



IS IMMORTALITY ATTAINABLE

Judaism claims "Jacob did not die" and "King David is alive and well."

What does that mean?

A Talmudic adage that has become ever-relevant in the past three decades of the Chabad movement.

TEACHER'S MANUAL



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Shluchim of the Rebbe to Mumbai India

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Rabbi Yochanan says that Jacob did not die, for “just as his progeny are alive, so is he.” (Source 1) In this address, the Rebbe explains the meaning of these words.

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Material objects are not immortal; their existence is fleeting. When a Jew takes an object and uses it to connect with G-d, the eternal, he imbues the object with that eternality. For example, when one gives their wealth to charity, they have raised it up from its temporal existence and used it for an eternal mitzvah.

Story: An Everlasting Investment (Teacher’s Manual only)

Money, the material, comes and goes, but a good deed lasts forever. Supporting millions of Jews’ livelihood is a spiritual act that is eternal.

Story: The Mentsch of Malden Mills (Teacher’s Manual only)

The hero of the story understood that a material investment is fleeting, but a spiritual investment is forever.

Accordingly, life’s objective is to transform fleeting, temporal moments into eternal ones.

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For most people, the majority of their life is material and fleeting, and only a small percentage is dedicated to holy, eternal matters. The life of a holy tzadik, however, is wholly dedicated to the spiritual. Their life is spiritual, holy and eternal. The Alter Rebbe writes that the life of a tzadik is spiritual life—faith, awe and love of G-d (Source 2).

The Rebbe explains that this can help us understand how Jacob was “eulogized and buried” yet still alive.

Every person is made up of a soul and body, and outwardly dressed in clothing. When a person changes their clothes, nothing drastic has occurred—it is merely an external trapping for the body. For a tzadik, the body itself is only a “garment” of the soul, via which it accomplishes its

activities in this physical world.

When the time comes to switch this garment for a different one, nothing significant has really happened. If until now the tzadik has worked in this world using their body, now they continue to do so through another medium: their students. Thus, if their progeny are alive, they also live on.

Story: The Baal Shem Tov's Empty Pockets

Materialism was nothing to him.

D. The Bond With His "Progeny" is Greater than Before (Optional Section).....15

The fact that the tzadik is alive and continues to affect this world is very relevant to his students and followers. Their bond, both physical and spiritual, continues as before.

In a letter the Alter Rebbe wrote to the children and students of Rabbi Mendel of Vitebsk after the latter's passing, he emphasized that the core of the tzadik's life is spiritual—faith, awe, and love of G-d—and therefore their students may continue to be affected by them, even in a physical sense, because that spirituality did not die; it continues in an even greater sense (Source 3).

The Rebbe notes that the term used for progeny also means a "seed." This alludes to the expectations of the tzadik's students. One does not plant a seed expecting merely to get a seed in return; they anticipate growing a tree that will bear many fruits. When the tzadik educates students and continues to influence them even after his passing, he expects that each one will in turn influence countless others. When the students fulfill their role, and live like "progeny," they cause that "he too is alive."

Introduction

In just a few days, Chabad Chassidim and the Jewish world at large will mark thirty years since the passing of the Rebbe.

One thing that is most strongly identified with the Rebbe is the global Chabad network of the Rebbe's emissaries. Through them the Rebbe changed Jewish life around the world. Such a project is revolutionary in Jewish history; other Jewish leaders looked on in surprise, wondering how it could possibly succeed.

After the Rebbe's passing, many expected Chabad to collapse. Pundits claimed that Chabad's emissaries only went to such difficult places—and stayed put—because of the Rebbe's direct encouragement. Now, they predicted, everyone would leave.

Time proved them wrong. Not only did Chabad's emissary network continue, it grew. Thousands more emissaries joined the ranks, and until today, hundreds of young couples set out each year—young men and women who never met the Rebbe.

How has the movement survived—and thrived—thirty years after the Rebbe's passing? The answer given is always the same: by the Rebbe's efforts. The Rebbe continues to propel and direct the staggering growth.

This class will hone in on the theological basis for this, and we will explore the idea of a tzadik leading after his passing and how he continues to influence his students and the entire world.

השיעור לג' תמוז

משיחת יו"ד שבט, ה'תשכ"ג
תורת מנחם כרך ל"ו עמוד 102 ואילך
[\[לשמיעת השיחה:\]](#)



[\[0:25 והלאה\]](#)

A. Jacob Did Not Die

Source 1 Talmud, Taanit 5b

Student's
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Rabbi Yochanan said: Our forefather Jacob did not die. Rav Nachman, "was it for naught that the eulogizers eulogized him and the embalmers embalmed him and the buriers buried him?" Rabbi Yitzchak replied . . . Just as his progeny is alive, so too, he is alive.

אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: יַעֲקֹב אָבִינוּ לֹא מָת. אָמַר לוֹ רַב נַחֲמָן בְּתַמִּיּהָה: וְכִי לְחַיִּים סִפְדוּ הַסִּפְדָּנִים וְחָנְטוּ הַחֹנְטִים וְקָבְרוּ הַקּוֹבְרִים! אָמַר לוֹ: ... מָה זָרְעוּ בְּחַיִּים – אָף הוּא בְּחַיִּים.

Rashi

Student's
pg.1

Did not die: rather, he lives forever.

לֹא מָת – אֲלֵא הִי הוּא לְעוֹלָם.

>> The Rebbe

Alive Despite The Eulogy

Student's
pg.1

The sages teach that "our forefather Jacob did not die." The question is raised, "was it for naught that the eulogizers eulogized him and the embalmers embalmed him?" The answer given is that "just as his progeny is alive, so too, he is alive."

From this we learn that when Jacob's descendants are alive, recognizable as his descendants, then Jacob himself lives on, despite all the time that has passed since he was eulogized and buried.

