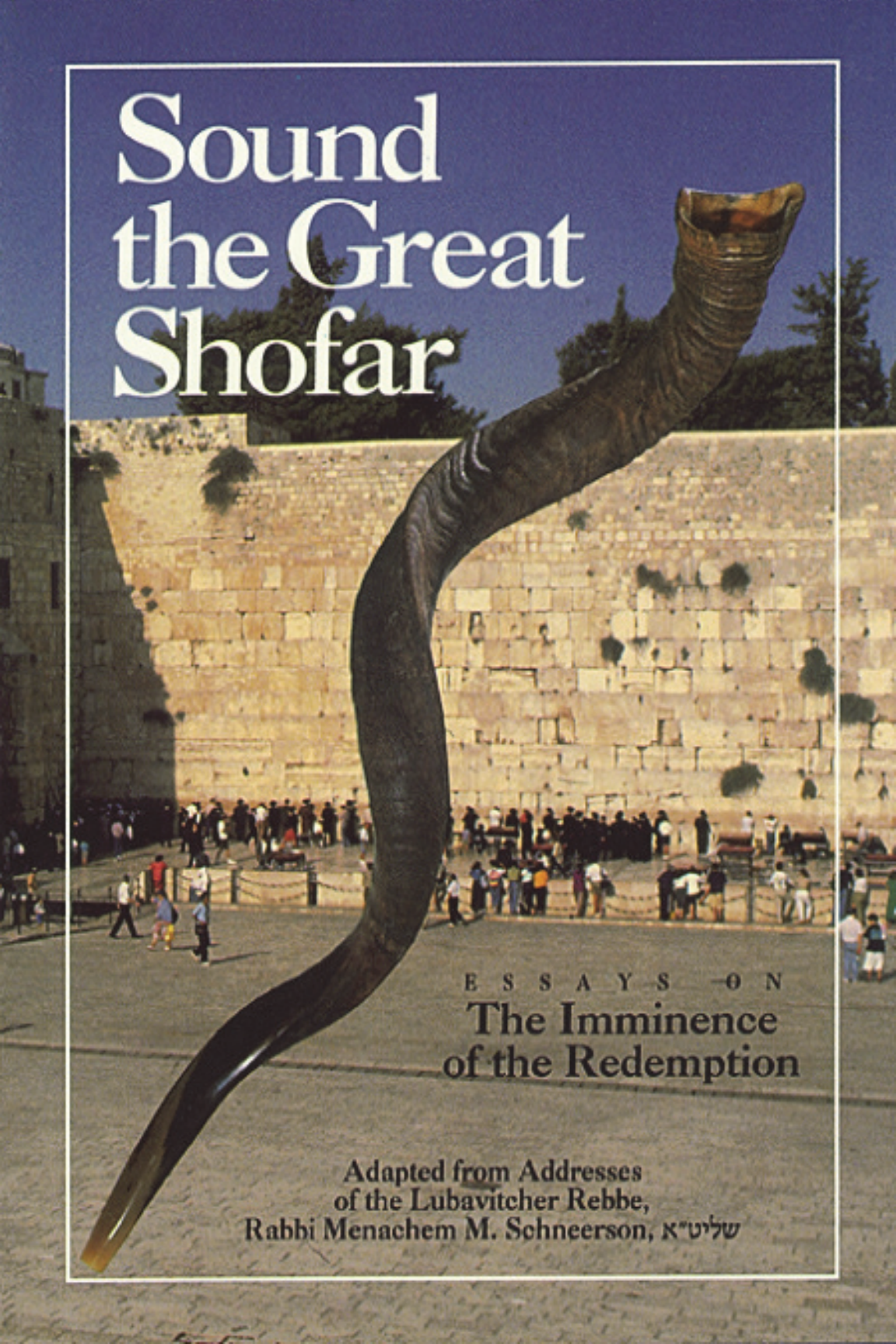


Sound the Great Shofar



ESSAYS ON
The Imminence
of the Redemption

Adapted from Addresses
of the Lubavitcher Rebbe,
Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, שליט"א

BRINGING MASHIACH NOW

Study as a Catalyst

An Adaptation of Addresses of
the Lubavitcher Rebbe שליט"א
on the Eve of the 28th of Nissan,
on Shabbos Parshas Shemini,
and on Shabbos Parshas
Tazria-Metzora, 5751

PUBLISHER'S FOREWORD

In recent weeks, the Rebbe *Shlita* has been reminding us that the task of bringing *Mashiach* must be *shared*. Instead of simply passing on the responsibility to his Rebbe, anyone who is in earnest about the urgency of this task should regard himself as an active partner in it.

This message brings to mind a striking chassidic story in the course of which the Baal Shem Tov tells a parable.

“A man with unusually keen vision once caught sight of an exquisite bird at the tip of a tall tree. Though he very much wanted to reach up there and catch it, he had no ladder. What did he do? He stood a couple of his friends on top of each others' shoulders, with himself uppermost, reached out, and caught the bird. The men underneath him, though they had helped him catch it, knew nothing of its surpassing beauty — but without them he could not have reached it.

“Now,” explained the Baal Shem Tov to some of his chasidim who had taken the liberty of leaving the *beis midrash* while he was still deep in his inspired meditations, “it so happens that when I say *Shemoneh Esreh* all manner of hidden things are revealed to me. At this time, my consuming desire is to ascend to the level which the *Zohar* calls ‘the palace of the bird's nest’ — the palace in the World Above which is the abode of the *Mashiach*. But I cannot aspire to such a lofty height unless I first stand you, my disciples, on each others' shoulders. The entire feat is thus accomplished thanks to yourselves, when you are with me in my *beis midrash*, even though you may not be aware of it....”

