

The Voice of Moshiach

Torah portion: Vayishlach, 17th of Kislev 5763 (11/22/02)

Chassidic Moonwalk

The 19th day of the Hebrew month Kislev, marks the release of Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi (founder of Chabad Chassidism) from Russian prison, 204 years ago, after being jailed for disseminating Torah - particularly, the teachings of Chassidism. Upon his release, the Alter Rebbe (as Reb Schneur Zalman is commonly called) continued to disseminate these teachings, but to a far greater extent, initiating an entirely new era of Chassidic revelation. Since that auspicious day, 19-20 Kislev, - Yud-Tes Kislev in Hebrew - has been celebrated by many Jews throughout the world, as a great and joyous holiday. Indeed, the Chabad Rebbes call it the "Holiday of Holidays," and "The New Year of Chassidic Teachings."

As is well known, the 3 major holidays (Pesach, Sukkot and Shavuot) begin on, or immediately before, the 15th day of their respective months - i.e., when the moon is at its fullest, symbolizing the wholesomeness of the Jewish people. How is it, then, that the grand Holiday of Yud-Tes Kislev falls out during the second half of the month, when the moon wanes and its light decreases?

In order to answer this question, we must take a look at the deeper significance of the moon's cycle, as explained in Chassidic thought:

The reason why the moon's light decreases during the 2nd half of every month, is because, during that time, the moon draws closer to the sun. In order for the moon to be able to absorb the very essence of the sun, the moon's light must move aside, so to speak, to make room for the sun's essence. Thus, while the 2nd half of the month sees the waning of the moon's light, it is for the sake of absorbing something more sublime - the sun's essence. (This is the mystical reason behind why we continue to count the days in ascending order - 16, 17, 18 - rather than in descending order - 14b, 13b, etc.)

Now we can understand why the holiday of Yud-Tes Kislev falls out on the 2nd half of the month, when the light of the moon wanes: The teachings of Chassidism are meant to prepare the world for the G-dly revelations of the Messianic era, when the Jewish people (symbolized by the moon) will experience oneness with the essence of G-d (symbolized by the sun). Therefore, the New Year of Chassidic teachings falls out during the half of the month that represents the absorbing of essence.

Rectified Chaos

The union of recipient and benefactor is also the theme of this week's Torah portion, Vayeshev:

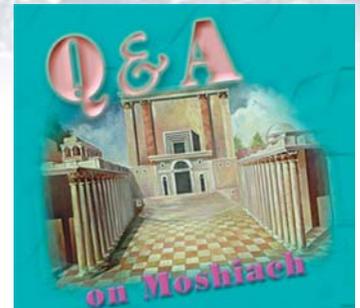
Chassidic teachings explain that Eisav (Esau) embodies a very sublime and immensely powerful spiritual energy, referred to in Kabbalah as "The Lights of Chaos," or "The Encompassing Light." But in Eisav, this energy is abused. It is therefore the mission of Yaakov (Jacob, i.e., the Jewish people in exile), to extract the Encompassing Light from Eisav (i.e., the world at large) and absorb it into himself, thereby transferring it to the realm of holiness. In this sense, Yaakov is a recipient, absorbing the sublime Encompassing Light from Eisav. But when the process is completed, at the end of the exile, Yaakov becomes the benefactor, radiating the Encompassing Light to the entire world in a rectified manner, as G-d intended it to be. This is the mystical meaning behind the verse, "The voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau."

The Rebbe tells us that we have completed the task. We have entirely extricated the Lights of Chaos from Eisav, and as a result, the world is now ready for the Messianic Redemption. It is up to us - the Jewish people - to recognize the incredible spiritual energy that we now possess, and by shining it upon the world (through conducting our lives in a holy fashion), to usher in the utopian, Messianic Era.

(From the Rebbe's talk on Parshas Vayishlach 5752)



The Rebbe
King Moshiach שליט"א



Some Jews view intense involvement with Moshiach and redemption as excessive. After all, they reason, why focus on matters seemingly irrelevant to everyday life?