אמרו חז"ל בגמרא¹: "יעקב אבינו לא מת", וממשיכים לבאר, משום שלכאורה קשה: "וכי לחינם ספדו הספדנים וחנטו החונטים?" - והתירוץ על זה: "מה זרעו בחיים אף הוא בחיים".

מזה מובן, שכאשר "זרעו בחיים", באופן שנקראים בשם "זרעו"², אזי "אף הוא בחיים", למרות שלפני משך זמן היו כל המאורעות של "ספדו הספדנים וחנטו החונטים".

2. ראה בשיחה ס"ט ואילך.

1. תענית ה, ב. וראה גם שיחת יו"ד שבט דאשתקד סי"ז (תר"מ חל"ג ס"ע 34). וש"נ.

It is said about a handful of tzaddikim throughout history that they did not really die. The best-known examples are Jacob and David. Jacob, the Talmud says, “did not die,” and David is “alive and well.”

In 1950, after the passing of the Sixth Rebbe, his son-in-law and successor the Rebbe invoked the teaching that “Jacob did not die” and “Just as his progeny is alive, so too, Jacob himself is alive.”

For the Rebbe this wasn't just a saying, but a way of life. Initially, the Rebbe refused to accept leadership of the movement, because his predecessor was still “alive” and continued to lead. Only after a year of the Chassidim pleading with him to lead them did he agree, explaining that he would only be the “hands and feet” of the Sixth Rebbe in this physical world. From his perspective, his father-in-law continued to lead and he merely represented him to the Chassidim.

When asked for blessings for health or livelihood and so on, the Rebbe's standard answer was “I will pray for you at my father-in-law's resting place.” The Rebbe's entire leadership was predicated on his predecessor being “alive” and continuing to lead, and himself being a messenger.

Here's but one example: On one of the visits of Israeli president Zalman Shazar to the Rebbe, the Rebbe told him that while visiting his father-in-law's grave, the Sixth Rebbe told him that everything would be okay with Shazar's trip—Shazar had asked the Rebbe for a blessing for his trip to represent Israel around the world.

(Shazar was so overcome with emotion upon receiving a message from the next world that he squeezed the Rebbe's hand.)

*

In this address, the Rebbe explains the words “Jacob did not die,” and what it means that the Rebbe continues to lead us.

B. Eternalize the Moment

>> The Rebbe

The Temporary And The Eternal

Student's
pg. 2

As we engage with the physical and material world, when we contemplate the matter we understand—and even feel—that these are matters that have no eternal continuity.

Even when we are seized by a desire for a particular material matter, when we stop to think we know that this is not something that will stay with us forever. This is a passing temporary matter, and there will come a time when we won't even enjoy it at all ourselves. It's just a matter of time: a day, month, year, decade, or longer. But we understand clearly that everything material is not eternal.

This is the basic difference between matters of holiness and everything else, from unholy to neutral. We all know that anything physical is temporary, even those worldly matters that we feel a deep desire for and are willing to toil and sacrifice everything we have for them. We know ourselves that this is something temporary.

When we contemplate this fact we realize that even while these physical matters exist they aren't truly alive in the fullest sense because their existence is temporary, even while they are alive.

והביאור בזה: כאשר יהודי מתעסק עם העולם, שיש בו דברים הקשורים עם גשמיות וגם (למטה מזה) עם חומריות - הנה כאשר מתבונן בשכלו, אזי יודע ומבין, ויכול גם להרגיש, שזהו ענין שאין לו קיום נצחי.

אפילו מי שמאיזו סיבה שתהיה רוצה וחפץ ביותר בדבר גשמי, על-אחת-כמה-וכמה בדבר חומרי, הנה כאשר חושב ומתבונן - אפילו בשעת התאוה - יודע הוא, שאין זה דבר שיישאר עמו באופן נצחי, אלא זהו ענין החולף ועובר, ויבוא זמן שגם הוא בעצמו כבר לא יתענג ממנו. זו רק שאלה של זמן: יום, חודש, שנה, עשר שנים, או יותר; אבל בוודאי בפשיטות אצלו שכל ענין גשמי אינו ענין נצחי.

וזהו כללות החילוק בין עניני טוב וקדושה לענינים ההפכיים ואפילו ענינים סתמיים - שבנוגע למציאות העולם, יודעים הכל שזהו דבר שיש לו הגבלה בזמן; אפילו ענין בעולם שהוא קשור אליו וחפץ בו ביותר - ועד שמוכן להתייגע ולמסור עבורו כל אשר לו - הנה הוא (הבעל-תאוה) בעצמו יודע שזהו ענין הקשור ומוגבל בזמן.

וכאשר מתבונן בכך שזהו דבר המוגבל בזמן - הרי אפילו בשעה שישנו עדיין במציאות, אין זה אמיתית ענין החיים, כיון שהחיות שלו - אפילו בהיותו חי - מוגבלת למשך זמן מצומצם.

Upgrading The Temporary To Eternal?

Student's Our role as Jews is to introduce eternity
pg. 3 into this world.

When we take a physical item and connect it to G-d—who is beyond time, space, and all other limitations—we introduce eternity into this world, making the time truly “alive,” and timeless.

For example, when we give from our possessions to charity because G-d commanded us to do so, we are using our money as a vehicle to reveal G-d's will in this world, through a physical item. We connect the item with G-d, who is eternal, thereby imbuing the physical item with eternity as well. (Even when we give charity in order to impress others we still fulfill the mitzvah, though not in its optimal form.)

The Alter Rebbe writes in Tanya: “This unity above is an eternal and everlasting unity.” Meaning, the connection forged between man and G-d when we learn Torah or do a mitzvah is eternal, because G-d and His will transcends time. A mitzvah is G-d's will, and like Him, is beyond time. When we do a mitzvah, we are bound eternally with G-d, in a bond that transcends time. What down here may seem like a fleeting, insignificant action, is to G-d an eternal bond, forever.