* * *

As was said above, the Rebbe *Shlita* has been reminding us in recent weeks that the task of bringing *Mashiach* must be *shared*. Accordingly, instead of simply passing on the responsibility to his Rebbe, anyone who is in earnest about the urgency of this task should regard himself as an active partner in it.

10 Iyar, 5751 [April 24, 1991]

I BELIEVE

I believe with perfect faith in the coming of *Mashiach*.
Even if he delays, I will wait¹ every day² for him to come.³

Our desire for *Mashiach's* coming should not be casual. On the contrary, the possibility that *Mashiach* will not arrive on this very day, heaven forbid, should be totally unthinkable. Were we to cry out *Ad masai!* ("Until when will we remain in exile!"), with sincere intent and earnest desire, *Mashiach* would surely come.

YEARNING FOR MASHIACH NEEDS FIT EXPRESSION: AN INCREASE IN TORAH AND IN MITZVOS

The sincerity of this intent, however, must be reflected in the performance of activities to hasten *Mashiach's* coming for, as our Sages teach,⁴ "Action is what matters." Every man, woman, and child has an individual responsibility to work to bring about *Mashiach's* coming. No one else can shoulder this burden for him: his own efforts and energy are needed. Each of us must prepare for the coming of *Mashiach* by increasing his study of the Torah and enhancing his performance of its commandments *beiddur*, in a beautiful and conscientious manner.

Why is it that these are the activities which will hasten *Mashiach's* coming? — Because they are intrinsically parallel to the manner in which *Mashiach* will relate to the Jewish people.

1. In his *Mishneh Torah, Hilchos Melachim* 11:1, the *Rambam* writes:

In the future, the King *Mashiach* will arise.... Anyone who does not believe in him, or does not await his coming, denies not only [the statements of] the other prophets, but also [those of] the Torah and of Moshe, our teacher.

Implied in the *Rambam's* statement is that even if a person believes that ultimately *Mashiach* will come, but does not anxiously await his arrival, he is considered to have denied Judaism's fundamental creed (*Chiddushim U'Burim BeShas*, Vol. III, ch. 40).

2. The intent is not that every day we should wait for *Mashiach's* ultimate coming, but that we should wait expectantly every day for *Mashiach* to come on that very day (*Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. XXIII, p. 394).
3. This is the twelfth of the *Rambam's* Thirteen Principles of Faith, as adapted and incorporated in the thirteen statements beginning *Ani Maamin* which are recited every day in certain communities.
4. Cf. *Pirkei Avos* 1:17.

To explain: The manner in which G-d rewards the Jewish people follows the principle of “measure for measure.”⁵ Thus our efforts to prepare for and draw down a particular revelation must reflect the nature of that revelation itself. *Mashiach* will serve as both a king⁶ and as a teacher,⁷ simultaneously.⁸ Therefore, to hasten his coming, our activities should anticipate each of these two functions.

A KING RELATES BY GIVING COMMANDS

In contrast to a relationship between a teacher and student, between two friends, or other types of associations, a king relates to his subjects by issuing commands. By nature, a king is utterly superior to his subjects. Thus chassidic thought explains⁹ that King Saul’s great height — “He stood among the people, and he was taller than the entire nation from his shoulders up”¹⁰ — reflected spiritual qualities that also far surpassed those of the people at large. Ideally, the same concept applies in regard to other monarchs.

Because of this gap, a king cannot communicate his thoughts and his feelings to his people. How does he relate to them? — By issuing commands and thus specifying activities for them to perform on his behalf. To prepare ourselves for the development of such a relationship with *Mashiach*, the ultimate king, we must enhance our observance of the *mitzvos*, the commandments we have been given by G-d. Of particular importance is the *mitzvah* of *tzedakah*, because “*tzedakah* brings the Redemption near.”¹¹

5. *Sanhedrin* 90a.

6. *Rambam, Hilchos Melachim* 11:1.

7. *Rambam, Hilchos Teshuvah* 9:2.

8. *Sefer HaMitzvos of the Tzemach Tzedek, Mitzvas Minui Melech.*

9. *Or HaTorah, Shir HaShirim*, p. 414ff.

10. *I Shmuel* 10:23.

11. *Bava Basra* 10a; see also *Tanya*, ch. 37.

TEACHING ESTABLISHES AN INNER BOND

Although obeying a king's commands establishes a relationship between himself and his subjects, this bond is incomplete, for the inner dimensions of his personality remain beyond the reach of his subjects' appreciation. To communicate these inner dimensions of his being, *Mashiach* will simultaneously serve as a teacher and, in this manner, establish such an inner bond.

Our Sages state that "Whoever teaches another person Torah is considered as if he had brought him into the world."¹² When a father brings a child into the world, he invests within him the very essence of his being. Similarly, a teacher has the capacity to share his essence with his students. When he invests himself in the subject matter he is conveying, and a student concentrates on its grasp, the nature of the student's being is transformed. As he studies, the inner bond established with his teacher shapes his thinking processes, causing them to resemble those of the teacher.

