels, G-d instructs Moses regarding the kindling of the Menorah.

Source 1 Exodus 27:20-21

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And you should command the children of Israel, and they should take to you pure olive oil, crushed for the lamp, to kindle the lamps continually. In the Tent of Meeting, outside the dividing curtain that is in front of the ark of the covenant, Aaron and his sons should set it up before G-d from evening to morning. It should be an everlasting statute throughout their generations, from the children of Israel.

וַאֲתָה תְצַוֶּה אֶת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל,
וַיִּקְחוּ אֵלֶיךָ שֶׁמֶן זַיִת זָךְ
כְּתִית לַמָּאֹר, לְהַעֲלֹת נֵר
תָּמִיד. בְּאֹהֶל מוֹעֵד, מִחוּץ
לַפָּרֹכֶת אֲשֶׁר עַל הָעֵדֻת,
יַעֲרֹךְ אֹתוֹ אַהֲרֹן וּבָנָיו מֵעֶרֶב
עַד בֹּקֶר לִפְנֵי ה', חֻקַּת עוֹלָם
לְדֹרֹתָם מֵאֵת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל.

The verses have a simple meaning, describing the Menorah lighting process in the Holy Temple. In the Previous Rebbe's discourse, however, he highlights a number of peculiarities in the precise wording of these verses, which indicate that there is something going on beneath the surface. This choice of language is like a speed bump, telling us to slow down and focus on the secrets the Torah is teaching us.

>> The Rebbe

The Questions On The Verse

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A number of points are discussed regarding the precise wording of these verses.

(a) The Torah generally introduces its commandments with the expression, "command the children of Israel," or a similar phrase. The verse in question, by contrast, states, "And you should command the children of Israel."

וידועים הדיוקים בזה¹:

א. דבכל הציווים שבתורה
נאמר צו את בני ישראל וכיוצא
בזה, וכאן נאמר ואתה תצוה
את בני ישראל.

1. אוה"ת פרשתנו (תצוה) ע' א'תקמא. ד"ה וקבל היהודים תרפ"ז ס"ג (סה"מ תרפ"ז ע' קיג. ה'תשי"א ע' 182).

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This question is about more than a choice of wording; it affects the meaning as well. "And you should command" implies that Moses is the one issuing the command. But Moses was merely an agent to transmit G-d's commandments to the Jewish people. Why then does the verse say, "and you should command"?

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(b) The phrase "oil, crushed for the lamp" also requires explanation. It would appear more appropriate for the verse to read "oil, crushed to illuminate."

וללוסיף, דהדיוק מה שכתוב ואתה תצוה הוא לא רק בהלשון אלא גם בהתוכן, דלשון ואתה תצוה משמע שמשא הוא המצוה, וצריך להבין, הרי משה הוא השליח למסור לישראל את ציווי הקב"ה, ולמה נאמר ואתה תצוה?

ב. גם צריך להבין מה שכתוב שמן גו' כתית למאור, דלכאורה הוה ליה למימר {=היה צריך לומר} שמן גו' להאיר.

These questions center on the linguistic, syntactic and grammatical choices of the verse:

1) This verse is an outlier. All verses in the Torah describing a command of G-d to the Jews are worded as "command the children of Israel" or "speak to the children of Israel" and so on. Here, however, the language is "and you should command," wording that implies great weight being given to Moses as the commander of this mitzvah, while in fact, Moses is only communicating G-d's command to the Jews.

2) Word choice: The Torah describes the oil as "crushed for the lamps" instead of "crushed to illuminate."

Moses' Role

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The Rebbe Rayatz explains in his renowned discourse, titled *Vekibel HaYehudim* 5687, that the Hebrew for command, "tzivui," is related to the word *tzavta*, which means "connection" or "bond." Thus, the verse "And you should command the children of Israel" carries with it the implication that Moses binds and connects the Jewish people to G-d.

ומבאר כבוד קדושת מורי וחמי אדמו"ר במאמרו הידוע דיבור המתחיל וקבל היהודים² שנאמר בפורים קטן תרפ"ז³, דציווי - תצוה - הוא צוותא וחיבור⁴. וזהו ואתה תצוה את בני ישראל, שמשא הוא מקשר ומחבר את בני ישראל עם אור אין סוף⁵.

As we can glean from the question, the Torah's intent here is to define Moses' role - "And you shall command." You will connect the Jewish people with G-d. This is the reason for the unusual language of the command, to stress Moses' role.

How did Moses connect the Jews with G-d? There are three levels, as we will explain.

5. כ"ה בסד"ה ואתה תצוה עטר"ת (סד"מ עטר"ת ע' רנו). ובכ"מ. ובד"ה זה תרפ"ז ס"ד בתחלתו (ועד"ו רסט"ו) "תקשר את בני ישראל" ואינו מוסיף "עם אוא"ס". ויש לומר, דבהמאמר מפרש שמשא מקשר את בני ישראל עצמם, כדלקמן ס"א.

2. השייכות דהביאור בואתה תצוה גו' לוקבל היהודים גו' - ראה לקמן ס"ט ואילך.
3. נדפס ב"התמים" חוברת ז לה, ג [שלו, ג] ואילך. סה"מ תרפ"ז ע' קי ואילך. ה'תשי"א ע' 180 ואילך. - ראה שם ס"ד.

4. כ"ה גם בתורא פרשתנו פב, א (עה"פ ואתה תצוה). ובכ"מ. וראה בהנסמן לקמן ע' נט הערה 55.

B. The Shepherd of Faith

>> The Rebbe

Moses Nurtures the Faith of the Jewish People and Helps Them Internalize it

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To explain the above point, the Rebbe Rayatz quotes the Sages' description of Moses as "Raya Mehemna".

There are two ways to render this term: (a) "the faithful shepherd," and (b) "a shepherd of faith," meaning that he sustains and nurtures the faith of the Jewish people.

The Jewish people have inherent resources of faith, for the Jews are "believers, descendants of believers." However, it is possible for this belief to be a detached concept, without being internalized in the person's conscious thought processes.

Moses "shepherds" the Jewish people. A flock of sheep cannot survive without a shepherd, and the Jewish people cannot survive without Moses, the figure of authority who guides them and mediates between them and G-d.