Student's This is our role as Jews, to take fleeting,
pg. 3 temporary matters—not fully “alive” even while they exist—and transform them into something eternal, true life.

Our role is to “resurrect the dead,” taking matters that are termed “dead” even while technically alive, and, make them into matters that are termed “alive” even when they are technically dead.

ובזה מתבטאת עבודתו של יהודי - לפעול בעולם ענין של נצחיות:

כאשר יהודי לוקח את עניני העולם ומקשר אותם עם הקב"ה, שהוא למעלה מזמן ומקום, שהרי הקב"ה אינו מוגבל כלל, גם לא בהגבלת הזמן - אזי נמשך בעולם ענין של נצחיות, למעלה מהזמן, ועל ידי זה נעשה דבר חי באמת, שאינו חולף.

ולדוגמא: כאשר יהודי לוקח מרכושו ונותן לצדקה, ועושה זאת (לא בשביל למצוא חן בעיני פלוני - שגם אז קיים מצווה³, אבל אין זה כפי שמצווה צריכה להיות - אלא) בגלל ציווי הקב"ה, שאז עושה מהכסף "כלי" ו"דרך" להתגלות רצונו של הקב"ה בעולם, באמצעות דבר שבעולם - אזי מקשר דבר זה עם הקב"ה, שהוא נצחי, ועל-ידי-זה נעשה גם דבר זה (שמצד עצמו הוא מדוד ומוגבל) - דבר נצחי.

ובזה מתבטאת עבודתו של יהודי - לפעול בדברים החולפים ועוברים, דברים המוגבלים בזמן, שלכן הנה גם בזמן היותם, אינם אמיתית המציאות - לעשות מהם דבר נצחי, חיים אמיתיים.

ונמצא, שעבודתו של יהודי מתבטאת ב"תחיית המתים" - לפעול על דברים שאפילו בחייהם קרויים מתים⁴, ולעשות מהם דברים שאפילו במיתתם קרויים חיים⁵.

5. לשון חז"ל - שם, סעי'א.

3. ראה גם לעיל [תורת מנחם] סעי' 45. וש"נ.

4. לשון חז"ל - ברכות יח, ריש ע"ב.

When we experience an important moment in life, we want to eternalize it with a picture. This is what we do with a mitzvah, on a much higher plane. When we take ten dollars and give it to charity, we eternalize it.

Story - An Eternal Investment (Teacher's Manual only)

In 1948, the Ford auto company decided that Israel was a good market for vehicle manufacturing—it was a new country, its military would need transportation equipment, the government would need cars, and so on. Ford saw Israel as an excellent business opportunity—and the opportunity to be the first to build an automobile manufacturing plant in Israel.

And so, Ford announced that they were going to put up a factory in Israel, and the news spread around the world. But when that news got to the Middle East, the Arab League announced that if Ford built in Israel, all member countries would boycott Ford.

Unfortunately, the threat worked, and Ford capitulated and withdrew its plans of building a plant in Israel.

That development was a personal blow to the entire young country. Everyone knew that with Ford submitting to Arab pressure, every other major international corporation would follow suit and refrain from doing business in Israel. What's more, Israel needed cars—and more important than that, Israel needed industry so that it could provide enough jobs to the thousands of Jewish Holocaust survivors who made it to the Jewish State.

In those days, there was an Israeli Jew living in Europe named Ephraim Illin. He was a big businessman who knew the ups and downs of it all. Before Israel's War of Independence, Ephraim had arranged for the purchase of a large vessel to transport illegal weapons to Israel under the noses of the British, covered by sacks of potatoes and onions.

Now, after Ford announced that it was changing its mind about building in Israel, the vice president of another auto company happened to forge a business connection with Ephraim Illin, and Mr. Illin asked him if he'd be interested in putting up a similar plant in Israel.

In order to build such a plant, an investment of \$2.5 million would be required. Thankfully, though, a deal was struck, with the auto company obligating itself to invest half a million and Ephraim Illin obligating himself to recruit the remaining \$2 million in the form of investors. Mr. Illin was confident that it would be easy—who wouldn't understand that it was a golden opportunity for an excellent investment?

However, when it got down to signing dotted lines, Ephraim Illin didn't have even one investor—which meant he would have to put down \$2 million of his own money, which today is worth \$20 million and perhaps even more.

One night, he was lying in bed unable to fall asleep as he contemplated signing off on a \$2 million investment of his own funds. He knew that he wanted to sign on the deal—but he admitted to himself that he didn't have the courage to do it.

Still lying in bed, he recalled an episode from his youth.

He had been born in Russia to a family with Chabad roots; when he was a young child, the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 broke out and his father decided that he'd send his son to the Holy Land before it was too late.

Ephraim's father had business interests in Russia and he didn't want to leave. But he knew that his son's future was not in Russia, and so he wanted to send him off. But Ephraim's mother invoked a veto: Either they all left together, or none of them went anywhere! She was not about to let her precious son sail off alone to some strange land.

Well, Mr. Illin didn't know what to do, and torn, he approached a rabbi (perhaps even the Lubavitcher Rebbe, who at the time would have been the fifth Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Sholom Dov Ber Schneersohn), and the rabbi told him to sell his business and take his whole family to the Land of Israel—and that indeed is what the Illin family ultimately did.

But now, back to the present, Mr. Illin was lying in bed, feeling perplexed and unable to decide what to do. So he decided that he'd do what his father did when his father couldn't decide what to do—he'd ask a rabbi.