Similarly, by teaching the entire Jewish people, *Mashiach* will establish such an inner bond with them all. This will uncover the essential spark of *Mashiach* that every Jew possesses within his soul.¹³

WHAT WE SHOULD STUDY

To relate to this aspect of *Mashiach* and hasten its revelation, we must increase our study of the Torah, in particular devoting our energies to the study of *pnimiyus haTorah*, the mystical dimensions of the Torah as they are revealed in the teachings of *Chassidus*. The Baal Shem Tov records in a celebrated letter that he once had a vision of *Mashiach* and

12. *Sanhedrin* 19b.

13. *Devarim Rabbah* 1:20 and the *Jerusalem Talmud*, *Taanis* 4:4, interpret the verse "And a star shall shoot forth from Yaakov" (*Bamidbar* 24:17) as a reference to *Mashiach*, while the *Jerusalem Talmud*, *Maaser Sheni* 4:6, interprets the verse as a reference to any ordinary Jew. The two interpretations can be combined, for every Jew possesses a spark of *Mashiach* within his soul (*Meor Einayim*, *Parshas Pinchas*).

asked him, “When are you coming?” *Mashiach* replied, “When the wellsprings of your teachings shall spread outward.”¹⁴ Spreading these teachings, both within our own personalities and to others, thus brings the coming of *Mashiach* closer.

More specifically, our study should center on the subject of *Mashiach* himself and on the future Redemption, and in particular, as these topics are developed in the *maamarim* and the *Likkutei Sichos* of the *Nasi* of our generation. These and other works are provided with subject indexes, which make the relevant sources easily accessible.

This study should be communal in nature, preferably in groups of ten, for “over every group of ten, the Divine Presence rests.”¹⁵ Furthermore, communal study contributes an element of happiness. Even a person who is used to studying in depth, and therefore prefers the peace and quiet of individual study, should complement his own studies by participating in these communal sessions.

Everyone should appreciate the need to participate in these efforts and see these guidelines as directed to him individually. Simultaneously, we should not interpret this as a private matter alone, but must endeavor to spread this message to every Jew. The responsibility to hasten *Mashiach*’s coming is incumbent upon each member of our people.

The nature of the present year, the year when “I will show you wonders,” creates a climate that is conducive to the success of these efforts. We have already seen great Divine miracles and will surely see more miracles in the future.¹⁶ May these miracles include the ultimate miracles that will accompany the future redemption, when, “As in the days of your exodus from Egypt, I will show you wonders.”¹⁷

14. For the relevant sources see footnotes 12, 13 and 14 to the above Overview.

15. *Sanhedrin* 39a.

16. See the booklet entitled *I Will Show You Wonders*, published by Sichos In English (1991).

17. *Michah* 7:15.

**OPEN YOUR
EYES AND SEE**
**Attuning Oneself to a
Changing Reality**

An Adaptation of Addresses of
the Lubavitcher Rebbe שליט"א
on Shabbos Parshas Vayeitzei, 5752
and other occasions.

PUBLISHER'S FOREWORD

For several months now, the Lubavitcher Rebbe *Shlita* has been emphasizing that we should “live with the Redemption,” and internalize it as an active element within our daily lives. In the public addresses on which this essay is based, he explains that all that is necessary is to “open your eyes and see.”

This call to simply open one's eyes recalls many familiar chassidic stories concerning pious folk whom Heaven granted the coveted privilege of encountering the Prophet Eliyahu disguised, but — because of their underdeveloped sensitivity — they failed to recognize him, and the elusive moment slipped between their clumsy fingers.

Accordingly, the Redemption should not be regarded as a hope for the distant future, but rather as a subject of immediate and present concern. It is our hope that the publication of this essay will in some measure make it ever more immediate and present.

22 Kislev, 5752 [November 29, 1991]

ISRAEL'S MISSION

Our Sages state,¹ “The world was created solely for *Mashiach*.” For G-d created the world so that He would have “a dwelling place among mortals,”² and this ideal will be realized in the Era of the Redemption. At that time the Divine Presence will become manifest in this world, for, in the words of Isaiah’s promise,³ “the earth will be filled with the knowledge of G-d as the waters cover the ocean bed.”⁴

Since it is human nature to appreciate something for which one has worked far more than an unearned gift,⁵ G-d desired that man have a share in bringing this promise to fruition, that he become G-d’s partner in creation.⁶ This indeed has been the purpose of the thousands of years during which the Jewish people have served G-d, thereby refining the world and preparing it for the manifestation of His Presence within it. Throughout the centuries, as we have wandered from country to country and from continent to continent, the inner purpose of these journeys has been to cultivate these places and prepare them for the Redemption.⁷

Throughout our history, our people have yearned for the consummation of this task, for the time when *Mashiach* will

1. *Sanhedrin* 96b.

2. *Midrash Tanchuma, Parshas Bechukosai, sec. 3; Tanya, ch. 36.*

3. The revelation of the Divine Presence is implied by the use of term “dwelling”. Just as it is in a person’s home that his personality finds expression without restraint or inhibition, it will be in this world that G-dliness will be revealed without restraint.

4. *Yeshayahu* 11:9; *Rambam, Mishneh Torah, Hilchos Melachim* 12:5.