Unfortunately, they fail to see that Moshiach and redemption are not trivial, secondary issues. They are the purpose of our lives, of our every action, and of all creation. Everything that happens in the world and every mitzvah we observe is moving us toward Moshiach and redemption. Any Jew who is committed to Torah and mitzvahs but unconcerned with Moshiach is like an expert pilot who is oblivious to his destination.

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Long Live Our Master Teacher and Rebbe King Moshiach Forever and Ever!



Moshiach and Science

A New World Part 7

by Rabbi Shimon Silman, Director of the Rabbi Yisroel Aryeh Leib Research Institute on Moshiach and the Sciences, Professor of Mathematics, Touro College.



The Age of the Universe

In Dr. Naftali Berg's lecture on Creation (last week's article), the question of the age of the universe came up. The Torah tells us that the universe is now 5763 years old. Yet when scientists try to answer this question (which is really outside the realm of science, as we explained in part 2 of this series) they come up with much larger numbers.

The Rebbe King Moshiach was often asked this question and responded to it in many letters and private audiences. A typical example is the following excerpt from a letter dated 1 Sivan, 5716 (1956):

"Regarding what you wrote that you read in the books of the astronomers about stars whose light rays must travel for much more than 6,000 years until it reaches the earth, and you ask how this fits with what our holy Torah states - that we are in the year 5716 after creation.

"Now, even if you want to say that the calculation of the distance of the star is correct (for there are differences of opinion among the astronomers on this), this raises no question regarding the date of creation. [The point is] that just like the stars were created, similarly the light rays were created. Just like G-d can create a star which will first start to radiate light from the time of its creation and onwards, it is equally possible that He would create the star together with the light rays [already] radiating from it.

"This is especially evident when considering what it says in the first *parsha* of the Torah: 'It was morning the first day,' while 'Let there be luminaries' was not said until the fourth day. Thus we see that there was a presence of light [morning] before the luminaries were placed in the heavens....

"A deep knowledge and an analysis of the principles [upon which the conjectures of the scientists regarding the age of the earth is based] will prove to the normal mind that these are merely conjectures which are far from certainty. This is the

opinion of the scientists themselves as is mentioned in their books. Nevertheless, in the introductory texts studied in the schools, they hide the doubts that they have in these principles." (Likutei Sichos, vol. 15, p. 478)

From this letter we see that while G-d created the entire universe 5757 years ago, He may have created certain things to *appear to an observer* to be older.

Continuous Creation

This concludes our series on creation - but the story of creation continues. It is a fundamental teaching of Chabad Chassidus that G-d continually creates the world anew. This principle was first taught by the Baal Shem Tov, then explained in detail by Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi, the Alter Rebbe, founder of Chabad Chassidus, in his famous book, the Tanya.

This teaching is based on a verse in Tehillim (Psalms 119) which says, "Forever, O G-d, Your words stand in the heavens." G-d created the universe with the 10 creative statements at the beginning of the Torah ("Let there be light" etc.). The Tanya explains that the existence of every entity in the world derives from the Hebrew letters and words of these 10 statements in some way. These letters are the life force with which G-d maintains the existence of every object even after it was created, and if he withdrew those letters the object would return to nothingness.

On the 19th of Kislev (this year - Sun., 11/24), we celebrate the redemption of Rabbi Schneur Zalman from imprisonment in Czarist Russia. This day is called the Rosh HaShana of Chassidus. On it we renew our commitment to the principles of Chassidus taught by the Alter Rebbe, based on the triple love - love of G-d, love of the Torah and love of our fellow Jew. *Gut Yom Tov!*

[Please send your comments on this series to RYALinst@aol.com]



SPARKS of REDEMPTION

Every Jew should exemplify the teachings of the Chanuka lights in actual practice.

This will hasten the fulfillment of the Divine prophecy of "even if darkness will cover the earth and a thick cloud the nations, but on you will shine forth G-d."

As in those days, we should merit to kindle lights in the Third and Eternal Holy Temple -- with the coming of Moshiach.