Among Moses' key responsibilities is a foundational principle in Judaism – belief in the Creator.

Every Jew is a believer. Anyone with a Jewish soul believes in G-d, and that fact cannot be changed, even if they may be in denial. But while the existence of the belief isn't in doubt, our awareness of it can vary. When it is lacking, our belief is only superficial. Moses' job is to ensure that our natural belief is internalized.

ולבאר זה, מקדים בהמאמר⁶
שמושה רבינו נקרא רעיא מהימנא
{= רועה נאמן}, דשני פירושים
בזה. שהוא רועה נאמן של ישראל,
ושהוא זון ומפרנס את ישראל
בענין האמונה. דהאמונה שישנה
בישראל מצד עצמם, שישאל
הם מאמינים בני מאמינים⁷,
אפשר שתהיה בבחינת מקיף, וזה
שמושה רועה ומפרנס את ישראל
בענין האמונה הוא שהאמונה
תהיה בפנימיות.

6. סעיף ד.
7. שבת צז, א.

The Righteous Thief

What is superficial belief? The Previous Rebbe cites a paradox of faith from the Talmud: “The thief at the entrance of the tunnel calls out to G-d.”

Source 2 Vekibel HaYehudim 5687, ch. 10

Student's
pg. 5

Faith transcends our ordinary conscious processes and is often not integrated within them. An illustration of this concept can be found in the Sages' teaching: “a thief calls out to G-d before breaking into a house.” This thief believes in G-d; he believes that G-d nourishes and sustains all of His creatures, “providing bread for all flesh,” overseeing the fortunes of each and every creature individually. And it is because of this faith that He asks G-d to help him and grant him success, so that he too will have “bread to eat and clothing to wear.” In what, however, does he ask for success? In stealing, and in not being caught in the act! This is an extreme paradox: asking G-d for help while flagrantly defying His will.

Student's
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This inconsistency is possible because this person's faith is far removed from their ordinary conscious processes, and is not internalized within them. If the faith would be integrated within the person, they would find it impossible to defy G-d's will. This paradoxical situation can exist only because faith stands beyond our ordinary conscious processes.

Let's ask this thief: One moment, if you believe in G-d, you know you can't steal. Why are you stealing?

This is precisely an expression of superficial belief. We can believe without it really permeating all aspects of who we are. One who has an internalized belief is guided by that belief in everything they do.

When we read this parable, we might laugh at this strange thief. But if we stop to think about it, we need to ask ourselves, is that “thief” me? The Previous Rebbe continues and explains that in a sense, most of us experience this same paradox.

אָמַנִּים כָּלֵלוֹת עֵינֵי הָאֱמוּנָה הוּא
בְּחִינַת מְקִיף. דִּהְיָה אָמְרוּ רַז"ל
גָּנָבָא אָפּוּם מַחְתֵּרְתָּא רַחֲמֵנָא
קָרִיא, וְהִינוּ שְׂמָאִין בְּאַלְקוּת
שֶׁהוּא יִתְבָּרֵךְ זֶן וּמִפְרָגִס אֵת כָּל
בְּרוּאֵיו, וְנָתַן לָהֶם לֶחֶם לְכָל בָּשָׂר,
וּמְשַׁגִּיחַ עַל כָּל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד בְּפֶרֶט,
וּמַצִּיד אֱמוּנָתוֹ זֹאת הוּא מְבַקֵּשׁ
עֶזֶר מִה' יִתְבָּרֵךְ שִׁיִּצְלִיחַ לוֹ שְׂגֵם
הוּא יִהְיֶה לוֹ לֶחֶם לֵאכֹל וּבִגְד
לְלָבֵשׁ. אָכֵל מָה תִּהְיֶה הַצִּלְחָתוֹ?
שִׁיִּצְלִיחַ בְּגִנְבָתוֹ וְשִׁלָּא יִהְיֶה נִתְפָּס
עַל הַגִּנְבָּה... שְׂוֵהוּ דְּבָר וְהַפּוּכֹ!
מְבַקֵּשׁ עֶזֶר מִה' יִתְבָּרֵךְ וְעוֹשֶׂה
הַפֶּךְ רְצוֹנוֹ יִתְבָּרֵךְ לְגַמְרִי.

וְהוּא מִפְּנֵי שֶׁהָאֱמוּנָה הוּא מְרַחוּק
וְאִינוּ נִרְגָּשׁ בְּפִנְיָמִיּוֹת, שְׂאֵם הִיָּתָה
הָאֱמוּנָה מְאִירָה בְּחִינַת פְּנִימִית
אִיךְ יַעֲשֶׂה הַפֶּךְ רְצוֹנוֹ יִתְבָּרֵךְ
לְעֵבֶר אֲמָרִי פִּיּו יִתְבָּרֵךְ? רַק לְהִיּוֹת
שֶׁהָאֱמוּנָה הִיא בְּחִינַת מְקִיף, עַל
כֵּן יָכוֹל לְהִיּוֹת דְּבָר וְהַפּוּכֹ.

Source 3 Vekibel HaYehudim 5687, ch. 11

Student's
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Every person can find parallels to this paradox in their own lives, either in a crude or subtle form. . . .

For example, commercial activity is intended to be a medium through which we can earn a livelihood. This medium must be pure; it should not involve the slightest trace of the prohibitions of falsehood, dishonesty, and the like. . . .

Accordingly, when we ask G-d for help in earning a livelihood, we must first be certain that our business is a pure medium. Furthermore, we need to ensure that this business is a vessel fit to receive blessings, i.e., that it is conducted according to G-d's will. Nevertheless, since faith transcends the level of our conscious processes, we often don't pay sufficient attention to this.

This is what it means that faith requires "nourishing" in order for it to radiate within our consciousness. This was the spiritual role of Moses, the shepherd who nurtured faith, allowing "the righteous" to "live by his faith," so that it is felt with an internal vitality.

Apparently, we might all have a small "thief" hiding inside us, ready to jump at any opportunity. That's because our belief in G-d isn't sufficiently internalized, and it remains superficial.