5. Cf. *Bava Metzia* 38a.

6. *Shabbos* 10a, 119b; *Likkutei Sichos, Vol. XV, p. 95.*

7. See the above essay entitled “*Make This Place Eretz Yisrael.*”

The Sages teach (*Pesachim* 87b) that “The only reason for which G-d exiled the Jewish people among the nations of the world was that proselytes be added to them.” In this teaching, *Chassidus* perceives an allusion to the ultimate cosmic mission of the Jewish people during their wanderings through the material universe — the task of sifting and elevating the exiled sparks of holiness that are embedded within it. See *MiGolah LiGeulah* (in English translation, published by Sichos In English), Part I, ch. 2, quoting *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5702, p. 69.

actually come. Three times a day, every day of the year, we ask G-d:⁸ “May our eyes behold Your return to Zion in mercy.” Indeed, our Sages⁹ teach us that one of the first questions a soul will be asked in its judgment for the afterlife is, “Did you anticipate the Redemption?”

OPEN YOUR EYES: THE TABLE IS SET FOR THE FEAST

The above assumes unique relevance in the present time, for the Jewish people have completed the mission with which G-d has charged us. To borrow an expression of the Previous Rebbe’s,¹⁰ we have already “polished the buttons”: everything necessary to bring about the Redemption has already been accomplished.¹¹

Our readiness for the Redemption is also reflected in the world at large. The values of freedom, tolerance, and generosity have spread throughout the community of nations. Regimes that have opposed them have toppled, giving way for greater communication and sharing.

Our Sages¹² have described the Redemption as a feast. To echo this analogy,¹³ the table has already been set, everything has been served, and we are sitting at the table together with *Mashiach*. All we need to do is open our eyes.

8. *Siddur Tehillat HaShem*, p. 58 *et al.*

9. *Shabbos* 31a.

10. *Sichah* of Simchas Torah, 5689 [1928].

11. See footnote 19 to the above Overview.

Indeed, we learn that G-d will bring about the ultimate Redemption speedily even when the Jewish people have not yet fully cleansed themselves. For in the penitential prayers of *Selichos* (quoting *Tehillim* 25:22 and 130:8), we say, *first*: “G-d, redeem Israel from all his afflictions”; and *afterwards*: “And He will redeem Israel from all his sins.” First G-d will redeem the Jews from their difficulties — including the greatest difficulty, the exile — and *then* He will redeem them from their sins. See the above essay entitled “Every Jew Has a Silver Lining.”

12. *Pesachim* 119b.

13. See footnote 21 to the above Overview.

PREPARING THE WORLD FOR MASHIACH

In previous generations as well, there has always been a potential for the Redemption.¹⁴ In the popular version of the *Rambam's* Thirteen Principles of Faith,¹⁵ the twelfth Principle reads: "I believe with perfect faith in the coming of the *Mashiach*. Even if he delays, I will wait every day for him to come." As has been explained,¹⁶ this does not mean that every day we should wait for *Mashiach's* ultimate coming, but that every day, we should wait expectantly for *Mashiach* to come *on that very day*.

Our Sages¹⁷ describe *Mashiach* as waiting anxiously to come. In previous generations, however, his coming was prevented by the fact that the Jews had not completed the tasks expected of them. At present, however, those tasks have been accomplished; there is nothing lacking. All we have to do is accept *Mashiach*.

This is the challenge facing our generation: To make the world conscious of *Mashiach*, and to create an environment that will allow his mission to be fulfilled. Every element of our study of the Torah and our observance of its *mitzvos* should be permeated by this objective, and directed towards it.

BECOMING ATTUNED TO THE REDEMPTION

We can gain awareness of *Mashiach* through the study of *pnimiyus HaTorah*,¹⁸ the Torah's mystical dimensions, and in

14. Note the comments of the *Chasam Sofer* (*Responsa on Choshen Mishpat*, Vol. 6, Responsum 98), that in every generation, there is a potential *Mashiach*. Moreover, were there no obstacles which prevented his coming, he would have come already. See also *Sdei Chemed*, *Pe'as HaSadeh*, *Maareches Alef*, Principle 70.

15. The full text of these thirteen principles, which differs slightly from the popular version that appears in many *Siddurim*, is found in the *Rambam's* Commentary to the *Mishnah*, in the Introduction to ch. 10 of Tractate *Sanhedrin*.

16. *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. XXIII, p. 394.

17. *Sanhedrin* 98a.

18. The connection between *pnimiyus HaTorah* and the Era of the Redemption is emphasized by the Baal Shem Tov in the renowned letter in which he describes an encounter with *Mashiach* in the spiritual realms. He asked *Mashiach*, "When are

particular, through the study of the subjects of redemption and *Mashiach*.¹⁹ This process will open the eyes of our mind, so that as we live our lives day by day, we will remain constantly attuned to the concept of redemption.

Furthermore, the increase in our awareness of the nature of the Redemption will serve as a catalyst, which will hasten the coming of the day when we can actually open our eyes and see — that we are in *Eretz Yisrael*, and in Jerusalem, and, indeed, in the *Beis HaMikdash*, with the coming of the Redemption.

May this be realized in the immediate future.

you coming?” And *Mashiach* answered him, “When the wellsprings of your teachings shall spread outward.” (See the above Overview, and footnotes 12-14 there.)

Since the essence of *Mashiach*'s coming is to allow for “the earth to be filled with the knowledge of G-d,” it will be heralded by the spreading of *pnimiyus HaTorah*, which disseminates this knowledge.

Such study is not the exclusive province of men. The obligation of women to likewise study the inner dimensions of the Torah, i.e., the teachings of *Chassidus*, is explained by the Rebbe *Shlita* in *Sefer HaMinhagim* (English translation; Kehot, N.Y., 1991), p. 192. See also the essay entitled “A Woman's Place in Torah” (*Sichos In English*, Vol. 45, pp. 16-22).