It was the year 1950. The sixth Lubavitcher Rebbe (Rabbi Yosef Y. Schneersohn, 1880–1950, Rabbi Sholom Dov Ber's son) had passed away earlier that year, and our Rebbe had not yet accepted the mantle of leadership. So Ephraim Illin approached a person he greatly loved and admired, Rabbi Pinchas Althaus, who was his Chabad point man. Mr. Illin asked him to arrange an audience with the Rebbe for him and indeed, within a few days, he was notified to be at 770 Eastern Parkway in Brooklyn at 11:00 in the morning.

When he entered the Rebbe's office, he immediately realized that he was standing before a giant of the spirit.

The Rebbe spoke to him in Russian, French and Hebrew. At first, the Rebbe was interested in his personal history. The Rebbe wanted to know about his Irgun fighting days, about his involvement in acquiring weapons for Israel, and so on—the Rebbe wanted to know everything.

And then the Rebbe got to the subject about which he had come. Mr. Illin told the Rebbe about the auto factory that he wanted to build. The Rebbe said to him that while every car is made out of some 30,000 parts, it doesn't mean that you need 30,000 factories.

However, continued the Rebbe, you will need to build 3,000 factories—

meaning, the Rebbe explained, that an auto factory is much more than just one factory. It's a place that needs raw materials and pre-made items alike so that it can make its cars, and as such, a full-fledged auto plant would be the foundation for industry in Israel and would greatly strengthen the new economy.

The Rebbe then said that he saw many ups and downs in Ephraim Illin's life—and that despite them all, G-d was with him throughout. And so now, the Rebbe advised him, it would be good to sign on that dotted line and invest his money in the factory.

And then, the Rebbe added that even if the deal doesn't succeed (G-d forbid) the way he estimated that it would, he'd still find himself in Israel amongst fellow Jews and he'd always find a way to stand strong.

Sixty years later, Mr. Illin related that he remembered more how he felt at his meeting with the Rebbe than what the Rebbe actually said. Being in the Rebbe's presence gave him a sense of calm and peace—the Rebbe gave him the confidence and the strength to sign off on the business.

And indeed, he listened to the Rebbe's advice and built the factory—and in the 20 years that the factory stood, all through the 50s and 60s, it produced close to 60,000 automobiles, with 60 percent of them sold outside the country.

*

Illin was exceptionally lucky. His investment paid off far better than a regular investment. He'd invested into helping other Jews with an income, and that is eternal.

Story - The Mentsch of Malden Mills (Teacher's Manual only)

On December 11, 1995, at 8 in the evening, a huge fire broke out at the Malden Mills textile factory in Lawrence, Massachusetts, which was the largest factory in the United States at the time.

The factory's owner, Mr. Aaron Feuerstein, was celebrating his seventieth birthday that evening with family and friends. In the middle of the party, one of his managers approached him with the news, "Mr. Feuerstein, the factory is on fire." A huge boiler had burst and caused the conflagration. The factory, which was purchased by Feuerstein's grandfather in 1956, was completely burned down. This was a fire that Boston had not seen in a hundred years.

By morning, it was clear to everyone that the three thousand workers at the factory—the factory that supported the entire local economy—were unemployed.

Everyone expected that he would take the insurance money, between 300 million and 500 million dollars, and retire, or move the factory to the south of the United States or maybe even to the Far East, where labor was far cheaper. This was a trend in those days.

But Feuerstein thought differently. He called a press conference and announced that he was going to rebuild the factory in the same location, and he also announced that he would pay the workers their full salaries over the next thirty days.

When a month passed, he again called a meeting and announced that everyone would receive their salaries again. He continued doing so until the factory was rebuilt, costing him 25 million dollars.

Feurstein immediately became world-famous. He was invited by President Bill Clinton to the State of the Union address, where the President praised him in front of the entire nation. In the media, he was nicknamed, “the Mensch from Malden Mills.”

Five years later, in an interview on “60 Minutes,” Mr. Feuerstein was asked whether his decision was (morally right but) financially unwise — would it not have made more financial sense to take the three hundred million dollars and retire?

Feurstein looked at the interviewer and asked, “What would I do with it? Eat more? Buy another suit? Retire and die? That never crossed my mind.”

He had two goals; to rebuild the family business that was so dear to him and second, to help the loyal employees who needed a livelihood. In the course of the interview, he was asked if he was a religious person and if it had an effect on his decision. “Definitely,” he answered, “My father taught me that bimakom she’ein ish, in places where moral behavior is lacking, hishtadel lihyos ish, strive to be a moral person.” You be the moral compass.

In 2021, shortly before his passing at the age of 95, he was interviewed again about the factory. He was asked if he thought that, in retrospect, had he not wasted the twenty-five million dollars, he would have been able to save the factory — which ultimately went bankrupt.

“I don’t regret it even for a moment,” he replied. “My father taught me that one could make a kiddush Hashem or chilul Hashem.” He wanted to make a kiddush Hashem. In the factory’s downfall, he blamed himself for not making the correct business decisions.

*

Feuerstein, too, understood that a material investment can produce another suit or another meal, but that is all fleeting. He knew that a spiritual investment - helping others - is forever. Indeed, he is spoken of until today.

The goal for us regular people is to transform more moments to eternal moments; to take more money of fluctuating value and transform them to money for charity of everlasting value.

C. Eternal Life

If for a regular person, most of their life is material, and only a small percentage is holy and spiritual, the tzadik's life is wholly sacred and spiritual - and eternal.

If our mitzvot are eternal, a small part of our life is eternal, but the tzadik's entire life is devoted to holiness.

The Tzaddik's Life Is Spiritual

Source 2 Igeret Hakodesh, ch. 27

Student's As is known, the life of the
pg. 4 tzadik is not the life of flesh, but spiritual life—faith, reverence and love of G-d ...

כְּנוֹדָע, שְׁחַיִי הַצַּדִּיק אֵינָם
חַיִּים בְּשָׂרִים כִּי אִם חַיִּים
רוּחַנִיִּים, שֶׁהֵם אֲמוּנָה וְיִרְאַה
וְאַהֲבָה.