In summary, not only professional thieves need a Moses. We all need someone to nourish and develop our faith.

Story: She says. I know!

When Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev returned from his first visit to his teacher, the Maggid of Mezritch, his father-in-law asked him what he'd learned there. "I learned that there's a Creator!" he replied. His father-in-law summoned the maid. "Do you know that there's a Creator?"

"Yes," she answered.

"Did you hear what she said?" the older man asked Rabbi Levi Yitzchak. "She also knows there's a Creator. You had to travel to Mezritch to find that out?"

"She says it, but I know it," Rabbi Levi Yitzchak responded.

וְהָיָה בְּדוֹגְמָא כְּזֶה יָכוֹל כָּל אֶחָד
וְאֶחָד לְמַצּוֹא בְּעַצְמוֹ אִם בְּגִסּוֹת
אוּ בְּדִקּוֹת... וַיָּכֻמוּ בְּעֵסֶק מַשָּׂא
וּמַתָּן, שְׂעֵסֶק מַשָּׂא וּמַתָּן הוּא כָּלִי
לְפָרְנֶסָה, וְצָרִיךְ לִהְיוֹת כָּלִי טְהוֹרָה,
וְהֵינּוּ כָּלִי שׁוֹם גְּדוּד אֲסוּר דְּשִׁקָּר
וּגְנֵבָה... אִם כֵּן כֹּאשֶׁר מְבַקְּשִׁים
עֶזֶר מִה' יִתְבָּרֵךְ עַל פְּרִנְסָה, הֲרִי
צָרִיכִים לִדַּע אִם הָעֵסֶק הוּא
כְּדָבָרֵי שִׂיחָה כָּלִי טְהוֹרָה,
וְצָרִיכִים לְהַשְׁתַּדֵּל שִׂיחָה כָּלִי
הַמְחֻזָּק בְּרָכָה, וְהֵינּוּ שִׂיחָה כְּפִי
הַכִּנּוּיָה, אֲמָנָה לִהְיוֹת שְׂהֲאֲמוּנָה
הִיא בְּכַחֲשִׁית מִקִּיף אֵינּוּ שָׁם לְבוֹ
כָּל כָּךְ.

וְזֶהוּ שְׂהֲאֲמוּנָה צָרִיכָה פְּרִנְסָה
שְׂהֲאֲמוּנָה תֹּאִיר בְּהַפְנִימִיּוּת. וְזֶה
הִיא עֲבוּדַת מִשָּׁה שֶׁהִיא רוֹעֶה
וּמְפָרְנֵס אֶת הָאֲמוּנָה, הֵינּוּ שִׂיחָה
צָדִיק בְּאֲמוּנָתוֹ יְחִידָה, שְׂהֲאֲמוּנָה
תְּהִיָּה בְּכַחֲשִׁית חִיוֹת פְּנִימִי, כִּי
מִשָּׁה הַמְשִׁיךְ בְּכַחֲשִׁית הַדַּעַת
בְּנִשְׁמוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל.

This is really one of the goals of Chassidism: to internalize our faith and belief in G-d. We must not only say “G-d willing”; we need to truly know it and live with it.

We asked what role Moses plays in connecting the Jewish people to G-d. We now have one answer: Moses ensures that our natural faith becomes internalized.

C. Inspiring Self-Sacrifice

>> The Rebbe

Encouraging the People in Trying Times

Student's
pg. 7

The discourse *Vekibel HaYehudim* goes on to state that the designation of Moses as “a shepherd of faith,” applies not only to Moses who led the Jews out of Egypt, but also to “the extensions of Moses in all generations,” the leaders of the Jewish people in every generation who reinforce the faith of the Jews of their generation, enabling them to internalize their faith.

For example, Mordechai served as “the extension of Moses” in his generation, as reflected in our Sages’ statement, “Mordechai in his generation, as Moses in his generation.” Even during the time of Haman, when the study of the Torah and the observance of mitzvot required self-sacrifice, Mordechai assembled groups of people to study publicly, in order to strengthen the Jews’ faith in G-d and inspire them to stand firm in the study of Torah and the observance of mitzvot

וממשיך בהמאמר, דזה שמשה הוא רעיא מהימנא, הכוונה בזה היא גם לאתפשטותא דמשה שבכל דור⁸, דראשי אלפי ישראל שבכל דור הם מחזקים את האמונה ד'ישראל (שבדורם), שהאמונה שלהם תהיה בפנימיות. וכמו מרדכי⁹, שהיה האתפשטותא דמשה שבדורו, כמאמר רז"ל¹⁰ שמרדכי בדורו כמשה בדורו, שגם בזמן גזירת המן, שלימוד התורה וקיום המצוות אז היה קשור עם מסירות נפש, הקהיל קהילות ברבים לחזק את אמונתם של ישראל בהוי' ולעמוד חזק בלימוד התורה וקיום המצוות.

Was Moses a one-time leader? If Moses “shepherded” the faith of the Jews and connected them to G-d, there must be a Moses in every generation who does the same.

Almost 1000 years after the giving of the Torah, the Jews were exiled from their land. The well-known story of Purim takes place during that period, when the Persian Empire ruled over much of the world. Haman convinces Achashverosh to kill all the Jews – men, women and children – in a single day.

The year between this decree and the day on which it was to be carried out, which ultimately resulted in the Purim miracle, was one of the most difficult years in history for the Jewish people, but also a very meaningful year. The Jews of the Persian Empire were faced with a cruel choice: Stick with the truth until the end, or give in to the powers of evil. Although Haman included all

8. תקו"ז תס"ט (ק"ב, א. ק"ד, א).

9. ראה בד"ה הנ"ל תרפ"ז ס"ג וס"ו.

10. אסת"ר פ"ז, ב.

Jews in his decree, a Jew who abandoned their religion was able to escape death. Life in exchange for principles.

Here's where Mordechai's greatness comes to the fore. He manages to rally the entire Jewish population, which included communities who were far from living a committed Jewish way of life, to join together and form a bloc of faith and connectedness to G-d, even to the point of giving their lives. This didn't encompass only the adults, but even extended to the children.