19. This should include the study of these subjects not only in *pnimiyus HaTorah*, but also as they are explained in Torah law, for example, the final two chapters of the *Mishneh Torah* of the *Rambam*. In-depth analyses of these texts by the Rebbe *Shlita*, both on the level of *halachah* and of *Chassidus*, are to be found in *I Await His Coming Every Day* (Kehot, N.Y., 1991).

**THE FULFILLMENT
OF OUR HUMAN
POTENTIAL**
**Guidelines for
Society**

An Adaptation of an Address of
the Lubavitcher Rebbe שליט"א
on Shabbos Parshas Ki Seitzei, 5751

PUBLISHER'S FOREWORD

Even before the currently closing Jewish year began, the Rebbe *Shlita* stated that this would be a year in which G-d's promise to His people would be fulfilled — that "I will show you wonders."* And indeed, this year has been filled with a series of wondrous events which when recounted stagger the imagination — the Gulf War, the mass immigration of Jews to *Eretz Yisrael*, and the complete collapse of communism, to cite a few.

It was events nearer home, however, that perhaps explain why in the course of his talks this past *Shabbos (Parshas Ki Seitzei; Aug. 24)*, the Rebbe chose to speak of concepts relevant to mankind as a whole. His statements touched on the ultimate purpose for any community and on the universal values around which any society should be structured.

We have taken these points, which were originally scattered throughout the course of talks focusing on other subjects, and arranged them as an independent essay. It is our hope that the ideals they champion will help motivate men of all faiths to join hands together to usher the world into its ultimate state of fulfillment — to the era in which "Nation will not lift up sword against nation, nor will they learn war any more"*** — with the coming of the ultimate Redemption. May this take place speedily, in our days.

18 Elul, 5751 [August 28, 1991]

* *Michah* 7:15. See the booklet entitled *I Will Show You Wonders*, published by Sichos In English, 5751.

** *Yeshayahu* 2:4. See the essay below, entitled "Swords into Plowshares: Disarmament as in Isaiah."

IN THE IMAGE OF G-D

Our Sages teach,¹ “Precious is man, for he has been created in the image of G-d.”² In his *Guide to the Perplexed*,³ *Rambam* explains that “the image of G-d” refers to our capacity “to conceive of intellectual ideas and to be conscious of ‘Him who spoke and brought the world into being.’ ” This, the ability to use our minds creatively and to direct our thoughts to G-d, is the pinnacle of our human potential.

Realizing this potential is dependent on peace of mind. And peace of mind comes when a person feels spiritual purpose and fulfillment, while living in an environment which affords him peace, security, and the opportunity to satisfy his material needs.

STRUCTURING OUR SOCIETY ACCORDING TO G-D’S PLAN

Creating a setting which leads to the realization of these goals should be the purpose of every society. This can be accomplished by adopting a structure based on the seven universal laws commanded to Noah and his descendants,³ i.e., to all humanity. For this is the blueprint which the Almighty gave Moses⁴ to allow all men to live in harmony.

Implicit in the above blueprint is *tzedakah*, charity.⁶ Those who have been granted success must realize that their

1. *Mishnah, Ethics of the Fathers* 3:14.

2. *Bereishis* 9:6.

3. Vol. 1, ch. 1.

3. These seven laws comprise the prohibitions against the worship of false divinities, blasphemy, murder, incest and adultery, theft, and eating flesh from a living animal, and the obligation to enact laws and establish courts of justice. See *Rambam, Hilchos Melachim*, chs. 9 and 10.

4. Cf. *Rambam, loc cit.*, 8:10.

6. See *Rabbeinu Nissim*, gloss to *Tractate Sanhedrin* 56b, who cites *Eichah* 4:6 and explains that charity is an obligation incumbent on all mankind. See also *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. V, p. 157 ff.

prosperity is a gift from G-d which carries with it the responsibility to help others who are not as fortunate.⁵

Incorporating these principles into our society is a self-reinforcing process, for the experience of the good these values promote, naturally encourages further progress along these lines. Similarly, in a spiritual sense:⁶

The Torah has promised that if we observe its [commandments] joyfully.... [G-d] will remove all the obstacles which hinder us from such observance, such as illness, war and hunger.... Similarly, He will grant us all manner of good things to reinforce our observance.

EDUCATING OUR YOUTH, THE KEY TO MAKING THESE IDEALS REALITY

Actualizing these ideals depends on *chinuch*, education. Education is, of course, not merely the transfer of knowledge, but more importantly, the communication of values and character traits which parents and grandparents have learnt through their studies and life experience. And this process of communication should flow naturally. Ideally, a child listens to his parents immediately, not because of intimidation, but as a byproduct of their ongoing relationship.

Admittedly, bringing up a child is not an easy process. A parent will occasionally observe attitudes of which he does not approve. After all, young people, like adults, are challenged by drives, and are subject to the pressures of their peer environment. But whatever the current inconsistencies in conduct, a parent should never despair over his child's future. If he has invested *himself* in his child's upbringing, he may rest assured that any frustration will be only temporary. As time passes, the warm and sensible concern which he has devoted to his children will inevitably bear fruit.

5. See the essay entitled "Charity and *Tzedakah*: A Contrast, not a Definition," published by Sichos In English, 5751.

6. *Rambam, Hilchos Teshuvah* 9:1.