The tzadik's life is obviously different than ours. What occupies him, what fills his soul, is different. Most people are first and foremost concerned with their material life, their pleasures, their fears, etc—primarily their survival and everything related to that. Yes, we all think about G-d occasionally, but life goes on and we think about G-d during the “breaks.” There are, however, those who are primarily occupied with G-d all the time, and they are the tzadikim. Their life is their relationship with G-d - faith, reverence and love. He lives with faith because faith isn't a vague concept but his life itself. His fears are the fear of G-d. Most people are driven by their fears, and the tzadik's fear is of G-d. We may be consumed completely by a burning love - the tzadik's love is the love of G-d, and that consumes his life.

>> The Rebbe

The Body As A Garment

Student's We can now understand how Jacob can still
pg. 4 be alive despite his eulogy and burial.

We can understand this through an analogy from our physical world.

ועל-פי-זה מובן איך יתכן ש"ספרו
הספדנים וחנטו החונטים", ואף-על-פי-
כן "הוא בחיים".

ויובן על פי משל גשמי שמצינו בענין זה:

Every person has a body and soul, and we also use clothes to cover the external side of our bodies. When we change from one piece of clothing to a nicer piece this doesn't diminish us—on the contrary, it raises us to a higher level.

The above point about clothing is true for all people. For some people, however, the body itself is also considered merely a garment.

Generally speaking, our bodies are very important to us. This can even reach the point that many people sometimes ignore the welfare of their soul in favor of that of their body (this is possible because their connection with G-d isn't always on the same level). Our bodies are much more important to us than our clothing—after all, no one would prioritize a coat over their soul's welfare... But for the sake of physical desires it is possible for people to do something detrimental to their soul.

However, there are some Jews who firmly believe that their body is secondary to their soul, and it merely serves as a garment for the soul in order to enable the soul to fulfill its purpose in the world. As explained in Tanya, a body without a soul is incapable of laying tefillin, giving charity, and observing all of the mitzvot, and was therefore exempt from observing mitzvot before its enclotement in the body. These people never rank their body on the same level as their soul, and certainly never place their body above their soul. The body is always secondary to them, and it is disregarded in favor of the soul.

אצל האדם יש נשמה וגוף, ויש לבושים שהאדם לובש על חיצוניות הגוף. והנה, כאשר האדם מחליף לבוש זה בלבוש אחר - נאה יותר, הנה לא זו בלבד שעכשיו אין אצלו ענין של חסרון, אלא אדרבה, שנתעלה לדרגא נעלית יותר.

וכל זה - אצל כל אחד ואחד, בנוגע ללבושים; אבל ישנם כאלו שאצלם גם הגוף הוא כמו "לבוש" אצל אחרים:

בכלל, תופס הגוף אצל האדם מקום מכובד ביותר, ועד כדי כך, שקורה לפעמים (מצד זה שהתקשרותו עם הקב"ה אינה בשווה בכל הזמנים) שהוא מוותר על טובת הנשמה בשביל טובת הגוף, שהוא חשוב אצלו שלא בערך יותר מאשר לבוש; הוא בוודאי לא יוותר על טובת הנשמה בשביל טובת המעייל... אבל בשביל הגוף - מילוי תאוות הגוף - יכול לקרות אצלו שיעשה רעה לנשמה.

אבל יש יהודים כאלו שהיה אצלם בהחלט גמור שהגוף אינו אלא דבר טפל לגבי הנשמה, ונתלבשה בגוף רק כדי שתוכל למלא שליחותה בעולם (כמבואר בתניא) שנשמה ללא גוף אינה יכולה להניח תפילין, ליתן צדקה ולקיים את כל המצוות, ולכן לא היתה חייבת בכך קודם התלבשותה בגוף), אך מעולם לא החליפו - להעמיד את הגוף בשווה לנשמה, ועל-אחת-כמה - וכמה למעלה מהנשמה, ולכן תמיד היה אצלם הגוף טפל ובטל אל הנשמה.

Student's
pg. 5

When such people complete their life mission with their bodies, although they are eulogized and buried, their soul actually reaches a higher level than it had prior to its investment in the body. The body was secondary, like an article of clothing, even while the soul was in it. For such a person, the death of the body is like changing the soul's garment from a simple piece of clothing to a more important one, like exchanging silver utensils for gold.

ולכן, כאשר מסיימים את כל השליחות עם הגוף, אזי יכול להיות מעמד ומצב ש"ספדו הספדנים וחנטו החונטים"; אבל כאשר ניתוסף בהנשמה עילוי גדול יותר לגבי מעמדה ומצבה בהיותה מלובשת בגוף, ואילו הגוף, גם כשהיתה מלובשת בו הנשמה, הוא אצלם טפל בלבד, כמו "לבוש" - הרי זה כמו שמחליפים בגד שאינו חשוב כל כך בבגד חשוב יותר, וכמו החלפת כלי כסף בכלי זהב.

The Soul Is Now Expressed In Its Progeny

Student's
pg. 6

This explains how we can say that our forefather Jacob didn't die, despite the fact that he was eulogized and buried.

What was important to Jacob wasn't food, drink, and the like. The forefathers were like "chariots" to G-d's will, and their entire lives were devoted to fulfilling G-d's will. This is all the more true about Jacob, who was the "choice of the patriarchs."

Jacob needed a body in order to fulfill G-d's mission for him in this world. Through his body he was able to deal with Laban—while remaining true to his identity—Esau, and raise a family who all followed in his path.

The body was then taken away and buried, denying the soul the opportunity to fulfill its mission through it.