Accepting the Torah During the Ahasuerus Era

Source 4 Vekibel HaYehudim 5687

Student's
pg. 7

The verse in the Megillah "the Jews accepted that which they had begun doing" means that now, during the time of exile, they accepted what they had already begun at the giving of the Torah. As the Sages teach (Shabbat 88) on this verse, "they reaccepted now that which they already accepted at the giving of the Torah."

"וְקִבְּלוּ הַיְּהוּדִים אֶת אֲשֶׁר הֵחֵלוּ לַעֲשׂוֹת" - שְׁעָתָה בְּזִמְנֵי הַגָּלוּת הֵם קִבְּלוּ מָה שֶׁהֵחֵלוּ כָּבֵר בְּזִמְנֵי שֶׁל מִתֵּן תּוֹרָה. וְכֹאמְרָם ז"ל¹¹ (שְׁבֵת פ"ח) עַל פֶּסוּק "קִיְּמוּ וְקִבְּלוּ הַיְּהוּדִים" וכו', שֶׁקִּיְּמוּ עָתָה מָה שֶׁקִּבְּלוּ כָּבֵר בְּזִמְנֵי שֶׁל מִתֵּן תּוֹרָה.

The Rebbe Rayatz quotes a verse from the Megillah in his discourse that says that the Jews accepted what they had already begun doing. This means that when they accepted the Torah at Sinai, it was only the beginning. A thousand years later, they finally accepted it completely.

>> The Rebbe

Upside Down

Student's
pg. 8

The Rebbe Rayatz points out in his discourse that this seems to be an inconceivable statement. At the giving of the Torah, the Jews were at the highest of spiritual peaks and received the most sublime revelations of G-dliness. This was all on top of the great revelations the Jews were granted before the giving of the Torah: the revelations associated with the Exodus, and particularly those of the splitting of the Red Sea.

ומדייק בהמאמר, שלכאורה הוא דבר פלא¹², דבמתן תורה היו ישראל בתכלית העילוי, והיה אז אצלם גילוי אלקות בדרגא הכי נעלית [דנוסף לזה שגם קודם מתן תורה היו גילויים נעלים ביותר, הגילוי שהיה ביציאת מצרים ובפרט בקריעת ים סוף, הנה הגילוי שהיה בשעת מתן תורה היה גילוי נעלה עוד יותר],

11. שְׁבֵת פ"ח

12. הביאור בדיוק לשון זה - ראה ד"ה וקבל היהודים דפורים קטן ה'תשל"ח ס"א (לקמן ע' מד).

Student's
pg. 8

In the times of Ahasuerus, by contrast, the Jews were at a nadir. Every exile entails a concealment of G-dliness, following the paradigm of the Egyptian exile, of which it is written, "They did not listen to Moses because of their dwindled spirits and hard toil." Similarly, all subsequent exiles present various challenges with regard to the observance of the Torah and its mitzvot. During the time of Haman there was a particularly great concealment, and the very lives of the Jewish people were endangered.

Nevertheless, at Sinai when the Jews were at their apex they only experienced the "beginning." Specifically at the time of Haman's decree, when they hit their absolute nadir, they "accepted" what they had begun at Sinai.

The Rebbe Rayatz asks an obvious question. At Sinai, the Jews were on the highest spiritual level. G-d spoke with them directly, showed them miracles, gave them the Torah, and they happily accepted it. Why is that considered merely the "beginning?"

During Haman's decree, the Jews were at a spiritual low, and under existential threat. Why could the Torah only be finally accepted then, cementing what had begun at Sinai?

Self-Sacrifice - The Real Deal

Student's
pg. 9

The discourse continues, explaining that at the time of Haman's decree, the Jewish people's observance of Torah and mitzvot was inspired by absolute self-sacrifice. They exhibited self-sacrifice in not renouncing G-d and the Torah, because, as explained in Torah Or, they would have been spared had they forsaken their faith. For the decree was issued only against the Jews, i.e., those who held firm to their faith. Nevertheless, the thought of renouncing their faith did not occur to them.

ובימי אחשורוש היו ישראל בתכלית הירידה, דנוסף להעלם וההסתתר שבכל גלות [דכל גלות הוא בדוגמת גלות מצרים]¹³, וכמו שבגלות מצרים כתיב¹⁴ ולא שמעו אל משה מקוצר רוח ומעבודה קשה, על דרך זה הוא בכל גלות, שישנם כמה נסיונות בקיום התורה והמצוות], הנה אז (בזמן גזירת המן) היה ההעלם וההסתתר עוד יותר, ואף על פי כן, בזמן מתן תורה, כשהיו ישראל בתכלית העילוי, היתה רק ההתחלה (החלו לעשות), ובזמן גזירת המן, כשהיו בתכלית השפלות, אז דוקא קבלו מה שהחלו במתן תורה.

ומבאר בזה, דבזמן הגזירה, היה קיום התורה ומצוות שלהם במסירות נפש. דנוסף לזה שהיתה להם מסירות נפש שלא לכפור חס ושלו, כמבואר בתורה אור¹⁵, שבאם היו ממירים דתם לא היו עושים להם כלום, כי הגזירה היתה רק על היהודים, ואף על פי כן לא עלתה על דעתם מחשבת חוץ חס ושלו, היתה להם מסירות נפש גם על קיום התורה ומצוות¹⁶,

16. שזהו חידוש גדול יותר, כי בנוגע לאמונה, גם קל שבקלים מוסר נפשו (תניא פ"ח. ובכ"מ).

13. ראה ב"ר פט"ו, ה' כל המלכיות נקראו על שם מצרים על שם שהם מצירות לישראל.

14. וארא ו, ט.

15. מג"א צא, ב. צד, א. צט, ב. וראה גם במקומות שנשמנו לקמן ריש ע' נה הערה 12.

Moreover, they exhibited self-sacrifice in the observance of Torah and mitzvot, to the extent that they gathered publicly to study Torah with self-sacrifice. It was Mordechai, the Moses of the generation, who inspired this self-sacrifice.

On this basis, we can understand the verse "The Jews accepted what they had already begun." The giving of the Torah was merely a beginning, and the full acceptance came at the time of Haman's decree. For their practical expression of self-sacrifice in their observance of Torah and mitzvot elevated them - in this regard - to a level higher than that experienced at the giving of the Torah. This is why the complete acceptance, "the Jews accepted," took place at this time.