THE ULTIMATE GOOD

In an ultimate sense, it is in the Era of the Redemption that the above goals will be realized, for *Mashiach* will then⁷ “perfect the entire world, [motivating all the nations] to serve G-d together, as it is written,⁸ ‘I will make the peoples pure of speech so that they all will call upon the Name of G-d and serve Him with one purpose.’ ”

And the singleness of purpose shared by all people will be manifest in an era of abundant good:⁹

There will be neither famine nor war, neither envy nor competition, for good things will flow in abundance and all the delights will be as freely available as dust. The occupation of the entire world will be solely to know G-d... as it is written,¹⁰ “For the world will be filled with the knowledge of G-d as the waters cover the ocean bed.”

PRECIPITATING THE ERA OF THE REDEMPTION

We do not, however, have to wait until the future. A foretaste of this is possible in our days, and even more so at present, for we are standing at the threshold of the Era of the Redemption. This is a unique year; the Hebrew letters whose numerical equivalent is associated with this year serve as an acronym for the Hebrew phrase meaning, “This will surely be a year when ‘I will show you wonders.’ ”¹¹ And we have seen wonders — including the miraculous victory in the Persian Gulf, an event associated by the classic text, the *Yalkut Shimoni*,¹² with “the year in which the Messianic king will be revealed.”

7. *Ibid.*, *Hilchos Melachim* 11:4.

8. *Zephaniah* 3:9.

9. *Rambam*, *Hilchos Melachim* 12:5.

10. *Yeshayahu* 11:9.

11. A reference to the Biblical prophecy (*Michah* 7:15), “As in the days of your exodus from Egypt, I will show you wonders.” See the above-mentioned booklet entitled *I Will Show You Wonders*.

12. Vol. II, sec. 499, interpreting *Yeshayahu* 60:1.

Similarly, we have seen an ingathering of the exiles of Israel to our Holy Land, a foreglimpse of the ultimate return to the Land in the Messianic Era. And there have been many other miracles which we have all witnessed in both the personal and global sphere.

These are, therefore, appropriate times to incorporate in our lives the heightened spiritual awareness which we will possess in the Era of the Redemption. In this way, we can add fulfillment to our present experience and precipitate the coming of that ultimate era. May this take place in the immediate future.

SOUND
THE GREAT SHOFAR
Together — Between
Individuals, and
Within Individuals

An Adaptation of Addresses of
the Lubavitcher Rebbe שליט"א,
on the 24th of Adar Rishon
and on Shabbos Parshas Vayakhel, 5752

PUBLISHER'S FOREWORD

What does the adjective “together” really mean?

In the first *sichah* of the *farbrengen* on the afternoon of *Shabbos Parshas Vayakhel* this year, the Rebbe *Shlita* discussed the chassidic dimensions of this concept on three levels: nationally, as reflected in the current ingathering of remote exiles; psychologically, as manifested in the functioning of an integrated personality; and interpersonally, as expressed in the mood of mutual appreciation that characterizes the relations between mature individuals.

The concept of our people's inescapable interdependence brings to mind a well-known passage in *Iggeres HaKodesh*.^{*} There the Alter Rebbe compares the harmonious fellow-feeling among Jews with the simple anatomical fact that all the bodily organs owe their ongoing health to the circulatory system which is common to them all.

There are certain times when this underlying sense of togetherness surfaces. May G-d grant that this be prompted only by happy circumstances.

And, while the Rebbe *Shlita* is regaining his strength from day to day, we and our readers join the entire House of Israel around the world in a confident prayer — that G-d send the Rebbe *Shlita* a speedy and complete recovery, so that in the very near future we will see him happily resuming his familiar daily schedule and his holy life-work.

7 Adar II, 5752 [March 12, 1992]

* Epistle 31. For an elaboration of the teaching of the *AriZal* that all the souls of the Jewish people are essentially the limbs of one and the same body, see also *Mitzvas Ahavas Yisrael* in *Derech Mitzvosecha*, by the *Tzemach Tzedek*.

MORE THAN A GEOGRAPHIC INGATHERING

Sound the great *shofar* for our freedom; raise a banner to gather our exiles, and bring us together from the four corners of the earth into our land.¹

Three times a day we express this fervent wish — that *Mashiach* come and gather our people to *Eretz Yisrael*, the eternal heritage of our people.² This involves more than a mere geographic movement on the part of our people. At that time G-d will “bring us together” and establish unity among us, for in that age, the Era of the Redemption,³ “there will be neither famine nor war, neither envy nor competition.”

The events of recent years point to the imminence of that era; many signs of the Redemption are appearing. The wondrous ingathering of hundreds of thousands of Jews to *Eretz Yisrael* is surely an obvious harbinger of the ultimate ingathering of our dispersed nation. Surging waves of migration that stand out boldly in our nation’s history are now reaching our holy land, including hundreds of thousands of people who were forcibly held back for decades.⁴ Indeed, the very nations which had previously blocked their emigration are now granting them permission and even assistance to settle in *Eretz Yisrael*.⁵

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1. Daily liturgy, *Siddur Tehillat HaShem*, p. 55.
 2. Note *Rambam, Mishneh Torah, Hilchos Melachim* 11:4, which specifies the ingathering of the dispersed remnants of Israel as one of the principal indicators by which the coming of the Redemption can be ascertained.
 3. *Rambam, op. cit.*, 12:5.
 4. Needless to say, settling the vast hosts of immigrants in *Eretz Yisrael* requires massive resources. It is a unique privilege and responsibility to help meet this challenge, and offer substantial assistance. (See the address of the Rebbe *Shlita* to the participants in the Machne Israel Development Fund, in *Sichos In English*, Vol. 47, pp. 216-221.)
 5. Unfortunately, there are still isolated countries that prevent Jews from emigrating. Nevertheless, the successful immigration of the many Jews who have reached *Eretz Yisrael* will generate spiritual influences that will facilitate the immigration of their brethren. See the *maamar* entitled *Amar R. Oshia 5739* (published in *Sefer HaMaamarim — Melukat*, Vol. IV, p. 89), which explains a similar pattern of spiritual causality.