וזהו ש"יעקב אבינו לא מת", כי למרות ש"ספדו הספדנים וחנטו החונטים", מכל מקום, "מה זרעו בחיים אף הוא בחיים":

התכלית אצל יעקב אבינו היא - לא אכילה ושתייה וכיוצא בזה, ענינים גשמיים הקשורים עם הגוף, אלא - כדברי המדרש⁷ "האבות הן המרכבה"; כל חיי האבות - ועל-אחת-כמה-וכמה יעקב, בחיר שבאבות⁸ - היו באופן שעל ידם יתמלא רצונו של הקב"ה,

וכדי למלא את שליחותו של הקב"ה בעולם הוצרך יעקב לגוף, שעל ידו התעסק תחילה עם לבן ("עם לבן גרתי", "ותרי"ג מצוות שמרתי"⁹) ואחר כך עם עשו - והעמיד "מטתו שלימה",

ואחר כך ניטל הגוף, "חנטו החונטים", ואז לא היתה יותר אפשרות לנשמה למלא שליחותה על ידי הגוף.

9. וישלח לב, ה ובפרש"י.

7. ב"ר פמ"ז, ו. פפ"ב, ו.
8. ראה שם רפע"ו. זח"א קיט, ב. קלג, א. קמוז, ב. קעא, ב.
שעה"פ תולדות כז, כה.

Student's This is where "his progeny is alive" enters the picture.
pg. 6

The fact that Jacob successfully raised "progeny," children and grandchildren who were raised and educated to "keep G-d's way, to perform righteousness and justice" gave Jacob's soul an even greater boost than the work he would have been able to carry out through his body.

The True Life Of The Righteous

Student's Jacob's body was indeed buried, but Jacob's life was never expressed in bodily matters, but with soul-related activity. As far as Jacob's soul is concerned, the fact that his progeny is alive—the culmination of all of the efforts of Jacob and the previous patriarchs—infuses his soul with vitality, and the soul was the central element of Jacob's life.
pg. 7

In the words of the Alter Rebbe in Igeret Hakodesh regarding the passing of the righteous, "the life of the righteous person is not their physical life, but their spiritual life; their faith in G-d and love and awe for Him."

This is the meaning of the Talmud's answer. Jacob's body was indeed buried, but his "life" was expressed in the fact that he established the Jewish people, a nation that isn't discouraged by the concealment of the world. The Jewish people continue living a true life even in this world of concealment, through their bond with the Living G-d. The life of this progeny means that Jacob himself lives on.

אבל לאחרי כן ניתוסף בנשמה הענין של "זרעו בחיים":

העובדה שהיתה "מטתו שלימה", שהעמיד את "זרעו", בנים ובני-בנים, שנתגדלו ונתחנכו באופן ש"שמרו דרך הוי' לעשות צדקה ומשפט"¹⁰ - פעלה בנשמת יעקב עילוי גדול יותר מאשר העבודה שהי' יכול לעשות על ידי הגוף.

הן אמת שבנוגע לגוף "חנטו החונטים וכו'", אבל, חיי יעקב לא התבטאו בענינים הקשורים עם הגוף, אלא בענינים הקשורים עם הנשמה; ובנוגע לנשמת יעקב, הנה הענין של "זרעו בחיים" - שזהו תכלית העילוי של כל ענין עבודת יעקב והאבות בכלל - פעל חיות בנשמת יעקב, שזהו עיקרו של יעקב.

וכדברי רבינו הזקן באגרת הקודש סימן ז"ך - אגרת ההסתלקות - ש"חיי הצדיק אינם חיים בשריים, כי אם חיים רוחניים, שהם אמונה ויראה ואהבה".

וזהו מענה הגמרא: הן אמת ש"חנטו החונטים" את גופו של יעקב, אבל, חיי יעקב התבטאו בכך שהעמיד את עם ישראל, "עם" שלא יתפעל מההעלם וההסתר של העולם, ואדרבה, בעולם גופא ימשיך חיים אמיתיים, על ידי ההתקשרות עם הוי' אלקיכם, אלקים חיים, ואז, הנה "זרעו בחיים" פועל שגם יעקב חי ("אף הוא בחיים").

10. וירא יח, יט.

Student's
pg. 7

The same is true about the Jewish leaders of every generation. They also lived their lives in this fashion, not investing their passion in physical matter per se, rather treating their body as a vehicle for bringing G-dliness into the world, uplifting it and connecting it to G-d. Therefore, when any Jewish leader reaches the point at which Torah requires eulogy and burial we see that they in fact live on, because their progeny is alive.

Student's
pg. 8

ומזה מובן גם בנוגע לגדולי ונשיאי ישראל בכל דור ודור, שגם אצלם היתה הנהגה כזו, שהחיות והלהט שלהם לא היו בעניינים הקשורים עם הגוף מצד ענינו של הגוף, אלא רק באופן שהגוף הוא ממוצע שעל ידו יכולים להמשיך אלקות בעולם, ולהעלות את העולם ולקשרו באלקות, ולכן, גם כאשר ישנו מצב שהתורה אומרת שצריך להיות "ספדו הספדנים וחנטו החונטים", הנה לאחרי כן רואים ש"יעקב אבינו לא מת", כיון ש"זרעו בחיים".

משיחת שבת פרשת בחוקותי, ה'תש"ל, בלתי מוגה
תורת מנחם כרך ס', עמוד 280 ואילך

Story - Emptying his pockets

Student's
pg. 8

Once, someone deliberating becoming a Chassidic Rebbe came for an audience with the Rebbe. During their discussion, the Rebbe said to him: "Do you know what it means to be a Rebbe? The Baal Shem Tov was the first Rebbe, and his custom was that he wouldn't go to sleep before giving every coin he had to charity."

There are many lessons to be learned from this story, and relevant to us is that materialism is of no value to the tzadik. His entire life is spiritual; to help others.