By any measure, the state of the Jews during the time of Haman's decree was not good. But they had one advantage over their ancestors: self-sacrifice. At that time, the Jews were ready to give their lives for their Jewish identity and mitzvah observance. This is the difference.

This is because the strength of a relationship is measured during a time of crisis.

Compare it to the wedding of a young couple. Standing under the chuppah they're full of goodwill and rosy dreams, but everyone knows that's only the beginning. Years will go by, and they'll experience serious challenges that they will overcome together. This will make their bond stronger and more durable, they will become even more loyal to each other, giving their marriage a much deeper meaning.

The same is true for the "marriage" between G-d and the Jewish people. At Sinai, after G-d took them out of Egypt, after showing them His might with the ten plagues and the splitting of the sea, and giving them manna from heaven, they would certainly say "Yes!" Only after years go by, and they are exiled from their land and living under an oppressive ruler who wants to annihilate them, and they're still faithful to their Judaism - then we know for certain that this marriage is a durable, lasting marriage. That's why they "accepted" what they'd begun at Sinai.

But this didn't happen on its own. That decision to give their lives wasn't automatic. That spark was fanned into flames by their leader, Mordechai.

ועד שהקהילו קהילות ברבים
ללמוד תורה במסירות נפש¹⁷.
והתעוררות המסירות נפש שלהם
היתה על ידי מרדכי היהודי, משה
שבדורו.

וזהו וקבל היהודים את אשר החלו
לעשות, דבמתן תורה היתה רק
ההתחלה ובזמן גזירת המן היתה
הקבלה, כי על ידי שהיתה להם
אז מסירות נפש בפועל על תורה
ומצוות נתעלו בענין זה למדריגה
נעלית יותר מכמו שהיו בזמן מתן
תורה, ולכן אז דוקא היתה הקבלה,
וקבל היהודים.

17. שזהו חידוש גדול עוד יותר, כמובן בפשטות.

Being Crushed Reveals the Soul's Light

Student's
pg. 10

After explaining at length how Moses and subsequent Jewish leaders nourish the faith of the Jewish people, the discourse then continues to explain the phrase, “crushed for the lamp.” During the time of exile, when we are all broken and distressed, “crushed,” we reach the “lamp,” the essential source of the light.

ולאחרי שמבאר בארוכה שמושה
ואתפשטותא דיליה שבכל דרא מחזקים
את האמונה דישראל, מבאר¹⁸ דיוק לשון
הכתוב שמן גו' כתית למאור (למאור ולא
להאיר), שבזמן הגלות, שכל אחד ואחד
הוא נשבר ונדכא, כתית, על ידי זה מגיעים
למאור (העצם) שממנו נמצא האור.

We can now understand why the Torah says “crushed for the lamp.” Crushing the olives represents the outward pressure exerted on a Jew. The olive doesn't just give its liquid. When squeezed and crushed, the rich liquid is revealed. Similarly, the Jewish soul reveals its best self in situations of pressure. When the soul is crushed, its source is revealed. The “lamp” is the inner layer of the Jewish soul. Only with the help of these forces can a Jew give their life for G-d.

The verse could have been worded simply: “Bring olive oil to light the menorah.” But the Torah chose to write “crushed for the lamp” to allude that through steadfast loyalty to Torah and mitzvot, while being “crushed,” under extreme conditions and danger, we reveal the “lamp” - we create a special connection with G-d, a connection rooted in the essence of our soul.

*

The Rebbe succinctly summarizes his predecessor's words, which took up many pages, where he elaborated on and praised the sacrifice of the Jews during Achashverosh's time and exhorted the Jews of his time in Russia to learn from them.

The Rebbe Rayatz explained the great importance of Jewish education for children, and described how, throughout the generations, when our enemies wanted to destroy us they always began by shutting down Jewish schools, because they knew that “without kids there can be no goats.” He encouraged the audience to give their lives for the Jewish education of their children. This was the key to everything, he explained. If we give our kids a Jewish education they won't be able to defeat us. Later, he encouraged the youth to establish underground Torah classes and rebuild the Jewish community and Torah life in the country.

When the Rebbe Rayatz said this discourse, he was actually practicing what he preached. He was the leader of the generation and aroused the souls of his listeners and convinced them to sacrifice their lives. Not figuratively, but literally.

18. בד"ה הנ"ל תרפ"ז סט"ו.

Story: Until the last drop of blood

In 1922, the Previous Rebbe gathered with nine of his Chassidim, creating a minyan, and formed a pact with them to preserve Judaism in the USSR with complete dedication, until the last drop of blood.

This is how he described it himself, in 1932:

“I chose nine young men, graduates of Tomchei Temimim, people of strong intellect and heart, hands and feet. I gathered them in Moscow for a meeting and we entered a pact, that come what may, we will be ready to go on until our last drop of blood.

“The authorities knew we were meeting and wanted to arrest us, but we met a day early.

“These young men didn’t do it for a paycheck; there was no money or bread. We went on our way with self-sacrifice, each in their own way.”

Ten years later, when he was already on American soil, the Previous Rebbe repeated the story again:

“In 1922, nine students gathered in Moscow and I was the tenth. We all vowed to give our lives for Torah until the last drop of blood. We divided the work across the country between us. This had a great effect on the country, and through this hundreds of Jewish schools were established, and unlike here in America, where Jewish schools are only to prepare a child for their Bar Mitzvah or teach them to say kaddish, these schools were to truly learn Torah.”

*

We’ve looked at two kinds of leadership of the leader of the generation.

The first is the leadership exemplified by Moses and his successors, whose role was to “shepherd” the faith of the Jews, to help them take it from a superficial belief and internalize it, through learning the inner parts of the Torah.

The second is the kind of leadership that Mordechai showed in his generation, and the same leadership that the Previous Rebbe showed in his generation and other leaders in similar times. They encouraged the Jewish people to give their lives to preserve Judaism and Torah study.