This is the teaching of the Chanuka lights:

Although the situation is that of "after sunset," particularly in the present bleak darkness of the last days of exile (preceding the coming of Moshiach), a Jew must not permit himself to be overawed by the darkness outside, but must illuminate his home with the light of Torah and mitzvot (symbolized by the Chanuka lights), and moreover, not rest at that, but let the light shine forth "outside" to let the world see that the light of Torah and mitzvot irradiates Jewish life.

Shabbat Candle
Lighting Time:
17th of Kislev 5763 (11/22/02)
Candle lighting: Shabbos ends:

NY Metro Area:	4:16	5:19
Los Ang.:	4:29	5:33
Miami:	5:12	6:15
Montreal:	4:00	5:03
Toronto:	4:29	5:32
London:	3:47	4:58

2

The Prophecy of King Moshiach

DEFENSE OF THE HOLYLAND

Based on discourses of the Lubavitcher Rebbe shlita, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson
Every word is pertinent today!

From a Torah perspective, what is the central issue today in regards to the defense of the Holy Land?

The issue is Pikuach Nefesh, danger to life. Make no mistake about it. From a Torah perspective nothing else is the real issue here: the interpretation, significance or wording of UN Resolution No. 242 is not the issue. The central issue is Pikuach Nefesh, the endangering of the lives of all the inhabitants of the Holy Land posed by the proposed return of certain areas of land.

Torah Law Speaks: The following is the definitive verdict of our Divine Torah law, as expressed in the Shulchan Aruch.(11) If a band of idolators have surrounded a Jewish City (on the Shabbos), if their intention is only to rob, we may not desecrate the shabbos to defend our property. If their intention is to kill -

or even if their intention is unknown, but there is reason to suspect that it might be to kill - then, even if they have not yet arrived, but are only preparing their attack, we are to go forth against them with weapons and we may desecrate the Shabbos for this purpose. However, if the city in question is close to the coast, then even where their intention is only to rob 'straw and stubble', we desecrate the Shabbos to defend the city against them, for if we will not do so, they might capture this (strategic) city - and from there it might be easy for them to conquer the land.

The ruling is clear, and the current circumstances in the Middle East are far more severe than those portrayed in the above passage, for the following reasons: First, every point on the map of the Holy Land, every settlement, can be considered as "a city close to the coast (or border)" due to the extremely vulnerable nature of Israel's geography. An enemy could obviously conquer the hinterland far more easily once it has captured any strong point near the border. Second, there is no question of the invading enemies having their eyes only on

despoiling "straw and stubble"; they announce their murderous goals very openly! A question could be posed about this Torah ruling. The desire is to rescue the Jews from the hands of their enemies. Since we are the "smallest of all the nations", we need the Almighty's help in our battle. If so, why should we take

weapons and desecrate the Shabbos? Should we not better recite Tehillim (Psalms) for our deliverance, or engage in Torah Study etc.? The unequivocal ruling of the Shulchan Aruch is resoundingly clear. The Al-mighty desires that, in this case, we should go forth against them well armed, and, if necessary, we are to desecrate the Shabbos for this purpose. The course of action mandated by the Torah is one manner of serving G-d. Just as one must study Torah and fulfill the Mitzvos so must he perform his bounden duty with regard to the prevention of danger to life.



A CALL TO ACTION

The Rebbe's slogan is: "The main thing is the deed." Hence, we present suggestions from the Rebbe's talks of what we can do to complete the Rebbe's work of bringing the Redemption.

During these upcoming days of 19-20 of Kislev (Sun-Mon), every Jew should attend a "Chassidic gathering" (if possible three), where Jewish people sit together in love and harmony, like brothers. These gatherings should be dealing with the strengthening of each others Torah and mitzvahs, each one taking a commitment of an extra mitzvah.

Such gatherings should also take place at home with one's family members.

A 'Vort' for the Week

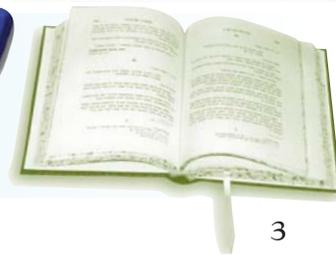
And Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked, and beheld, Esau came, and with him four hundred men. (Gen. 33:1)

Jacob went to meet with his brother Esau even though he knew that his life might be endangered by the encounter. But he didn't discuss the matter with anyone, or think twice about it. He just did it. From this we learn how important it is to DO things, because DOING is what will bring Moshiach.