D. The Bond With His "Progeny" is Greater than Before (Optional Section)

The fact that the tzadik's life is soul, not body; spirituality and not physicality, tells us something more than about the tzadik himself. It contains a message to his followers too: their connection to the tzadik, physically and spiritually, continues after his passing.

When Rabbi Mendel of Vitebsk passed away, his younger colleague, the Alter Rebbe, wrote a letter to the students of the former, comforting them for their great loss. The letter is printed in chapter 27 of the Igeret Hakodesh section of the Tanya. The Rebbe quoted this letter in connection with the passing of the Sixth Rebbe.

In this letter, the Alter Rebbe says that the tzadik's life is spiritual: faith, reverence and love of G-d, and that continues. Accordingly, he explains, the students can still receive the inspiration of their teacher - even physically - because the spirit lives on in even greater measure than before.

Let us learn some selections of this letter:

Source 3 Igeret Hakodesh, ch. 27

Student's
pg. 9

The holy Zohar writes that "a departed tzadik is more present in all realms than during his lifetime." This needs explanation: of course this would be the case in the upper realms, but how could the tzaddik be more present in the lower realms?

We can explain this according to a teaching I received on the sages' words "He left life for all the living."

As is known, the life of a tzadik is not corporal life, but spiritual life; faith, reverence and love of G-d ...

כתוב בזהר הקדוש, שצדיק
שנפטר נוכח בכל העולמות
יותר מאשר בחייו. וצריך
להבין: מובן הדבר, שבעולמות
העליונים הוא נוכח אחרי
הסתלקותו במדה מרבה יותר
באשר נשמתו עולה למעלה,
אבל בעולם הזה כיצד הוא
נוכח שם במדה מרבה יותר?

ויש לומר, על דרך מה שקבלתי
על מאמר חכמינו זכרונם
לברכה על צדיק שהסתלק
"שהשאר חיים לכל חי".

כנודע, שחיי הצדיק אינם
חיים בשרים כי אם חיים
רוחניים, שהם אמונה ויראה
ואהבה...

Student's During the tzadik's life on
pg. 9 earth, these three qualities were expressed with a physical medium; the soul bound to the body. His students only received but a ray of these qualities which shone forth beyond the confines of the body through his holy speech and thought.

After his passing, however ... all those close to him can receive from his influence directly from his spirit in the Garden of Eden, now that it is not constrained by the physical limitations of space and time.

Student's Thus, it is very easy for
pg. 10 the students to receive this inspiration from the tzaddik's essential spirit—the faith, reverence and love with which he served G-d ...

The Zohar clearly states that “tzadikim protect the world after their departure more than during their lifetime. If not for the prayers of the tzadik, the world would not exist for even a moment.”

והנה, בהיות הצדיק חי על פני האדמה, היו שלשה מדות אלו בתוך פלי ולבוש שלהם בבחינת מקום גשמי, שהיא בבחינת נפש הקשורה בגופו, וכל תלמידיו אינם מקבלים רק הארת מדות אלו וזיון, המאיר חוץ לכלי זה על-ידי דבוריו ומחשבותיו הקדושים.

אבל לאחר פטירתו, יכול כל הקרוב אליו לקבל חלק מבחינת רוחו שנגן עֲדֵן, הואיל ואינה בתוך פלי ולא בבחינת מקום גשמי,

הלָּקָה, נקל מאד לתלמידיו, לקבל חלקם מבחינת רוח רבם העצמיית, שהם אמונתו ויראתו ואהבתו אשר עבד בהם את ה'...

ובענינים והשפעות גשמיים שהצדיק ממשיך, נאמר במפרש בזהר הקדוש, ש"הצדיקים מגנים על העולם, ואחרי הסתלקותם – במדה מרבה יותר מאשר בבחינתם בעולם זה, ולולא תפלתם של הצדיקים בעולם ההוא, לא הִיָּה העולם הזה מתקיים אִפְּלוּ רגע אחד".

>> The Rebbe

The Meaning of “Progeny”

Student's We can further explain the precise meaning
pg. 10 of “his progeny is alive.”

It must be noted that every detail in Torah is precise. We must therefore explain why specifically the term “progeny” is used, rather than children, students, or the like.

ויש להוסיף בדיוק הלשון “זרעו בחיים”:

ובהקדמה - שהענינים¹¹ שבתורה מדויקים הם בכל פרטיהם. ולכאורה, מהו לשון “זרעו” דווקא, ולא בניו, יוצאי חלציו, תלמידיו וכיוצא בזה?

11. מכאן עד סיום השיחה – הוגה ע"י כ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א, ונדפס בהוספות ללקו"ש ח"ד ע' 1268 ואילך. המוסגר בחצאי ריבוע – מהנחה בלתי מוגה.

Student's
pg. 10 In context, the text is not referring simply to descendants, but specifically to those that follow the path that Jacob showed. It would therefore seem more appropriate to call them "students" or a similar term indicating that these are people that follow Jacob's path.

The answer is that the Hebrew word for progeny, *zar'o*, literally means "seed." The use of this terms alludes to Jacobs progeny functioning like "seeds."

Student's
pg. 11 As the sages teach, a person plants a certain quantity of seeds in order to reap many times more in produce.

No one plants a seed in order to grow another seed—it wouldn't be worth the effort. When we plant a seed it is in order to grow a tree that will bear fruits containing hundreds and thousands of seeds.

Fostering Future Growth

Student's
pg. 11 The same is true in our case. The students Jacob raised were like "seeds." He planted each one of them with the intention that each should sprout many more hundreds and thousands following in his path.

This is also true about Jewish leaders in every generation, down to the leader of our generation, whose *yahrzeit* we are marking. The Hebrew word for leader, *nasi*, serves as an acronym for the Hebrew words "a spark of our forefather Jacob." When they invested in their students and followers they intended for each of them not to suffice with their

ובפרט שהכוונה כאן היא אינה לבנים סתם, אלא לאלו שהולכים בדרכיו ואורחותיו אשר הורנו, ואם כן, צריכים לקרותם בשם "תלמידיו", "מחונכיו" וכיוצא בזה - שם שמורה על כך שהם הולכים בדרכיו של יעקב.