D. An Alternative Crush

At the beginning of the 1950s, the Rebbe took upon himself the leadership of Chabad Chassidim, whose center had moved to the United States. In this free land there were no longer decrees against religion, and Judaism was not persecuted. Jews were not thrown into prison for the "sin" of studying Torah, and synagogues were not locked and barred.

On the contrary, American Jews experienced material prosperity unlike anything seen in many years, which over time led to a spiritual flourishing. Synagogues, yeshivas, Jewish Schools, and so on sprung up everywhere. Anyone interested in learning will find such an abundance of Torah classes that they won't know which one to choose. Apparently, there is no longer a need for self-sacrifice. The decree of "being crushed" against Judaism no longer exists.

In the following passage, the Rebbe gives a new meaning to the term "kasis," crushed.

>> The Rebbe

Student's
pg. 11

Even when the Jews are living in a state of material and spiritual prosperity, and their observance of Torah and mitzvot is in the most complete and joyous form, they can still feel "crushed."

The very fact that the Divine presence isn't openly revealed while we are in exile causes a feeling of "crushed." The very identity of every Jew is Divine revelation, so when the Divine light is in exile, we are broken and shaken, "crushed." This is what the Sages taught, "For whoever did not merit to have the Holy Temple built in their time, it is considered it as if it was destroyed in their time."

וענין הכתישה שבזמן הגלות הוא גם כאשר ישראל נמצאים במצב של הרחבה והרווחה, ואפילו ברוחניות, שקיום התורה ומצוות שלהם הוא בתכלית השלימות וההידור ומתוך שמחה וטוב לבב. שזה גופא שהחיות האלקי אינו נראה בגלוי, שבזמן הגלות כתיב אותותינו לא ראינו וגו', הרי זה פועל ענין הכתישה אצל ישראל. כי מכיון שעצם מציאותו ותוקף מציאותו של כל אחד ואחד מישראל הוא גילוי אלקות, הרי בשעה שאין האור האלקי נראה בגלות, הוא לגמרי שבור ומזועזע... בחינת כתיש, וכמו שאמרו רז"ל¹⁹ כל מי שלא נבנה בית המקדש בימיו הרי זה כאילו נחרב בימיו. [מהנחה בלתי מוגהת].

19. ראה ירושלמי יומא פ"א ה"א. מדרש תהלים עה"פ קלו, ז.

People can feel in a “crushed” state for various reasons. One person is “crushed” because Stalin does not allow him to observe Torah and mitzvot, and he must endanger his life in order to do so. Another person lives in a free democratic country, and no one interferes with his service to G-d, but he is “crushed” – he is sad and frustrated that the light of the Creator is not revealed in the world. This situation tears him to pieces.

Two Levels of “Crushed”

Student's

pg. 11

The Rebbe continues to develop this point further:

There are two paths of "crushed" that lead to "the lamp":

The first path is when the Jewish people are being crushed by decrees against Torah study and mitzvah observance, as they were at the time the Rebbe Rayatz delivered this discourse. Their self-sacrifice leads them to "the lamp."

Student's

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There is, however, another dimension to the phrase “crushed for the lamp”: Even when the Jews are living in a state of prosperity, both in a material and spiritual sense, the very fact that they are in exile leads them to a state of "crushed." Through this crushed state, they reach “the lamp.”

ויש לומר בנוגע כתיית למאור - שעל ידי הענין דכתיית שבזמן הגלות מגיעים להמאור, דשני ענינים בזה. א) כשישראל נמצאים במצב של כתיית מצד זה שישנם גזירות על קיום התורה ומצוות (כמו שהיה בזמן אמירת המאמר), ועל ידי זה מגיעים להמאור על ידי המסירות נפש שלהם.

ב) ועוד ענין בכתיית למאור, שגם כשישראל נמצאים במצב של הרחבה, הרחבה בגשמיות וגם הרחבה ברוחניות, אלא שהם נמצאים בגלות... ועל ידי הכתיית דישראל מזה שנמצאים בגלות, מגיעים להמאור.

In the previous section of the discourse, we explained that the hint in the phrase “crushed for the lamp” is that through the “crushing” during exile – the observance of mitzvot even when it is difficult – one reaches the “lamp,” the source of light. Here, the Rebbe clarifies that there are two levels of “crushing”: The first is a result of decrees against the Torah and mitzvot, and the second occurs even when there are no decrees.

But why is a Jew broken if he has no troubles? It is because the Creator is not fully revealed in the world, and redemption has not yet come to the world. Those who are highly spiritually sensitive understand that this reality is a great trouble. The Divine presence is in exile! The world is limiting the possibility of G-dliness to be fully present.

An Ailing Soul

The Rebbe cites examples of people that lived with this “crushed” feeling.

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The Hebrew word for “sick,” *choleh* has the numerical value of 49. There are 50 “gates of understanding,” so *choleh* alludes to a person who has attained 49 of these gates and is lacking merely the fiftieth. They aren't content with this achievement, and feel “sick” with yearning for the revelation of G-dliness.

Moses was lacking only a little in his understanding of G-d. He achieved 49 of the 50 gates during his lifetime, but only on the day of his death was the 50th level revealed to him, as he stood on Mt. Nevo, which is an acronym for *nun bo*, “50 in him.”

ועל דרך הידוע שחולה בגימטריא מ"ט, שגם כשמשיג מ"ט שערי בינה אלא שחסר לו שער הנו"ן, הוא חולה.²⁰

וכמו משה רבינו שכתוב בו²¹ "ותחסרהו מעט מאלקים" לפי שניתנו לו רק מ"ט שערי בינה, ורק ביום פטירתו, כשעלה על הר נבו, נתגלה לו שער הנו"ן, וזהו נבו ראשי תיבות נו"ן בו... [מהנחה בלתי מוגהת].

Moses, of course, knew the entire Torah – all forty-nine gates of understanding. Only one gate was not given to him, the fiftieth gate. Seemingly, Moses could have been satisfied. He knew everything except for one gate. The teachings of Kabbalah tell us that the numerical equivalent of ח-ו-ל-ה, a sick person, is 49. A person to whom only forty-nine gates of understanding have been revealed becomes “sick” because the fiftieth gate has not been revealed to them. Even though they may appear to be in a very good state and have a wonderful spiritual sensitivity, they are broken because the revelation is incomplete.