(The Rebbe, King Moshiach)

?ask moshiach

The Lubavitcher Rebbe, King Moshiach, continues to lead us and guide us as before. We can still receive advice and blessings from him in miraculous ways, one of which is through the Igros Kodesh. For more information contact your local Chabad Rabbi or visit www.igrot.com.



Wonders of the Rebbe shlita

Rosh Hashanah In New Delhi

Rabbi Nachman Nachmanson, director of the Chabad house in New Delhi, India, was extremely busy before Rosh HaShana. Some of his activities included lectures, sounding the Shofar in the month of Elul throughout Delhi, and conversations with tourists who visited the Chabad house.

Uppermost in his mind was finding a nice place for the Rosh HaShana prayers and meals for the many Israelis in the area. Rabbi Nachmanson realized that word had gotten out about Chabad's Rosh HaShana program, and he knew he would be hosting hundreds of guests. The most practical solution seemed to be to ask the owner of the hotel where he lived to allow them to use the roof of the hotel for the Holiday. It had enough room for hundreds of people and would be perfect for the prayers and meals.

Rabbi Nachmanson approached the hotel owner with his request, but to his surprise he was turned down, even when he offered a great deal of money. Faced with these unexpected difficulties, Rabbi Nachmanson wrote to the Rebbe through the *Igros Kodesh*. He described the situation: Rosh Hashanah was just around the corner, yet he still did not have an appropriate location for all his guests.

He opened volume 23 of the *Igros* at random to page 282-283 and read: **And you will find a proper solution for the good of the students (for after all, they are most important) ... I will append a copy of my general Rosh HaShana letter ... about the synagogue in Kfar Chabad, founded and directed by my father-in-law, their development and expansion etc. ... great is the zechus ha'rabbim**

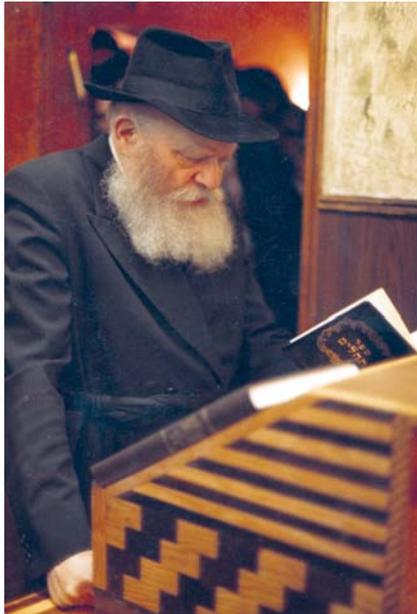
(merit of the public) **that their decisions should be attuned to the true purpose, in tune with the will of my father-in-law, the Rebbe, founder and director of the Kfar.**

With blessings for success in all matters concerning the synagogue, among all other matters concerning Kfar Chabad.

He hadn't expected such a clear answer. Now he was going to search for a spacious place to serve as their synagogue. With G-d's help, he found a nice hall that he could rent for a reasonable fee. Now the countdown began. The first volunteers appeared as a gift from Above in order to help him arrange the meals. Within two days, a team of 30 people had been organized to prepare the food. Of course, this was all under Rabbi Nachmanson's supervision.

Word had gotten out amongst the tourists, and the number of people interested in attending continued to grow. The hall was divided with a proper *mechitza*, and Rabbi Nachmanson spoke about the significance of the holiday. About 400 men and women showed up! It was amazing to see all sorts of people, with their varied backgrounds and modes of dress, solemnly holding their prayer books on this awesome day.

The most amazing thing, said Rabbi Nachmanson, is that when we began the Rosh HaShana services, it began to pour. It rained all night and I don't even want to think what would have happened if we were praying on the open roof of the hotel. Well, the Rebbe had spoken of "blessings for success in all matters concerning the synagogue!"



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