INTEGRATING A FRAGMENTED PERSONALITY

Together with the foretaste of the Redemption that we have been granted, we have also been given the potential to anticipate the Redemption and incorporate the spiritual ideals of that era within our everyday life. In this vein, the concept of gathering in the dispersed has relevance within every individual's personal world, and likewise within the sphere of our relations with others.

It is not only a nation that stands in need of ingathering. In our time, we often encounter fragmented personalities, people who find difficulty integrating their various drives and motivations. The source for this centrifugal thrust lies in a lack of coordination within our multifaceted spiritual makeup. We have ten different potentials⁶ and we have been given an ongoing, lifelong task of establishing harmony between them.

This endeavor is illustrated in a renowned chassidic story: Reb Zalman Aharon, the elder son of the Rebbe Maharash, once asked his uncle, Reb Yosef Yitzchak, if he recited his prayers *betzibbur*, "with the community." Reb Yosef Yitzchak answered in the affirmative. The very next day, however, Reb Zalman Aharon noticed that his uncle prolonged his prayers, lingering far longer than any congregation would.

"Didn't you tell me you prayed *betzibbur*?" he asked.

"I do," his uncle replied. "*Betzibbur* literally means 'with the collective.' After I marshal together the ten components of my soul, I pray."

A BOND ABOVE CONSCIOUS THOUGHT

How is such a unity established? How can a person bring the divergent thrusts of his personality into harmony? — Through dedicating them to G-d. When a person makes an all-encompassing commitment to G-d, he gains a wholesome

6. These ten qualities in turn further subdivide, producing the full range of emotional attributes. See *Tanya*, ch. 3, and "Mystical Concepts in Chassidus," by R. Jacob Immanuel Schochet, ch. 3, sec. 6 (Kehot, N.Y. 1988).

sense of fulfillment⁷ that enables him to establish harmony among the diverse elements of his being.

The unity established is not manufactured, but rather reflects the inner truth of every person's being. For the soul is⁸ "an actual part of G-d from above." Consequently, all of its potentials reflect this fundamental G-dly core.

This process of establishing internal harmony is reflected in the very first statement a Jew makes upon rising: *Modeh Ani* — "I gratefully acknowledge..."⁹ What is the core of this declaration? — That immediately upon awakening, a person gathers together his entire being and devotes it to G-d.

To explain: Seemingly, before a person is able to make such a declaration, he should consciously perceive G-d's presence. This in turn would appear to require that he contemplate the world around him until he comes to the realization that¹⁰ "the entire earth is filled with His glory." Only then would he be able to make an all-encompassing commitment to G-d.

We, however, do not need such preparation, for our connection with G-dliness is intrinsic and constant, shaping our thinking processes even when we sleep. Indeed, a person's bond with G-d may be even greater when he sleeps than when he is awake, for then his conscious intellectual faculties do not control his thoughts. In their absence, his essence can surface. And the essence of every soul is connected with G-d at all times.¹¹

When a person rises from sleep, however, he becomes conscious of himself as an individual entity, and indeed, as a powerful entity. Nevertheless, as soon as he becomes aware of

7. In a related context, the Maggid of Mezritch offers a non-literal interpretation of the phrase (*Bamidbar* 10:1) *shnei chatzotzros*, (lit., "two trumpets"), rendering it as *shnei chatzi tzuros*, "two half-entities." A Jew and G-d are both "half-entities" until a union is established between them.

8. *Tanya*, ch. 2, paraphrasing *Iyov* 31:2.

9. *Siddur Tehillat HaShem*, p. 6.

10. *Yeshayahu* 6:3.

11. Note the explanation of the *Rambam* in *Hilchos Gerushin* 2:20.

his own existence, he gives himself over to G-d with thankful acknowledgement.¹² And this enables him to perceive how “great is Your faithfulness,” i.e., how every entity in the world reflects G-d’s gracious kindness.

UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

Thus the establishment of harmony and unity within our individual beings enables us to perceive the inner unity that pervades the totality of existence.¹³ Similarly, it enhances our ability to establish unity in our relations with others.

The importance of such efforts is emphasized by the fact that the Alter Rebbe placed the declaration,¹⁴ “I hereby undertake the fulfillment of the *mitzvah*, ‘Love your fellowman as yourself,’ ” at the very beginning of the prayer service, making it the foundation of all of one’s daily activities.

In simple terms, this command means that when one person sees another, he should try to unite with him, for in truth all men share the same inner G-dly essence. When a person appreciates this fundamental commonality, he understands that the various differences that exist between people need not lead to division. On the contrary, they enable each person to complement the other and contribute an element which is lacking, or not as developed, in the other’s personality.

This thrust toward unity applies not only to those individuals in one’s immediate community, but to all people, even those far removed; indeed, even those in a distant corner

12. In the *Mishneh Torah*, *Hilchos Teshuvah* 3:4, the *Rambam* speaks of “those who slumber in the vanities of worldly existence.” The fundamental unity all men share with G-d affects these individuals, despite their “sleep”. Accordingly, their “slumber” will surely be only temporary. Ultimately, they too will “wake up” and develop a conscious relationship with G-d.