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The third Chabad Rebbe, the Tzemach Tzedek, famously writes:

We would hear from our teacher and master (i.e., the first Chabad Rebbe, the Alter Rebbe): “I do not want anything. I do not want Your Gan Eden. I do not want Your World to Come. I want nothing else but You Yourself.”

וידוע מה שכתב הצמח צדק²² שהיה נשמע ממורינו ורבינו נשמתו עדן - אדמו"ר הזקן - איך וויל זע גאָר ניסט איך וויל ניט דאין ג"ע איך וויל ניט דאין עוה"ב כו' איך וויל מער ניט אַז דיך אַליין. {איני רוצה מאומה, איני רוצה בגן העדן שלך, איני רוצה בעולם הבא שלך כו', איני רוצה - אלא כך לבדך.

The Alter Rebbe, the first Chabad Rebbe, presented this idea in the above cited statement. Figuratively speaking he was saying: “I may be able to live at a very high spiritual level, but I am not willing to compromise and accept anything less than a direct connection with the Creator Himself at the highest level.”

20. טעמה"צ להאריז"ל פ' וירא. לקו"ת ברכה צו, ב. המשך וככה תרל"ז פס"ג (ע' צט).

21. תהלים ח, ו.

22. הובא בשרש מצות התפלה להצ"צ פ"מ (קלה, סע"א).

Within Everyone's Ability

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The fact that the Alter Rebbe made such a statement—and as inferred from the expression “we would hear,” he would say this regularly—and the fact that the Tzemach Tzedek publicized it, endows each and every Jew with the potential to have a similar desire. Our most basic desire can be for the revelation of G-d's essence.

Moreover, this desire can be so powerful that when such a revelation is absent - and especially in the time of exile when we are lacking even the revelation that existed in the time of the Holy Temple - we are “crushed.” We request three times - or more - every day, “may our eyes behold Your return to Zion in mercy,” i.e., that there be a revelation of G-dliness, a revelation of G-d's essence.

ועל ידי שהיה נשמע לשון זה
מאדמו"ר הזקן [דפירוש היה
נשמע הוא שזה היה לא רק בזמנים
מיוחדים אלא שזה היה דבר
הרגיל], ובפרט לאחר שנתפרסם
זה על ידי הצמח צדק, ניתן הכח
לכל אחד ואחד מישראל שעיקר
רצונו יהיה גילוי העצמות, ועד כדי
כך, שכשארין מאיר גילוי זה, ומכל
שכן בזמן הגלות שאין מאיר אפילו
הגילוי (גילוי אור) שהיה בזמן
הבית, הוא במצב דכתיב, ומבקש
ג' פעמים בכל יום או יותר ותחזינה
עינינו בשובך לציון ברחמים, שאז
יהיה גילוי אלקות ועד לגילוי
העצמות.

The words of the Alter Rebbe empower every Jew to aspire for greatness. Even those who enjoy a quality life, both materially and spiritually, can still feel broken because the redemption has not yet arrived.

We beseech G-d three times a day in prayer for the coming of the Moshiach. We thirst for a deeper spiritual fulfillment beyond what we currently have.

A more practical example:

There are two general types of people who choose the path of repentance. The first type consists of individuals who have experienced a serious crisis in their lives, such as the loss of a loved one or another traumatic event. They undergo deep soul-searching, seeking true meaning in life. They are exposed to the light of Judaism and return in repentance. This is one type of “crushed.” Their troubles “crushed” them, and their souls were awakened.

The second type is those who seemingly have everything. They have wealth, a loving family, and nothing bad has happened to them. Yet, they feel a spiritual thirst, a sense of illness due to the lack of inner meaning in their lives. They therefore embark on a journey to a Jewish life in search of fulfillment. This is the second type of “crushed.” Their souls feel crushed due to the dryness and sense of emptiness that fills them

This is the meaning of the phrase “crushed for the lamp.” The feeling of being “crushed” that stems from our being in exile brings us to “the lamp.” For the desire of every Jew for the revelation of G-dliness - and the fact that this desire affects the very essence of their being, causing them to feel broken and “crushed” in the time of exile when there is no revelation of G-dliness - is an expression of the essence of the soul, the soul’s “lamp.” The connection shared with G-d at this level is essential in nature, (i.e., it is not a bond between two different entities, but a single existential union).

וזהו כתיבת למאור, שעל ידי הענין דכתיבת מזה שנמצאים בגלות מגיעים להמאור, כי זה שהרצון דכל אחד מישראל הוא גילוי אלקות ועד שזה נוגע לעצם מציאותו [שלכן הוא נשבר ונדכא (כתיבת) מזה שבזמן הגלות לא יש גילוי אלקות] הוא מצד עצם הנשמה, מאור שבנשמה, שהתקשרותה באלקות היא התקשרות עצמית.

The same way we spoke about the Jew who sacrifices his life for Judaism, who discovers his true essence, and is deeply connected to G-d on a much higher level – so too, we say about a Jew who, in good times, feels broken because they haven't experienced the highest and most elevated revelation. The fact that a person, despite seemingly having everything good, is still restless and feels troubled to the point of a broken heart, indicates that they are not spiritually satisfied. It is an expression of the essence of their soul and proof of how deep their connection to G-d is.

Accordingly, we have learned a third way in which the leader of the generation connects the Jewish people to G-d.

The first way is that of Moses and subsequent leaders, whose role is to nurture the faith of the Jewish people, ensuring that it would not be merely external but internal. This is accomplished through the study of the inner dimensions of the Torah.

The second way was pioneered by Mordechai the Jew in his generation, and later exemplified by the Rebbe Rayatz, along with other leaders in generations which found themselves in similar circumstances. They encouraged the Jewish people to dedicate themselves to the preservation of Judaism and the study of the Torah.

The third way is introduced in the teachings of the Rebbe. The Rebbe teaches that the leader of the generation influences the Jewish people to feel that the fact that G-d is still not revealed in the world does not allow them any rest. The fact that the world is not yet in a state of complete redemption bothers them and causes them to feel a genuine personal distress.