והענין: "זרעו" - הוא גם מלשון זריעה. ולכן נקטו לשון זרעו דווקא, כדי לרמז שזרעו של יעקב הם באופן של זריעה.

ענין הזריעה הוא - כמאמר רז"ל¹² "אדם זורע קב¹³ כדי להכניס כמה כורין".

אדם אינו זורע גרעין בשביל שיצמח גרעין אחד - בשביל זה אינו כדאי כל הטירחא; כאשר זורעים גרעין אחד, הרי זה כדי שיצמח אילן עושה פירות, שבהם יהיו מאות ואלפי גרעינים.

ועל-דרך-זה בנדון דידן: כאשר יעקב מעמיד תלמידים, הרי זה בדרך כזו שהם "זרעו" - הוא "זורע" אותם, כך, שמכל אחד מהם יצמחו "כמה כורין", מאות ואלפים שילכו בדרכיו של יעקב.

והיינו שהזריעה שזרע יעקב אבינו - וכן נשיאי ישראל שבכל דור ודור (כמו שכתוב בספר קהלת יעקב (לבעל מחבר הספר מלא הרועים) מע' רבי ש"נשיא" הוא ר"ת ניצוצו של יעקב אבינו), עד לנשיא דורנו בעל ההילולא - בתלמידיו, חסידי ומקושריו, כוונתו

12 פסחים פז, ב.

13 כן הוא בתו"ח ר"פ בשלה. ובגמרא - סאה. ובתו"א ר"פ בשלה - כור.

own Torah and mitzvot but to produce many more people who study Torah—both the revealed and inner dimensions—and observe mitzvot with the spirit of love for their fellow Jews.

The Rebbe whose *yahrzeit* we are marking devoted himself completely to the education of Jewish children. From students on the highest level who are being taught the deep secrets of Kabbalah and Chasidut, all the way to those children who still need to be taught the Hebrew alphabet. What all of these students had in common for him was that he wanted them to be “seeds,” that every person he educated or influenced should go on to influence many others. This is how we can bring the Rebbe’s desire and Divine service to complete fruition, when we who follow in his path act as “seeds.”

When the Rebbe’s students fill their role as “seeds” they will be truly alive, and he too will be alive.

Eventually we will see this life in the revealed and physical sense, when the dead will be resurrected with the coming of Mashiach, may it be speedily in our days.

בהזריעה היתה, שכל אחד מהם לא יסתפק בעבודתו בתורה ומצוות לעצמו, כי אם, יכניס “כמה כורין”, יעמיד מחנות מחנות של צבאות הוי”, העוסקים בתורת הנגלה ובפנימיות התורה ובקיום המצוות חדורים באהבת ישראל.

[בעל ההילולא, כבוד קדושת מורי וחמי אדמו”ר נשיא דורנו, עסק מתוך מסירה עצמית בחינוך על טהרת הקודש, החל מאלו שנמצאים למעלה מעלה, שעמהם צריכים ללמוד ענינים עמוקים שבתורה, סתרי תורה, קבלה וחסידות, ועד לאלו שלא ידעו אפילו אל”ף-בי”ת, והוצרכו להתחיל ללמוד עמהם מאל”ף-בי”ת¹⁴ והצד השווה בנוגע לכולם הוא - הענין של “זרעו”: כוונתו לא היתה לחנך יהודי שידע אל”ף-בי”ת לעצמו, ועד שיגיע לדרגות נעלות, שיוכל בעצמו ללמוד ולהבין סתרי תורה, אלא כוונתו היתה לפעול ענין של זריעה - שכל מחונך ומקבל ומושפע שלו יצא אחר כך לעולם ויכניס “כמה כורין”. ובאופן כזה נשלם הרצון ותכלית העבודה של בעל ההילולא - כאשר ההולכים בדרכיו הם באופן של זריעה].

וכאשר תלמידיו ימלאו תפקידם זה, שיהיו “זרעו”, על ידי זה יהיו הם בחיים, ועל ידי זה - “אף הוא בחיים”.

ועד שיבוא הזמן שיראו זאת בגלוי בעיני בשר למטה מעשרה טפחים - כאשר נזכה לתחיית המתים, בביאת משיח צדקנו, בקרוב ממש.

משיחת יו”ד שבט, ה’תשכ”ג
תורת מנחם כרך לו עמוד 102 ואילך

Key Points:

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- The Talmud establishes that “Jacob did not die,” explaining that because “his progeny is alive” he too “is alive” - despite being eulogized and buried.
- Physicality and materialism are fleeting in this world. Even the indulgence in the strongest of desires is passing. With holiness, however, the reverse is true: when a Jew takes a physical object and connects it with G-d, it now becomes eternal, because G-d is eternal. This is, in essence, our job in this world.
- Most of the life of a regular person is spent on physical, fleeting pursuits, and a small percentage is devoted to holy matters. The tzadik's life is different: it is dedicated primarily to holiness.
- The body of the tzadik is insignificant in relation to his soul; it is a garment for the soul and it used to affect this world. Thus, when the tzadik dies, it is likened to a person changing their clothes. Earlier the tzadik's garment was a body; now he continues to live as before - and even greater.
- The ultimate objective of the tzadik's life is to influence this world. As long as his progeny continue his legacy and his mission in this world, his soul is still alive, because it is continuing its mission, now through his students. The garment that was the body is now the students.
- The word used for progeny in this teaching is seed. Just as a seed is expected to grow a tree that will bear thousands of seeds, the tzadik too raises many students who in turn will raise many more students who will follow the ways of the Torah and mitzvot.