13. In this vein, our Sages (*Berachos* 13b) — and this is quoted as *halachah* (*Shulchan Aruch*, *Orach Chayim* 61:6, *Shulchan Aruch HaRav* 61:6) — interpret the expression “G-d is one” in the *Shema* as meaning, not only that there is one G-d, but also that His oneness permeates every element of existence.

14. *Siddur Tehillat HaShem*, p. 12, quoting *Vayikra* 19:18.

of the world. Needless to say, the manner in which these feelings of unity are expressed will differ in terms of the practical means of expression available, but the feelings of oneness are universal in nature.

FOCUSING ON OUR SHARED CONNECTION

Even when the distance between individuals is also spiritual in nature, i.e., when one person does not share another's level of adherence to Torah law, *one should persistently focus on the essential connection which is shared*, and not on the differences.

In regard to one's *own* personal conduct, one must emphasize two modes of serving G-d, striving both to¹⁵ "Turn away from evil, and [to] do good." When, however, one relates to another individual, one must channel one's energies solely in the path of¹⁶ "Do[ing] good." The emphasis on a person's positive qualities will, moreover, encourage their expression, for¹⁷ "a little light dispels much darkness."

Although there are times when another individual's conduct warrants reproof,¹⁸ before speaking one should question whether he himself is fit to be the one to administer it. Furthermore, if reproof must be given, it should be offered gently,¹⁹ which will obviously enable it to be accepted more

15. *Tehillim* 34:15.

16. When he was four years old, the Rebbe Rayatz asked his father why we need two eyes.

Replied the Rebbe Rashab, "With his right eye one should look at a *Siddur* and at a fellow Jew; with his left eye one should look at sweets and toys." (*Sefer HaToldos* of the Rebbe Rayatz, Vol. I, pp. 8-9.)

17. *Tanya*, ch. 12; cf. *Tzeidah LaDerech*, sec. 12.

18. See *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim* 608:2; *Shulchan Aruch HaRav*, sec. 156 and 308.

19. *Rambam, Mishneh Torah, Hilchos De'os* 6:8. See also the essays entitled: "The Innate Quality of Every Jew — The Indivisibility of the Land of Israel" (published in *Sichos In English*, Vol. 44, pp. 206-209); "Every Jew has a Silver Lining" (*ibid.*, Vol. 47, pp. 11-18); and "The Safest Place in the World" (*ibid.*, pp. 19-24).

readily than harsh speech. Moreover, such words should be spoken only on select occasions.

These concepts are reflected in the verse,²⁰ “One who withholds the rod hates his son,” which indicates that stiff rebuke may be given only when the relationship between two individuals is like a father and a son. There are two concepts implied by this verse: Firstly, that to give rebuke, one must love the other person just as a father loves his child; secondly, that the difference in level between the two people must be as radical as that between a father and a son. This is not true in most cases. Since all individuals share a fundamental equality, it is appropriate that people relate to each other as equals.

GIVING OF ONESELF

The unity that we share with others should not remain merely in the realm of feeling, but should be translated into actual deeds of love and kindness. In regard to the sacrifices that were brought in the *Beis HaMikdash*, it is written,²¹ “A person who shall bring from you....” The Alter Rebbe²² notes that seemingly it would have been more proper to say, “A person of you who shall bring....” The transposition of the words in the verse, however, indicates that the offering must be “from you,” of a person’s own self.

A similar concept applies in regard to *tzedakah*. One should not give merely what is left over after one has taken care of one’s own needs, but should give “from you,” from one’s own self. And these gifts should be substantial. To borrow the words of a verse,²³ “everything a person owns he

20. *Mishlei* 13:24.

21. *Vayikra* 1:2.

22. *Likkutei Torah, Parshas Vayikra*. These concepts are quoted in many later chassidic teachings as well. See *Basi LeGani 5710* (translated into English by Sichos In English, 5750).

23. *Iyov* 2:4. In *Tanya, Iggeres HaKodesh*, ch. 3, the Alter Rebbe explains that although our Sages prescribe that a person should not give more than a fifth of his resources to *tzedakah*, there are certain situations when a person can — and indeed should — transcend these limits.

will give for the sake of his life.” Similarly, the realization of the fundamental unity we share with others will prompt us to give generously, without limits.

Moreover, our gifts to *tzedakah* should constantly be increased. Every moment, the creation as a whole is being renewed²⁴ and is receiving additional blessings through G-d’s benevolence. Therefore, at every moment, we should renew and increase our commitment to *tzedakah*, amplifying the manner in which we help others.

“BLESS US, ...ALL AS ONE”

Unity is the key to G-d’s blessings. Thus, in our daily prayers, we say “*Bless us, our Father, all as one.*” The teachings of *Chassidus*²⁵ explain that the very fact of being together “all as one,” makes us worthy of blessing. And this unity will lead to the ultimate blessing — the coming of the time when G-d will “sound the great *shofar*,” and together²⁶ “with our youth and with our elders... with our sons and with our daughters,” the entire Jewish people will proceed to *Eretz Yisrael*, to Jerusalem, and to the Third *Beis HaMikdash*. May this take place in the immediate future.

24. *Tanya, Shaar HaYichud VeHaEmunah*, ch. 1.

25. *Tanya*, ch. 32.

26. *Shmos* 10:9.