“Crushed” When it is Good - The Endeavor of Shlichus

Perhaps it can be said that these principles are manifested in the endeavor of Shlichus, the Rebbe's major mission.

A regular spiritual leader cares for his community. He teaches his yeshiva students or works to improve the spiritual standing of his community. But when he is told that there is a Jew in a distant land who cannot celebrate his son's bar mitzvah, he says, "He should come here."

The Rebbe brought about a revolutionary change in thinking. The Rebbe could not sleep knowing that there was someone in Kathmandu not laying tefillin, that Jewish children in Morocco were not receiving a Jewish education, or that a Jewish girl in South America was assimilating, heaven forbid. Therefore, he taught his emissaries the shluchim to take their families and children and move to a distant city at the edge of the world, where there is no religious community, no organized communal life, no kosher food, no Judaism, and live there for the rest of their lives – just so that Jewish children in that city could celebrate their bar mitzvahs and bat mitzvahs, learn about the Shema Yisrael, and participate in a Shabbat meal.

Why? Because as long as the light of G-d and the light of Judaism do not shine openly in every corner of the world, the emissary feels "crushed". It is not enough for the person himself to be on a lofty spiritual level; his interest is that the light of Judaism illuminates the entire world. When he hears about a certain corner of the world where the light of Judaism does not yet shine, he is moved to bring them the light of Judaism.

This idea also applies to each one of us. When we go on vacation to Florida and visit an amusement park, if we take with us a pair of tefillin and give Jews the opportunity to put on tefillin, it is exactly the same point. Our vacation is not complete when we see Jews in whom the light of Judaism has not yet been revealed.

When we prepare for the Shabbat meal and encounter a Jew who seems unprepared for the Shabbat, we should invite them to join. Why? This is the Rebbe's message:. That we should all feel "crushed" when we see a lack of Divine revelation in a particular place, and do everything in our power to reveal it.

This work leads to unity among the Jewish people. For as previously explained, the Hebrew for command, *tzivui*, is related to the word *tzavta*, which means "connection," or "bond." This unity is reached through working in the mission of our leader, the Moses of our generation, the Rebbe Rayatz, to bring all of Israel closer to the observance of Torah and mitzvot, by revealing the inner light within them, until they become an eternal, unwavering flame.

Through this work, we will merit very soon the kindling of the lights in the Holy Temple, with the true and complete redemption, when there will be a revelation of divinity. Such a revelation already occurred to some degree during the giving of the Torah, and it will happen again very soon with the coming of our righteous Messiah.

מאמר דיבור המתחיל "ואתה תצוה" תשמ"א,
יצא לאור בקונטרס פורים-קטן - תשנ"ב

Story: Concern for a distant Community

Marty Jacobs, Bel Harbor, Florida.

In the year 5730 (1970), I visited Japan for business purposes, and it seems that my father-in-law mentioned this fact to the Rebbe. Before the onset of Shabbat, I received a phone call in the hotel room where I was staying. On the line was Rabbi Berel Levy, the head of the OK kashrut organization.

"This is Rabbi Berel Levy speaking," he said when I picked up the receiver, "do you know who I am?"

"Yes, I know," I replied. "We have met briefly in the past." "I am currently in the Philippines dealing with matters related to kosher certification, and I will also be here for Shabbat," Rabbi Levy opened his remarks before getting to the point.

"The Rebbe requested that I establish contact with you - he is very concerned. The Jewish community

ועל ידי עבודה זו פועל אחדות בבני ישראל, תצוה את בני ישראל מלשון צוותא וחיבור, והוא על ידי העבודה בשליחותו של משה רבינו שבדורנו, כבוד קדושת מורי וחמי אדמו"ר נשיא דורנו, לקרב את כל ישראל לקיום התורה ומצוות על ידי גילוי בחינת המאור שבהם, ועד שיהיו נר תמיד, באופן נצחי בלי שינויים.

ועל ידי עבודה זו זוכים בקרוב ממש להדלקת הנרות בבית המקדש, בגאולה האמיתית והשלימה, שאז יהיה גילוי אלקות, וכבר היה לעולמים מעין זה בשעת מתן תורה²³, וכן יהיה בקרוב ממש בביאת משיח צדקנו. [מהנחה בלתי מוגהת].

in Tokyo is planning to build a new synagogue, and among the members, there is disagreement regarding whether to include a mikveh (ritual bath) in the new building."

"The Rebbe knows that you are in Tokyo and that you will probably visit the synagogue on Shabbat. It is reasonable to assume that you will be honored with an aliyah to the Torah, and afterward, you will make a donation to the synagogue, as is customary. The Rebbe said that he wishes to be a partner with you in this charitable act. He asks that you clarify that your donation is intended for the benefit of the new mikveh and that you write a letter to the community explaining the importance of the mitzvah of ritual purity. Please mention in your letter that your donation is given in partnership with the Rebbe of Lubavitch."

Of course, I fulfilled his request. I wrote a letter in English regarding my donation to the new mikveh of the Tokyo community, and I asked them to display the letter in a prominent place for all to see. When I returned to the synagogue on Sunday or Monday, I saw that the letter was indeed hanging on the bulletin board.

After returning home, I didn't give much thought to the matter. However, several months later, I received an unexpected phone call at my office in Washington, D.C., which was located on Pennsylvania Avenue, not far from the White House. On the other end of the line was someone who explained that they were currently in the city and had just finished a meeting at the White House. They expressed their desire to meet with me and explained, "The Rebbe owes you money."

When he arrived at my office, he handed me a \$100 bill and explained, "The Rebbe said that you donated charity in Tokyo, and this is his portion of it."

This is how it came to be that once I donated charity in partnership with the Rebbe of Lubavitch. I don't know exactly what impact my letter, written at the Rebbe's request, had, but to the best of my understanding, there is now a mikveh (ritual bath) in Tokyo.

video:

Years later, Rabbi Marvin Tokayer, who had served as a rabbi in Tokyo, visited the Rebbe. The Rebbe encouraged him to maintain contact with the community in Japan and continue to take an interest in the state of Judaism there.

(From: My Story, JEM)

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